

Concordia Seminary - Saint Louis

Scholarly Resources from Concordia Seminary

Doctor of Theology Dissertation

Concordia Seminary Scholarship

6-1-1966

The Voice in the Wilderness and the Coming One-- The Old Testament as the Link Between John the Baptist and Jesus Christ

Walter Rosin

Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, ir_rosinw@csl.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholar.csl.edu/thd>



Part of the [Biblical Studies Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Rosin, Walter, "The Voice in the Wilderness and the Coming One-- The Old Testament as the Link Between John the Baptist and Jesus Christ" (1966). *Doctor of Theology Dissertation*. 62.

<https://scholar.csl.edu/thd/62>

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Concordia Seminary Scholarship at Scholarly Resources from Concordia Seminary. It has been accepted for inclusion in Doctor of Theology Dissertation by an authorized administrator of Scholarly Resources from Concordia Seminary. For more information, please contact seitzw@csl.edu.

THE VOICE IN THE WILDERNESS AND THE COMING ONE--
THE OLD TESTAMENT AS THE LINK BETWEEN
JOHN THE BAPTIST AND JESUS CHRIST

A Thesis Presented to the Faculty
of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis,
Department of Exegetical Theology
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Theology

by

Walter L. Rosin

June 1966

40452

Approved by: Martin H. Franmann
Advisor

Paul H. Bretscher
Reader

Julius Paul [Signature]
Reader

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE. i

Chapter

I. INTRODUCTION. 1

II. THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS AT HAND. 18

III. THE MIGHTIER ONE COMES. 35

IV. PREPARE HIS WAY BEFORE HIM. 56

V. HE WILL BAPTIZE WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT
AND WITH FIRE 84

VI. BEHOLD THE LAMB OF GOD. 108

VII. CONCLUSION. 126

BIBLIOGRAPHY 135

W. H. C. Frey, John the Baptist (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1921).

John G. Gager, Jr., John the Baptist and the Desert Tradition, translated by Michael Gager (New York: Harper and Brothers, n.d.).

Augustine M. Jones, John the Baptist (Philadelphia: Porcupine Press, 1921).

Wolfgang Schottler, Johannes der Täufer, edited by W. Michaelis (Leipzig: Verlag Wissenschafts-Verlag, 1935). This work was first prepared in 1905, but remained unpublished until the date given above.

Ernst Lehmann, "Johannes der Täufer," Das Urchristentum (Weilheim: Knecht and Kuprecht, 1932).

PREFACE

Looming large among the familiar figures for readers of the Old and New Testaments is that of the first-century herald in the wilderness, John the Baptist. His thrilling cry which aroused the people of his day has re-echoed down the centuries so that he has retained his divinely-given place in Christian history. Yet in spite of the permanence of this position and the revolutionary character of his message, relatively little has been written about him, particularly in the English language. Individual aspects of his life and proclamation have been discussed frequently, but the only recent comprehensive works in the English language have been those of Kraeling,¹ Steinmann,² and Scobie.³ Some excellent works appeared earlier in the German language, among which are those of Schlatter⁴ and Lohmeyer.⁵

In view of the more recent English works, it might appear that a restudy of the message of John would be superfluous. However, a survey of these books reveals that the message has frequently been neglected

¹Carl H. Kraeling, John the Baptist (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1951).

²Jean Steinmann, St. John the Baptist and the Desert Tradition, translated by Michael Boyes (New York: Harper and Brothers, n.d.).

³Charles H.H. Scobie, John the Baptist (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1964).

⁴Adolph Schlatter, Johannes der Täufer, edited by W. Michaelis (Basel: Verlag Friedrich Reinhardt, 1956). This work was first prepared in 1880, but remained unpublished until the date given above.

⁵Ernst Lohmeyer, "Johannes der Täufer," Das Urchristentum (Goettingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1932).

in favor of a study of the life of the Baptist⁶ in relation to the environment in which he lived as well as his relation to the activity of Jesus of Nazareth. This type of study has no doubt been stimulated by the appearance of the Dead Sea Scrolls which contain many real and apparent parallels to the concepts and expressions of both the Old and New Testaments. While the study of Kraeling appeared prior to any real assessment of these discoveries, it is apparent that many of the documents which are now known to be in existence were presupposed and anticipated by him. On the other hand, while the work of Scobie which appeared subsequent to the Dead Sea discoveries has taken these documents into account, it too has as its primary emphasis an explanation for the activity of the Baptist and his relation to Jesus, although the message also receives some consideration.

The original intent of this thesis was to deal with the question of the relationship between Jesus and John. However, the appearance of Scobie's work made such a study unnecessary since he had already dealt with the question. Although the conclusions reached by him could be disputed in some cases, the documentation provided makes it possible for the reader to examine personally the relevant materials and to draw his own conclusions.

As already indicated, in dealing with the question of the relationship between Jesus and John it is easily possible to overlook what is at least an equally important area, the content of the Baptist's message. In addition, an emphasis upon the environmental factors tends to lead to a generalization regarding the similarity of one movement to another

⁶In the present work John the Baptist will be referred to as either "John" or "the Baptist." When the writer of the Fourth Gospel is intended he will be referred to as "the evangelist John" or "the writer of the Fourth Gospel."

without making sufficient allowance for original elements or for elements whose origin may not be in the contemporary scene but rather in a previous era. It is this content of the Baptist's message which has often been dealt with piecemeal in journal articles and in commentaries. For that reason it seemed advisable to consider the work and message of the Baptist from the point of view of discovering its Old Testament roots and drawing together the relevant material which had been written regarding it. It is the purpose of this thesis to consider the life and message of this one who has been called "the clasp between the Testaments," and so attempt to rediscover the relevance of his message for the world of today.

The evangelists. It is proposed that the gospels have completely falsified the facts or at least altered them in order to harmonize them with Christian tradition. But the attempt, it is argued, has not been entirely successful, and the four accounts betray the true situation by their contradictions.

Among the men who have adopted this view are Eisler¹ and Goguel.² Eisler, for example, arrives at conclusions which are, in almost every case, in direct opposition to the traditionally accepted view of this relationship. Basing his opinion on the Slavonic version of Josephus, which he believes to be a true version of the historian's original work, he concluded that the entire writings of Josephus had been interpolated by Christians and that John was always conceived of in terms of the Messiah, that his work was independent of that of Jesus of Nazareth.

¹Hubert Eisler, The Messianic Jesus and John the Baptist (London: Methuen and Co., Ltd., 1937).

²Emile Goguel, Jesus and the Origins of Christianity, translated by Olive Thomas (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1960), vol. II.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A discussion of the message and activity of John the Baptist frequently takes as its starting point the relation between John and Jesus of Nazareth as depicted by the four evangelists. When this is done, three views usually emerge, all more or less contradictory. The first view of this relationship which is often suggested is that there was no relationship, or at least that it was not such as is suggested by the evangelists. It is proposed that the gospels have completely falsified the facts or at least altered them in order to harmonize them with Christian tradition. But the attempt, it is argued, has not been entirely successful, and the four accounts betray the true situation by their contradictions.

Among the men who have adopted this view are Eisler¹ and Goguel.² Eisler, for example, arrives at conclusions which are, in almost every case, in direct opposition to the traditionally accepted view of this relationship. Basing his opinion on the Slavonic version of Josephus, which he believes to be a true version of the historian's original work, he concluded that the common version of Josephus has been interpolated by Christians and that John was always conceived of in terms of the Messiah, that his work was independent of that of Jesus of Nazareth,

¹Robert Eisler, The Messiah Jesus and John the Baptist (London: Methuen and Co., Ltd., 1931).

²Maurice Goguel, Jesus and the Origins of Christianity, translated by Olive Wyon (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1960), Vol. II.

and that there was opposition between the movements founded by the two men. In the introduction to his book, he, however, weakens his case as he writes:

I am fully aware of the fact that every single bit of evidence presented in the following pages can be frittered away and made to crumble into dust by the simple application of widely practiced methods of criticism and exegesis. . . . Any student, who through sheer inability to synthesize the mass of historical evidence, prefers to carry the analysis to the length of hairsplitting, and who will go on forever weighing undecidedly all the possibilities that might come under consideration will be thoroughly antagonized by the present book without presumably deriving much profit from it. . . . I have been working and writing for those who are convinced, as I am myself, that no explanation of a single fact is satisfactory which cannot be made to fit into some plausible consecutive scheme enabling us to account for the totality of facts and phenomena--for those who feel that we cannot go on forever with our traditional histories of New Testament times, into which a life of Jesus cannot be made to fit, and with lives and characteristics of Jesus which cannot be made to fit into contemporary history of Jews and Romans.³

It is impossible to deal here with all the individual points of Eisler's work, but an excellent summary and criticism of the work in toto is offered by Scobie.⁴

Although Goguel's argument has a different basis, he arrives at conclusions which are similar to those of Eisler. His opinion is summarized in the following words:

The way in which Matthew and Luke related the sending of the disciples of John to Jesus seems to imply that, in the mind of the narrators, John was not convinced. If the tradition had thought the opposite, the evangelists would not have failed to say that after having rendered the homage of a prophet to Jesus, John would have rendered it a second time,

³Eisler, p. ix.

⁴Charles H. Scobie, John the Baptist (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1964, pp. 86-89.

founded this time upon the work which had been accomplished. Thus John persisted in his point of view. After Jesus had left him John only saw in him an unfaithful disciple and almost a renegade.⁵

While some have not made the same radical judgments, they nevertheless concur in the opinion that the gospel accounts do not present an accurate picture of the true relationship. Scobie, for example, feels that the infancy account gives little factual detail since it is obvious that the Lukan infancy account of Christ was woven into the originally independent infancy account of the Baptist, which has been altered by Luke to fit into the scheme of his gospel.⁶ E. F. Scott believes on the basis of Josephus' eulogy of John that the Baptist was never in open conflict with the Pharisees, but that this circumstance from the life of Jesus was transferred to the account of John's life in order to show the harmony between these two men.⁷ He says:

We have no evidence that he ever contemplated a break with the orthodox religion, or that there was anything in his message to draw upon him that enmity of the Pharisees which was instinctively directed against Jesus from the first.⁸

Others have concluded that the Magnificat ascribed by the gospels to Mary is really a hymn of Elizabeth and that the Benedictus as the gospels record it is not the original hymn sung at the birth of John but has been changed so that it contains a reference to the coming

⁵Goguel, p. 279.

⁶Scobie, pp. 48-58.

⁷E. F. Scott, "John the Baptist and His Message," The Expositor, Series 7, VI (1909), 72.

⁸Ibid.

salvation from the House of David.⁹ The connection between Jesus and John is thus thought to be artificial and literary, not real and historical. All of this is considered evidence of the existence of two separate movements which were to some extent in opposition to each other.

In addition to the above factors, further evidence for the opposition between John and Jesus is frequently found in the so-called sect of the "disciples of the Baptist" of whom the Mandaeans are said to be descendants.¹⁰ But even apart from this debatable evidence it is maintained that the gospels, and in particular the Gospel of John, give evidence of antagonism between two distinct groups, the followers of Christ and the followers of John.

The usual starting point for discussion of the supposed antagonism is the reference in Acts 19 to a group of twelve disciples who were baptized with the baptism of John. From here, the next step is to an assumption that the Fourth Gospel was written as a polemic against these

⁹M. D. Goulder and M. L. Sanderson, "St. Luke's Genesis," Journal of Theological Studies, New Series, VIII, 12-30; Clayton R. Bowen, "John the Baptist in the New Testament," American Journal of Theology, XVI (1895), 95. Bowen also believes that the genealogy recorded by Luke may have originally been an independent genealogy of John the Baptist. See also Scobie, pp. 51-55.

¹⁰For a discussion of the Mandaean movement, see W. Brandt, "Mandaeans," Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, edited by James Hastings (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1928), VIII, 380-393 and C. Colpe, "Mandäer," Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart, edited by Kurt Galling, et al. (Tuebingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1960), IV, 710-711.

disciples. The evangelist John's emphasis on the superiority of Christ is pointed out and it is supposed that the emphasis on the pre-existence of Christ was made in order to combat the idea that since the Baptist preceded Christ in time he was therefore superior.¹¹ Proceeding from this point, the same antagonism is supposedly found in the other gospels also.¹² In recent years, however, the attitude toward the Fourth Gospel has changed to some extent and the defenders of the Johannine account have become more numerous. J. A. T. Robinson says:

This treatment has almost universally been assumed to spring from purely theological motives of a polemical nature and thus to provide evidence for a very minimum of historical foundation--about as much as I would be prepared to allow to the Baptist group claiming John as the Messiah against which the whole construction is supposed to be directed. On the contrary, I believe the fourth Evangelist is remarkably well informed on the Baptist because he, or at least the witness behind the part of his tradition, once belonged to John's movement and like the nameless disciple of 1:37, 'heard him say this and followed Jesus.'¹³

¹¹Carl Kraeling, John the Baptist (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1951), p. 197.

¹²James L. Jones, "References to John the Baptist in the Gospel according to St. Matthew," Anglican Theological Review, XLI (1958), 298-302. Jones believes that Matthew can be divided into five sections, 1-7, 8-11:1, 11:2-13:53, 13:54-19:1, and 19:2-26:1, and that each of these sections is a polemic against the Baptist sect. His view is that these sections contain a common theme, the relationship of John and Christ, which is related to the theme of the individual section in such a way as to indicate that the disciples of John are a specific concern of the author. See also A. S. Geysler, "The Youth of John the Baptist--A Deduction From the Break in the Parallel Account of the Lucan Infancy Narrative," Novum Testamentum, I (1956), 71-74.

¹³J. A. T. Robinson, "The New Look at the Fourth Gospel," Twelve New Testament Studies (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1962), p. 100.

In another place he says:

I confess, moreover, to seeing less and less evidence of a polemical motive in the Gospel whether against Baptist, Jewish, or Gnostic groups¹⁴

While this by no means exhausts the arguments which have been marshalled against the truth of the relationship between Jesus and John as depicted by the gospels, nor those which have been offered in their defense, it clearly indicates that this has been a matter of sharp debate. While the debate has not resulted in a settling of the issues, it has led to a deeper study and a search for related material which would unquestionably establish the viewpoint of one or the other.

In the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls it was initially felt that such material had been found. Prior to this discovery, J. Thomas had attempted to sketch the background of John the Baptist in terms of a Baptist movement which was present at this period, with John as a

¹⁴J. A. T. Robinson, "The Destination and Purpose of St. John's Gospel," New Testament Studies, VI (1959-1960), 130. See also his "Elijah, Jesus, and John the Baptist--An Essay in Detection," New Testament Studies, IV (1957-1958), 278-279; Raymond E. Brown, "Three Quotations from John the Baptist in the Gospel of John," Catholic Biblical Quarterly, XXII (1960), 293; Wm. H. Brownlee, "John the Baptist in the New Light of Ancient Scrolls," Interpretation, IX (January, 1955), 71-90. Brownlee believes that the Fourth Gospel was written with a polemical purpose in mind but then continues: "Wherever such a purpose exists, the critical theory is that one should discount its testimony as compared with other sources from which the polemical element is absent. This is sound criticism, to be sure, but it often fails to take into serious account not only the fragmentariness of our knowledge, but also the possibility that the party engaged in the polemics might be telling the truth. Not always is it necessary to misrepresent the truth in order to uphold one's cause in a debate, thank God!"

part of this movement.¹⁵ As his sources he used references in Josephus, Philo, Epiphanius and the Sibylline Oracles pertaining to the Essenes and other groups of a similar nature. The discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls seemed to substantiate his theory. Some scholars immediately seized upon these discoveries, popularized them, and found in them not only the origin of a John-the-Baptist movement, but also the cradle of Christianity. Tracing the apparent parallels between this literature and that of Christianity, Jean Steinmann found little, if any, difference between them.¹⁶ Brownlee, another student of the Dead Sea Scrolls, found the same close parallels.¹⁷

As time passed, however, a second assessment was made and those who were more cautious did indeed find parallels, but they also found radical differences.¹⁸ They found that what had originally appeared to be a parallel was often capable of an interpretation which destroyed the parallelism. In addition, the fragmentary nature of the texts made a completely valid assessment impossible and required that statements based on them be made with extreme care and due qualification.

¹⁵J. Thomas, Le Mouvement Baptiste en Palestine et Syrie (150 Av. J.C.--300 Ap. J.C.) (Gembloux 1935).

¹⁶Jean Steinmann, St. John the Baptist and the Desert Tradition, translated by Michael Boyes (New York: Harper and Brothers, n.d.).

¹⁷Brownlee, pp. 71-90.

¹⁸Ethelbert Stauffer, Jesus and the Wilderness Community at Qumran, translated by Hans Spalteholz (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1964), pp. 12-34.

This is by no means to be interpreted to mean that the Scrolls are without value, for what had previously been proposed in theory is now frequently capable of verification on the basis of these documents. They are extremely valuable in giving a more accurate picture of Judaism at the time of John; they make it apparent that Judaism was not a monolithic system but was inclusive of various sects whose independent teachings may have influenced the popular thought. The probability of a connection between John and Qumran or a similar group is worthy of consideration, although its certainty will perhaps never be established. Furthermore, the writings of the Dead Sea community make it clear that many of the concepts contained in the gospels, particularly the fourth, are not from a later period as had sometimes been thought, but were in existence at the time of John and Jesus.¹⁹ Nevertheless, as F. Bruce has said:

For all its resemblances to the Qumran movement, Christianity owes its essential character to something quite distinctive--the life and teaching of its founder. No doubt the Qumran sectaries owed much to the shadowy figure of the Righteous Teacher who so stamped his individuality on the movement. But it is insufficient to say with Renan--and more recently with Dupont-Sommer--that 'Christianity is an Essenism which has largely succeeded'. Why did it survive when Essenism and Qumranism disappeared? Partly because it contained all that was of value in Qumran--and much besides. But pre-eminently it owes not only its survival but its very being and character to the person and mission of Jesus--not only in his interpretation of O.T. prophecy, but in the way in which his interpretation comes true in his own life and achievements.²⁰

¹⁹Roland E. Murphy, "The Dead Sea Scrolls and New Testament Comparisons," Catholic Biblical Quarterly, XVII (July, 1956), 265-268. In this article Murphy points out that many of the similarities between the New Testament and Qumran are due to a common source, the Old Testament and Apocryphal literature.

²⁰F. F. Bruce, "Qumran and Early Christianity," New Testament Studies, II (1955-1956), 190.

What is said of Christianity is in a similar way true also of the work of John the Baptist, for after acknowledging the possibility of John's relation to Qumran Bruce also says:

But even if John did owe some debt to the Qumran community, it was a new impulse which sent him forth 'to make ready for the Lord a people prepared' (Luke i.17). . . when 'the word of God came to John the son of Zechariah in the wilderness' (Luke iii.2), as it had come to many a prophet before, he learned and proclaimed the necessity for something more than the teaching or action of Qumran.²¹

While, therefore, the discovery of the Scrolls can be and has been used by some to deny the uniqueness of John and his message, it also can be and has been properly used by scholars to clarify the divine origin, character, and content of his message in relation to contemporary movements.

For this group of scholars, the gospels are for the most part considered as documents which give an accurate account of the mission and activity of John and his relation to Christ. In taking this view, interpreters of this school recognize what are frequently apparent contradictions in the accounts of the gospels. However, they feel that most of these apparently contradictory elements can be harmonized if one considers the purpose of each gospel and then recognizes the reason for the choice of certain elements and the omission of others. It is this selectivity on the part of the evangelists which frequently accounts for the apparent contradictions. In addition, it must be remembered that the information which we have is very limited and if we had the full knowledge of all factors, what appears to us as con-

²¹Ibid., p. 189.

tradition might not in fact be so. Apparently these contradictions were no problem for the writers of the gospels.²²

But no matter which view is taken, it becomes apparent that the link between John the Baptist and Jesus is incapable of explanation in terms of a natural development alone. The ultimate link between the two is the divine initiative in their missions and in the writings of the Old Testament, particularly Old Testament prophecy. A reading of the account of the activity of both cannot help but leave the reader with this overwhelming impression. Their words and actions are a renewal and continuation of the activity of these former leaders of Israel, yet not only a continuation, but a significant advance beyond their position.

The prophetic note is already struck in the words announcing the divine impulse which sent John on his mission. Luke says ἔγένετο ῥῆμα θεοῦ ἐπὶ Ἰωάννην. In contrast to the general ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ, ῥῆμα signifies a particular utterance and indicates divine inspiration.²³ A close Old Testament parallel is that in which the call of Jeremiah is announced, τὸ ῥῆμα τοῦ θεοῦ ὃ ἐγένετο ἐπὶ Ἰηρειαίᾳ (Jer. 1:1). As the call had come to the prophets of old, so it now came to John.

²²J. O. F. Murray, "The Witness of the Baptist to Jesus," The Expository Times, XXXVII (1925), 103-109.

²³Alfred Plummer, "A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to St. Luke," The International Critical Commentary, (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1901), p. 85.

This was a startling event, for no prophet had been known in Israel for several hundred years. This is not to say that there had been no religious speech or literature in Israel for a long period; the pre-Christian apocalyptic literature bears ample witness to the fact that it was there. However, Israel had not seen an outburst of prophetic activity such as that inaugurated by John for several hundred years. Men of the Maccabean age recognized this, as I Maccabees 4:46; 14:41 and 9:27 clearly show. For a nation which had experienced prophetic activity almost continuously, at least from the time of Samuel on, this loss was keenly felt, for it seemed as though God had withdrawn from His people. It was the glory of John to revive this prophetic function at the command of God, and the breaking of the silence of God toward His people caused a thrill to run throughout the land of Israel. A new prophet had arisen, and all the country around Jordan went out to hear him.

The relationship of John to the prophets of old is already indicated in the infancy narrative concerning him. Not only was his birth a striking event by virtue of the angelic announcement and the advanced age of the parents, but even the words of the announcement are most striking. As the spirit of the Lord filled the prophets of old, so the Spirit would be a guiding, empowering, and sustaining force in the life of this child. According to Luke's report the angel said, "he shall be filled with the Holy Spirit even from his mother's womb and he shall turn many of the sons of Israel to the Lord their God, and he will go before him in the spirit and power of Elijah to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children . . . (2:15-17). This was to be a manifestation of the Spirit unparalleled in the life of the Jewish people since the time

prior to the days of the Maccabees. This spirit which was promised remained with the child so that he grew and became strong in spirit (2:80). The implication is that the spiritual growth of the future Baptist was not automatic but was the result of the action of the Spirit of God within him.²⁴ These thoughts also find expression in the thanksgiving Psalm of Zechariah who was filled with the Holy Spirit and led to speak his Benedictus (Luke 1:68-79) composed on the basis of Old Testament phraseology.²⁵

The words with which the coming of John is announced by the evangelists Matthew and Luke are also a reflection of the activity of the Old Testament prophets. In the Fourth Gospel (1:23), John, quoting from Isaiah 40, identifies himself as the voice of one crying in the wilderness. However, he was not the only one who had issued the call to repent and prepare the way for the Lord. This had been the theme of many of the prophetic oracles. All of these men were voices of God to the people. This chain of voices reached its climax in John who is identified as the Voice, the one in whom the whole prophetic call to preparation finds its summation.²⁶

²⁴Henry B. Swete, The Holy Spirit in the New Testament (London: Macmillan and Company, Limited, 1921), p. 16.

²⁵Ernst Lohmeyer, "Johannes der Täufer," Das Urchristentum (Goettingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1932), p. 23.

²⁶A. Von Rohr Sauer, "Problems of Messianic Interpretation," Concordia Theological Monthly, XXXV (October, 1964), 570.

In addition, the announcement of his birth specifically foretold his activity as one which would be carried out in the spirit and power of Elijah. Mark's announcement of John's opening activity indicates this also through a combination of the passage from Malachi 3 with that of Isaiah 40, Malachi's prophecy being an explicit reference to the coming of the messenger and of Elijah before the great and terrible day of the Lord. The interrogation by the religious leaders can leave no other impression than that they at least suspected that he was Elijah or at least one of the prophets of God (John 1:19-22). The people had no doubt about it. Herod was afraid to put John to death even after he had imprisoned him because he feared the people who considered him a prophet (Matt. 14:5). The scribes and Pharisees could not answer Jesus' question because they feared the consequences which would ensue if they denied John's prophetic position (Matt. 21:24-26 par). It was a firm conviction in the minds of the laymen that John was a prophet of God.

To the indication noted above, we might also add the physical appearance of John. He is described in a manner that recalls the figure of Elijah. His hairy garment and leather girdle could not but direct the thoughts of his contemporaries to the fiery prophet of the Old Testament. To be sure, there could be nothing more than the common dress of the desert dweller, yet the very fact that the description is included appears to be significant.²⁷ At any rate, the hairy garment was traditionally considered the mark of a prophet.²⁸

²⁷Kraeling, p. 14.

²⁸Zech. 13:4

The witness of Jesus corresponds to that of the people. The question regarding the origin of John's baptism addressed to the religious leaders was a witness to the fact that his baptism was of divine origin (Matt. 11:24 par.). Yet Christ pointed to John not only as a prophet, but as more than a prophet. The Old Testament prophets were only preparatory voices for an age which was centuries in the future. He was the eschatological prophet, the last one to appear before that final age. He was the one who prepared the way for the immediate appearance of the Lord, the Messenger to come before the Lord would suddenly appear in His Temple, the Elijah who was to come if only men were willing to accept him and recognize him as such. He was the prophet who, like Moses, stood on the summit of the mountain and saw the promised land lying immediately before him, yet was not permitted to enjoy the fullness of that land.²⁹ From that vantage point he could foretell not only what the Coming One would be like, but could even identify him. And the people responded to his message with the witness that though John did no sign, everything he said concerning the Christ was true.³⁰

There was good reason for the identification of John with the Old Testament prophetic tradition, and this identification was based not only on his appearance or on the events surrounding his birth, but also on his message. As the Old Testament prophets broke with ceremonial ritualism, so also did John. In his message the ceremonial element is once

²⁹Lohmeyer, p. 29.

³⁰John 10:40-41.

again subordinated to the prophetic accent.³¹ With his appearance in the wilderness and his use of the threshing floor and tree metaphor John placed himself squarely in the prophetic tradition.³² He was a prophet and his whole life and message were calculated to reinforce that identification.

It is the purpose of this study to investigate the message of John from the viewpoint of the prophetic position of John, using the message of the Old Testament prophets as a basis for understanding it. Since it appears to be an established and accepted fact that John stands in the prophetic tradition, it would seem that the basic understanding of his message must begin with an understanding of the prophetic utterances both in their forthtelling and foretelling functions. Consequently a consideration of Apocalyptic literature and the Qumran writings will be incidental to this investigation and will be included only as it reflects and reinforces the basic prophetic message.

An examination of the message of John indicates that there are at least five distinctive ideas which occur and which are found in the gospel accounts. While a different arrangement might be proposed and preferred by others through a combination or division of certain of the elements, the following five have been selected as a basis for this study: (1) The Kingdom of Heaven, (2) The concept of the Messiah, the Coming Mightier One, (3) The baptism of repentance for the remission of sins, (4) The baptism with Holy Spirit and with fire, and (5) The Lamb of God.

³¹Floyd Filson, The New Testament Against Its Environment (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1950), p. 85.

³²Kraeling, p. 44.

Although these concepts do not include the entire message of John, they appear to be the basic elements to which all the other recorded utterances are related. For example, the pre-existence of the Coming One who is mightier than John is involved in the second, fourth, and especially the fifth of the above categories. The threshing floor and tree motif is included in the fourth division. The question of the Baptist from prison is related especially to the second and fifth of the proposed areas of discussion. All these are, therefore, secondary to the basic concepts which have been chosen.

On the other hand, the categories have not been reduced for a number of reasons. The section dealing with the Messiah might conceivably have included a discussion of the Lamb of God, for the two concepts are without doubt related. However, since the one is a more general designation, while the other is specific, these concepts have been differentiated. Similarly, the Kingdom of Heaven might have been treated as a subdivision of the Coming One or vice versa. Yet since the Kingdom concept involves more than the personality of the King and the Coming One is considered as more than a King, the two should properly be considered as separate but related concepts. The Coming One could also have been included under the prophetic utterance concerning the baptism with Holy Spirit and with fire since this was to be a part of his function. However, it is only one of his functions, and for this reason it appears wiser to make the separation.

From this it is obvious that the message of John is a closely integrated message reported and compressed by the evangelists into a concise yet comprehensive form. Although the various elements are considered separately, they should be viewed as a single message, the

full import of which can best be determined by a consideration of its individual elements. When this has been done, the message with its purpose and personal application will become clear.

No better summary of the message of John could be composed than that reported by the evangelist Matthew alone: "Repent! For the Kingdom of Heaven is near you."¹ The succeeding statements of the Baptist reported by Matthew as well as the accounts of the other synoptists and the evangelist John are a clarification of this pregnant statement in which all the hanging threads of Israel's Messianic hopes are drawn together.² For with this statement one of the threads from which the Messianic fabric is woven is brought to the fore and impressed upon the multitudes who came to hear the new prophet's message. This thread which stands out in contrast to all others is that of the Messianic King.

With his striking statement John asserted that the reign of God was about to break in upon the sphere of history in a way hitherto unrealized. This was not to say that God had not been in control of history in the past, particularly in the history of Israel. It was rather to say that this rule was about to be more power and manifest in an extraordinary way. The new note in the teaching of John concerning the Kingdom is heard in the responses of the church.

¹ Matt. 3:2. This statement of John has been rejected by some as an anachronistic proclamation of the Gospel. Carl Bränding, *John the Baptist*, (The World of Charles Scribner's Sons, 1921), p. 67, for example, describes it as very doubtful. However, in view of the centrality of this concept in Jewish thought it is difficult to see why it should not be historical. See below for a discussion of the origin of the term.

² *John the Baptist*, translated by Walter Bauer; Verlag Friedrich Reinhardt, 1909, pp. 71-72.

CHAPTER II

THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS AT HAND

No better summary of the message of John could be composed than that reported by the evangelist Matthew alone: "Repent! For the Kingdom of heaven is upon you."¹ The succeeding statements of the Baptist reported by Matthew as well as the accounts of the other synoptists and the evangelist John are a clarification of this pregnant statement in which all the varying threads of Israel's Messianic hopes are drawn together.² Yet with this statement one of the threads from which the Messianic fabric is woven is brought to the fore and impressed upon the multitudes who came to hear the new prophet's message. This thread which stands out in contrast to all others is that of the Messianic King.

With his opening statement John asserted that the reign of God was about to break in upon the sphere of history in a way hitherto unrealized. This was not to say that God had not been in control of history in the past, particularly in the history of Israel. It was rather to say that this rule was now to be made known and manifested in an extraordinary way. The new note in the teaching of John concerning the Kingdom is heard in the nearness of its approach.

¹Matt. 3:2. This statement of John has been rejected by some as an authentic proclamation of the Baptist. Carl Kraeling, John the Baptist, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1951), p. 67, for example, describes it as very doubtful. However, in view of the centrality of this concept in Judaic thought it is difficult to see why it should not be historical. See below for a discussion of the origin of the term.

²Adolph Schlatter, Johannes der Täufer (Basel: Verlag Friedrich Reinhardt, 1956), pp. 91-92.

It is a new note, for while this announcement of the coming Kingdom was also a common element in the prophetic utterances of the past and was based upon these utterances and the ideas surrounding the concept of the Kingdom in Israel, its announcement by John revealed a sense of urgency which had not been present in previous proclamations. It is this eschatological element, as well as the prophetic tone of the utterances reminiscent of the words of previous prophets, which makes it so impressive and startling.

It is true that John has little to say specifically with regard to the Kingdom, but this is certainly understandable, for the gathering crowds were familiar with the concept. In view of this, if we are to understand the message of John, it is incumbent upon us to ask questions regarding their conceptions of the Kingdom. For the answer to this question we must turn to the Old Testament in which their thinking had its roots. Commenting on the understanding of this phrase in the New Testament period, K. L. Schmidt says,

Jesus of Nazareth was not the first to speak of the Kingdom of God. Nor was John the Baptist. The proclamation of neither is to the effect that there is such a kingdom and its nature is such and such. Both proclaim that it is near. This presupposes that it was already known to the first hearers, their Jewish contemporaries. This concrete link is decisive. It gives us a positive relationship of Jesus and the Baptist with apocalyptic and Rabbinic writings in which there are points of agreement and distinction to these two movements, which for their part, derive from Old Testament prophecy.³

What is the origin of the idea of God's Kingdom? How did He come to be worshipped as King? The monarchy was not an original institution

³K. L. Schmidt, "Βασιλεία," Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, edited by G. Kittel, translated by G. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1964), I, 584. Emphasis is mine.

within Israel. It was, in fact, an element borrowed from the surrounding cultures, incorporating numerous ideas common to them. As it developed in the surrounding nations, the monarchy became the embodiment of the people, with the king as their representative. Political and cultic elements were closely related in this institution, in which the king became the representative of the god and in fact was invested with the attributes of the god himself. He was the source of power and strength for the community, and its blessing depended upon him in life as well as after his death.⁴

When the monarchy was adopted as the form of government in Israel, many of the ideas associated with the king in surrounding cultures were not merely adopted, but were strongly modified. While the government and court language of the neighboring countries provided a ready-made institution and language for Israel to adopt, there were nevertheless, significant differences. These were due, first, to the fact that the religious element was supreme in Israel and that the monarchy was not a basic element in that religion. This religion had existed as a result of the covenant which God had made with Abraham, renewed with the succeeding patriarchs and ratified again at Mt. Sinai. Its basic elements were unchanged during the Exodus as well as the period of the Judges. The monarchy was therefore an institution which was brought into connection with an established religious heritage and subsumed under it.⁵

⁴Sigmund Mowinckel, He That Cometh, translated by G. M. Anderson (New York: Abingdon Press, 1954), p. 31. For a complete discussion of the concept of kingship in the nations surrounding Israel, cf. pp. 21-56.

⁵G. Von Rad, "Βασιλεύς," Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, p. 566.

The second cause for the differences was an outgrowth of this circumstance. In spite of the fact that cultic and political elements were also interwoven with the monarchy in Israel, Yahweh was still King, and the king was still a man and not God. In fact, Yahweh was King of kings and Lord of lords, not only of the kings of Israel, but of the kings of all the nations. It was He who set the king upon his throne, and while the possessor of the reign may be said to have received the Kingdom of God,⁶ yet the king is never deified in Israel as was the case in the surrounding nations, particularly Babylonia and Egypt. God alone is the King of all nations and of all creation.⁷

The third variation, and one with which we are particularly concerned, is that of the Messianic King concept which arose in Israel. The origin of this idea cannot be completely established in a historical framework, and the suggestion has been made that the roots of the idea are to be found in Israel's unique view of God.⁸ At any rate, there is no eschatological expectation of a Deliverer King at the end of the age in Babylonian or Egyptian literature.

Mowinckel has suggested that the failure of the human king to live up to the expectations which were made of him at the beginning of his

⁶I Chron. 28:5; 29:23; II Chron. 9:8; 13:8. Cf. also the promise of God in I Chron. 17:14.

⁷Von Rad, p. 566.

⁸Ibid. If, however, Israel's unique view of God is considered as historically conditioned, that is, given in a revelation that is historical and has a history, then the origin of the Messianic idea can be established within such a historical framework. But even this view would tend to eliminate a prime datum of Israel's faith, the intervention of God in Israel's history.

reign or at the annual festival of enthronement was the starting point of Messianic belief. Because the ideal of kingship was never fully realized in the reign of any king, there was always the element of future involved in the idea of kingship. At certain points in the history of Israel this thought was crystallized into a present expectation and a specific promise of a definite person.⁹

But while this is true, the real starting point for the awakening of the hope of a Messianic King finds its clearest formulation in the promise of God to David. God's answer to David's request to build a house for Yahweh is that David shall not build a house for Him, but that rather He will build a house for David which will last forever.¹⁰ On the basis of this promise of God, the realization of the ideal kingship is projected into the future by the prophets. This becomes particularly true in the immediate pre-exilic and post-exilic periods when the prophets are led to look beyond the judged house of David. Amos speaks of rebuilding the ruined hut of David (9:11); Isaiah refers to the shoot from the stump of Jesse (11:1); Jeremiah tells of the righteous Branch which God will raise up for David (23:25; 33:15), the same Branch to which Zechariah may also be referring (3:8). But there is a continuity with David and God's promise to him. At times the Messianic King

⁹Mowinckel, p. 98. However, this does not seem to satisfy the question of origin entirely, for in the prophets there is a reflection of the existence of a Messianic idea prior to the establishment of the monarchy. In Gen. 49:8 as well as in Amos 9:11-15 and Isaiah 9 and 11 there are paradisaic motifs which indicate that the monarchy may not have been the starting point. In these sections the conditions of the Messianic era are described in terms of those present at the creation of the world with the one who introduces this aeon being the king who is the shoot out of the stump of Jesse. Since this is the case, it seems probable that the Messianic idea in some form existed in Israel throughout its history.

¹⁰II Sam. 7:8-17.

is actually referred to as David.¹¹

The idea of the Messianic King therefore plays an important part in the future hope of Israel, but it is not always said explicitly that the Kingdom is to be ruled by the Messiah. Perhaps it would be better to say that the rule of the Messiah and the reign of Yahweh Himself are not clearly distinguished.¹² Numerous examples can be cited from the prophets in which it is stated that Yahweh Himself will rule, and these references include both the timeless element of His reign as well as the element of expectation. It is the latter group of passages which contains the eschatological element and which apparently forms the link between the Messianic Kingdom and reign of God.¹³

Prophetic utterances deal not only with the person of the Messianic King, but are also replete with references to the nature of His reign, references which are in turn colored by Israel's conception of the function of the national king. As has been indicated, one of the ideas which was incorporated by Israel in its concept of the monarchy was that of the king as the protector of the people and the one concerned with the welfare of those whom he ruled. It requires no detailed searching of the history of Israel to determine that this is one of the functions of the national king.

On a higher and more perfect level this is also the function of the Messianic ruler as depicted by the prophets. Isaiah 9 and 11 clearly

¹¹Hos. 3:5; Jer. 30:9; Ezek. 34:23-24; 37:24.

¹²Von Rad, p. 568.

¹³For the timeless element cf. Ex. 15:18; I Sam. 12:12; Ps. 145:11ff.; 146:10. For the element of expectation cf. Is. 24:23; 33:22; Zech. 3:15; 14:16; Ob. 21.

point to the Davidic king as the one who will rule the nations and establish justice for his people, a description also applied to the righteous Branch of Jeremiah. With this description we have what came to be interpreted as a national form of expectation, a coming golden age for the Jewish people. Speaking of this common form Moore says:

The national, or as we might call it, the political expectation, is an inheritance from prophecy. Its principle features are the recovery of independence and power, an era of peace and prosperity, of fidelity to God and His law, of justice and fair-dealing and brotherly love among men, and of personal rectitude and piety. The external condition of all this is liberation from the rule of foreign oppressors; the internal condition is the religious and moral reformation or regeneration of the Jewish people itself. This golden age to come presents itself to the imagination as a renaissance of the golden age in the past, the good old times of the early monarchy, and in this the revival of the kingdom of a prince under the Davidic line.¹⁴

The song of Zechariah at the birth of John reflects these ideas.¹⁵ He blesses the God who has raised up salvation in the house of His servant David to save His people from the hand of their enemies and all those who hate them, in order that they might serve God.

The force which lies behind the king and his achievements in the history of Israel is God Himself, and the king is able to achieve his objectives because he is the bearer of the Spirit of God. This is evident in the life of Saul, Israel's first king. When he has been chosen by God, the Spirit of God comes upon him after his anointment; he prophesies and in the strength of the Spirit overcomes the enemies of Israel and brings peace to the land (I Sam. 10:10; 11:6). When he turns against God, the Spirit of God is withdrawn from him, an evil

¹⁴G. F. Moore, Judaism In the First Centuries of the Christian Era the Age of the Tannaim (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1927), II, 324.

¹⁵Luke 1:68-75.

spirit takes its place, the kingdom is removed from his power (I Sam. 16:14), and the Spirit of God falls upon his successor, David (I Sam. 16:13). The possession of the Spirit is closely associated with the anointing of the King, and "The Lord's Anointed" became a common designation for the ruler of Israel.

The future Messianic ruler is proclaimed as being endowed with the same Spirit of God. The Spirit of the Lord is to rest upon the shoot from the stump of Jesse so that he may judge wisely and destroy the wicked (Is. 11:1-4). It is this same Spirit which is upon the Suffering Servant (Is. 42:1-4) equipping him for his task, which includes that of "subduing" the nations.¹⁶

For all his power, the national king is a servant of God taken from among the people. As such he represents the people before God. The concerns, the honor and the shame of the king are those of the people. He is the embodiment of the entire community. His piety leads to piety on their part and his sins infect the whole nation and bring about its destruction. This is the theme of the recorded history of the kings of Israel.

It is important to notice that the coming Child of Isaiah 9 is also from among his people. He is born "unto us" and the people share in the justice which he establishes. The Coming One of Isaiah 53 stands among his people unrecognized, bears their sicknesses and their sins. Through him healing and forgiveness comes.

Thus, a whole complex of religious and political ideas was linked with the concept of the empirical king of Israel as well as with the

¹⁶The question of the identification of the Suffering Servant with the Messianic King will be dealt with in a later chapter.

Messianic King. Although they might not have been able to formulate it clearly, it is this Messianic concept which must have arisen in the minds of those listening to the proclamation of John.

With this pronouncement that the Kingdom of Heaven was at hand, John not only aroused Messianic hopes but also indicated that God Himself was about to break in upon history with His rule. This is involved in the term which he used to identify the coming event, "Kingdom of Heaven." The term Kingdom of Heaven is used only by Matthew, while the other synoptists prefer the term "Kingdom of God." This use of the term Heaven owes its origin to Jewish reverence which refused to allow the pious to speak the name of Yahweh. Thus the term $\pi\iota\tau\epsilon\sigma\tau\iota\ \delta\epsilon\iota\tau\alpha\iota$ became a substitute for "God dwells" or "God is present." Kuhn points out that it is closely related to the $\pi\alpha\tau\epsilon\rho\ \delta\epsilon\iota\tau\alpha\iota$ of the Old Testament, and as the term $\pi\iota\tau\epsilon\sigma\tau\iota\ \delta\epsilon\iota\tau\alpha\iota$ became a substitute for the phrase $\pi\alpha\tau\epsilon\rho\ \delta\epsilon\iota\tau\alpha\iota$ so later Judaism uses the term $\delta\epsilon\iota\tau\alpha\iota\ \sigma\tau\iota\ \delta\epsilon\iota\tau\alpha\iota$ for "God is King."¹⁷

Against this background it becomes clear that the Kingdom of heaven or of God is not a territory under God's rule, but rather refers to the kingship of God. John's expression therefore is a statement indicating

¹⁷G. Kuhn, "βασιλεύς," Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, p. 571.

that God is about to exert His rulership and make it manifest.¹⁸

In a later Jewish thought the phrase *מלכות שמים* occurs most frequently in two types of passages: (1) those which speak of accepting the yoke of the kingdom of God, or (2) those which refer to the manifestation of the kingdom of God. The first of these involves a personal decision by which a man acknowledges or rejects God's rule. The fact that the possibility exists of making the choice indicates that God's kingdom is not yet manifest. If it were, no one could deny that God is King. The second expression points to the end time when God's rule becomes apparent to all. The Kingdom of God in this latter sense was the object of Jewish petitions.¹⁹ Legalistic Judaism felt that this manifestation could be brought about through its own activity. This is reflected in sayings which declare that if all Israel would keep one Sabbath perfectly the Kingdom of God would immediately come. On the other hand it was also recognized by some that the manifestation of the Kingdom of God does not result from the activity of man or the working out of any historical process but rests entirely in the hands of God. It has its roots in the hope and expectation of the ideal Davidic King who will come at the end of the age at a time determined by God.

¹⁸Sverre Aalen, "'Reign' and 'House' in the Kingdom of God in the Gospels," *New Testament Studies*, VIII (1961-1962), 221ff., attempts to equate the Kingdom with a community or realm, particularly in the thought of Christ. This interpretation places the emphasis on the territory or group which God rules rather than on the ruling activity of God. While it is true that God's rule involves a territory or group of people, the origin of the term indicates that the ruling activity of God should receive the greater emphasis. For further support of the view of Aalen, cf. Ernst Lohmeyer, *Lord of the Temple*, translated by Stewart Todd (London: Oliver and Boyd, 1961).

¹⁹Kuhn, p. 574.

It becomes apparent then that in the thought of later Judaism the age of the Messiah and the coming of the Kingdom of God are not completely identical. The one frequently precedes the other, so that the $\xi\sigma\lambda\alpha\tau\epsilon\upsilon$ achieves its completion only in the $\Pi' \text{הַמְּלָכִים} \text{מִיּוֹמָה}$ where God is all in All. Kuhn summarizes:

Thus the two concepts are heterogeneous. To be sure they often appear together as the two things on which the hope of Israel, both national and religious, is set. But they are nowhere brought into an inner relationship. Nowhere do we have the thought that the Kingdom of the Messiah is the $\Pi' \text{הַמְּלָכִים} \text{מִיּוֹמָה}$, or that the Messiah by his operation will bring in the $\Pi' \text{הַמְּלָכִים} \text{מִיּוֹמָה}$ or vice versa. Such a link with the thought of the Messiah is quite impossible in terms of the strict concept of the $\Pi' \text{הַמְּלָכִים} \text{מִיּוֹמָה}$.²⁰

While this is true in later Jewish thought, it is quite probable that at the time of John's proclamation this distinction was not so sharp and the concepts were intermingled, as Kuhn himself indicates.²¹

Gathering together the thoughts of the concept, Kingdom of Heaven, in Judaism we find that John's proclamation indicates the expectation of the Lordship of God coming down into the world. It is a reign, not a realm, which comes into being as a purely divine intervention and is not brought into existence by human effort. There is nothing which can prevent this Kingdom from arriving. It is about to break in. There is nothing which can cause it to appear. It will come when God's time has arrived. He has set a definite date for the great deliverance which nothing can hasten and nothing can delay. And the time is at hand.

This appearance of God at the end of the age is the burden of the Old Testament prophetic message. God will manifest His salvation in a

²⁰Ibid.

²¹Ibid.

manner similar to the salutary events of Israel's past history, with this difference; those events were temporal and preparatory, this one will be final and permanent. Israel's existence depends upon it. For her this appearance of God is a matter of life or death.²² It is a time for destruction of the enemies of Israel and the salvation of God's people.

This message which is already found in the proclamation of the Old Testament prophets was fastened upon and extended by the writers of apocalyptic literature. A development took place in the conception of the one great eschatological event. The picture which is presented by the writers is one which is confused, marked by a dualistic conception, and incapable of reduction to a single pattern. The expectation which it proclaims, however, revolves around two central points: "God's decisive intervention in history and human experience, and the final state of the redeemed to which the intervention leads."²³ We find this trend of thought occurring already in Dan. 7:9-14 where the Ancient of Days is seated upon the throne pronouncing judgment and giving to the one like a son of man an everlasting dominion. The seventeenth Psalm of Solomon speaks of the Davidic Messiah in the same vein. Here we find the passage:

Behold, O Lord, and raise up unto them their king, the son of David, at the time in which Thou seest, O God, that he may reign over Israel Thy servant, And gird him with strength, that he may shatter the unrighteous rulers, and that he may purge Jerusalem from nations that trample (her) down to

²²Norman Perrin, The Kingdom of God in the Teaching of Jesus (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1963), p. 161.

²³Ibid., p. 167.

destruction. Wisely, righteously he shall thrust out sinners from (the) inheritance, He shall destroy the pride of the sinner as a potter's vessel, with a rod of iron he shall break in pieces all their substance, he shall destroy the godless nations with the work of his mouth. . .²⁴

Similar quotations could be adduced from Enoch, the Sibylline Oracles, Qumran literature and others.²⁵

While there is a difference in tone in these Apocalyptic writings, the cause of which can be traced back to the national situation, they are nevertheless reminiscent of the writings of the prophets. We find some of the same thoughts in Isa. 11:4. The Messiah will smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, destroying the wicked and ruling with righteousness. Evaluating the Psalms of Solomon Torrey concludes:

It is obvious that the poet is here dealing with long-familiar ideas and expressions. He and his readers held the same doctrine which is set forth in Enoch, the same in all particulars as that which was enounced [sic] by Second Isaiah more than three centuries earlier.²⁶

For John and his listeners the concept of the Kingdom of Heaven would include elements of apocalyptic as well as prophetic nature. It is worthwhile to note that John has nothing to say about how this Kingdom will come into being and how God will specifically manifest His reign. This may indicate that his view embraces a variety of influences, including both prophetic and apocalyptic elements. Nevertheless, it

²⁴Ps. Sol. XVII: 23-27. This passage as well as all other passages from the apocryphal literature is taken from R. H. Charles, The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1913).

²⁵For a complete listing see Perrin, pp. 166-167.

²⁶C. C. Torrey, The Apocryphal Literature (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1945), p. 108.

should also be noted that this lack of specificity is found in prophetic proclamation, whereas apocalyptic literature tends to be more specific. John's emphasis, like that of the prophets, is simply that God is about to break in upon history with His reign. In view of the question which he later asks from his prison cell, it appears quite obvious that his conception of the Kingdom of Heaven was somewhat different from that which he saw taking place in the activity of Christ. His conception is scarcely so clear that one can say:

Was meint Johannes mit dem 'Himmelreich'? Dieser Ausdruck findet sich oft im Neuen Testament, von unserm Heiland selbst gebraucht. Es wird mit diesem Gnadenreich Christi hier auf Erden bezeichnet, zumal das Gnadenreich, wie es im Neuen Bunde Gestalt annimmt. Es ist das Reich, in dem Christus als König regiert, das er selber baut, ja das er sich mit seinem Blut erkaufte hat. Dieses Reich besteht in ihm, gründet sich auf ihm, kommt mit ihm. Wo er ist, da ist sein Gnadenreich; wo er nicht ist, da ist auch sein Gnadenreich nicht; wo er kommt, da kommt sein Gnadenreich.²⁷

Nor can we say with finality that he had no thought of an earthly kingdom as was suggested by E. F. Brand when he wrote:

In Johannes Predigt können wir keinen Anhalt finden, dass er an solch ein Reich gedacht habe. Er hätte sonst wahrlich als Vorläufer andere Vorkehrungen für das Kommen eines Herrn gefordert. Hat er den, welchen er seinen Zuhörern verkündigte, als einen irdischen König erwartet oder sein Reich als ein irdisches angesehen, so hätte er wahrlich andere Vorbereitungen zu dessen Empfang gefordert. Nein, er denkt einzig und allein an ein Reich, das überirdisch ist wie dessen König, himmlisch wie sein Gott. Er denkt an das Reich, das Gott auf Erden, aber in den Herzen der Menschen aufrichten will, ein geistliches Reich, worin der Messias als geistlicher König ein geistliches Volk regiert.²⁸

²⁷C. J. Heuer, "Johannes der Täufer," Verhandlungen der Deutschen Evangelisch--Lutherischen Synode Missouri, Ohio und anderen Staaten Minnesota Distrikts, 1912, p. 31.

²⁸E. F. Brand, "Johannes der Täufer," Proceedings of the Fifty-Sixth Convention of the Eastern District of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio and Other States, 1931, p. 25.

Such a statement is hardly possible, not only in view of the question of John, but also in view of the apparent misunderstanding of the nature of the Kingdom by Jesus' disciples themselves even at the time of His ascension.²⁹ It is questionable, to say the least, to read back into John's statement the understanding of Christ, the Apostles, or the early Church. His understanding must be determined on the basis of his actual proclamation.

Yet it must be recognized that the proclamation itself contains no "earthly" elements. There is no suggestion for a campaign to bring about the shedding of the Roman yoke. The subjugation of the nations by Israel has no part in it. It is an exclusively religious proclamation concerning the establishment of the reign of God through $\pi\upsilon\lambda\alpha\sigma$ and $\pi\upsilon\lambda\alpha\sigma$. As the last of the Old Testament prophets, his position at the beginning of his work may be described as being similar to theirs, a position which is described in the New Testament as one of searching and inquiring "about this salvation; they inquired what person or time was indicated by the Spirit of Christ within them. . . ."³⁰

The note upon which John's message opens according to Matthew is also the opening note in the proclamation of Christ.³¹ But with the unfolding of His proclamation we are no longer left in doubt about the Kingdom or its nature of manifestation. In His reply to the Baptist it is made clear that the Kingdom of God has arrived with the appearance of

²⁹Acts 1:6.

³⁰I Peter 1:10-11.

³¹Matt. 4:17; Mk. 1:15.

Himself (Matt. 11:4-6 par.). Pointing to the prophetic message of Is. 61:1, Jesus tells John that his prediction and proclamation is true and is being fulfilled, although in a manner unforeseen by him. The miracles which Christ performs and the good news which is being preached is the evidence that the Kingdom of Heaven has arrived (Lk. 4:18-20). To the Pharisees Jesus can say, "If I by the finger of God cast out demons, then is the Kingdom of God come upon you."³² This is nothing less than saying that the Kingdom of God is present in His person. With His arrival, the reign of God has come.

Again we notice that, as with John, Christ's message is linked to the Old Testament. As John according to the Fourth Gospel (1:23) cites Isaiah at the opening of his ministry, so does Christ.³³ As the message of John reflects the prophetic utterances concerning the Kingdom, so Christ cites the prophets to show that with His arrival upon the scene of history God has broken into the world with His almighty power. On the basis of the prophets John proclaims the coming of the Kingdom; on the basis of the same prophets Christ announces its arrival. John exhorts those who hear him to prepare themselves to accept the Kingdom which is imminent; Christ's proclamation of the Kingdom is a demand to submit to the reign which has already come into being. Both John and Jesus proclaim ἡ ἄρχὴ ἔχει ἤδη ἄρξαι τῶν οὐρανῶν. But John could only speak of a future event; with the appearance of Jesus, God's reign was beginning to manifest itself. John proclaims the coming of the King and urges his listeners to be prepared for His Coming

³²Luke 11:20.

³³Luke 4:16-21.

so that they will not be condemned. With the appearance of Jesus, the King has arrived and the comment of the evangelist John on the appearance of Christ is simply, "He who believes in Him is not condemned; He who does not believe is condemned already (3:18). The call of Christ, "Repent! For the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand," is a final call and requires final decision. When He speaks, He brings the last word, the final possibility offered by God. The axe is no longer laid at the root of the trees. It is swinging downward with the final stroke, and a man's "yes" or "no" to the demand of Christ for submission to Himself determines his fate. The Kingdom of Heaven is here, although God's power to save and destroy still lies veiled under the form of the Servant. "Where man responds to the call of Christ in faith, i.e., obedience, he is in touch with the Kingdom of God which comes without his cooperation."³⁴

³⁴Schmidt, p. 587.

CHAPTER III

THE MIGHTIER ONE COMES

Although John's proclamation of the coming Kingdom is partially clarified in the few statements recorded by the evangelists, it is noteworthy that the statements include no further reference to a King. He is content to simply say: "The one who comes after me is mightier than I, and I am not fit to take off his shoes."¹ In an age permeated with the thoughts of a Messianic deliverance, a whole host of images was aroused with this designation, images which have their origin in prophetic utterances of the past. It is our purpose here to examine the complex of Messianic ideas which had arisen in Israel out of this background.

At the time of John, Israel was aroused to a fever of expectation by its national situation. The prophets had promised deliverance but it had not been forthcoming. The brief period of independence under

¹Matt. 3:11; Mk. 1:7; Lk. 3:16; Jn. 1:27; Acts 13:25. The slight differences in wording do not appear to be of any decisive significance. John also speaks of the Coming One in John 1:15.30 and adds the phrase $\delta\ \sigma\ \pi\ \rho\ \iota\ \sigma\ \omega\ \mu\ \omicron\upsilon\ \epsilon\ \rho\ \chi\ \omicron\ \mu\ \epsilon\ \nu\ \omicron\ \varsigma\ \epsilon\ \mu\ \pi\ \rho\ \omicron\ \tau\ \theta\ \epsilon\ \nu\ \mu\ \omicron\upsilon\ \chi\ \epsilon\ \rho\ \omicron\ \nu\ \epsilon\ \nu\ \delta\ \tau\ \iota\ \pi\ \rho\ \omega\ \tau\ \omicron\ \varsigma\ \mu\ \omicron\upsilon\ \eta\ \nu$ and $\delta\ \sigma\ \pi\ \rho\ \iota\ \sigma\ \omega\ \mu\ \omicron\upsilon\ \epsilon\ \rho\ \chi\ \epsilon\ \tau\ \alpha\ \iota\ \alpha\ \nu\ \eta\ \rho\ \omicron\ \varsigma\ \epsilon\ \mu\ \pi\ \rho\ \omicron\ \tau\ \theta\ \epsilon\ \nu\ \mu\ \omicron\upsilon\ \chi\ \epsilon\ \rho\ \omicron\ \nu\ \epsilon\ \nu\ \delta\ \tau\ \iota\ \pi\ \rho\ \omega\ \tau\ \omicron\ \varsigma\ \mu\ \omicron\upsilon\ \eta\ \nu$ in a reference to his pre-existence. In the words which depict the service of a slave for his master, that of untying or carrying his shoes, Schlatter, Kraeling, and Scobie not only see an expression of the inferiority of John to the Coming One but also a reference to his humanity. The last two also see the comparison between John and the Coming One as a clear indication that John was not expecting the Coming One to be God since no pious Jew would venture to compare himself to God. Adolf Schlatter, *Johannes der Täufer* (Basel: Verlag Friedrich Reinhardt AG., 1956), p. 103. Carl Kraeling, *John the Baptist* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1951), pp. 53-55; and Charles Scobie, *John the Baptist* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1964), pp. 66.

the Maccabees which had held out such great hopes had been dashed to pieces by the imposition of the Roman yoke and had only served to heighten this expectant atmosphere. The promise of the Lord still stood: "Behold I send my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come into his temple."² His coming would surely not be delayed much longer.

Various elements from the past history of the nation had combined with this passage from Malachi to supply answers to the questions which were asked concerning the place and manner of His coming. Most frequently the answer to the question regarding the place of His appearance was that it would occur in the desert. This is reflected in the words with which the appearance of John is announced.³ The wilderness theme occurs frequently in prophetic literature, for it was only natural that the appearance of the final deliverance would be associated with the great deliverance event of Israel's past. Looking back, man could see that Israel's most intimate relations with God had taken place during the Exodus. Here in the wilderness God had taken them and shaped them into a people. He had guided them, led them, fed them, protected them and delivered them from bondage. God and people had never been bound

²Mal. 3:1.

³Matt. 3:3; Mk. 1:2,3; Lk. 3:4-6. In Mark the passage from Is. 40:3 is combined with Mal. 3:1. In contrast to the synoptists, the evangelist John reports this announcement as a word of the Baptist himself. The difference is most likely due only to a variation in the manner of reporting the event.

as closely and uninterruptedly as they had been on that occasion.⁴

As the prophets adopt this theme in their proclamation of the coming Messianic age, the wilderness assumes an eschatological character and significance. After describing Israel's unfaithfulness under the figure of his unfaithful wife, Hosea uses the wilderness theme to speak of God's method of bringing Israel back to Himself: "Therefore, behold I will allure her; and bring her into the wilderness and speak tenderly to her and there I will give her vineyards. . . ." (2:16). It is God who will lead the returning remnant of Israel through the wilderness back to their native land, opening up rivers on the mountains and fountains in the midst of valleys, causing water to flow from the rocks as at the Exodus.⁵ He will make Israel walk back from captivity past brooks of water and in a straight path.⁶

It is apparent that this theme of the Messianic deliverance in the wilderness was a prevalent one in Israel. Recent discoveries at Qumran have shown that the sect which occupied this site withdrew to the region near the Dead Sea because, on the basis of Is. 40:3, they expected an appearance of the Messiah in the wilderness.⁷ The implication of Jesus' question, "What went ye out into the wilderness to see?"⁸

⁴Ernst Lohmeyer, "Johannes der Täufer," Das Urchristentum (Goettingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1932), I, 48. G. Kittel, "ἔσχατος," Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament, edited by G. Kittel (Stuttgart: Verlag von W. Kohlhammer, n.d.), II, 655-656.

⁵Is. 40:3; 41:18; 42:16; 43:19,20; 48:21.

⁶Jer. 31:9.

⁷Wm. H. Brownlee, "Messianic Motifs of Qumran and the New Testament," New Testament Studies, III (1956-1957), p. 197.

⁸Matt. 11:7; Lk. 7:24.

as well as His warning to avoid the desert if the appearance of the Messiah in the desert is announced, reflects the same prevalence of this expectation.⁹ The reference in Acts 21:38 to Theudas and the Egyptian who led a revolt in the desert as well as the notices of Josephus give evidence of the strength of this tradition.¹⁰

Another tradition, however, placed the appearance of the Messiah in Jerusalem in association with the temple. This too has its roots in the proclamation of the prophets. Mal. 3:1 was the basis for such a belief but it found added evidence in other places. In the latter days the mountain of the house of the Lord would be established and the Lord would reign over his people from Mt. Zion.¹¹ At this time according to Is. 66:6 the voice of the Lord would be heard from the temple, and Zech. 6:12 tells us that the Branch will build the temple of the Lord. In the later rabbinic writings it is said that when the Messiah reveals himself he will come and stand on the roof of the temple,¹² but the fact that this expectation is already present in Jesus' time may be inferred from the temptation story in which Jesus is urged to cast himself down from a pinnacle of the temple and thus satisfy a common expectation of his day.

⁹Matt. 24:26.

¹⁰Josephus, "Antiquities," Complete Works of Josephus (New York: Bigelow, Brown and Company, Inc., n.d.), XVIII, 4, 1; XX, 5, 1 and 8, 6.

¹¹Micah 4:1-4, 6-7.

¹²Herman L. Strack and Paul Billerbeck, Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrash (Muenchen: Beck'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1921), III, 9.

Not only the place of the Messiah's coming but also the manner of His appearance was a cause for speculation. The prophets speak only of the appearance of the Messiah without any clear description of the manner or time of His appearance. There are references in the literature of Judaism both to the "Days of the Messiah" and the "Day of the Messiah" and these are two separate concepts.¹³ The day of the Messiah is apparently the time when the Messiah is revealed, and it is the work of the Messiah which constitutes this revelation. Another tradition, apparently referred to first in Justin's Dialogue with Trypho in the middle of the second century A.D. indicates that the Messiah might be born and living somewhere, but would remain unknown until Elijah comes, anoints Him and reveals Him to all.¹⁴ Apparently this tradition of the "hiddenness" of the Messiah is not of late origin, for it is already reflected in the request of the brothers of Jesus to reveal Himself if He is the Messiah.¹⁵ The Servant Song of Is. 53 already describes the Messiah as one who grew up among His people unknown,

¹³Sigmund Mowinckel, He That Cometh (New York: Abingdon Press, n.d.), p. 304. The "Days of the Messiah" is a term involving a description of the conditions and events which are present during the Messianic reign. The "Day of the Messiah" is a term which refers to the actual appearing of the Messiah.

¹⁴Justin Martyr, "Dialogue with Trypho," The Ante-Nicene Fathers (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1926), I, 199. "But Christ--If He has indeed been born and exists anywhere--is unknown, and does not even know Himself, and has no power until Elias comes to anoint Him and make Him manifest to all."

¹⁵Mowinckel, p. 306.

despised, and rejected by them. Remembering the thought that the "Day of the Messiah" is revealed through the work of the Messiah, it is interesting to note that it is His works to which Jesus points in answer to the question of John concerning His identity as the Coming One. The source of the idea that the Messiah is already present, unknown and wandering about among people may be found in the longing for His day to appear,¹⁶ but it may also be that the thoughts of the Messiah's "hiddenness" are already present in the words of the prophets with their vague descriptions of his manner of manifestation.

When the Messiah does appear, his appearance will be sudden, un-awaited, unforeseen. This is the note sounded in Mal. 3:1. His appearance cannot be determined on the basis of any mathematical calculation, although later apocalyptic literature made the attempt. The general impression is that his appearance will be marked by a sudden miraculous manifestation.

Yet there are certain indications which point to the nearness of his arrival. Foremost among these is the phenomenon known as the "birth pangs" of the Messiah which will herald his coming, a circumstance which the Rabbis refer to as the "travail of the Messiah."¹⁷ This is a reference not to the suffering of the Messiah himself, but to the labor of the nation during which the Messiah is brought forth. The origin of the phrase is found in Micah 5:3: "Therefore He shall give them up until

¹⁶G. F. Moore, Judaism in the First Centuries of the Christian Era the Age of the Tannaim (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1927), II, 361.

¹⁷Joseph Klausner, The Messianic Idea in Israel, translated by W. F. Stinespring (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1955), p. 82.

the time when she who is in travail has brought forth . . ."; this is interpreted to refer to a period of oppression which will precede the arrival of the ruler coming forth from the house of David. It includes the element of judgment involved in the prophetic descriptions of the "Day of the Lord," a time of oppression by foreign nations. In this crisis of judgment, the wicked will be punished and the righteous delivered. The concept of the "birth pangs" of the Messiah is vividly portrayed in the Book of Enoch and in the Aggadah of Judaism, but Klausner says,

These Aggadic descriptions sprang from the imaginations of the people or of the 'popular prophets' (the apocalyptists) on the basis of Holy Writ; and the Book of Enoch is a receiving vessel for these popular imaginings.¹⁸

The "travail of the Messiah" is a judgment on the generation to which he comes and is a time for repentance.

But there is not only confusion on the issues of the place, manner, and time of arrival of the Coming One, but also on the identification of his person. In fact, the question arises as to whether the Messiah is a single individual, several individuals, or a term to be understood in a collective sense.

There is little evidence that at the time of John the Messiah would have been considered a collective term. The Messianic idea is distinct from, and ought to be differentiated from the person of the Messiah. The Messianic idea involves a chain of sin, punishment, repentance, and redemption and is found throughout the entire history of Israel. The Messiah is an entity in itself.¹⁹ It appears that it

¹⁸Ibid., p. 305.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 157.

is this confusion or identification of the Messianic idea with the person of the Messiah which has led to some of the interpretations which consider the Messiah to be a collective term.

The Servant passages in Isaiah lend themselves most readily to this type of interpretation and are frequently taken as a reference to the entire nation of Israel. Of these, Klausner, for example, says:

. . . 51:7. These "that know righteousness" are the servants of the LORD, the disciples of the prophets--the disciples of the prophet, who are like him because God's law is in their hearts. Therefore sometimes the prophet calls them by the collective name, "The servant of the LORD," and sometimes they are in his eyes the true Judah, "the servants of Jacob." Even when he describes himself as the prophet suffering for the iniquity of others and persecuted by others for doing good to them, he does not thereby intend to describe himself alone, but all who are faithful to God's covenant, "the people in whose heart is His law." If we take this into consideration, we shall understand clearly all those passages in Second Isaiah about which interpreters have had difficulty.²⁰

In spite of this, however, there is little evidence for the collective Messiah at the period which we are considering. The Messianic idea is not the same as the Messiah and it is the latter with which we are concerned here. This differentiation must be maintained if we are to formulate any definite ideas regarding the Judaic conception of the Messiah at the time of John. Even when this is done, the fact remains that the prophetic predictions do include passages which are capable of interpretation in the collective sense. Hellenistic Judaism favors the collective interpretation of the servant passages of Isaiah while Palestinian Judaism leans toward the understanding of the passages in

²⁰Ibid., pp. 161-162.

an individual sense.²¹ This possibility may have added to the confusion regarding the identity of the Coming One.

We may assume that the most common idea at the time of John was that of the Messiah as a definite individual. The concept of the king which has been discussed in the previous chapter makes this abundantly clear. He is to be a person, an individual from the line of David. He is the one who comes in history from among his people. Hosea speaks of him as "David their king" (3:5), Isaiah calls him the "child" upon whose shoulder the government rests (9:6), Micah designates him as the ruler (5:2), Jeremiah speaks of the Branch and David their king (23:5; 33:15), Ezekiel foresees one who will be "their prince forever," the good Shepherd of his people (34:23.24), and he is the lowly king of Zechariah (9:9). These and other passages could be adduced to show the individuality of the Coming One.

But the Messiah does not only appear in the form of a king. The question of the official delegation approaching John for an estimate of his own position enables us to deduce the fact that the Messianic ideas of Israel in the days of John were much richer and varied than this. They ask him "Are you Elijah? . . . Are you the prophet we await?" and although these are the only two questions recorded, John's answer implies that their first question was "Are you the Messiah?"²² To each of these questions John answers "no." In view of Christ's identification of John as Elijah, the answer seems strange. However, in this reply

²¹W. Zimmerli and J. Jeremias, The Servant of God (Naperville, Ill.: Alec R. Allenson, Inc., 1957), pp. 53, 77-78.

²²John 1:19-21.

we find hidden reference to the confused Messianic ideas of the day.

Elijah had come to play an important part in all Messianic speculations. He was the one who on the basis of Malachi was to be the messenger. The interpretation of the messenger had, however, developed in two different directions so that in some circles Elijah was identified as the forerunner of the Messiah, while in others he had come to be identified with the Messiah, the forerunner of God.²³ The gospels reflect the former tradition in identifying the role of John the Baptist, since this was the identification made by Christ Himself.

In both of these traditions Elijah had come to play an important part in the advent of the kingdom. Many legends had grown up around him so that he was to be responsible for the preparation of the people for a proper reception of the coming King. He was the one who was to settle all religious questions regarding ritual purity; he would correct any injustices, put genealogical lists in order, restore proper worship to the Temple, return all things to an original purity; he had even come to be associated with the resurrection of the dead. His task was to prepare the people for a proper reception of the Kingdom of God.²⁴

In view of the tasks popularly assigned to him, it is not surprising

²³Oscar Cullmann, The Christology of the New Testament (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1959), p. 24. S. L. Edgar, "New Testament and Rabbinic Messianic Interpretation," New Testament Studies, V (1958-1959), 48. T. W. Manson, The Sayings of Jesus (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1954), p. 69. J. A. T. Robinson, "Elijah, John and Jesus: An Essay in Detection," New Testament Studies, IV (1957-1958), 263-281. Strack-Billerbeck, IV, 781-798.

²⁴Moore, pp. 358-360, 384.

that he came to be identified with the Messiah himself. Since this thought was current in Judaism, John's denial of the identification of himself with Elijah is understandable. He wanted no misconceptions. He was not the Messiah, and if Elijah was to be identified with the Messiah, then he would not accept the Elijah designation.²⁵

But Malachi was not the only point of origin for beliefs concerning the identity of the Messiah. The nation searched its sacred writings to learn what God had really promised for His people. As it did so it found reference not only to the King and to Elijah, but also to a prophet.²⁶ The question "Are you the prophet?" is a reflection of the idea that the Coming One was to be not only a king, or Elijah, or one of the prophets, but the prophet. This idea in Judaism no doubt

²⁵Raymond E. Brown, "Three Quotations from John the Baptist in the Gospel of John," Catholic Biblical Quarterly, XXII (1960), 297. Brown believes that if John thought of anyone as Elijah, at least at the beginning of his ministry, it was the Coming One whom he cast in that role. On the other hand, when Jesus appeared and it became evident that he was the Messiah, the role of John could be clarified. Jesus was the one who identified John as Elijah, because He knew and taught that with His own appearance and work, the Kingdom of God had come into being. The Kingdom of the Messiah was the Kingdom of God. Elijah was to precede the Kingdom of God. Therefore John is the Elijah of Malachi's prophecy. The uncertain opinions regarding the coming of the Kingdom were thus clarified. But this does not mean that prior to the manifestation of the Messiahship of Christ and the identification by Jesus, John the Baptist thought of himself in the role of Elijah. In view of the complete lack of evidence, however, this opinion of Brown must remain within the realm of speculation. The proclamation of John nowhere refers either to the Elijah of Malachi or the Elijah of popular expectation.

²⁶J. W. Bailey, "John the Baptist: The Man and His Message," Biblical World, XXVI (1919), 419.

originates with the words of Moses in Deut. 18:15-18:

The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your brethern--him shall you heed--just as you desired the Lord your God at Horeb And the Lord said to me I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brethern; and I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him.

As originally spoken these words may have involved the authorization of the prophetic office in general, including a reference to Joshua, Moses' successor, but the use of the singular implies more than this.²⁷ The question posed to John with its use of the definite article bears witness to the fact that Judaism understood the passage in the sense of a single, definite prophet.

But, as in the case of the Elijah tradition, we are confronted with two divergent lines of thought. The first of these is that the Messiah himself is the prophet. The statement of the people in the Fourth Gospel after the feeding of the five thousand may be a reflection of this view.²⁸ This tradition which was common in Judaism is stated more clearly in the words of the woman at the well of Samaria. Replying to Jesus she said, "I know that Messiah is coming. When he comes he will tell us everything."²⁹ This statement was made after she had already

²⁷E. J. Young, My Servants the Prophets (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1955), pp. 30-31. G. Von Rad, Theologie des Alten Testaments (Muenchen: Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1960), II, 274.

²⁸John 6:14.

²⁹John 4:19.25. The willingness of the village citizens to investigate indicates that this was not a peculiar view of the Samaritan woman but was rather a widespread belief. Among the Samaritans there was a common view regarding Tãeb, the restorer, who would bring about repentance. This has been identified by some as the Messiah Ben Joseph. Cf. Klausner, p. 484.

indicated her recognition of Christ as a prophet.

The second tradition regarding the prophet is that he is indeed the prophet par excellence but not to be identified with the Messiah. The question addressed to John distinguishes between the two, and in John 7:40.41 we discover the same distinction being made. Speculating on the identity of Jesus, some say he is the prophet, while others say he is not the prophet, but he is the Christ. Since the definite article is also used here, the context at this point clearly indicates that a differentiation was made between the Messiah and the prophet by some of the people. For our purposes, the first tradition is most important because it indicates that the Messiah would not only be a King but also a prophet. Some combination of the Deuteronomy passage with the passage from Malachi most likely led to the identification of Elijah redivivus with the Messiah. If the Messiah is to be the great prophet, and if Elijah is to come before the Lord, the prophet who is to be the Messiah must be Elijah.³⁰

Summarizing these traditions and their development, Cullmann says:

Originally the eschatological Prophet is not merely a forerunner of the Messiah; faith in the returning prophet is sufficient in itself, and to a certain extent runs parallel to faith in the Messiah. The Messiah actually requires no forerunner, since he himself also fulfills the role of the Prophet of the end time. Thus it can happen that Prophet

³⁰Aage Bentzen, King and Messiah (London: Lutterworth Press, 1955), pp. 65ff. In addition to the Elijah redivivus tradition there was also a tradition referring to the reincarnation of Moses. Enoch 90:31 contains a reference to the return of Enoch with Elijah, but there is no definition of his function.

and Messiah are united in the same person. . . . The eschatological Prophet of Jewish expectation originally prepares the way for Yahweh himself, since he appears at the end of days. Later the connection of the idea of the returning Prophet with that of the Messiah not only developed so that this Prophet is at the same time the Messiah, but also so that the returning Elijah is only the forerunner of the Messiah. .
 . .³¹

Also included among the ideas which form the shimmering picture of the Coming One is that of the priestly Messiah. Lohmeyer, in particular, has developed this thought, which finds some of its basis in the prophecy of Malachi.³² If the Lord is suddenly to come into his temple to restore all things, then he must be the "Lord of the Temple," the one who will correct all the abuses which are found there. The prophecy of Malachi regarding his coming appears in a context in which these abuses are enumerated. The prophecy of Ezekiel 40-48 concerning the future Messianic age centers in the temple. Here the dominant figure is the Prince whose duty it is to enter the temple first (46:2), to present the offerings (45:17.22; 46:2-13) and to collect contributions from the people (46:13-17).

The priestly background of John may account for some of the vocabulary in his proclamation, but it is possible that John himself viewed the Coming One as being endowed with priestly characteristics. It is a striking fact that much of his proclamation contains these overtones. Repentance, remission of sins, and in particular, the expression "Lamb of God" have a relation to the temple ritual. The offerings for

³¹Cullmann, p. 23.

³²Ernst Lohmeyer, Lord of the Temple, translated by Stewart Todd (London: Oliver and Boyd, 1961).

forgiveness brought by the people were presented to the Lord by the priest; the daily offering of the lambs in the morning and evening sacrifice was a priestly function; it was the activity of the priest according to the command of God which brought repentance and remission of sins to the people.

Supporting evidence for the existence of the priestly Messianic concept can be found in the Zadokite Fragments which foretell that the Messiah will arise from Aaron and Israel (2:10; 8:10; 9:10.29 [B text]; 15:4; 18:7.8), an idea which can also be obtained from Eccl[esiastic]us 45:24.25 as well as from the Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs.³³ The discoveries at Qumran also give evidence of this idea.³⁴ We may conclude from all this that the idea of an ideal priest was one of the elements involved in the Messianic conceptions of Israel. This was a natural product of the religious life of the nation. Malachi and Ezekiel have been mentioned as specific points of origin for this idea, but it may also be supposed that since not only the monarchy, but also the priesthood played an important part in the life of the nation, the failures of the contemporary priesthood raised Messianic hopes in

³³Reuben 6:6-12; Levi 8:11-15; Dan. 5:4.10.13; Simeon 7:2.

³⁴Manual of Discipline 9:11; Damascus Covenant 12:23; 14:19; 19:10; 20:1. There is, however, disagreement over the identification of the Teacher of Righteousness with the Messiah as well as over the equation of the Messiah of Aaron and Israel with a single individual. For a discussion, see James C. Greig, "The Teacher of Righteousness and the Qumran Community," New Testament Studies, II (1955-1956), 119-126; Morton Smith, "'God's Begetting the Messiah' in 1 Qsa," New Testament Studies, V (1958-1959), 218-224; Karl Kuhn, "Die Beiden Messias Aarons und Israels," New Testament Studies, I (1954-1955) 168-179.

priestly terms just as the failures of the monarchy heightened royal Messianic expectations.³⁵

A further Messianic designation and one which is prominent in the Gospels is the title "Son of Man." While the origin of the title has been much disputed and is difficult to trace, it is quite apparent that its first appearance in Judaism is in the prophecy of Dan. 7:13 where an eternal dominion is given to this figure. As the context indicates, the Son of Man is to be identified with the Saints of the Most High. It is this which has caused some to interpret the phrase in a collective sense, in terms of the nation of Israel.³⁶ However, an examination of the pseudepigraphical literature clearly indicates that the term was used in an individual, personal sense prior to the New Testament.³⁷

While the thought of an "Urmensch" can also be found in religions outside Israel, it is certainly not necessary to revert to these sources to account for its inclusion in the Messianic ideas of John and Jesus.³⁸

³⁵Cullmann, p. 86, agrees with this and says, "Because of his office, the High Priest is the proper mediator between God and His people, and as such assumes from the very beginning a position of divine eminence. Judaism had in the High Priest a man who could satisfy already in the present the need of the people for divine mediation in a cultic framework. But the weaker became the correspondence between the reality of the empirical priesthood and their high expectations, the stronger became the Jews' hope for the end when all things would be fulfilled. This hope included also the concept of priest, so that the figure of the perfect High Priest of the end time moved ever nearer that of the Messiah." This appears more likely than Mowinckel's derivation of the origin of the priestly Messianic idea from the priestly functions of the King of Israel. Cf. Mowinckel, passim.

³⁶Klausner, pp. 229-230.

³⁷Enoch 48:2; 46:2-4; Ezra 13:1-13; 25:53.

³⁸The tracing of all the elements involved in the concept is not our purpose here. We are concerned only to note that the Messianic idea of the "Son of Man" was present. For a discussion cf. R. Otto, The Kingdom of God and the Son of Man (London: Lutterworth Press, 1938).

The idea of the original perfect man is clearly stated in Genesis and possibly the failure of man to live up to God's expectations led to the idea of a perfect man who would return at the end of days. The Messianic ideas which involved a return to Paradisial bliss would quite naturally also include the return of the first man at the end of the age to redeem all mankind. Supporting the prophetic origin of the term Moore says,

It is not likely that the discovery of the Messiah in Daniel's "Son of Man" was original with the followers of Jesus or with himself. Nor is it necessary to suppose, as is commonly done, that they got the idea from apocalyptic circles such as those from which we have the Parables of Enoch, any more than it is necessary to assume such a source for the interpretation to which Joshua ben Levi is a witness, or the midrash which finds in 'Anani' (cloud-man) a name of the King Messiah. . . .³⁹

In addition to the concepts already cited, another idea current in the time of John and Jesus has done more to influence the thought of the entire New Testament than any of the others. This was the concept of the Servant, the source of which is, of course, the Servant Songs of Isaiah. There are many questions which revolve around the interpretation of these passages, but at this point we are not concerned with a discussion of them. They need examination and will be treated under the chapter dealing with John's designation of Jesus as the Lamb of God. For the present we are concerned only with indicating that they share in the shaping of the Messianic concepts of Judaism at the time of John.

A further strange belief which appears to have been present in some sections of Judaism was that of the Messiah Ben Joseph. The sources

³⁹Moore, p. 336.

which speak of this belief are late in origin, coming from the Tannaitic period and do not necessarily reflect a belief current in the days of John and Jesus. Their origin may have been Obadiah 18 where the house of Joseph is described as a flame. Klausner believes that the thought of a political and a spiritual Messiah led to the creation of the two Messiahs of David and Joseph, and that later Judaism found the latter in the prophecy of Zech. 12 concerning the one who was pierced and in Ezekiel concerning the one who fights Gog and Magog. This division took place also because of the fact that a Messiah who is killed is entirely out of place in Judaic Messianic thought.⁴⁰

Without doubt Judaism conceived of the Messiah as a human being although obviously an outstanding one. However, in view of the witness of John as recorded in the Fourth Gospel, we cannot limit our investigation to the question of his tremendous human or super-human qualities; we must also include a consideration of his pre-existence.⁴¹ It has been said that the reference to the pre-existence of the Coming One betrays the theological emphasis of the evangelist, who has placed these words in the mouth of the Baptist in the interest of his own theology.⁴² They are not to be considered as a part of the authentic proclamation of John. Although all the evangelists speak of the vast superiority of the Coming One to his precursor, the granting of superiority is not yet a confession of pre-existence.

⁴⁰Klausner, p. 11.

⁴¹Jn. 1:15.30

⁴²Kraeling, p. 34.

Is there any evidence for the existence within Judaism of the concept of Messianic pre-existence? Judaism includes the name of the Messiah among the seven things which existed before the creation of the world, but it nowhere expressly acknowledges the pre-existence of the Messiah.⁴³ Yet there are some Messianic ideas which could very well give this impression. The thought could be extracted from the Moses redivivus and Elijah redivivus concepts. Micah in describing the ruler to come speaks of him as being from $\square \} i y$ (5:2) and Isaiah includes among the names ascribed to the child that of $\overline{7} \overline{y} \overline{'} \overline{7} \overline{x}$ (9:6). From this it is clear that the possibility of the thought of pre-existence cannot be excluded pre-emptorily from the Messianic concepts.⁴⁴ Nor can the possibility of deity since the Is. 9 passage also calls the child $\overline{7} \overline{7} \overline{x} \} \overline{x}$.⁴⁵ John could very well have thought of the Messiah as pre-existent--if not in the sense of existence from eternity, at least in the sense of pre-existence in time--even in the early period of his ministry, and the

⁴³Klausner, p. 460. The seven items are the Torah, repentance, Garden of Eden, Gehenna, the Throne of Glory, the Temple, and the name of the Messiah. Klausner interprets "The name of the Messiah" in the sense of the idea of the Messiah by which he means the chain of sin, punishment, repentance, and redemption. By his own statement, however, he weakens his case when he says, "To conclude from this passage that the Messiah's name preceded the creation of the world (pre-existence) would be senseless. What need would there be for the Messiah's name if the Messiah himself did not yet exist?" This argument is not convincing since the "name of the Messiah" would most naturally be interpreted as referring to a definite individual.

⁴⁴It must be granted that the $\square \} i y$ of Mic. 5:2 need not necessarily mean eternity, but may mean "antiquity."

⁴⁵The question of John's identification of Jesus as the Son of God will be considered in association with the title "Lamb of God."

idea of his deity may also have been present or have become clear as the result of the later revelation at the baptism of Jesus.

What was the picture of the Messiah at the time of John? The answer to the question would depend on the person of whom it was asked, for the idea of the Messiah was apparently a mosaic composed of the various indications offered by the prophets and apocalyptists. King, Prophet, Elijah, Priest, Son of Man, Servant of Yahweh, Messiah Ben Joseph--all are facets of the complex image which was evoked in the minds of those who heard John. The milieu of Jesus and the apostles had a popular character comprising a number of factors. As Mowinckel observes:

the ideas in question were connected with each other, and were "in the air" in the milieu as a result of the influence of living traditions. They belonged to the realm of its inherited religious ideas, and existed there in varying forms and in no ordered system as religious ideas usually do exist in the mind of the public. The ordinary man neither knows nor inquires whence he derived them. In the time of Jesus the theologians and those who had theological interests would try (as theologians always do) to find them in the scriptures; and if the question were put to them they would answer that that was their source.⁴⁶

In a religious atmosphere such as that which permeated Israel, however, it may be that not only theologians, but the common people sought the source of their religious ideas in scripture. Furthermore, it is important to note that few of the apocalyptic ideas are reflected in the words of Christ and his apostles. This is most likely due to the fact that these elements had little effect on the people addressed

⁴⁶Mowinckel, pp. 417-418.

by them. While they may have imposed some influence on the popular Jewish mind, this influence should not be overstressed. We would agree with Manson who, speaking of the Messianic idea of Christianity, says,

It must nevertheless be insisted that all Messianic ideas, from whatever source derived, underwent a total change in being appropriated to Jesus the Crucified, so that for our understanding of Christianity we start from the Crucified, and not from these ideas. Moreover, the real background of the mind of Jesus, to judge from the tradition, was not Jewish apocalyptic or ethnic gnosis, but the prophetic religion of the Old Testament.⁴⁷

At the time of Jesus some sort of synthesis may have taken place to form a composite picture of the Messiah. The various elements had either been drawn together or existed along side each other to form the idea of the Messiah. Manson, in the appendix of his book, Jesus the Messiah, has shown that the concepts of the Son of Man, Davidic Messiah, and Servant of the Lord have already been brought together in 1 Enoch, although the origin of each may have been separate.⁴⁸ But no matter which Messianic element was dominant in the mind of a given individual, the basic thought was still there. The Messiah was about to come, the Kingdom of heaven was about to be established, and the hope of Israel was about to be fulfilled, a hope which had its roots in the prophetic proclamation of the canonical Old Testament.

⁴⁷W. F. Manson, Jesus the Messiah (London: Hodder and Stoughton Ltd., 1952), viii.

⁴⁸Ibid., pp. 171-174.

CHAPTER IV

PREPARE HIS WAY BEFORE HIM

The Coming One who was mightier than John was on His way and the world was not prepared to meet Him. The task of preparation for His arrival had been delegated to John by God and he clearly understood his function. It is immaterial whether or not John considered himself as Elijah in the early period of his activity. In any case, he saw his role as one of preparation for the Coming One, a preparation which took the form of a proclamation. Within this proclamation two elements which are particularly rich in meaning and which constitute the essence of the call to preparation play a significant role. These are the concepts of baptism and repentance.¹

The attraction of the preaching of John which brought the crowds to the Jordan River to hear him lay to a great extent in the novelty of his preaching. And, paradoxically, the novelty of the message was its resemblance to the teaching of the Old Testament prophets.² Both baptism, or lustration, and repentance had played an important part in the prophetic utterances, often appearing in the same immediate context. In the message of the Baptist, however, they are so closely linked that they form an indivisible whole, a single unit of "Busstaufer," "repentance

¹Mk. 1:4; Luke 3:3. The express statement that John came "preaching the baptism of repentance" is found only in Mark and Luke but is presupposed by the accounts of the other evangelists. Cf. Matt. 3:2.5.6; John 1:25.28.29.

²Anthony C. Deane, "The Ministry of John the Baptist," The Expositor, Series 8, XIII (1917), 423.

baptism." Yet the proclamation of John was not simply the echo of Old Testament preaching. Something new had been added.

The newness is already apparent in the title which is applied to John, the son of Zechariah, "the Baptist," a title, reserved for him by both the evangelists and Josephus (Antiq. XVIII, 5, 2), the one important secular witness of the same period. The application of the title indicates the distinctiveness of his activity and identifies baptism as his distinguishing mark. It points to the uniqueness of the rite which he introduced, for it requires an officiant in contrast to all other lustrations of that period. In this baptism the officiant performs the act. The candidate does not immerse himself as in contemporary lustrations.

It is not only John's title which points to the uniqueness of his act, but the very term βαπτισμα differentiates this act from all other lustrations of that period. There are no known examples of its occurrence outside the New Testament and Christian literature of this period.³ It is significant also that almost half of the occurrences of baptism and its cognates in the New Testament appear in a context associated with John.⁴ Thus the New Testament either coins or reserves the word

³Albrecht Oepke, "βαπτισμός, βαπτισμα", Theological Dictionary of the New Testament edited by G. Kittel, translated by G. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1964), I, 545. βαπτισμός which occurs outside the New Testament refers to the act alone, while βαπτισμα refers to the act with its result and therefore its institution. Cf. Walter Bauer, A Greek English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature, translated and adapted from the German by William F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957), p. 132.

⁴R. R. Williams, "Baptize, Baptism," A Theological Workbook of the Bible edited by Alan Richardson (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1953), p. 27. H. Schmoller, Hand-Konkordanz zum Neuen Testament. (Stuttgart: Privelegierte Württembergische Bibelanstalt, n.d.), pp. 72-78.

for the baptism of John and Christian baptism. By this usage, the New Testament indicates that it understands these acts in the sense of something new and unique. In the New Testament a change has also taken place in the use of the verb βαπτίζω so that it no longer appears predominantly in the middle or reflexive voice, as had been the case in Jewish as well as Gentile writings, but in the active and passive voice.⁵

These three factors, the title reserved for John, the sudden appearance of the word βάπτισμα and the use of the active and passive forms of the verb βαπτίζω point to the uniqueness and originality of the baptism of John and Christian baptism. At the same time they indicate a connection between the two which differentiates them from all others. The New Testament gives further witness to this connection when Mark begins the Gospel of Jesus Christ with the baptism of John (1:4) and the Acts of the Apostles includes it in the Christian kerygma and makes a knowledge of John's baptism a qualification of the one who is to succeed Judas. (10:37; 1:22).⁶

The idea of purifying lustrations in preparation for appearances before the Lord was well known. The ceremonial law was replete with regulations concerning purification prior to such an occasion. Beginning with the preparations for the reception of the law at Mt. Sinai, we find stringent rules for the purification by washing of worshippers and officiants at the cultic rites as well as regulations regarding

⁵Oepke, p. 537.

⁶The reason for this qualification is found in the connection between the two baptisms as is indicated. Some have, however, interpreted the inclusion of this stipulation as evidence of antagonism between a group of disciples of John the Baptist and Christian disciples.

ritual purity in daily life. The single occurrence of the verb βαπτίζω in the canonical Old Testament is in 2 Kings 4:15 where the word is associated with the act performed by Naaman at Elisha's command.⁷ The Hebrew word בָּטַח , "to dip," is elsewhere rendered in the Septuagint by the Greek word βάπτω and the ceremonial washings are described through the use of πλύγω and λούομαι. In the later Jewish period, however, these acts were designated as בָּטַח , and בָּטַח and βαπτίζω became technical terms for the actions involved in these purifactory rites. The close connection between washing and purification needs no documentation. In the account of Mark (7:4) Jesus uses the plural βαπτισμοί in connection with the purifying rites performed by the Pharisees, and Heb. 6:2 speaks of βαπτισμῶν διακρίσεως, a possible reference to Jewish lustrations.⁸ In view of the fact that the synoptists connect the baptism of John with a purification from sin, and that the idea of purification is prominent in Josephus' account of John's baptism, some interpreters have concluded that the roots of John's baptism are to be found in these purifactory rites of Judaism. There are four factors, however, which speak against such a connection: the novelty of John's baptism, its connection with the forgiveness of sins, the repetition of the acts in Judaism, and the use of a baptizer in John's baptism.

⁷Oepke, p. 535. However, another occurrence of the word is in Is. 21:4: ἡ ἀνομία με βαπτίζει. Edwin Hatch and Henry Redpath, A Concordance to the Septuagint (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1892), I, 190. The Massoretic text has nothing corresponding to this use of βαπτίζω at this point.

⁸Some interpreters have suggested that this reference is not to Jewish lustrations but to baptism as practiced by the disciples of John the Baptist. However, the dominant Old Testament background of the Epistle to the Hebrews speaks against this interpretation.

The closest approximation to John's baptism, both in form and content, may be found in the proselyte baptism of Judaism. The baptism of proselytes deserves careful consideration, although the date for the origin of this baptism is difficult to fix. Scholars have disagreed on the evidence, and the results of their investigations are inconclusive. Indications of its presence are found in statements from the Mishna which deal with arguments between the schools of Hillel and Shammai regarding the time which must elapse between the circumcision and the baptism of proselytes as well as the necessity of both baptism and circumcision for the initiation of gentiles into Judaism.⁹ On the basis of these notices some have stated without question that the practice of proselyte baptism was in existence at the time of John. This is the conclusion of Cullmann,¹⁰ Schniewind,¹¹ Jeremias,¹² and others.¹³ The conclusion of Strack-Billerbeck is:

Die vorstehenden Stellen zeigen, das für die Schulen Schammais u. Hillels (im 1. nachchristl. Jahrh.) die Proselytentaufe bereits zu einer feststehenden von keiner Seite angefochtenen Institution geworden war; man darf deshalb deren Anfänge mit Sicherheit in die vorchristliche Zeit verlegen.¹⁴

⁹Herman L. Strack and Paul Billerbeck, Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrash (Muenchen: C. H. Beck'sche Verlagbuchhandlung, 1926), I, 107.

¹⁰Oscar Cullmann, Baptism in the New Testament translated by J. K. S. Reid (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1950), p. 9.

¹¹Julius Schniewind, "Das Evangelium nach Matthäus," Das Neue Testament Deutsch (Goettingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1950), p. 24.

¹²Joachim Jeremias, "Proselytentaufe und Neues Testament," Theologische Zeitschrift, V (Nov.-Dec. 1949), 418-428.

¹³Williams, p. 27; T. W. Manson, The Sayings of Jesus (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1954), p. 41.

¹⁴Strack-Billerbeck, I, 103.

T. F. Torrance is of the same opinion and cites three reasons for his belief in the pre-Christian existence of Proselyte baptism in Judaism:

(1) Tertullian assumes that these Jewish baptisms were old enough for pre-Christian Greek lustrations to have copied them. (2) In our oldest material in the Mishnah the discussion on the necessity of Proselyte baptism between Hillel and Shammai clearly indicates a time before the fall of Jerusalem when the Temple ritual was daily carried out. (3) The evidence of the Zadokite Fragments and the Dead Sea Scrolls indicates that similar lustrations existed before Christ. . . . 'There is nothing to indicate that Proselyte baptism was of recent origin'. . . That does not hold of course for all the ideas that came in the Tradition to be associated with it, but it does hold for the practice itself.¹⁵

Oepke agrees with this conclusion regarding the time of origin and adds:

it is hardly conceivable that the Jewish ritual should be adopted at a time when baptism had become an established religious practice in Christianity. After 70 A.D. at least, the opposition to Christians was too sharp to allow for the rise of a Christian custom among the Jews. Proselyte baptism must have preceded Christian baptism.¹⁶

Nevertheless, objections are still raised to its existence at the time of

John. Replying to the conclusions of Torrance, Taylor writes:

Several scholars, both Jew and Christian, on the other hand have recognized that the time and circumstances under which Jewish proselyte baptism arose are entirely uncertain. Over forty years ago Alfred Plummer pointed out that the Old Testament, the Apocrypha, the New Testament, Philo, Josephus and the Older targumists are all notable for their silence on the subject of proselyte baptism.¹⁷

¹⁵T. F. Torrance, "Proselyte Baptism," New Testament Studies, I (1954-1955), 154.

¹⁶Oepke, p. 535.

¹⁷T. M. Taylor, "The Beginnings of Jewish Proselyte Baptism," New Testament Studies, II (1955-1956), 194-195. Cf. also C. F. Mann, "The Scrolls, the Lord and the Primitive Church," Church Quarterly Review, CLIX (1958), 518.

But apart from the question of origin, there are weighty objections to finding the roots of John's baptism in the practice of Jewish proselyte baptism. It is true that similarities between them do exist. Like John's baptism, proselyte baptism took place only once; those who were not of the Jewish race were by this baptism incorporated into the people of God and shared in the blessings of the Covenant; by it the participants severed their connection with their former manner of life. However, in spite of all the obvious similarities at least three striking and decisive differences should be noted. The first is reflected in the words of Taylor, which indicates that the New Testament nowhere establishes a relationship between John's baptism and Proselyte baptism. Secondly, the baptism of John was a baptism for the remission of sin, a fact which is no more ascribed to proselyte baptism than to any other ritual purification.¹⁸ Thirdly, the baptism of proselytes is also self-administered, the officiants at the baptism being witnesses rather than baptizers.¹⁹

More recently the roots of John's baptism have been sought in practices recorded in the writings of the Qumran Community. Some scholars have found parallels in what was apparently an initiatory rite of the group, a rite which has been assumed to have eschatological im-

¹⁸Oepke, p. 536; Torrance, pp. 152-153; Mann, p. 518. The fact that Jewish sources declare that when a proselyte arises from his baptism he is as a new born infant does not necessarily indicate that the sources attribute forgiveness of sins to this baptism, but refers rather to ritual purity. Cf. Strack-Billerbeck, II, 423.

¹⁹Oepke, p. 546. Oepke concludes that proselyte baptism was self-administered and cites a reference from Gerim 1:8 to support his view.

plications.²⁰ Some have found the connection in the area of the creation of a new community among these covenanters, with the entrance into the community based upon and marked by a baptism which had a once-for-all character.²¹ Yet between the baptism of this community and that of John there are radical differences which those who find close affinities are willing to grant. There is no evidence in the writings for a single baptism which would be comparable in every respect to that of John. In some respects the initiation baptism of Qumran and John's baptism are similar. It does not work ex opere operato but must be preceded by sincere repentance on the part of the initiate, a requirement parallel to that of John. Yet the once-for-all character of the act is not clear, since it is followed by other lustrations. It is a baptism which requires no administrant. The entire life of the community was centered in rites of purity which have a legal orientation, whereas the baptism of John gives no evidence of such legal foundation. It is related to outward ritual cleanliness rather than an inner purity.

As indicated, all this is not to say that external similarities did not exist between the various types of lustrations which have been cited and John's baptism. At the time when John appeared there were without doubt many sects comparable to the Dead Sea Community existing on the fringes of Judaism, and the monumental work of J. Thomas has shown that

²⁰J. A. T. Robinson, "The Baptism of John and the Qumran Community," Twelve New Testament Studies (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1962), pp. 11-27.

²¹Wm. H. Brownlee, "Messianic Motifs of Qumran and the New Testament," New Testament Studies, III (1956-1957), 16. O. Betz, "Die Proselytentaufe der Qumransekte und die Taufe im NT," Revue de Qumran, I (October 1958), 213-234.

baptism played an important part in their life.²² Baptism was, so to speak, "in the air" at the time. Yet it is important to notice that these sects were esoteric groups on the fringe of Judaism and because of this played no important role in the lives of the masses, the very people who were attracted to the baptism of John. If proselyte baptism was already practiced at this time, it would seem that this would be more influential than baptism as practiced by these groups. The main significance of the work of Thomas as well as that of the Dead Sea Scrolls is to make us more aware of the sharp contrast between the work of these communities and that of John the Baptist with which Christianity is so closely associated. The Baptist is not simply a product of his time; and the social, political and even religious movements of the day will not explain the origin of his baptism. Affinities are there, but they can never fully answer all the questions which arise, although they may provide a basis for the understanding of John's baptism in its newness. His baptism is simply different from any illustrations which were known at that time.

The basic issue still seems to be involved in the answer to the question addressed by Jesus to the scribes and pharisees, "The baptism of John: was it from heaven or from men?"²³ Two basic differences, a repentance-baptism for the forgiveness of sin preparing the way for the Messiah and the administration of this baptism at the specific com-

²²J. Thomas, Le mouvement baptiste en Palestine et Syrie 150 Av. J.C.--300 Ap. J.C. (Gembloux: J. Duculot, 1935).

²³Matt. 21:25; Mk. 11:30; Lk. 20:4.

mand of God, separate the baptism of John from all other baptisms known to exist at that period.²⁴ We would agree with Murray who says:

The issue which confronts us is whether the baptism of John was from heaven or men. Was his claim true or false? If John was simply deluded it is strange that in his delusion he stumbled on a truth vital for all mankind. If history can prove anything, we must admit that in John the Baptist we are dealing with a man through whom the race came into direct and conscious contact with God.²⁵

Since the people who were attracted to John's baptism were apparently not found on the fringes of Judaism, it would seem most logical to find the basis for John's baptism in those writings which were normative for Judaism, the writings of the prophets. It is abundantly clear from them that the ideas of baptism or lustration had Messianic and eschatological overtones, and these ideas may have prepared John for his mission and the nation to accept his baptism.

The prophets proclaim that God will sprinkle the hearts of His people with clean water and they shall be cleansed (Exek. 36:25,26). He will open a fountain for the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to cleanse them from sin and uncleanness (Zech. 12:10; 13:1). The Psalmist prays God to wash him thoroughly from his iniquity and to cleanse him from his sin (Ps. 51:7). The cleansing is also indicated in passages such as Is. 44:3 and Joel 2:28, which speak of the pouring out of the Spirit upon God's people.

²⁴P. M. Bretscher, "John the Baptist's Baptism," Concordia Theological Monthly, XXI (April 1950), 306.

²⁵J. O. Murray, "The Witness of the Baptist to Jesus," The Expository Times, XXXVII (December 1925), 109.

Placed in the context of the near approach of the Kingdom of Heaven involving the advent of the Coming One, John's baptism reclaimed these concepts from the prophetic books. In consequence a powerful Messianic awakening took place. The baptism was new, not so much in a historical sense, as in its eschatological orientation.²⁶ John stood before the coming Day of the Lord and proclaimed God's final counsel to the people. He could only baptize with water in view of the Coming One, who would baptize with the Holy Spirit and with fire. But it was the certainty of the Coming One's coming which gave his baptism its validity and made submission to it vital.

The eschatological element involved in the baptism of John was revolutionary as far as the Jewish authorities were concerned. If there had been no deviation from the accepted Jewish practices, there would have been little or no concern regarding his identity and the authority for his baptism.

Lohmeyer, in particular, has developed what he considers to be the cultic and eschatological element in John's proclamation and has compared his baptism to the institution of sacrifice in the Temple. He sees John's baptism as a means for the formation of a new community, or at least a rite pointing forward to its formation. Identifying the Temple with the rule of God and John's proclamation of a coming Kingdom with the formation of an eschatological community, he sees this community as being identified with the Temple which the Coming One will erect.²⁷ Since

²⁶Ernst Lohmeyer, "Johannes der Täufer," Das Urchristentum (Goettingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1932), I, 81.

²⁷Ernst Lohmeyer, Lord of the Temple, translated by Stewart Todd (London: Oliver and Boyd, 1961), pp. 65-67.

John's whole manner of life indicates a scorn for cultic institution, his baptism Lohmeyer argues, must somehow be related to this polemical position. And so it is. For John indicates by his life and proclamation that baptism is now the means for approaching God just, as sacrifice had formerly been. As sacrifice requires the priest as mediator to present the offering, so baptism is administered by John; as God acted through the means of sacrifice, so He now acts through the means of the water; the cultic ritual has a High Priest and correspondingly John may be termed the High Priest of baptism. The eschatological character of the rite becomes apparent in that it is set over against tradition as the coming world is set over against the present world, in that it is not limited to a place as is sacrifice but can take place anywhere, and in that it is not repeated, but is a once-for-all act in contrast to sacrifice.²⁸ The work of J. Thomas would tend to support this view, since he finds that among some of the baptist sects there was a tendency to substitute baptism for sacrifice at the time of John.²⁹

The evidence presented is rather convincing, and it is doubtless true that baptism does have a "cultic" significance. Yet it must also be noted that there is nowhere any indication on the part of John of an open rejection of the Temple ritual, nor are the people ever urged to abandon the sacrificial acts. If John saw his baptism as a replacement for sacrifice, the absence of this thought in his proclamation is difficult to comprehend. John's actions and proclamation could well be explained in terms of the prophetic statements. The opposition of the

²⁸Ibid., pp. 92-94.

²⁹Thomas, pp. 12-19.

prophets was not to temple ritual as such, but to the abuses associated with it. Isaiah spoke openly of these abuses (1:10-15) and the Psalmist could say, "Thou requirest not sacrifice, else would I give it" (51:10). In his pronouncements, John is following their lead. Yet it must also be agreed that, unlike John, the prophets proclaimed no new rite. This speaks for the initiation of baptism as a substitute for sacrifice and John's refusal to forbid or discourage sacrifice may be explained in terms of the fact that the Coming One had not yet arrived. The Kingdom of Heaven had not yet come into existence and therefore the old covenant regulations were still binding. John baptized with water in view of the Coming One who would baptize with the Holy Spirit and with fire and this gave his baptism its validity. In the interim, the Old Covenant remained in force. John's baptism was an initiatory and promissory rite preparing for entrance into the coming Messianic community. This interpretation receives added support from the significant fact that all the gospels interpret John's baptism from the perspective of Christ's baptism.³⁰

But baptism was only one part of the proclamation of John, and without an understanding of the second element, repentance, the call to baptism has little significance. Apart from it, it could easily be classified with the ritual washings of Judaism. As has already been indicated, the baptism of John as a *βάπτισμα μετανοίας εἰς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν* (Mk. 1:4) is one of the factors which compels us to place it in a unique position and to differentiate it from them.

³⁰T. F. Torrance, "Aspects of Baptism in the New Testament," Theologische Zeitschrift, für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche, XVI (1913), 243.

"Repent! For the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand" is the insistent call of John as it is also that of Jesus. Yet no definition of repentance is given by either of them. This is not surprising, for as Moore says:

all assume that their hearers know well enough what repentance is, and how the forgiveness of sins depends upon it; and have no more need to be told that the impenitent sinner has no right in the good things of the Days of the Messiah or the World to Come. If we ask where the masses got these notions and beliefs, the only possible answer is, in the popular religious instruction of the synagogues, through which the teaching of the students of scripture in their schools was disseminated among all classes. . . . the conceptions, nature and effects of repentance entertained by John or by Jesus and his disciples differ in no respect from those of their countrymen to whom they addressed their appeal; and naturally, since they were derived from the same source, the liturgy and homilies of the synagogue.³¹

We can agree in part with this statement and yet it should be said that it is doubtful whether the ideas of John and Jesus were determined by the teachings of the rabbinic schools, and that this understanding of repentance differs in no respect from that of their countrymen. The reaction to their call indicates that an element of difference existed in it, an element which recalled people from their present understanding back to the understanding and utterances of the prophets.

Judaism was not concerned with speculation on the way in which God expiated sins. It knew that God had issued certain directives for action to which He had attached His promise of forgiveness. The essential condition for forgiveness was the use of these appointed means. Together with their use, however, there was an insistence upon repentance, apart

³¹G. F. Moore, Judaism (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1927), I, 518-519.

from which the rites were useless. Repentance meant a turning from sin to God with the intention of not committing the sin again, and involved a confession of one's sins to God. Its origin was either fear of the consequences of sin in this world and the world to come, or the more noble motive of love for God. The question of whether the initiative in repentance, conceived of as the reciprocal "return," was on God's side or man's was a debatable issue. The two opinions were combined in some of the rabbinic writings so that repentance became an action of both God and man.³²

This view of repentance differs sharply in some respects from that which was proclaimed by the Old Testament prophets, for while theoretically it was close to their proclamation, in practice, as had often happened in the past, it had become a "legalistic distortion of that complete, personal, committed, resolute, divinely wrought return to God, the 180-degree turn from sin to God of which the prophets had spoken."³³ On previous occasions when Israel had lapsed into ritual formalism, expecting thereby to escape the wrath of God, the prophets had been most vociferous in their calls to repentance. The prophet Joel proclaims God's call to Israel in the words "Return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; and rend your hearts and not your garments" (2:12). The proclamation of Isaiah is similar in nature and content (1:10-17). In the time of the impending approach of

³²Ibid., pp. 500-531.

³³Martin Franzmann, Follow Me: Discipleship According to St. Matthew (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1961), p. 28.

the Kingdom of Heaven John once again issued the prophetic call in all its sharpness and clarity.

Repent! This was a concept for which the Old Testament had no special term, although the concept itself was certainly well known. The Hebrew word which is translated "repent," נָחַם is used most frequently in the Old Testament, but its meaning is not the same as that of the Greek $\mu\epsilon\tau\alpha\nu\omicron\epsilon\acute{\omega}$ by which it is translated in the Septuagint.³⁴ The majority of times when it is used it contains a reference to a change of mind on the part of God, and is not applicable to an understanding of the word "repentance." The word נָחַם is used of man in Job 42:6 and Jer. 8:6, but here the reference is chiefly to sorrow over sin and is not entirely comparable to the New Testament usage of the word $\mu\epsilon\tau\alpha\nu\omicron\epsilon\acute{\omega}$ with its fuller content. The Old Testament word which expresses this concept and which is more closely related to the New Testament meaning is one which the prophets drew from secular speech as a word which would adequately describe the intent of their thoughts. This was the word שׁוּב . Both words, נָחַם and שׁוּב , are used in a religious sense and are at times closely related. A comparison of Jer. 8:6 with Jer. 31:18,19 shows that this is the case and at the same time indicates the change which has occurred in the transition from secular to the religious use of the word שׁוּב .³⁵ By using it the prophets meant to

³⁴Johannes Behm, " $\mu\epsilon\tau\alpha\nu\omicron\epsilon\acute{\omega}$, $\mu\epsilon\tau\acute{\alpha}\nu\omicron\sigma\iota\varsigma$," Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament, edited by G. Kittel (Stuttgart: Verlag von W. Kohlhammer, n.d.), IV, 985.

³⁵Jer. 8:6: $\text{יִשְׂרָאֵל} \text{נָחַם}$; Jer. 31:18ff.:... $\text{נָחַם} \text{שׁוּב}$ שׁוּב שׁוּב ; Jer. 8:6: $\mu\epsilon\tau\alpha\nu\omicron\omega\gamma$ $\acute{\alpha}\nu\omicron\tau\eta\varsigma$ $\kappa\alpha\kappa\acute{\iota}\alpha\varsigma$; Jer. 31:18ff.: $\epsilon\pi\iota\sigma\tau\epsilon\phi\omicron\nu$ $\mu\epsilon$, $\kappa\alpha\iota$ $\epsilon\pi\iota\sigma\tau\epsilon\phi\omega$... $\mu\epsilon\tau\epsilon\nu\acute{\omicron}\eta\sigma\alpha$.

indicate that man had departed from God and needed to return to Him. The element which had brought about this separation was sin manifesting itself in various forms in the lives of people. But these manifestations were only outward indications of the fact that man's inner orientation was wrong. He was directed not toward God but away from Him and was in need of a complete reversal which involved his entire being. Having departed from God, he needed to return in order to re-establish the proper relationship. Later Judaism used the technical term נְשׁוּבָה נְשׁוּבָה for this repentance, an expression which can be misleading. The word came to be translated "do repentance" or as Luther rendered it, "Tuet Busse." But there was no intention either in the mind of official Judaism or in the mind of Luther to indicate by this that repentance was an activity of man and not of God.³⁶

This reversal which must take place is an individual one involving a personal return to Yahweh. Although the prophets often called the entire nation to repentance, there is no doubt that repentance was for them an individual matter, a matter between a man and his God. This truth becomes most clear in Ezekiel 18, where the prophet denies that God punishes one for the sins of another. It is true that the individual is bound up with the nation, but the responsibility for turning away from God is an individual responsibility. The son will not be punished for the sins of the father nor the father for the sins of his son. Each man stands before God in his own condition.

³⁶Behm, p. 991.

The relationship involved is always a God-man relationship which touches every area of a man's life, including his social, personal, religious, economic, and political activities. The Psalmist recognizes this when he says in Ps. 51:4: "Against Thee, Thee only have I sinned and done this evil in Thy sight;" Amos sees the oppression of the poor as a rejection of God (4:1-6); Hosea equates Israel's idolatry with unfaithfulness to her husband, God (2:1-13); and Jeremiah and Isaiah condemn Israel's trust in political alliances as a rejection of God's omnipotence (Is. 7:1-17; Jer. 27). There is no division of secular and religious activity. God is involved in all of man's life and the outward activities are only an expression of his inner condition. Even though man tries to deceive God by a show of religious activity, God is still aware of his true feeling. Joel informs the people that God wants rent hearts and not rent garments (2:12); Isaiah proclaims God's hatred of the mere formal offer of sacrifice (1:10-17); and the Psalmist recognizes that it is not animal sacrifices which God desires, but rather the sacrifice of a broken and contrite heart (51:16,17).

With this it becomes evident that the call for repentance is a radical call, demanding not merely outward conformity, but a complete about-face in the mind and life of an individual. On the negative side it is a complete turning away from idolatry, unrighteousness, and unholiness; positively it is a complete turning to Yahweh with all one's heart.³⁷ It is turning from sin, turning to God and complete change in one's conduct.

³⁷Joel 2:12.

The prophetic concept of repentance also involves an eschatological factor. The call to repentance on the part of the prophets is always in view of a Day of the Lord. If Israel repents, God will not visit her with His punishment. The approaching doom may yet be averted if only she will turn back to the Lord. Even the punishment which God does bring down upon her has repentance as its goal, for it is God's purpose to bring Israel to a knowledge of her dependence upon Him through this kind of activity.

But while the call is issued to the nation and to the individual and the impression is sometimes apparently given that Israel or the individual can effect this repentance alone, this impression is shown to be incorrect by the other passages which make it abundantly clear that repentance is an act of God from beginning to end. No one can seek God and turn to Him of his own volition. The mere knowledge and acknowledgement of sin is not yet repentance. Man must also turn to God in complete trust in His promise of mercy. Repentance is not merely a backward gaze but a forward look involving the will of man.³⁸

But while man is involved in the turning, it is God who does this turning so that man is in effect passive, powerless to bring about this change. Jeremiah records the prayer of Ephraim, "Turn Thou me and I shall be turned;" (31:18); Israel prays in Lamentations "Turn us to Thyself, O Lord, that we may be returned" (5:21); and the Psalmist says, "Return us, O God, let Thy face shine that we may be saved" (80:3,7; 85:4). Closely related to this thought are the passages in Ezekiel

³⁸W. D. Chamberlain, The Meaning of Repentance (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1943), p. 22.

which encourage Israel to get a new heart, but which recognize that it is God who will give the new heart and the new spirit (18:31; 11:19; 36:26). The Psalmist recognizes his complete dependence upon God as he prays the Lord to create in him a clean heart and put a new and right spirit within him (51:10). The apocalyptic literature continues to hold to this thought, as the Psalms of Solomon indicate when they make the turning back of the obedient soul the object of God's chastisement (18:4), and the Book of Jubilees credits God with the cleansing of man and the creation of a holy spirit within him (1:23).

As the prophets had done, so John broke with accepted Jewish traditions and called for a return to the worship of God through repentance rather than ceremony. It is this prophetic character of his call which makes the view of Kraeling difficult to accept. His opinion is that the term "repentance" must be determined on the basis of historical probabilities, but he weakens his own position and makes it untenable by the following concessions:

These two things have to be admitted in taking this adverse position. The first is that repentance is nowhere defined in the New Testament whether by John, Jesus or the Christian writers. The second is that the God-fearing Jew can and does pray to the Lord to make him truly repentant and thereby acknowledges his complete dependence on the divine initiative. Yet the first of these facts implies only that the nature and content of repentance could be taken for granted because it was interpreted in traditional terms, while the second suggests only a healthy reverence for God's assistance in all that man can achieve, and does not in the least imply the inability of the human will to assert itself actively, in this case to perform the act of repentance.³⁹

³⁹Carl Kraeling, John the Baptist (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1951), pp. 69-70.

This opinion of Kraeling seems to originate from his basic view of the nature of the baptism of John as well as his understanding of repentance, both of which he feels are not different from the views of contemporary Judaism except in the urgency of the call of John and the association of the two elements of baptism and repentance. In the light of the polemic of John against Judaic tradition (Matt. 3:7-9) this opinion is difficult, if not impossible, to defend.

It is just this association between the elements of baptism and repentance which must be maintained and which, in view of all contemporary estimates of the Baptist's position as a prophet, must be interpreted in the light of prophetic utterances. When Mark reports ἔγένετο Ἰωάννης ὁ βαπτίζων ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ κηρύσσων βάπτισμα μετανοίας εἰς ἕσπερον ἡμερῶν, he is indicating two things. The first is that not only repentance, but also the baptism of John is a gift and revelation of God; the second, that these two words are without doubt to be considered together. The grammatical construction clearly indicates the latter, while the former receives attestation from the question which Jesus addressed to the Pharisees and the answer which is implied.⁴⁰

But while the association of baptism and repentance is beyond doubt, the question may still be raised as to whether the forgiveness of sins is a result of the baptism of John or whether his baptism is simply a symbolical act meant to signify the inner cleansing which has taken place prior to baptism. In this case the grammatical construction is

⁴⁰Matt. 21:25; Mk. 11:30; Lk. 20:4. Cf. Lohmeyer, "Johannes der Täufer," Das Urchristentum, p. 74.

inconclusive and the answer must be based on other factors. Bauer lists Mk. 1:4 under the uses of eis which denote purpose and translates "for the forgiveness of sins, so that sins might be forgiven."⁴¹ Robertson, however, questions its use in this manner and says:

it by no means follows that the same idea is expressed by εἰς ἄφεσιν in Mk. 1:4 and Ac. 2:38 (cf. Mt. 10:41), though that may in the abstract be true. It remains a matter for the interpreter to decide.⁴²

J. R. Mantey considers it among unusual meanings of the preposition and concludes:

Did John baptize that they might repent, or because of repentance? If the former, we have no further scriptural confirmation of it. If the latter, his practice was confirmed and followed by the apostles, and is in full harmony with Christ's demand for inward genuine righteousness.⁴³

The last statement, however, is a begging of the question which is not whether Christ and his apostles did or did not demand repentance as did John, but rather how this repentance came about. The problem apparently lies in the identification of repentance with sorrow for sin, with repentance and intent to forsake sin being the cause of forgiveness. When it is considered in this way, repentance can simply be the act of man in contrast to the prophetic insistence upon repentance as an act of God alone, and does not include the full meaning of the term.

This understanding is comparable to that of Josephus, our only secular witness to the baptism of John. In his description of John

⁴¹Bauer, p. 228.

⁴²A. T. Robertson, A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research (New York: Richard R. Smith, Inc., 1914), p. 595.

⁴³J. R. Mantey, "Unusual Meanings for Prepositions in the Greek New Testament," The Expositor, Series 8, XXV (June 1923), 458.

and his activity he says:

Who was a good man, and commanded the Jews to exercise virtue, both as to righteousness towards one another and piety towards God, and so to come to baptism; for that washing with water would be acceptable to him, if they made use of it, not in order to the putting away or the remission of some sins only, but for the purification of the body; supposing still that the soul was thoroughly purified beforehand by righteousness.⁴⁴

This view of repentance no longer reflects the prophetic view, but rather Josephus' legalistic background and Hellenizing tendencies which are a distortion of the teachings of the prophets.⁴⁵ It is also well known that Josephus was not sympathetic to Christianity and was concerned chiefly with presenting his nation in the best possible light. For this reason it is quite likely that his statement may contain a polemic against Christianity. It might be asked why the purpose of John's baptism is stated in negative terms by him. The statement "not in order to put away some sins" indicates that among certain people at least it must have been considered as having this benefit,⁴⁶ for there was an apparent association of the two ideas. Josephus' comments appear to be one among the many attempts to deny the importance of the message and work of John to a point which causes Schlatter to say with a touch of humor, "Ein Täufer ohne Reichspredigt, ohne Busspredigt, ohne Busstaufe, --eine Mumie!"⁴⁷

⁴⁴Josephus, "Antiquities," XVIII, Ch. 5, 2, Complete Works of Josephus (New York: Bigelow, Brown & Co., Inc., n.d.), p. 106.

⁴⁵Behm, p. 990.

⁴⁶A. Schlatter, Johannes der Täufer (Basel: Verlag Friedrich Reinhardt AG., 1956), pp. 62-63.

⁴⁷Ibid., p. 64.

Even in the report of Josephus it remains evident that the two elements of John's message were baptism and repentance and that these two elements were not independent but closely bound together. John's proclamation was not only "Repent" but he came preaching βαπτισμα μετανοίας εις ἁφροσύνην & μυστήριον. As the prophets of the Old Testament had done before him, he called all to repentance, not only the notorious sinners, but also the pious Israelites, warning them that a blood relationship to Abraham was not the deciding factor in relationship to God, but rather the spiritual condition of a man. It was this alone which had value. He called them to a complete and radical turning which would issue in a life consistent with their oral profession. And to the repentance proclamation he bound his repentance-baptism, which in turn was bound to the near approach of the Kingdom of Heaven. John issues the call to repent in view of the Kingdom which is coming. He urges the people to bring forth fruits worthy of that repentance. But the bringing forth of the fruits presupposes that the repentance has taken place. Between the command and the exhortation there lies the repentance-baptism which indicates that it is somehow bound up with the ability to change one's whole life view. It is repentance-baptism which results in the forgiveness of sins and the changed life.

That forgiveness of sins is not due to any activity on the part of man also becomes clear from the Old Testament understanding of forgiveness. The Septuagint uses the term ἀφίηται to denote "release, surrender, leave," but it also uses the term for the remission of sin or guilt as a translation of the words חַטָּאת, פְּדוּת, and נָשָׂא. In the Old Testament this concept of remission of sins is bound up with cultic acts, but by the Septuagint translation it becomes apparent that a judicial sense is

also involved in the thought.⁴⁸ God is the judge before whom man stands, whose verdict he must accept, and upon whose mercy he must rely. In the acceptance of the proclamation of God's mercy man receives the forgiveness of sins which God offers, although his ability to accept is also an act of God as is indicated by the Old Testament understanding of repentance. From first to last therefore, βαπτισμα μετανοίας εἰς ἄφεσιν ζουστ(ω)ν is an act of God mediated through His prophet John. John's proclamation is also a proclamation of God's mercy.

The repentance-baptism of John cannot be separated from his entire message which is not only one of wrath, but also a message of salvation. The condemnation of even the most pious is clearly included, but with the proclamation of the Coming One and the Kingdom of Heaven there is hope. God is about to break in with His righteous rule to gather His own together and to destroy those who have not taken His proclamation seriously and accepted its truth. Both the proclamation of John and his act of baptism are eschatological and are carried out in view of this future event. Lohmeyer sees the relationship in the following way:

An dem Worte "taufen" wird dieser Zusammenhang am deutlichsten. Wie kann, was in Balde von einen anderen geschiet mit Geist und Feuer, noch ein "Taufen" heissen? Es ist gewiss ein Bild hergenommen von dem Wasserritus, den Täufer bringt und verkündet; aber welch seltsame Verbundenheit wird da sichtbar! Die Wassertaufe ist ihrem Inhalt nach ein Bild der kommenden Taufe, diese ihrer Form nach ein Abbild der Wassertaufe; jene weist voraus auf ihn eigenes Ende, diese zurück auf ihren eigenen Anfang. Was beide zusammengebündet so fest, dass das eine nicht ohne das Andere ist, sage eben das Wort "taufen."⁴⁹

⁴⁸R. Bultmann, "ἀφέναι, ἀφίημι," Theological Dictionary of the New Testament edited by G. Kittel, translated by G. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1964), I, 510.

⁴⁹Lohmeyer, "Johannes der Täufer," Das Urchristentum, I, 81.

The forgiveness of sins was dependent on the Coming One. John did not have the power to effect it. But God had made His baptism a means through which the forgiveness was offered in view of that event, just as He had bound the forgiveness of sins to the sacrificial acts of the Old Testament. With this forgiveness of sins man was directed not to the past, but to the future when the Coming One would baptize with the Spirit and with fire.

In view of all this, it is hardly correct to say that "baptism as administered by John was, according to the Synoptists, symbolical of purification of the soul,"⁵⁰ or that

The water of baptism represents and symbolizes the fiery torrent of judgment, and that the individual by voluntarily immersing himself in the water enacts in advance before God his willing submission to the divine judgment which the river of fire will perform. John's baptism would therefore be a rite symbolic of the acceptance of the judgment which he proclaimed.⁵¹

Nor could we agree with Williams that "John's b. therefore is presented as a washing in Jordan, symbolic of and accompanied by repentance."⁵²

The tying of John's water baptism to the Spirit-and-fire baptism of the Coming One through the use of the same word "baptism" indicates that the revelation of God is included in both. Therefore the repentance-baptism of John is not only symbolic, not only a proclamation identical with that

⁵⁰J. H. Bernard, "A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to St. John," The International Critical Commentary (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1929), I, 51.

⁵¹Kraeling, p. 117.

⁵²Williams, p. 27.

issued by the Old Testament prophets, nor is it simply a deep and beautiful symbol for something which has taken place inwardly. In its meaning and execution it is an act of God mediated through John the Baptist so that ultimately it is not John who baptizes, but God.

In spite of all this, it must not be said that John proclaimed a new birth with his baptism. Rather, in its eschatological character it was a proto-type of the Spirit baptism which was to come and of Him who was to baptize with the Spirit. Again Lohmeyer brings this out clearly when he says:

Sie [die Taufe] ist nur Weg, noch nicht Ziel, nur Zeichen, noch nicht Wirklichkeit, Morgendämmerung, noch nicht Tageshelle. Aber dass sie dieser erste Anfang ist, das gibt ihr auch den vordeutenden Schimmer, den die verwirklichte Fülle jenes Tages in sich schliesst. So wird man sagen dürfen, dass die Busstaufer des Täufers Sinn und Sein, Erkenntnis und Wesen heiligt, damit er, um Worte des Epheserbriefes von der Christlichen Taufe zu gebrauchen, "ohne Fehl oder Makel, oder etwas derart sei sondern heilig und untadelig." Er wird das reine, das von Gott gereinigte Gefäss, das der Fülle des Geistes noch wartet, die der letzte Tag bringen wird.⁵³

John was clearly aware of his limitations. He knew that he was not the Messiah, but merely his forerunner, his way preparer. The Coming One was stronger than John and it was He on whom men were to focus their attention while John faded into the background. John could only baptize with water, but the Coming One would baptize with Spirit and fire and it was this which formed the climax of the Baptist's message.

The ringing cry of John the Baptist, based upon the proclamation of the prophets, was resumed by Jesus as He began His ministry. The cry

⁵³Lohmeyer, "Johannes der Täufer," Das Urchristentum, I, 80.

"Repent! For the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand" was a continuation and fulfillment of John's prophetic message. Jesus called the same pious Israelites to repentance as the prophets and John had done before Him. The very words of denunciation are identical, "generation of vipers"; (Matt. 3:7; 23:33) the same warning is issued, "Every tree that does not bring forth good fruit is cut down and cast into the fire"; (Matt. 3:10; 7:17-19). He offers the forgiveness of sins; and it is He who institutes a sacrament of baptism through which repentance and forgiveness of sins are given. But the call, the warning, the offer and the sacrament are no longer in view of the Coming One, but are based on the fact that He has come. They are no longer issued on the authority of another, but on His own authority, for He is the one who baptizes with the Spirit and with fire, the Coming One proclaimed by the prophets of the Old Testament.

CHAPTER V

HE WILL BAPTIZE WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT AND WITH FIRE

John's message was one which was calculated to stir the most complacent of those who approached to hear him. This wilderness preacher in the tradition of the fiery spirit of Elijah had, among other things, a message of fire to proclaim. It is as though he were warning the crowds that they would neglect his preparatory baptism at their own peril. With the arrival of the Coming One a new aeon would begin in which those who were unfit would not only be deprived of all its blessings, but would find themselves completely outside the pale of the Kingdom, for this Coming One who was proclaimed by John would baptize with the Holy Spirit and with fire.

The difficulty involved in the interpretation of this portion of the proclamation of John is attested to by the variety and frequency of questions which are asked regarding it, and the variety of answers which are given. The answers which are offered are usually not definite but are a reflection or a summary of the interpretations which have been offered by various commentators. These commentators can for the most part be classified into five different categories.

The first of these includes those who insist that John is here actually referring to only one thing, a cleansing by fire, a judgment of God. This school of interpreters maintains that the passage must be interpreted in the light of the thought or environment of the time when these words were uttered. In his commentary on the Gospel of Matthew, Alexander Bruce ably represents this group. He says:

Notable here are the words $\epsilon\gamma\ \pi\upsilon\epsilon\upsilon\mu\alpha\tau\iota\ \eta\gamma\iota\omega\varsigma$. They must be interpreted in harmony with John's standpoint, not from what Jesus proved to be, or in the light of St. Paul's teaching on the Holy Spirit as the immanent source of sanctification. The whole baptism of the Messiah as John conceives of it, is a baptism of judgment. It has been generally supposed that the Holy Spirit here represents the grace of Christ, and the fire of His judicial function; not a few holding that even the fire is gracious as purifying. I think that the grace of Christ is not here at all. The $\pi\upsilon\epsilon\upsilon\mu\alpha\ \eta\gamma\iota\omega\varsigma$ is a stormy wind of judgment; holy, as sweeping away all that is light and worthless in the nation (which after the Old Testament manner is conceived of as the subject of the Messiah's action, rather than the individual). . . . John . . . thinks of three elements as representing the functions of himself and of Messiah: water, wind, fire. He baptizes with water, in the running stream of Jordan to emblem the only way of escape, amendment. Messiah will baptize with wind and fire, sweeping away and consuming the impenitent, leaving behind only the righteous.¹

This view is held by a number of men, among whom is Kraeling one of the more recent writers in English on the proclamation of the Baptist.² His view is followed and adopted by Schweizer in his article on $\pi\upsilon\epsilon\upsilon\mu\alpha$ in *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament*.³

The second interpretation which has gained much prominence is the view that John is here referring to Pentecost when the Spirit was poured out on the disciples. The fire of baptism of which John spoke is supposed by some to be a prophecy with regard to the tongues of fire which appeared on the heads of those who were filled with the Spirit at this time. This is a view which has been quite generally held. Lenski, in

¹Alexander Bruce, "The Synoptic Gospels," *The Expositor's Greek Testament*, edited by W. Robertson Nicoll (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, n.d.), I, 84. Cf. also pages 342 and 483.

²Carl H. Kraeling, *John the Baptist* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1951), p. 61.

³E. Schweizer, " $\pi\upsilon\epsilon\upsilon\mu\alpha$, $\pi\upsilon\epsilon\upsilon\mu\alpha\tau\iota\ \eta\gamma\iota\omega\varsigma$," *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament*, edited by G. Friedrich (Stuttgart: Verlag von Kohlhammer GMBH, n.d.), VI, 396-397.

particular, maintains that it is correct.⁴

Two other interpretations which have been presented as an exegesis of the passage are indicated in the quotation from Bruce above. The first of these maintains that the "Holy Spirit" symbolizes grace while "fire" represents a judicial function.⁵ The second is a variation of this view in which "fire" as well as the "Holy Spirit" is considered as gracious since it is a purifying element.⁶

A fifth interpretation which has been proposed is that of the Holy Spirit as representing the grace of Christ, while fire is understood to represent the fiery trials which await the disciples who accept Christ's baptism.⁷

Each of the views presented above as well as some variation of them has its defenders and critics, who base their defense and criticism on both textual and environmental factors. Because of this confusion, resulting from a multitude of interpretations, an understanding of the

⁴R. C. H. Lenski, The Interpretation of St. Mark's and St. Luke's Gospels (Columbus: The Lutheran Book Concern, 1934), p. 27; E. F. Brand, "Johannes der Täufer," Proceedings of the Fifty-Sixth Convention of the Eastern District of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio and Other States, (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1931), p. 37.

⁵F. Lang, "πῦρ," Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament, edited by G. Friedrich (Stuttgart: Verlag von Kohlhammer GmbH), VI, 943. Julius Schniewind, "Das Evangelium nach Matthäus," Das Neue Testament Deutsch (Goettingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1949), p. 24, indicates that this is his interpretation when he says: "Aber man ging irre, wenn man diesen Messias der Erwartung sich nur als drohenden Richter dachte. Schon die Tatsache der Taufe beweist das Gegenteil. Das Alte wird begraben, damit ein Neues werde. Dies Neue, das kommen soll, wird hier als Taufe mit dem Heiligen Geist bezeichnet."

⁶A. Plummer, An Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to St. Matthew (London: Elliot Stock, 1909), p. 28.

⁷G. Delling, "baptisma, baptisthenai," Novum Testamentum, II (1957), 92-115.

message of John requires an investigation of the terms "Spirit" and "fire" for a clearer perception of the meaning which the listeners of John would attach to a use of these words. Once again, we use the proclamation of the Old Testament prophets as our starting point, since it is in their tradition that John stands. A determination of the thinking of the Old Testament on these two concepts will assist us in developing the most probable meaning of the proclamation of John and our Lord on the subjects.

The doctrine of the Spirit is one of the most prominent features of Old Testament theology and is contained in every section of the canon, the law, the prophets, and the writings. The vocabulary for the concept of Spirit is also very simple, consisting only of the word πr which is used in the sense of breath, wind, or spirit.⁸ The root πr from which the verb is derived means primarily to breathe out with violence. Ordinarily when it is used in the sense of breath it carries with it the idea of power and indicates a strong heavy breathing in contrast to ordinary quiet breathing.⁹ Typical examples of this usage may be found in Job 8:2, Is. 33:11, and Ps. 18:15.

When used in the sense of wind, the word often has the connotation of power and violence. Prov. 27:16 speaks of the folly of trying to retain the wind; Ezek. 17:10, 19:12 speak of the east wind withering a

⁸Francis Brown, et al., A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1952), p. 925.

⁹Norman Snaith, The Distinctive Ideas of the Old Testament (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1946), p. 183f.

vine; and Is. 7:2, of the trees of the forest bowing before the wind. These are three typical examples which indicate the power and destructive force of $\overline{\text{r}}\overline{\text{r}}\overline{\text{r}}$, wind. The winds are also spoken of frequently as the agents of God and the media through which He exercises His power. For this use of the term we may cite such passages as Ps. 135:7, Jer. 10:13; and Ex. 10:13.

However, when $\overline{\text{r}}\overline{\text{r}}\overline{\text{r}}$ is used in the sense of belonging to man or to God it has the meaning of "spirit." This definition has its natural foundation in the idea of wind. The point of comparison appears to be in the unlimited power which is common to both wind and spirit. Both are powerful, invisible forces bordering on the supernatural, whose origin no one understands but which no one can deny.¹⁰

When used in relation to man the word appears as a psychological term denoting the dominant disposition of a man. For example, Num. 5:14 speaks of the $\overline{\text{r}}\overline{\text{r}}\overline{\text{r}}$ of jealousy coming upon a man; Ps. 51:12 of a free $\overline{\text{r}}\overline{\text{r}}\overline{\text{r}}$ or generous disposition which gives freely and without reserve; and Is. 37:7 of a $\overline{\text{r}}\overline{\text{r}}\overline{\text{r}}$ which will cause the Assyrian king to return to his home since he has been terrorized by a rumor. In man it is the spirit which dominates him and forces him to adopt a particular line of action. We are most concerned, however, with $\overline{\text{r}}\overline{\text{r}}\overline{\text{r}}$ in its relation to $\overline{\text{r}}\overline{\text{r}}\overline{\text{r}}$ or $\overline{\text{r}}\overline{\text{r}}\overline{\text{r}}\overline{\text{r}}\overline{\text{r}}$, for while the word $\pi\overline{\text{r}}\overline{\text{r}}\overline{\text{r}}\overline{\text{r}}\overline{\text{r}}$ occurs in the New Testament also in the sense of breath, wind, or spirit, it is the spirit

¹⁰Otto Procksch, Theologie des Alten Testaments (Guettersloh: C. Bertelsmann Verlag, 1950), p. 459.

of God which occurs most frequently.¹¹ This spirit is called πνεῦμα ἁγίου, πνεῦμα τοῦ θεοῦ, πνεῦμα ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ.

The Spirit of God first appears in the Old Testament in its function as the creator and sustainer of life, hovering over the primeval chaos, impregnating it with life (Gen. 1:2);¹² when the Spirit of God is withdrawn, the things which God has created die (Ps. 104:29). The Spirit of God therefore appears as the living principle of creation. The thought is brought out again most forcefully in Ezek. 37:1-10 where it is the breath of God which causes the dry bones upon which sinews, flesh, and skin have been stretched to spring into life. Without this breath they are only lifeless bodies. It is the breath of God which is the difference between life and death, it is the secret of vitality.

The writers of the Old Testament also conceive of the Spirit of God as a source of strength for leadership. Above all, the great leader Moses appears as the bearer of the Spirit (Num. 11:29.17) and God takes of His Spirit which He has placed upon Moses and endows his assistants with it. The same Spirit filled the successor of Moses, preparing him

¹¹Snaith, p. 320. The Spirit of God is called שְׁרֵטֵי הַיְיָ in only three passages of the Old Testament, Ps. 51:11, and Is. 63:10, 11. O. Procksch, "שְׁרֵטֵי הַיְיָ," Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, edited by G. Kittel, translated by G. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1964), p. 98, points out that in rabbinic literature שְׁרֵטֵי הַיְיָ has become almost a fixed formula. However שְׁרֵטֵי הַיְיָ which would correspond to הַיְיָ שְׁרֵטֵי הַיְיָ is never used. Since holiness is an attitude of God and is ascribed to man because of a relation to God, Snaith's observation is correct.

¹²F. W. Dillistone, The Holy Spirit in the Life of Today (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1947), p. 25, finds that "for the writers of the Old Testament from the first to the last 'the Spirit' denoted God in action in human life."

for leadership in the conquest of Canaan (Deut. 34:9). No book emphasizes the qualities of strength and leadership as attributes of the Spirit of God more strongly and clearly than the book of Judges. It is said of Gideon that the Spirit of the Lord came upon him causing him to blow the trumpet in Israel as a signal for the gathering of a liberating army (6:34); it came upon Samson and began to move him (13:25) and filled him with the strength to kill the young lion (14:6); the contexts indicate that the Spirit of God was the source of leadership in such judges as Deborah and Jephthah since they were called by God to be spiritual leaders fighting against the enemies of Israel. In the period of the monarchy Saul was filled with the Spirit and moved to fight against his nation's enemies (1 Sam. 11:16). It made him a great leader until he disobeyed the Lord and the Spirit of God was removed from him and placed upon his successor, David (1 Sam. 16:13f.). Other examples could be cited, but these sufficiently demonstrate that it was the invasion by the Spirit which endowed the heroes of Israel with physical strength and courage enabling them to become leaders of their nation.

Furthermore, in Hebrew thought the Spirit is regarded as the source of increased mental and spiritual capacities. The interpretation of Pharaoh's dream required a man who was filled with the Spirit of God (Gen. 41:38); the same Spirit filled one of the architects of the tabernacle enabling him to carry out his task (Ex. 31:3): Wisdom cries out, "Turn you at my reproof; Behold I will pour out my Spirit upon you, I will make my words known unto you" (Prov. 1:33); the Spirit of the Lord will rest upon the shoot from the stump of Jesse and is described in terms of a spirit of wisdom, understanding, and counsel (Is. 11:2). From all these passages it is obvious that wisdom and discernment are regarded as

attributes of the Spirit, gifts with which men are endowed when they are filled with the Spirit of God.¹³

This outpouring of the Spirit contains nothing of the mystical or magical, for in spite of the invasion by the Spirit, the individual personality is not lost in the process. Rather, the filling of the individual with the Spirit of God effects an exaltation of the physical and spiritual life beyond the natural powers of the recipient.¹⁴

While the Spirit is regarded as the source of strength and discernment and wisdom, it is more particularly regarded as the source of prophecy. The prophet is a man of the Spirit. The Spirit of God seizes him, filling his mind, and he is at times controlled by this spiritual force outside himself.¹⁵

David, for example ascribes his words to the Spirit of the Lord in his dying testimony (2 Sam. 23:2); Micah says of himself, "But truly I am full of power by the Spirit of the Lord and of judgment and of might, to declare unto Jacob his transgression, and to Israel his sin" (Micah 3:8); prophecy is ascribed to the Spirit in Joseph's interpretation of Pharoah's dream which involved the future of Egypt (Gen. 41:38); the

¹³George Johnston, "Spirit, Holy Spirit," A Theological Wordbook of the Bible, edited by Alan Richardson (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1951), p. 235.

¹⁴Procksch, Theologie, p. 461.

¹⁵Henry B. Swete, The Holy Spirit in the New Testament (London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1921), p. 2.

Spirit caused Balaam to prophesy good things for Israel contrary to his will (Num. 24:2); Hosea describes the prophet as the man of spirit (Hos. 9:7); Elisha considers his teacher to be a man of the Spirit and asks for a double portion of that Spirit to rest upon him (2 Kings 2:9); Micah's prophecy to Ahab and Jehoshaphat is attributed to the working of the Spirit (1 Kings 22:19ff.); and Isaiah implies that his prophecy is from the Spirit of God (30:1). In Old Testament thought, therefore, the Spirit of God is conceived of as the origin of prophecy, whether in visions or in direct revelation.

While it is never said in the Old Testament that God is a Spirit or that the Spirit of God is God, the idea of the Spirit as a personality receives support in several places. In making such a statement we must take into account the use of parallelism in Hebrew literature.¹⁶ Ps. 51:11 makes the absence of God parallel with the absence of His Holy Spirit. In Ps. 139:7 the Spirit and God's presence are equated by the parallelism "whither shall I go from Thy Spirit or whither shall I flee from Thy presence?" Haggai 2:4.5 expresses the same thought, for here the Lord exhorts Joshua and Zerubbabel to be strong for He is with them, and then immediately adds, "According to the word that I covenanted with you when ye came out of Egypt so my Spirit remaineth among you." The thought is also expressed in Ezekiel 39:29 where the Lord says, "Neither will I hide my face any more from them: for I have poured out My Spirit upon the house of Israel." Isaiah virtually hypostasizes the Spirit

¹⁶H. Wheeler Robinson, The Christian Experience of the Holy Spirit (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1928), p. 5.

when he says of the Israelites in their relation to God in the wilderness, "But they rebelled and vexed His Holy Spirit, therefore He turned to be their enemy and himself fought against them" (63:10). From these passages it is at least possible to infer that the Spirit is God, and that where God's Spirit is present, God Himself is also there. Evidently the presence of God among His people also means the presence of the Spirit of God.¹⁷ Robinson sums this up when he says of 2 Cor. 3:17:

We must not read back the full content of these words into the Old Testament conception of Yahweh . . . but at least we may see some preparation for them in the way in which His activity is described as His presence (lit. "Face") and this is paralleled with His ruach.¹⁸

In addition to the knowledge that the Spirit of God was present and active in the life of Israel and particularly in the lives of the prophets, there was also the expectation of a future and greater outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Joel's prophecy most clearly points forward to the future Messianic Age when the Spirit of God would be poured out on the sons and daughters of Israel enabling them to prophesy, see visions, and dream dreams (3:1f.). It would be an age in which the Spirit of God would breathe upon dead people and they would live (Ezek. 36:26; 37:9-14), the fulfillment of the expressed desire of Moses that the Lord would put His Spirit upon all His people in order that they might prophesy (Num. 11:29). In this Messianic Age it was the leader of the people of God who in particular would be filled with the Spirit of God (Is. 11:1,2;

¹⁷Johnston, p. 236f.

¹⁸Robinson, p. 11. Johnston, p. 237, agrees with this and says that many of the passages "imply some sort of personalization, yet, the most the Hebrews did was to approach that half-dreamed, intangible representation which appears in Job 4, 15 (then a spirit passed before my face)."

61:1).¹⁹ In the words of Swete:

Great as had been the energy of the Divine Spirit in their own experience, it was foreseen by the prophets that the new Israel of the Messianic Age would be inspired both in head and members with a fuller strength and deeper wisdom corresponding with the larger mission on which it was to be sent.²⁰

The pouring out of the Spirit in the Messianic Age would be the means of drawing together the people of God from all nations. This is especially clear in the prophecy of Zech. 12:1 and 13:1, where it is seen that the acknowledgment of sin and the desire for the grace of God are dependent on the fact that the Spirit of God has been given to man. The transformation which is brought about by the Spirit extends first to the eyes of men who look upon Him whom they have pierced and then to the voices which are raised in sorrow over this circumstance. In this lamentation all men become one. The fellowship which has been broken by sin is thus once more restored by the Spirit. It is the Spirit who brings individual members of the people of God together and forms them into one body.²¹

Summing it all up, we find that the Old Testament doctrine of the Spirit is represented by the key words of personality, vitality, service, and fellowship.²² The Spirit may have been understood as a personality,

¹⁹Although the Messiah is not specifically described as the dispenser of the Spirit he is frequently thought of as the bearer of the Spirit. The hope of a future outpouring of the Spirit and the hope of a coming bearer of the Spirit could, however, logically be brought together in the thought of the Messiah as the dispenser of the Spirit. See Julius Schniewind, "Das Evangelium Nach Markus," Das Neue Testament Deutsch (Goettingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1949), p. 44.

²⁰Swete, p. 3.

²¹Hellmuth Frey, "Das Buch der Kirche in der Weltwende, Die kleinen nachexilischen Propheten," Die Botschaft des Alten Testaments (Stuttgart: Calwer Verlag, 1948), pp. 313-316.

²²Robinson, p. 8.

present and active where God is present; it is the source of life, being the source of both physical creation and the spiritual creation of the people of God; it is the source of prophecy and of the exaltation of all spiritual and physical powers which are used for the special purposes of God's people: and it is the force which draws the individual members of Israel together into one body in close fellowship with itself and with one another. In the coming Messianic Age it would be a power poured out in previously unknown measure, particularly on the leader of this age. On the basis of the Old Testament we may conclude that all this could have been and perhaps was understood by those who heard John proclaim that the Coming One was to baptize with the Spirit.

This conclusion is strengthened by a consideration of the references to the Spirit in Apocryphal and Pseudepigraphical literature. Baruch 23:5 refers to the Spirit of God as the creator of life; judgment comes because of a denial of the Spirit of the Lord according to Enoch 67:10; in Jub. 1:23 the Lord speaks of creating a holy Spirit in his people and cleansing them so that they will remain true to Him; Ps. Sol. 17:37 attributes the might of the Messiah to God's Holy Spirit and points to the gathering of the tribes as an event which takes place during His time (17:50). Although the doctrine of the Spirit is not found as frequently in these writings as in the Old Testament, it does occur.²³ When it does, its usage is identical with that of the canonical Old Testament.

²³Swete, p. 4; Erik Sjöberg, "πνεῦμα, πνευματικός," Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament, edited by G. Friedrich (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer GMBH, n.d.), VI, 383.

The concept is also one which is found in the Qumran literature. One of the most striking passages is that found in the Manual of Discipline, IV, 37-38 where it is said that at the determined hour of judgment,

God will purge all the acts of man in the crucible of His truth, and refine for Himself all the fabric of man, destroying every spirit of perversity from within his flesh and cleansing him by the holy spirit from all the effects of wickedness. Like waters of purification He will sprinkle upon him the spirit of truth, to cleanse him of all the abominations of falsehood and of all pollution through the spirit of filth; to the end that, being made upright, men may have understanding of transcendental knowledge and of the lore of the sons of heaven, and that being made blameless in their ways, they may be endowed with inner vision.²⁴

In this literature, however, the function of the Holy Spirit is no longer spelled out as clearly as in the canonical and apocryphal writings. The concept of the Spirit has become confused so that it is often impossible to determine if the writer is speaking of the Spirit of God or some spirit within man. The idea of the Spirit has been modified and there appears to be a consistent dualism of good and evil spirits which does not appear in the canonical writings.

²⁴Theodor H. Gaster, The Dead Sea Scriptures (New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1956), p. 45. For a discussion of the use of "Spirit" in the Qumran literature see George Johnston, "'Spirit' and 'Holy Spirit' in the Qumran Literature," New Testament Sidelights, edited by Harvey McArthur (Hartford: The Hartford Seminary Press, 1960), pp. 27-42; Jean Steinmann, St. John the Baptist and the Desert Tradition, translated by Michael Boyes (New York: Harper and Brothers, n.d.), p. 69; Wm. H. Brownlee, "A Comparison of the Covenanters of the Dead Sea Scrolls with Pre-Christian Jewish Sects," Biblical Archeologist, XIII (September, 1950), 71.

John's proclamation, however, was not only concerned with one who would baptize with the Holy Spirit, but also with fire. Most commentators would agree that both were a part of his proclamation,²⁵ although the interpretation of the term "fire" varies, some commentators understanding it as a purifying agent while others understand it as a judicial instrument. Still others prefer some combination of these so that by means of judgment and purification the fire becomes, in a manner of speaking, a saving instrument. In view of this, it is necessary once again to turn to the Old Testament for a clarification of this concept.

The Hebrew word for "fire" which appears most frequently and is translated by $\pi \psi \rho$ is $\psi \chi$, occurring approximately 380 times.²⁶ As we examine the Old Testament usage we are immediately struck by the fact that fire often is associated with God or religious things. It is the fire on the altar consuming the sacrifice which sends the sweet smelling savor upward to God. He Himself is the one who sometimes sends it for that purpose, as in the case of the meal provided by Gideon (Judges 6:21) or the water-saturated sacrifice of Elijah (1 Kings 18:38). God Himself

²⁵Most of the questions concerning the content of John's proclamation have been directed toward the inclusion of the term $\pi \nu \epsilon \delta \mu \alpha \ \alpha \chi \iota \omega \nu$, particularly its inclusion in the sense of Holy Spirit. Some who are willing to grant the inclusion of the term insist that its understanding in the sense of Holy Spirit is due to the influence of the early Church. However, the usage of the term in the Old Testament as well as the Apocrypha and the Dead Sea Scrolls makes its use by John in the sense of "Holy Spirit" not only possible, but probable. Procksch, " $\alpha \chi \iota \omega \nu$," p. 104, believes that the use of $\pi \nu \epsilon \delta \mu \alpha \ \alpha \chi \iota \omega \nu$ in the sense of "Holy Spirit" rather than "holy wind" originates with Jesus and is referred by Him back to John the Baptist.

²⁶Lexicon in Veteris Testamenti Libros, edited by Ludwig Koehler and Walter Baumgärtner (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1951), I, 90.

is closely associated with fire on the occasions of His personal appearance. He appears to Moses in a burning bush (Ex. 3:2,4) and to Israel on the fiery Mt. Sinai. The $\text{אֵשׁ} \text{ מִן־הַשָּׁמַיִם}$ has the appearance of a devouring fire on top of the mountain (Ex. 19:18) and the presence of the Lord is apparent to Israel at night because of the pillar of fire (Ex. 14:21).

Yet God is not fire; He simply uses it as a means to manifest Himself and to carry out His judgment. He is not bound to the element but uses it as His servant. The use to which He puts it is that of judgment. So Sodom and Gomorrah are destroyed through fire and brimstone (Gen. 19:24); fire falls from heaven to consume the intended captors of Elijah (2 Kings 1:10); it goes out from the Lord to devour Nadab and Abihu as a punishment for offering strange incense before the Lord (Lev. 10:2). The prophets speak of it as an instrument of God's judgment both upon the foreign nations and upon Israel.²⁷ It is the working tool in the hand of the divine judge.²⁸

Fire also has an eschatological connotation in the Old Testament. It carries out three functions in the eschatological drama. (1) It is a sign of the coming day of the Lord (Joel 3:3); (2) It is the instrument of annihilation for all of God's enemies (Mal. 3:19; Is. 66:15f.; Ezek. 38:22; 39:6) and (3) The condemned experience their everlasting punish-

²⁷For foreign nations, Amos 1:4.7.10.12.14; 2:2; Jer. 43:12; Nahum 3:13 and others. For Israel, Amos 2:5; Hos. 8:14; Jer. 11:16; 17:27; 21:14; 22:7; Ezek. 15:7; 16:41; 24:9 and others.

²⁸Lang, p. 935.

ment through means of fire (Is. 66:24).²⁹ In view of this it appears that fire is conceived of chiefly as a means of judgment, particularly in the eschatological drama and is not considered primarily as a purifying element.³⁰

In determining the meaning of John's message the words spoken by Jesus to His disciples immediately before His ascension should also be considered since they occur in a context which refers to the proclamation and baptism of the Baptist (Acts 1:4,5). If there had been any doubt with regard to the meaning of $\piνευμα \ \delta\epsilon\ \chi\epsilon\iota\upsilon\upsilon$ in the message of John these words make it clear that his reference was to that gift of the Holy Spirit which the Messiah would give. Jesus is simply making it clear that although He was the Messiah this promise had not yet been fulfilled and could not be fulfilled prior to His resurrection and ascension to the Father. It was a clarification of His statement to the disciples recorded in Jn. 16:7.

When John spoke his message, then, it is quite certain that on the basis of the Old Testament he had no intention of using the words

²⁹Ibid., pp. 935-936.

³⁰Kraeling, p. 117, believes it is purifying and finds in Dan. 7:10-11 the source for John's institution of an eschatological baptism. He believes that the destructive and purifying river of fire, a figure which had its origin in Persian eschatology, suggested the rite to John. However, in Dan. 7:11 fire is unmistakably judgmental since the beast is given over to be burned by it. Charles H. Scobie, John the Baptist (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1964), p. 115, disagrees with Kraeling's conclusion and points out that while the thought of judgment is involved in the proclamation and baptism of John, the basic idea of immersion in the Jordan River is not judgment but cleansing or washing away of sin.

πνεύμα ἁγίου in the sense of a Holy Wind.³¹ Nor is it likely, in view of the remaining portion of his proclamation, that both elements πνεῦμα and πῦρ are to be considered as possessing a single function, either that of purifying or that of destroying. They are rather to be understood as having separate, opposing functions. The axe is laid at the root of the tree. The unfruitful tree will be cut down and cast into the fire, while the fruitful one will live and produce fruit. The chaff will be burned in unquenchable fire, while the wheat will be gathered up and stored in the granary of God. Fire means judgments; spirit means creative restoration.

The images used by John in this context have their origin in the Old Testament. Is. 10:33f. is a striking parallel to the action described by John. The prophet says that "the Lord of hosts will lop the boughs with terrifying power; the great in height will be hewn down and the lofty will be brought low. He will cut the thickets of the forest with an axe and Lebanon with its majestic trees will fall." In contrast to this the Old Testament presents the righteous man as "a tree planted

³¹Ibid., p. 72. This conclusion is, however, disputed and the interpretation "wind" still has its defenders. For a defense of this view see Schweizer, p. 397 and Ernest Best, "Spirit Baptism," Novum Testamentum, IV (1959), 236-246. Best sees two traditions at work. In his view John's original proclamation was one of wind and fire fulfilled at Pentecost; since Pentecost was obviously an outpouring of the Holy Spirit this came to be an interpretation of the Baptist's original saying. Also Francis Glasson, "Water, Wind and Fire (Luke III.16) and Orphic Initiation," New Testament Studies, III (1956-1957), 69-71; R. Eisler, The Messiah Jesus and John the Baptist (London: Methuen and Co., Ltd., 1931), p. 275f. Ernst Lohmeyer, "Johannes der Täufer," Das Urchristentum (Goettingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1932), p. 84, disagrees and points out that in Acts 2:2 wind and fire are not to be considered as identical with πνεῦμα and πῦρ of John's proclamation. He points out that the tongues are not described as being fire, but ἄλλοσποδοὶ ὡσεὶ πύρος.

by the rivers of water that brings forth its fruit in its season. His leaf also shall not wither and whatever he does shall prosper." (Ps. 1:3)³² The idea of threshing which is suggested in the picture of the Coming One with the winnowing shovel in His hand is also common in the Old Testament. The evil ones are frequently depicted as chaff or straw which is worthless and will be annihilated.³³

The Old Testament use of Spirit, Holy Spirit, and fire confirms the interpretation that John is speaking of the two elements as performing two different functions. It must be admitted that in the Old Testament judgment is frequently associated with wind. Is. 29:5f. is especially important in this respect as it tells Israel that their enemies will be like chaff but also that "in an instant, suddenly, you will be visited by the Lord of Hosts with thunder and with earthquake and great noise, with whirlwind and the flame of a devouring fire." Similar to this is the thought of Ps. 1:4 where the wicked are "like chaff which the wind drives away."³⁴ However, there are three reasons which lead to the conclusion that Holy Spirit and fire are not only two separate elements but that they perform opposing functions. (1) The overwhelming evidence of the Old Testament with regard to the activity of the Spirit points to

³²See also Is. 65:22; Jer. 11:16, 19; 17:7.8; Hos. 14:6 and others.

³³Ps. 1:4; 35:5; Is. 5:24; Jer. 23:28; Hos. 13:3 and others.

³⁴In this, as in most cases, the thought is not strictly parallel. The fire, not the wind, is the destroying agent. Nor is it described as a "holy wind." In this passage as in others the contrast is between persons, not the agents of blessing and judgment.

its salutary function, while the "fire" occurs in judgmental and condemnatory contexts in the majority of cases.³⁵ (2) The context in which these words appear in the proclamation of John point to the separate functions. (3) The early Christian Church interpreted the proclamation in this manner.

When Christ promised His disciples that they would receive power after the Holy Spirit had come upon them, and this promise was made in the context of a reminder of the proclamation of John (Acts 1:4.5), He was obviously referring to the promise which could not be fulfilled until after His ascension to the Father. This promise was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost when those who were gathered together were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in tongues. Peter's sermon on that occasion clearly saw this not only as a fulfillment of the promise of Christ, but also the fulfillment of the promise regarding the Messianic Age recorded in Joel 3:1ff.³⁶

This was the time referred to as the end of days, the breaking in of the Messianic Age which resulted in such an outpouring of the Spirit as had never been in evidence before. It was manifested not only in the working of signs and miracles and the speaking of tongues on the part of the apostles, but also in their true and fearless witness to the Messiah and in their inspired teaching. Furthermore, it was evident in the

³⁵It should be noted that in the three specific cases in which $\psi\tau\iota\sigma\iota\varsigma$ occurs in the Old Testament its function is described as one of creating, energizing, and sanctifying. See Ps. 51:11; Is. 63:10.11.

³⁶Acts 2:14-21.

spiritual gifts present among individual Christians regardless of their position. The Corinthian congregation furnishes an excellent example of this, and from the manner in which these spiritual gifts are described, it appears that they were quite common also in other churches.³⁷

This phenomenon of spiritual gifts was already evident at the time of the conversion of Cornelius and his household recorded in Acts 10. As Peter preached and the Spirit came upon these people His presence was made apparent by their ability to praise God and speak in tongues. The baptism of the Spirit was apparently accompanied by signs which appeared not only among members of the Jewish nation who accepted Christ, but also among members of the believing Gentiles. It appeared among all members of the true Israel which, as had been prophesied, would be gathered from all nations. In his report on the incident Peter sees it as a fulfillment of Jesus' promise of Acts 1:16. As John had proclaimed, God not only could, but did raise for Abraham other children than those who were related to him by blood ties.

Before drawing final conclusions, notice should also be taken of the twelve so-called "Disciples of the Baptist" who made their appearance in Ephesus (Acts 19:1-7). While the origin of these disciples is not certain, it may be hesitantly conjectured that these were men who had been instructed in the proclamation of John and baptized into his baptism by Appollos, of whom it is said in the previous chapter that he taught of Jesus but knew only the baptism of John. His instruction concerning Jesus was perhaps that which John had given, "He shall baptize you with

³⁷I Cor. 12-14.

the Holy Spirit and with fire."

This incident has caused needless confusion with regard to the teaching of John. In particular, it is Acts 19:2 which causes the confusion, for here the disciples who were baptized into John's baptism declare that they have not heard whether there is a Holy Spirit. This passage has led some to the conclusion that in his proclamation John did not speak of a baptism with the Holy Spirit, but that this portion of his message is a later insertion of Christians who wished to emphasize the superiority of Jesus. With regard to this view it need only be said that what these "disciples" did or did not know some twenty-five to thirty years after the original proclamation can scarcely be used as a norm for the reconstruction of the Baptist's message.³⁸ It is certainly not necessary to draw the conclusion indicated above.

The statement of these "disciples" is capable of an altogether different interpretation which allows for John's proclamation of the Spirit and a true adherence to his teaching by these "disciples." It is entirely possible that they knew of John's proclamation but were not aware of the fact that the Spirit had in fulfillment of John's promise, been poured out after the ascension of Christ. The incident in Ephesus, from this point of view, would be an indication of how closely the tradition of the Baptist and his baptism were followed. These "disciples" knew John's proclamation, but they did not yet know that the Coming One had come and had poured out the Spirit on all flesh since they had not yet seen nor experienced the baptism of the Spirit as it manifested

³⁸Kraeling, p. 59.

itself in outward phenomena.³⁹

From all that has been said it appears that both Pentecost and the special gifts of the Spirit are included in John's proclamation of the Spirit. However, the understanding of this message must not be restricted to this circumstance. The full meaning of John's proclamation must also include a recognition of his historical position.⁴⁰ He stood at the threshold of the Messianic Age and his proclamation must be considered from this eschatological viewpoint. John's baptism is a temporary institution because it foreshadows and indicates the last period before the "Day of the Lord," the breaking in of the Messianic Age. The appearance of the Messiah in history ushers in a new era, an era in which God Himself is present, for the presence of the Holy Spirit means the presence of God among His people. With the baptism of the Spirit, a new aeon is created, an aeon consisting of the fellowship of the people of God, foretold by the prophet Zechariah.⁴¹

We may therefore say that those who heard the proclamation of John understood his message in the sense of an announcement of the fact that

³⁹Lohmeyer, p. 26. Best, p. 237, suggests that if we are to take the assertion of these "disciples" literally, in the sense that they had not even heard of the Holy Spirit, we would also have to ask whether they had ever lived in a Jewish environment at all.

⁴⁰Karl Rengstorf, "Das Evangelium nach Lukas," Das Neue Testament Deutsch (Goettingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1949), p. 57; M. Leimer, "Die Taufe Johannes Des Täufers In Ihrem Verhältnis Zu Christi Taufe," Concordia Theological Monthly, XIV (March 1943), 98.

⁴¹Frey, p. 316. In the common mourning over the one who has been pierced and in acceptance of common guilt for this circumstance the nation is bound together and the broken fellowship restored. It is the Spirit which stands behind this union.

the Messianic Age was near at hand. In this Messianic Age, the presence of God would be evident, not only in supernatural signs and wonders, but in a new and clearer and fuller proclamation of God's will, in the establishment of His Kingdom, and in the fellowship of believers. It would have been understood in the sense that God would be present in the world with judgment for evildoers and vindication for the repentant and believing.⁴²

With the coming of Christ it became apparent that God was present among His people, not in a vague transcendent way, but personally, immanently, powerfully, and in action. With His ascension to the Father, God was still present among them as the source of wisdom and discernment, opening the eyes, minds, and hearts of men, guiding them into all truth, creating the new Israel in which all the members are priests, spiritual leaders.

The baptism with fire has been delayed until the fulfillment of the present age and the time of the Parousia. In a sense it is already taking place in the reactions of the people to the message of Christ. For he who does not believe in the Son of God is condemned already.⁴³ The Holy Spirit is present in His action of judgment and vindication, binding into one body the Church, the individual members who have been baptized with the Holy Spirit. At the final separation the believing human wheat

⁴²Floyd Filson, The New Testament Against Its Environment (Chicago: Henry Regnery Co., 1950), p. 75.

⁴³Jn. 3:18.

will be gathered into the granary of God to enjoy the use of the unlimited gifts of the Spirit, while the unbelieving chaff will be cast into unquenchable fire. When this occurs the Old Testament prophetic vision will achieve its complete fulfillment.

CHAPTER VI

BEHOLD THE LAMB OF GOD

From the accounts of the activity of John in the four evangelists, it would seem that his proclamation of the Coming One preceded the identification of this One with Jesus. Among the crowds which flocked to the Jordan River to hear John's proclamation and to be baptized by him, there was one who had no need to be baptized. This one was Jesus. It is a striking fact that the unanimous witness of the accounts, whether implied or specifically stated, is that it was at the point of His baptism that the identification was made.¹ At this juncture John apparently became aware of the divine mission of Jesus as the Christ by the descent of the Holy Spirit upon Him.

Although there are obvious differences in the gospel accounts of the incident, these accounts are not contradictory but complementary. The Synoptics, for example, describe the baptism of Jesus; the Fourth Gospel does not. However, from a reading of the account it becomes evident that while the evangelist John does not record the incident, he is very much aware of it (Jn. 1:33-34). His record of the proclamation of the Baptist is chiefly concerned with the proclamation subsequent to Jesus' baptism. The Synoptists include a fuller account of John's preaching prior to it and immediately fasten their attention upon the work of Christ while the Fourth Gospel is concerned with indicating the gradually diminishing importance of John and the increase in the importance

¹Matt. 3:13-17; Mk. 1:9-11; Lk. 3:21,22; Jn. 1:29-34.

of the Christ. It answers some of the questions which would arise concerning the activity of John subsequent to Jesus' baptism. In both, the Baptist is merely a witness, a precursor, a way-preparer, not the founder of an original, independent community. The synoptists report the Kingdom and the repentance-baptism proclamations, while the official investigation noted by the Fourth Gospel presupposes that this preaching has taken place. If it had not, there would have been no inquiry regarding John's authority for baptism. Taking this into consideration, it is impossible to say as Kraeling emphatically does,

Among the canonical Evangelists, the fourth is unfortunately not as reliable as the other three in his rendering of the specific utterances, for he telescopes them, adapts them to the purposes of his advanced pre-existence Christology, and in general uses them to make John the first confessing Christian.²

In a previous chapter we have already dealt briefly with the question of John's awareness of the pre-existence of the Coming One,³ but the question still remains as to whether John may in a certain sense be included among the followers of Christ, or, to put the question more specifically: Did John understand the mission of Christ as a mission involving a vicarious suffering in any form? Those who insist that he did would base their contentions on his statement of identification when he pointed to Jesus with the exclamation, "Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world."⁴ Those who maintain that he had no conception of this kind believe that their statement cannot be prop-

²Carl Kraeling, John the Baptist (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1951), p. 34.

³Supra, p. 35.

⁴Jn. 1:29.36.

erly assigned to the Baptist, but is rather a confession of the later Church which has been ascribed to him. Some scholars contend that this confession is simply another statement reflecting the polemic of Christianity against the Johannine disciples.⁵

The question which must be answered is two-fold: (1) Could John have made such a statement, and (2) if he did, what was its meaning in the context of his day? Since the title "Lamb of God" is clearly bound up with John's assertion of the deity of Jesus, (John 1:30) the second aspect of the question involves both His person and His work. As has been indicated in the opening paragraphs of this chapter, the logical starting point for our investigation must be the baptism of Jesus since it is after this event that the statements are made.

It has long been recognized that there is an apparent connection between the words spoken by the heavenly voice at the baptism of Jesus and the servant passage of Is. 42. When the Spirit descended upon Christ at His baptism, the accompanying voice testified, "this is [you are] my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased."⁶ The traditional location for the Old Testament source of these words is in the Psalms and Isaiah: the statement is considered a combination of Ps. 2:7 and Is. 42:1. This tradition has, however, been challenged so that the source of the words is limited by some interpreters to Is. 42:1 alone. An examination of

⁵For a discussion of the existence of such a sect, supra, pp. 4, 103.

⁶Mk. 1:11 and Lk. 3:22 use the phrase εὖ εἶ . Matt. 3:17 alone uses the phrase οὗτος ἐστίν according to the best texts. The use of the aorist ἐὺδόκησα, "I took delight," may indicate something similar to the foreordination of Christ before the foundation of the world of I Peter 1:20 and may therefore be significant.

this possibility will lead us into a discussion of the designation "Lamb of God" as well as the deity of Christ as recognized by the Baptist.

Jeremias is one of the most consistent of those who identify the Old Testament source of the celestial words at the baptism of Jesus solely with Is. 42:1. His case is to a great extent based upon a comparison of the words in each and leads to the following conclusion:

The hypothesis that the voice at the baptism was originally purely an echo of Is. 42:1 is supported by several considerations. First, the heavenly voice, Mark 1:11 is obviously meant to explain the impartation of the Spirit (Mark 1:10) as a fulfillment of scripture. As so often in O. T. Quotations, e.g., in rabbinic literature, the continuation of the passage (Is. 42:1 in Matt. 12:18c) is implied but not actually quoted: *θήσω τὸ πνεῦμά μου ἐπ' αὐτόν*. Thus the heavenly voice affirms that the promise given in Is. 42:1 about the gift of the Spirit has just been fulfilled. Second, when the text of the divine declaration at the baptism and the transfiguration wavers between *ἀγαπητός* (Mark 1:11 par.; 9:7 par. Matt. 17:5) and *ἐκλεκτός*, we presumably have variations in the translation of *קָדוֹשׁ* Is. 42:1, which is sometimes rendered by *ἐκλεκτός* (LXX, Σ and Θ) and sometimes by *ἀγαπητός*. Third, in John 1:34 the heavenly voice at the baptism according to the supposed oldest text . . . is given in the words *οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ ἐκλεκτός τοῦ θεοῦ*.⁷ But 'the chosen of God' is a Messianic designation coming from Is. 42:1.⁸

⁷Although Nestle includes *ὁ υἱός* in the main body of the text he indicates that this variant has strong claim to originality. Textual evidence for it includes the original version of \mathfrak{A} and a few other codices, the Latin manuscript e, and two Syrian manuscripts originating at about the Fifth Century. Westcott-Hort include it as a noteworthy rejected reading. It should also be noted that the Bodmer Papyrus (p⁶⁶) reads *υἱός*.

⁸W. Zimmerli and J. Jeremias, *The Servant of the Lord* (Naperville, Ill.: Alec R. Allenson, Inc., 1957), pp. 81-82. Jeremias offers the following comparison:

Mark 1:11 = Luke 3:22	with	Is. 42:1 (as quoted in Matt. 12:18),
par. Matt. 3:17		
<i>οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ υἱός μου ὁ ἀγαπητός</i>		<i>ἰδὼν δὲ πᾶς μου ὃν ἠγάπησα</i>
<i>ἐν σοὶ (ὦ, μαθ.) ἐνδόξασα</i>		<i>δὲ ἀγαπητός μου</i>
(Cf. Mark 1:10 par.): <i>τὸ πνεῦμά μου ἐπέσει ἐπ' αὐτόν</i>		<i>δὲ ἐνδόξασεν ἡ ψυχὴ μου</i>
		<i>θήσω τὸ πνεῦμά μου ἐπ' αὐτόν</i>

It should also be noted that in reporting the words at the transfiguration,

We have quoted Jeremias at length because he has stated the arguments, which others have also used, so clearly and concisely. He finds further support for his view in the phrase $\delta \lambda \alpha \nu \acute{o} \varsigma \tau \omicron \upsilon \theta \epsilon \omicron \upsilon$ which he feels can be explained through the supposition of an Aramaic original. Since the Aramaic ܠܡܒܘܠ can mean either "lamb or boy, servant" he is convinced that John's original reference in that language is to the Servant of God, and finds further support for it in the reference to the Servant passage of Is. 53:12 regarding the role of the servant in the removal of sin.⁹

The most serious objection to the identification of the passage with Is. 42:1 alone is the overwhelming textual evidence in favor of the retention of $\nu \acute{\iota} \acute{o} \varsigma$, the only significant variant being that found in Jn. 1:34. But even if the original word was $\nu \acute{\iota} \acute{o} \varsigma$ as the text indicates, it is obvious that the rest of the passage refers to the beginning of the Servant Song in Is. 42. Jesus is thus designated as the

Luke uses the word $\epsilon \kappa \lambda \epsilon \lambda \epsilon \chi \mu \acute{\epsilon} \nu \omicron \varsigma$ in agreement with the LXX. For a further discussion, cf. J. Jeremias, " $\lambda \alpha \nu \acute{o} \varsigma \tau \omicron \upsilon \theta \epsilon \omicron \upsilon - \pi \alpha \tau \epsilon \rho \varsigma \theta \epsilon \omicron \upsilon$ " Zeitschrift für Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft, XXXIV (1935), 115-123 and Oscar Cullmann, Baptism in the New Testament, translated by J. K. S. Reid (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1950), pp. 17-21.

⁹The most serious objection raised to this proposal is the lack of textual evidence. In addition, it has been pointed out that the Aramaic equivalent of $\tau \lambda \lambda \psi$ is not ܠܡܒܘܠ but ܠܡܒܘܠܐ . Cf. Stephen Virgulum, "Recent Discussion of the Title 'Lamb of God'," Scripture, XIII (July 1961), 80.

Son who in the role of the Servant takes the sins of the people upon Himself. Whatever view one takes of the Old Testament source the connection of the words spoken at Jesus' baptism with the Servant Song of Is. 42 remains firm.

The establishment of the connection, however, raises a further question with regard to the Servant. Is the Servant to be considered as an individual or as a collective entity? If the former, is he a historical person, a contemporary, the prophet himself, or some future figure? C. R. North has considered the Servant Songs carefully and has concluded that the prophet is referring to someone in the future and to Jesus in particular.¹⁰ He indicates that although the collective interpretation may have been the original one, it did not receive full consideration in Judaism until the end of the first millenium A.D. and therefore is possibly in opposition to Christianity. The Judaic opposition to an individual interpretation, however, is based on linguistic grounds and must have merit or it would not have been accepted by so many Christian scholars.¹¹ This opinion of North agrees with that of Jeremias who believes that from the Second Century A.D. on, Jewish exegesis was shaped to a large extent by opposition to Christianity, a circumstance which led to an avoidance of the use of the terms "Servant of God" and "The Chosen One" as designations for the Messiah by Jewish

¹⁰C. R. North, The Suffering Servant of Deutero-Isaiah (London: Oxford University Press, 1948), pp. 218-219. North presents the entire history of the interpretation of the Servant Songs before presenting his own view. H. H. Rowley, The Servant of the Lord (London: Lutterworth Press, 1952), pp. 3-57 agrees to a large extent with North's conclusions although he finds more fluidity in the term "Servant," an oscillation between the individual and collective meanings.

¹¹North, pp. 17-18.

interpreters.¹²

If we accept the interpretation of the servant as an individual, we are faced with the further question of whether the pious Jew of John's day could conceive of the work of the Messiah in terms of vicarious suffering. From all the evidence it appears that the concept of the suffering Messiah is a concept which is unfamiliar to Judaism at this time. The Messiah may be called the Servant of God on occasion, but he is never thought of as suffering vicariously for his people.¹³ This is at least true of official Judaism.

One of the most important pieces of evidence for this is the manner in which the targums deal with the Is. 53 passage. In a curious way, they interpret it so that the Servant inspires fear among the people and is considered with reverence. God does not turn his face from the servant, but from the people who are thus despised rather than the Servant.¹⁴

If the idea of a suffering Messiah was present it would have been found only among the sects on the fringes of the nation of Israel. Yet, as Schlatter has observed, Judaism had no single dogmatic system.¹⁵ It would therefore be possible for such an idea to have been in existence;

¹²Zimmerli-Jeremias, p. 75.

¹³Sigmund Mowinckel, He That Cometh (New York: Abingdon Press, n.d.), pp. 255. 329; Cullmann, p. 19; North, p. 11; Oscar Cullmann, The Christology of the New Testament, translated by Shirley Guthrie and Charles Hall (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1959), pp. 58-60; Rowley, pp. 61-88.

¹⁴Cullmann, Christology, p. 59.

¹⁵A. Schlatter, Johannes der Täufer (Basel: Verlag Friedrich Reinhardt AG, 1956), p. 129.

but from the available evidence we must conclude that while the idea of a Suffering Servant and a Messianic King were both present in Judaism, they were never identified or brought into close relationship.

In spite of this, it is quite obvious that John was speaking of the vicarious atonement of Jesus when he designated him as the "Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world." There are a number of possibilities for the meaning of this designation among which are that of the paschal victim, the daily sacrifice, the guilt offering, the apocalyptic lamb and the Suffering Servant. A consideration of the manner in which they are described in comparison with the Baptist's proclamation results in the conclusion that objections can be raised to any one of them.

In favor of the identification of the Lamb of God with the Paschal lamb one could cite the references in the Fourth Gospel to the crucifixion of Christ which took place at the time of the Passover as well as the references in I Peter 1:18.19 and I Cor. 5:7. John specifically says that not one of Christ's bones was broken at this time in fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy, a possible reference to the Paschal lamb.¹⁶ The two chief objections which have been raised against this interpretation are that the Paschal lamb is not a lamb provided by God nor is it one which removes sin. In addition, the paschal victim was not necessarily a lamb, but one of the flock from the sheep or goats.¹⁷ It is doubtful

¹⁶C. H. Dodd, The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel (London: Cambridge University Press, 1953), p. 236, has pointed out that this may just as well be a reference to Ps. 33(34):21(20).

¹⁷Ex. 12:5.

whether the first two objections could be maintained, for it was this sacrifice which removed the judgment of God from those who carried out the directions for the paschal observance and the offering is not simply ordinary flesh but flesh which belongs to God.¹⁸ All the first-born are His. It should also be noted that the usual offering was a lamb.

Schlatter, among others, finds the reference to the Lamb of God as an indication of the daily sacrifice which was offered.¹⁹ This interpretation has the advantage of a specific reference to the lamb as a victim in the daily sacrifices, and may also be said to have been provided by God. Objections have been raised on the grounds that it is not, strictly speaking, provided by God and that it is not considered to be an expiation for sin.²⁰ However, these objections do not appear to be valid since Lev. 17:11 clearly points to God as the provider of the daily sacrificial offering as an expiation for sin.

A further comparison has been found between the lamb of God and the scapegoat upon which the sins of Israel were placed. The chief argument in its favor is that it contains the idea of the carrying away of sin. However, in addition to the fact that the animal used on the Day of Atonement was a goat and not a lamb, the verb which is used in the

¹⁸Hellmuth Frey, "Das Buch der Heimsuchung und des Auszugs Kapitel 1-18 Des Zweiten Buches Mose," Die Botschaft des Alten Testaments (Stuttgart: Calwer Verlag, 1949), V, 35-38.

¹⁹A. Schlatter, Der Evangelist Johannes (Stuttgart: Calwer Verlag, 1960), pp. 46-47.

²⁰C. K. Barrett, The Gospel According to St. John (London: SPCK, 1960), p. 147.

Septuagint for the taking of sin is not ἀἴρω but λαμβάνω.

Another interpretation which has received much support is that of the Lamb of God as an apocalyptic lamb. This is the conclusion of Dodd, who feels that it refers to the Messiah as the victorious leader of his people who could put away sin from among them and overcome the powers of evil.²¹ This view takes as its starting point the eschatological character of John's proclamation in which the Coming One is seen as a leader of power and might. It finds support in the apocalyptic literature, particularly in the Book of Enoch and the Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs.²² Dodd finds further confirmation of his opinion in the designation of the horned Lamb of Revelation as the one who overcomes evil (5:9).

The chief objection to this interpretation is that it does not seem to take seriously the explanatory phrase of John's message, "that takes away the sin of the world." Nor does it appear to be more understandable to the contemporaries of John or the writer of the gospel than a reference to the Lamb of a sacrificial character. As C. K. Barrett says,

the fourth gospel was written in order to present the claims of Christianity to the 'higher religion of Hellenism' . . . What, may we ask, would these men make of the horned lamb of Enoch? . . . anything less likely to appeal to them than the apocalyptic figure of the Lamb-Messiah would be difficult to imagine.²³

²¹Dodd, p. 236; Raymond E. Brown, "Three Quotations From John the Baptist in the Gospel of John," Catholic Biblical Quarterly, XXII (1960), 295; Jean Steinmann, St. John the Baptist and the Desert Tradition, translated by Michael Boyes (New York: Harper and Brothers, n.d.), p. 84.

²²Enoch 90:38; Joseph 19:8.

²³C. K. Barrett, "The Lamb of God," New Testament Studies, I (1954-1955), p. 211; Virgulum, p. 79.

In spite of this criticism, Barrett believes that the relationship is as follows:

John the Baptist, or at any rate the earliest Christians, thought of the Messiah as the apocalyptic lamb, destined to overthrow evil. But Christian theology pondered the fact of Jesus' death, and Christian liturgy developed the notion of the Christian passover. John the Evangelist brought the resultant wealth of material together in a term which, like many that he used, was at once Jewish and Hellenistic, apocalyptic, theological, and liturgical; and so deposited at the centre of Christian theology, liturgy and art the picture of agnus dei qui tollit peccata mundi.²⁴

Since no single one of these interpretations meets all the objections which could be raised, it is possible that all are somehow involved in John's proclamation of the Lamb of God. The reference is without doubt primarily to Christ's death and the overcoming of sin in terms of the picture of the atonement deriving from the Jewish sacrificial system,²⁵ but the eschatological element is also included. The reference to the Lamb may also have some apocalyptic overtones, although this is quite unlikely.

To the above possibilities we must also add that of the Lamb of God being conceived of in terms of the Suffering Servant. Apart from Jeremias' suggestion of the word "Lamb" as representing an Aramaic original which had the meaning "servant," the close connection with the Is. 42:1 passage remains as has been indicated. If the passage reflected in the words

²⁴Barrett, "Lamb," New Testament Studies, p. 217.

²⁵W. Grundmann, "ἀμνός," Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, edited by G. Kittel, translated by G. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1964), I, 304.

of the heavenly voice is now related and joined to the Servant Song of Is. 53, John's reference is understandable. While it is true that the Servant is not called a Lamb in this passage and that the lamb is not killed but shorn, it is nevertheless also true that the servant is compared to a lamb (53:7). It is the work of this Servant to make atonement for his people who are compared to sheep gone astray, by his vicarious suffering and death (53:10-12).

In addition to the above facts, it is apparent that the early church saw the servant passages of Isaiah in this light. In the proclamation and prayer of Acts 3:12-26 and 4:27-30 Jesus is designated by the term $\pi\alpha\tilde{\iota}\varsigma$, a word which could very well be translated "servant" rather than "son" since in the immediate context David is designated by the same term.²⁶ In each of these instances in which it occurs it is closely bound to a reference regarding the suffering and death of Jesus. If we add to this the incident of the Ethiopian Eunuch (8:27-35) who was reading Is. 53 and its explanation by Philip there is no doubt that the designation $\pi\alpha\tilde{\iota}\varsigma$ $\theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon$ was a term applied to Christ by the very early Church and that its source was found in Is. 53.

But since all of this follows the events of Good Friday and Easter, the question might still be asked whether it was possible for John to have had and to have conveyed this understanding. If we remember that his mission is explained in terms of Is. 40 we have an indication of his

²⁶ Walter Bauer, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature, translated and adopted from the German by William F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957), pp. 609-610.

familiarity with the writing of the prophet. It is quite unlikely, as Schlatter observes, that John read only Is. 40 and Jesus only Is. 61, the two quotations with which their respective ministries are announced.²⁷ He was obviously aware of the passages concerning the Servant which lie between these two references. Through them John became aware of the mission of Jesus and the point at which this understanding and identification took place was obviously at the baptism of Jesus.

The meagerness of the accounts makes an awareness of all the contacts between John and Jesus impossible. The evangelists are not interested in giving us a detailed chronological record of all the activities of each. However, the dialogue between John and Jesus prior to His baptism indicates at least a beginning awareness on the part of John of something which was confirmed by the descent of the Spirit upon Him on that occasion.²⁸ Nor can we eliminate the special revelation which, like the baptism which John proclaimed, came from God.²⁹ With the descent of the Holy Spirit upon Him John became fully aware of the fact that this was the one designated by God as the Messiah, the Coming One whom he had been proclaiming. This was the Chosen One of God upon whom He had put His Spirit.

The objection has been raised that John did not see the Spirit descending upon Jesus and that the proclamation recorded by the Fourth Gospel was simply placed into the mouth of the Baptist by the Evangelist.

²⁷Adolph Schlatter, Die Geschichte des Christus (Stuttgart: Calwer Verlag, 1960), p. 108.

²⁸Matt. 3:14-15.

²⁹Jn. 1:33.

It is true that Matt. 3:16 and Mark 1:10 speak only of a vision by Jesus of the Spirit of God descending from the open heavens with the accompanying voice and Luke does not specify the witnesses, whereas the Fourth Gospel explicitly states that John also witnessed this tremendous event.³⁰ But this again may be due only to a manner of reporting. The account of Luke permits and Matthew and Mark do not explicitly deny that John witnessed it. It may not have suited their particular purpose to record it, while the Fourth Gospel with its emphasis on *μαρτυρία* may have included it because it was in agreement with its peculiar thrust.³¹

Furthermore, the synoptics seem to presuppose some kind of an understanding which took place between John and Jesus regarding their respective missions. If this had not occurred, Christ's answer to the Baptist's question from prison would have been as enigmatic for John as his proclamation of the Lamb of God is sometimes supposed to have been to the ordinary Jew. In contradiction to those who say that this question indicates a lack of understanding of the mission of Jesus, it rather confirms John's experience at the baptism and his witness of the startling events together with the understanding which accompanied it. Languishing in prison, John's natural reaction may have been to emphasize those

³⁰Charles H. Scobie, John the Baptist (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1964), pp. 146-148, concludes that this is definite proof that a development has taken place and that the record of the Fourth Gospel is not to be considered as factual in the reporting of the baptism of Jesus.

³¹Nils Alstrup Dahl, "The Johannine Church and History," Current Issues in New Testament Theology, edited by Wm. Klassen and Graydon Snyder (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1962), pp. 130-131.

aspects of his proclamation which concerned the Coming One who would purge His threshing floor and destroy the fruitless trees. What he had thought would occur was not taking place, and doubt began to creep into his mind. It was at this point that Christ recalled him to a remembrance of the baptism experience by a reference to the prophecy of Is. 61 with its proclamation of the anointing with the Spirit which would enable the one of whom the prophet spoke to preach good tidings to the meek, bind up the broken hearted, proclaim liberty to the captives, open the doors of the prisons, and proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, the great year of Jubilee. It was an encouragement to him in his present desperate situation as well as a confirmation of the truth of his previous identification of the Coming One.

Assuming then that John did witness the startling events at the baptism of Jesus and heard the heavenly voice, the witness of the Baptist subsequent to the baptism of Jesus recorded by the evangelist John is entirely possible and can be accepted as true. It is a witness which is consistent with the facts and in agreement with the prophecies of the Old Testament on which his message was based.

When John proclaimed one who would come baptizing with the Holy Spirit and fire, he was proclaiming one who was supernatural, one who had the power to save and to condemn. As such He was above all, not simply prior in time, although that was also true, but above everything. He was $\pi\rho\omega\tau\omicron\varsigma$ not $\pi\rho\acute{o}\tau\epsilon\rho\omicron\varsigma$ (Jn. 1:15). With His appearance the Kingdom of Heaven was coming. By this proclamation John expressed the thought that He must not only become, but that He was and is before the Baptist, and not only before him, but before all. He must come out of the heavenly realm

from God upon the earth.³² To believe in Him is to believe in God.³³

As has been indicated, this proclamation of John is based upon the experience at the baptism of Jesus. The proclamation in Jn. 1:15 is not to be considered as a proclamation prior to that event, but is a part of the prologue of the Fourth Gospel which anticipates the event recorded in 1:29-34, at which time John indicates that prior to the descent of the Spirit in fulfillment of the Isaiah prophecy and the special revelation from God he was not aware that Jesus was this Coming One whom he had proclaimed.³⁴

In view of this, we cannot agree with Bailey who says:

The gospels nowhere record that Jesus made a declaration of his messiahship to John, neither do they assert that John had affirmed the messiahship of Jesus in wholly unambiguous terms. John's conduct in continuing to gather disciples and his message from prison alike find their natural explanation in a lingering question in John's mind, not as to the character, but as to the official standing of Jesus. . . . It was this doubt, we must believe, that made him "less than the least in the Kingdom."³⁵

³²Schlatter, Johannes der Täufer, p. 123.

³³Jn. 3:36.

³⁴If the alternate reading of Jn. 1:34 is accepted, it would not be necessary to insist that John proclaimed Jesus as the Son of God, but simply as the "Chosen" of God, supra, p. 111. However, since the textual evidence for the wording of the voice at the baptism of Jesus is overwhelmingly in favor of *υἱός* and since there is no compelling reason for assuming that John did not hear it, this designation of Jesus by him as *υἱός* should be retained.

³⁵J. W. Bailey, "John the Baptist: The Man and His Message," Biblical World, XXVI (1919), 424.

In Christ the two concepts of the Messianic King and the Suffering Servant which had lain side by side in the thought of Judaism were brought together once again.³⁶ Judaism could not reconcile the two ideas and had emphasized the royal aspect of the Messiah's work, interpreting all of Is. 53 in terms of a conquering servant. With His proclamation, John recalled his listeners to the true prophetic word, though he himself may not have grasped its full implications. The thought of a combination of Servant and King was already there in the prophecy of Is. 53:12 concerning the Servant who, because of his vicarious suffering, would receive a portion with the great and divide the spoil with the strong.³⁷ But it was as difficult for John to accept and fully grasp this identification as it was for the disciples of Jesus at a later time. In spite of the experience of John, in spite of the specific words of Jesus, both still retained hopes of a Messianic Kingdom on earth, ruled by this One whom they recognized as the Messiah. In their limited understanding, His actions and words were frequently paradoxical. The Isaiah prophecy already contained this paradox.

³⁶Arch B. Taylor, "Decision in the Desert," Interpretation, XIV (1960), 301. Taylor, however, indicates that the two concepts were first brought together by Christ.

³⁷A. Bentzen, King and Messiah (Chicago: Alec R. Allenson, Inc., 1956), p. 71, agrees with this but feels that behind the identification of King and Suffering Servant lies the myth of "First Man" which prefigures the sufferers in the Psalms as well as Is. 49, 50, and 53. H. Ringgren, The Messiah in the Old Testament (Chicago: Alec R. Allenson, Inc., 1956), p. 66, believes that the idea of the king doing penitence and atoning for the sins of the people is the source of this identification by the prophet.

The descent of the Spirit upon Jesus in fulfillment of that prophecy was one of the mighty saving acts of God with which the Kingdom of Heaven was inaugurated. By His baptism Christ bound Himself not only to a nation but to all people who were involved in the same problem of sin, and the descent of the Spirit upon Him was a manifestation of His position as the Servant-Son who would suffer vicariously for them. For Himself it was the divine signal to begin His public work.³⁸ His anointment by the Holy Spirit without measure was the fulfillment of the words of Ps. 45:6,7 as the Epistle to the Hebrews indicates (1:8,9). In the baptism He was, so to speak, equipped with the Spirit for His ministry. His whole life was under the guidance of the Spirit so that immediately following the baptism event it drove Him into the wilderness and He returned in the power of that same Spirit, Lk. 4:1,14. He began His ministry with the text from Isaiah 61 which emphasizes the Spirit (Lk. 4:18), so that in a deep and inexplicable way the Holy Spirit appears to be in control of the Messianic timetable.³⁹ When the hour was come--an apparent reference to this divine timetable which controlled His work--He went to His baptism of death for all men as the King of the Jews (Mk. 10:38). In this work of His suffering, death, resurrection, and ascension, He opened the Kingdom of Heaven to all believers who recognize in Him the Servant-King foreseen by the Old Testament prophets, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, the beloved Son in whom the Father took great pleasure.

³⁸Schlatter, Geschichte, p. 90.

³⁹Herbert J. A. Bouman, "The Baptism of Christ with Special Reference to the Gift of the Spirit," Concordia Theological Monthly, XXVII (Jan. 1957), p. 10.

CONCLUSION

Rooted in the prophetic message of the Old Testament, the word which John the Baptist proclaimed was a compelling word for the people of his day. His message was above all an eschatological message, proclaiming the fact that the God of history who had from of old been leading the course of history was about to break in upon it personally, powerfully, in the person of the Messiah. With His arrival a new state of affairs would come into existence. In fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy it would be a definitive outpouring of the powers of deliverance and salvation, the restitution of mankind, and would involve the formation of a new eschatological community.

The preparation for this eschatological community was to be carried out by means of a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins, a radical turning which involved a transformation in outlook and a reformation in conduct. John came in the way of righteousness (Matt. 21:32) and with his proclamation, this righteousness was rescued from the narrow and false interpretation which had been foisted upon it by legalism and returned to its former Old Testament understanding. It was a call to a heart-searching repentance, not a mere lip service or life of conformity to cultic regulation. The baptism of repentance was a recognition of personal guilt, acceptance of the judgment of God on past life, and an acknowledgment of the need for the redemptive activity of God. In the impending crisis the righteous and repentant would be saved. Those who rejected the divinely ordained means would be lost.

As the Old Testament prophets had foretold, this community would consist of people whom God Himself would raise up to be its members.

In its blood relationship with Abraham was of no consequence. This community would result from the supernatural action of God, the action of His life-giving Spirit which would be dispensed by the Coming One whose coming meant judgment and deliverance and whose certain appearance gave John's baptism its validity. God was able to raise live children of Abraham for Himself from dead stones. Through the Spirit He did just that. For the Holy Spirit is the author of life, God in action. Where the Spirit is, there is God, creating, empowering, filling with wisdom and insight.

All of this was not to be accomplished by the Baptist. He was merely a preparatory voice. This would be accomplished by the Coming One who was not only a king, but a prophet like Moses who had seen God face to face and would bring God's message to His people. But He was more than a prophet. He was the prophet who was to come. In agreement with Old Testament prophetic utterances, John proclaimed that this one would not only be a human being, although He would be that also. He had power beyond that of any human individual, a power that belonged only to God. It was He who had the power to cleanse the threshing floor and burn the chaff in unquenchable fire while He gathered the wheat into the granary of God. He was the one who would swing the axe to cut down the unfruitful tree. These are powers which belong to God alone. Appearing in history subsequent to John, He was actually before him because He had been from eternity.

This formation of the eschatological community was to be accomplished through the Servant of Yahweh foreseen by the prophet Isaiah, the Lamb of God who would bring forgiveness through his sacrificial death. Those

who received Him would be baptized with the Spirit with which He Himself had been anointed without measure at His baptism, a baptism which bound Him to His people and which was the beginning of His mission of salvation, to be accomplished through a baptism of suffering and death.

All of this is not to say that those who approached John to hear him and submit to his baptism were fully aware of and could systematically proclaim these ideas. It is quite likely that many of them were convinced only that this was a prophet of God and that his message was one which was to be heard, believed, and followed. But with this dependence on the message of the prophet from God they also received the blessings contained in the message of repentance-baptism. It is also possible that while all of these thoughts were not present in the mind of any single individual other than John himself as they were revealed to him by the Spirit of God in the events which occurred, they were present among the people as a collective group. For a recognition of John as a prophet would turn them to the thoughts of the previous prophets, recalling their message and awakening new insights into their proclamation. For the message of John is without doubt a message based on their words, although it is a significant advance beyond them.

Obedience to the prophetic message of John would also have led these people to the Christ whom John had the privilege to identify. Having been a witness of the divine approval given through the theophany and the celestial voice, John, as the last of the Old Testament prophets, had the privilege of directing the attention of those who heard him to Jesus of Nazareth, the Coming One sent from God. Those who followed his direction came to know that whatever John had said concerning Him

was true. Although under the rigors of imprisonment the vision was somewhat dimmed for the prophet himself so that doubt concerning the identity of the Coming One began to creep into his mind, a reminder based on the prophetic message of Isaiah recalled him to that blessed event of the baptism of Jesus and renewed his faith. Everything he had proclaimed was taking place, although in a paradoxical manner. There is no real evidence to indicate that either John or his true disciples ever denied the Messiahship of Jesus of Nazareth or were antagonistic to Him. The fact that the death of John was reported by his friends to Jesus indicates that there was a closeness between them which is best explained on the basis of the relationship as described by the gospels, that of the Christ and His precursor.

Although he may be described as the last of the Old Testament prophets, and we are people who live in the New Testament era, the importance of John should not be minimized. Throughout its history the Church has recognized the importance of the position, message, and action of John the Baptist. As a consequence he has played a significant role in the life and liturgy of the Church. Of all the important personages of the Old and New Testaments the festival of his nativity is the only one-- in addition to that of Christ--which was introduced into both Greek and Latin liturgies. The Lutheran Church has retained the observance of this event among its festival days and celebrates it on June 24. In addition, two other days have been assigned to John the Baptist in certain areas of the Church, his conception observed on September 24 and his beheading,

remembered on August 29.¹

Portions of his message as well as events in his life have been incorporated in the various liturgies of the Church. The Benedictus, the song of praise sung by the father of the Baptist at his birth, is one of the canticles which may be sung at the Matins service. The Agnus Dei sung at the celebration of Holy Communion is rooted in John's identifying message, "Behold the Lamb of God which takes away the sin of the world." The Advent propers wisely refer to the message and preparatory activity of this man. The proper preface takes note of this when it says, "whose way John the Baptist prepared proclaiming Him the Messiah, the very Lamb of God, and calling sinners to repentance that they might escape from the wrath to be revealed when He cometh again in glory." The Third Sunday in Advent has as its gospel the section taken from Matt. 11:2-10 containing the question of John from prison and the answer of Christ which includes His witness to the Baptist. Joined to the epistle for the day, I Cor. 4:1-5, it is a reminder to Christians to be faithful in their witness to the Christ so that at His second coming they may receive the same sort of commendation. The gospel pericope for the Fourth Sunday in Advent taken from John 1:19-28 is the account of the interrogation of the Baptist by the Jewish religious authorities and the witness of John to the Christ. It was a joyful task for him to bear this witness in view of the nearness of the Kingdom of Heaven as it is also the Christian's joyful task to bear the same witness in the world today in view of the coming of the Son of Man.

¹Alban Butler, Butler's Lives of the Saints, edited, revised and supplemented by Herbert Thurston and Donald Attwater (London: Burns and Oates, 1956), III, 440-442.

If we take the phrase "the Coming One" as a messianic designation, the gospel for the first Sunday in Advent, Matt. 21:1-9, would also recall the message of John as it speaks of the joyful shouts of the crowd accompanying Christ's entry into Jerusalem, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." It is the same lesson which appears on Palmarum. To these we might add the context in which the Transfiguration gospel appears, a context which contains the identification of John the Baptist as the Elijah who was to come.

The message of John is still relevant for the Church of today. It is first of all a reminder that there is a need for re-emphasis on the study of the prophetic message of the Old Testament as a basis for and understanding of the New Testament. Many of the motifs of the New Testament writers are presented so subtly that their message can often be read without an awareness of its implications. Not only the message of John, but also the message of Christ, his apostles, and the early Church are firmly rooted in the writings of the prophets of the Old Covenant. The Old Testament themes of repentance, the Kingdom, the Day of the Lord, forgiveness and judgment are taken up and defined in their relation to the great event of history, the appearance of the Coming One. This interdependence once again underscores the unity of scripture.

The message of John also speaks strongly to the Church of today against a trust in mere formalism of any kind. There is always the danger that members will divert their attention from the one way of righteousness and again lapse into a righteousness whose basis is legalism. John's message points out most clearly that neither blood nor denominational ancestry is a criterion for membership in the Kingdom of Heaven. Righteousness is individual, based on the relationship be-

tween a man and his God, a relationship determined by his attitude toward the one way of salvation appointed by God. In achieving this righteousness, the individual is completely powerless and dependent on the initiative of God for transformation and reformation.

The attitude of John is also a standard for emulation by the Church and its individual members. "He must increase while I must decrease," is his message concerning the Coming One. John, the greatest one on earth, says that he is nothing in comparison to the Christ and wants to receive of His fulness. It is the Church's task to point to Christ as did John. It is not to find its glory in its own achievements but is rather to guide people to Christ through its message and action.

This guidance must take place in the context of the world although it is also a call to be separate from the world and its influence. Here again the message of John is most instructive. As people from all walks of life approached him receiving his repentance-baptism their question was, "What shall we do?" (Lk. 3:10). John's answer does not reflect a weakness in his message as has been supposed, a mere interim ethic which is binding until the appearance of the Coming One, the Judge.² It is rather an exhortation to individuals to be what they are, persons whose sins have been forgiven, who are living under the kingship of the Coming One who acknowledges them as His own and gathers them together. It is nothing less than the Christian doctrine of good works, for these are actions which are in conformity with the transformation which has taken

²T. W. Manson, The Sayings of Jesus (London: SCM Press Limited, 1954), pp. 253-254.

place.³ The turning to God is a turning which is reflected in daily action within one's calling. John's message is a message which speaks of a radical cure for the sickness of society in his day as it does in our own, speaking out against immorality, injustice, and dishonesty, but recognizing that the correction of the evil cannot take place until the radical turning to God has occurred. It is a reminder to the Church of the basic nature of its message which is the message of the prophets, of the Christ, and of His disciples.

Furthermore, while the message of John points to the formation of an eschatological community with the arrival of the Coming One, it does not signify an organizational structure. Rather the Kingdom of Heaven which comes into being with the Messianic Age is the reign of God among His people for judgment and deliverance, a reign which brings with it the blessing of the Spirit of God. Living under the Reign of God, the Church needs to recognize more and more the power of the Spirit which has been poured out in previously unknown measure and utilize that power. With it should come the boldness for witness and leadership and the wisdom to meet the challenges which God has set before His people.

The world of today is in much the same position as the Jewish nation of John's day. It needs to hear the same eschatological message which he proclaimed. The Church's message to it must be the message of the Baptist, "Repent! For the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." While the eschaton is present with the arrival of Christ, its completion does not occur until

³Bekenntnisschriften der Evangelischen--Lutherischen Kirche (Goettingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1959), "Apologia der Konfession," Article IV. (II.), paragraph 142, p. 212; Article VI, paragraph 35, p. 280.

the day of an individual's death or the parousia. Nevertheless, with the life, death, and resurrection of Christ, the once-and-for-all event has occurred and it is the reaction to that event which determines whether a man is within or without the reign of God. Therefore this event, together with its conclusion, must be proclaimed with the same sense of urgency which characterized the preaching of John the Baptist. "Today, while it is still today" is the time limit for that reaction.⁴ Rejecting this sign has the same consequences as the rejection of the sign of the Voice crying in the wilderness. Those who refuse it face the prospect of unquenchable fire. Those who accept it are safely within the storehouse of God.

Finally there is the example of the witness of John as a fearless witness. It is a witness which needs to be offered to all social ranks and classes regardless of the consequences. It is not a muffled voice but a sharp, clear condemnation of sin and a bold proclamation of the promise of forgiveness and power through the Lamb of God, the Coming One who baptizes with the Holy Spirit and with fire, whose baptism for His people was the beginning of the New Testament.⁵

⁴Heb. 3:13.

⁵D. Martin Luther's Evangelien--Auslegung, edited by Erwin Mülhaupt (Goettingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1938-1954), II, 14.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

A. Primary Sources

Biblia Hebraica. Edited by Rudolph Kittel. Stuttgart: Württembergische Bibelanstalt, 1949.

↘ Novum Testamentum Graece. Edited by Erwin Nestle. 24th edition. Stuttgart: Württembergische Bibelanstalt, 1960.

↘ Septuaginta Id Est Vetus Testamentum Graece. Edited by Alfred Rahlfs. Stuttgart: Württembergische Bibelanstalt, 1935.

The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament. Edited by R. H. Charles. 2 vols. Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1913.

B. Secondary Sources

Aalen, Sverre. "'Reign' and 'House' in the Kingdom of God in the Gospels," New Testament Studies. VIII (1961-1962), pp. 215-240.

Bailey, J. W. "John the Baptist: The Man and His Message," Biblical World. XXVI (1919), pp. 418-424.

Ball, C. J. "Had the Fourth Gospel an Aramaic Archetype?", Expository Times. XXI (1909), pp. 91-93.

Bammel, E. "Is Luke 16, 16-18 of Baptist's Provenience?", Harvard Theological Review. LI (1958), pp. 100-106.

Barns, Thomas. "The Baptism of John: Its Place in New Testament Criticism," The Expositor. Series 5, VI (1897), pp. 139-153.

Barrett, C. K. The Gospel According to St. John. London: SPCK, 1960.

----- "The Lamb of God," New Testament Studies. I (1954-1955), pp. 210-218.

----- "The Old Testament in the Fourth Gospel," Journal of Theological Studies. XLVIII (July-October 1947), pp. 155-169.

Bauer, Walter. A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature. Translated and adapted from the German by William F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957.

- Behm, Johannes. "μετανοέω, μετάνοια," Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament. Edited by Gerhard Kittel. Stuttgart: Verlag Von W. Kohlhammer, n.d. IV, pp. 972-976, 985-1004.
- Bekenntnisschriften der Evangelischen--Lutherischen Kirche. 4th edition. Goettingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1959.
- Bentzen, Aage. King and Messiah. London: Lutterworth Press, 1955.
- Bernard, J. H. "A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to St. John," The International Critical Commentary, I. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1929.
- Best, Ernest. "Spirit Baptism," Novum Testamentum. IV (1959), pp. 236-243.
- Betz, O. "Die Proselytentaufe der Qumranekte und die Taufe im NT," Revue de Qumran. I (October 1958), pp. 213-234.
- Blackman, Cyril. "The Critical Quest," The Christian Century. LXXVI (October 14, 1959), pp. 1176-1179.
- Bouman, Herbert J. A. "The Baptism of Christ With Special Reference to the Gift of the Spirit," Concordia Theological Monthly. XXVIII (January 1957), pp. 1-14.
- Bowen, Clayton R. "John the Baptist in the New Testament," American Journal of Theology. XVI (1895), pp. 90-106.
- Brand, E. F. "Johannes der Täufer," Proceedings of the Fifty-Sixth Convention of the Eastern District of the Ev. Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio and Other States. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1931.
- Brandt, W. "Mandeans," Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics. Edited by James Hastings. VIII. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1928, pp. 380-393.
- Braun, F. M. Jean Le Theologien. Paris: Gabalda et Cie, 1964.
- Bretscher, Paul M. "John the Baptist's Baptism," Concordia Theological Monthly. XXI (April 1950), pp. 305-306.
- Brown, Francis, et al. A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament. Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1952.
- Brown, Raymond E. "The Problem of Historicity in John," Catholic Biblical Quarterly. XXIV (1962), pp. 1-14.
- "Three Quotations From John the Baptist in the Gospel of John," Catholic Biblical Quarterly. XXII (1960), pp. 292-298.

- Brownlee, Wm. H. "A Comparison of the Covenanters of the Dead Sea Scrolls With Pre-Christian Jewish Sects," Biblical Archeologist. XIII (September 1950), pp. 49-72.
- . "John the Baptist in the New Light of Ancient Scrolls," Interpretation. IX (January 1955), pp. 71-90.
- . "Messianic Motifs of Qumran and the New Testament," New Testament Studies. III (1956-1957), pp. 12-30, 195-210.
- Bruce, Alexander B. "The Synoptic Gospels," The Expositor's Greek Testament. Edited by W. Robertson Nicoll. I. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, n.d.
- Bruce, F. F. "Qumran and Early Christianity," New Testament Studies. II (1955-1956), pp. 176-190.
- Bultmann, Rudolf. "ἁγιῶν, ἁφῆσις," Theological Dictionary of the New Testament. I. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1964.
- Buse, Ivor. "The Markan Account of the Baptism of Jesus and Isaiah LIII," Journal of Theological Studies. New Series. VII (October 1905), pp. 74-75.
- Butler, Alban. Butler's Lives of the Saints. Edited, revised and supplemented by Herbert Thurston and Donald Attwater. III. London: Burns and Oates, 1956.
- Chamberlain, William D. The Meaning of Repentance. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1943.
- Colpe, C. "Mandäer," Die Religion in Geschichte Und Gegenwart. Edited by Kurt Galling et al. IV. Tuebingen: J. A. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1960. Pp. 710-711.
- Cullmann, Oscar. Baptism in the New Testament. Translated by J. K. S. Reid. London: SCM Press Ltd., 1950.
- . The Christology of the New Testament. Translated by Shirley C. Guthrie and Charles A. M. Hall. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1959.
- . "The Significance of the Qumran Texts For Research into the Beginnings of Christianity," Journal of Biblical Literature. LXXIV (1955), pp. 213-226.
- Dahl, Nils Alstrup. "The Johannine Church and History," Current Issues in New Testament Theology. Edited by Wm. Klassen and Graydon F. Snyder. New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1962. Pp. 124-142.

- Dana, H. E. and Julius R. Mantey. A Manual Grammar of the Greek New Testament. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1947.
- Danker, Frederick W. "Luke 16:16--An Opposition Logion," Journal of Biblical Literature. LXXVII (1958), pp. 231-243.
- Deane, Anthony C. "The Ministry of John the Baptist," The Expositor. Series 8. XIII (1917), pp. 420-431.
- Delling, G. "baptisma, baptisthenai," Novum Testamentum. II (1957), pp. 92-115.
- Denny, James. "Jesus' Estimate of John the Baptist," The Expositor. Series 7. VII (1909), pp. 60-75.
- Dillistone, F. W. The Holy Spirit in the Life of Today. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1947.
- Dodd, C. H. The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel. Cambridge: The University Press, 1953.
- Dods, Marcus. "The Baptist's Message to Jesus," The Expositor. Series 5. I (1895), pp. 201-212.
- "The Gospel of St. John," The Expositor's Greek Testament. Edited by W. Robertson Nicoll. I. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, n.d.
- Edgar, S. L. "New Testament and Rabbinic Messianic Interpretation," New Testament Studies. V (1958-1959), pp. 47-54.
- Eisler, Robert. The Messiah Jesus and John the Baptist. London: Methuen and Co., Ltd., 1931.
- Engelder, Theo. "Contrition," Concordia Theological Monthly. Translated by H. J. A. Bouman and Erwin Leuker. XXVII (May-July 1957), pp. 321-348, 417-440, 504-522.
- Falconer, Robert A. "The Testimony of John the Baptist," Biblical World. XX (1913), pp. 441-449.
- Filson, Floyd V. The New Testament Against Its Environment. Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1950.
- Franzmann, Martin H. Follow Me: Discipleship According to St. Matthew. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1961.
- Frey, Hellmuth. "Das Buch Der Heimsuchung Und Des Auszugs Kapitel 1-18 Des Zweiten Buches Mose," Die Botschaft Das Alten Testaments. V. Stuttgart: Calwer Verlag, 1949. Pp. 35-38.

- . "Das Buch der Kirche in der Weltwende, die Kleinen nachexilischen Prophets," Die Botschaft des Alten Testaments. Stuttgart: Calwer Verlag, 1948.
- Gaster, Theodor H. The Dead Sea Scriptures. New York: Doubleday and Company, 1956.
- Geyser, A. S. "The Youth of John the Baptist--A Deduction From the Break in the Parallel Account of the Lucan Infancy Story," Novum Testamentum. I (1956), pp. 70-75.
- Glasson, T. Francis. "John the Baptist in the Fourth Gospel," Expository Times. LXVII (1955), pp. 245-246.
- . "Water, Wind and Fire (Luke III, 16) and Orphic Initiation," New Testament Studies. III (1956-1957), pp. 69-71.
- Goguel, Maurice. Jesus and the Origins of Christianity. Translated by Olive Wyon. II. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1960.
- Goulder, M. D. and M. L. Sanderson. "St. Luke's Genesis," Journal of Theological Studies. New Series. VIII (1957), pp. 12-30.
- Greig, James C. G. "The Teacher of Righteousness and the Qumran Community," New Testament Studies. II (1955-1956), pp. 119-126.
- Grobel, Kendrick. "He That Cometh After Me," Journal of Biblical Literature. LX (1941), pp. 397-401.
- Grundmann, Walter. "ἑραστήριον, ἐραστήριον, ἐραστία," Theological Dictionary of the New Testament. Edited by G. Kittel. Translated by G. Bromiley. I. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1964. Pp. 267-316.
- Guebert, Alex Wm. C. "Sermon Study on Jeremiah 26:1-15 for Oculi," Concordia Theological Monthly. XXII (January 1951), pp. 46-53.
- Hatch, Edwin and Henry Redpath. A Concordance to the Septuagint. I. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1892.
- Herbert, A. G. "Burn, Fire," A Theological Wordbook of the Bible. Edited by Alan Richardson. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1953, p. 39.
- Heuer, C. J. "Johannes der Täufer," Verhandlungen Der Deutschen Evangelisch--Lutherischen Synode Missouri, Ohio Und Anderen Staaten Minnesota Distrikts. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1912.
- Hjerl-Hansen, Børge. "Did Christ Know the Qumran Sect?," Revue de Qumran. I (July 1959), pp. 495-508.

- Hooker, Morna D. Jesus and the Servant. London: SPCK, 1959.
- Huck, Albert. Synopsis of the First Three Gospels. Translated by F. L. Cross. 9th edition. New York: The American Bible Society, n.d.
- Jeremias, Joachim. "Ἰησῦς," Theological Dictionary of the New Testament. Edited by G. Kittel. Translated by G. Bromiley. I. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1964. Pp. 185-186.
- . "Ἰησῦς τοῦ Θεοῦ - πᾶσι Θεοῦ," Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche. XXXIV (1935), pp. 115-123.
- . "Ἰησῦς," Theological Dictionary of the New Testament. Edited by G. Kittel. Translated by G. Bromiley. I. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1964. Pp. 338-340.
- . "Proselytentaufe Und Neues Testament," Theologische Zeitschrift. V. (November-December 1949), pp. 418-428.
- . "Die Ursprung der Johannes--Taufe," Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche. XXVIII (1929), pp. 312-320.
- . "The Qumran Texts and the New Testament," Expository Times. LXX (1958), pp. 68-69.
- Johnson, S. Lewis. "The Message of John the Baptist," Bibliotheca Sacra. CXIII (January 1956), pp. 30-36.
- Johnston, George. "Spirit, Holy Spirit," A Theological Wordbook of the Bible. Edited by Alan Richardson. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1953. Pp. 233-247.
- . "Spirit and Holy Spirit in the Qumran Literature," New Testament Sidelights. Edited by Harvey K. Mc Arthur. Hartford: The Hartford Seminary Foundation Press, 1960. Pp. 27-42.
- Jones, James L. "References to John the Baptist in the Gospel According to St. Matthew," Anglican Theological Review. XLI (1958), pp. 298-302.
- Josephus. "Antiquities," Complete Works of Josephus. XVIII. New York: Bigelow, Brown & Co., Inc., n.d. P. 106.
- Justin Martyr. "Dialogue With Trypho," The Ante-Nicene Fathers. I. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1926. P. 199.
- Kiddle, Martin. "The Teaching of John the Baptist," Expository Times. XLVIII (1936), pp. 396-400.

- Kittel, Gerhard. "Ἐξήτας," Theologisches Wörterbuch Zum Neuen Testament. Edited by G. Kittel. II. Stuttgart: Verlag von W. Kohlhammer, n.d. Pp. 655-656.
- Klausner, Joseph. The Messianic Idea in Israel. Translated by W. F. Stinespring. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1955.
- Kleinknecht, Herman. "Βασιλεύς, Βασιλεία," Theological Dictionary of the New Testament. Edited by G. Kittel. Translated by G. Bromiley. I. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1964. Pp. 564-565.
- "πνεῦμα, πνευματικός," Theologisches Wörterbuch Zum Neuen Testament. Edited by C. Friedrich. IV. Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer GMBH, n.d. Pp. 330-357.
- Knowling, R. F. "The Acts of the Apostles," The Expositor's Greek Testament. Edited by W. Robertson Nicoll. II. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, n.d.
- Koehler, Ludwig and Walter Baumgärtner. Lexicon in Veteris Testamenti Libros. I. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1951.
- Kraeling, Carl H. John the Baptist. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1951.
- Krieger, Norbert. "Barfuss Busse Tun," Novum Testamentum. I (1956), pp. 227-228.
- "Ein Mensch in Weichen Kleidern," Novum Testamentum. I (1956), pp. 228-230.
- Kuhn, Karl. "ἄγιος," Theological Dictionary of the New Testament. Edited by G. Kittel. Translated by G. Bromiley. I. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1964. Pp. 97-100.
- "Βασιλεύς, Βασιλεία," Theological Dictionary of the New Testament. Edited by G. Kittel. Translated by G. Bromiley. I. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1964. Pp. 571-574.
- "Die Beiden Messias Aarons Und Israels," New Testament Studies. I (1954-1955), pp. 168-179.
- Lang, Friedrich. "πῦρ," Theologisches Wörterbuch Zum Neuen Testament. Edited by G. Friedrich. VI. Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer GMBH, n.d. Pp. 927-948.
- Leimer, M. "Die Taufe Des Täufers in Ihrem Verhältnis Zu Christi Taufe," Concordia Theological Monthly. XIV (March 1943), pp. 197-206.

- Lenski, R. C. H. The Interpretation of St. Mark's and St. Luke's Gospels. Columbus: Lutheran Book Concern, 1934.
- Lewis, A. S. "John the Baptist, Did He Preach Baptism For the Remission of Sins?", The Expositor. III (February-July 1898), pp. 255-259.
- Lohmeyer, Ernst. "Johannes der Täufer," Das Urchristentum. I. Goettingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1932.
- . Lord of the Temple. Translated by Stewart Todd. London: Oliver and Boyd, 1961.
- Luther, Martin. D. Martin Luther's Evangelien--Auslegung. Edited by Erwin Mülhaupt. II. Goettingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1938-1954. Pp. 5-24.
- McCarthy, Dennis J. "Qumran and Christian Beginnings," Theology Digest. V (1957), pp. 39-47.
- McCorry, Vincent P. "The Word," America. XC (December 5, 1953), pp. 277-278.
- Mann, C. S. "The Scrolls, the Lord, and the Primitive Church," Church Quarterly Review. CLIX (1958), pp. 512-531.
- Manson, T. W. The Sayings of Jesus. London: SCM Press, Limited, 1954.
- Manson, W. F. Jesus the Messiah. London: Hodder and Stoughton, Ltd., 1952.
- Mantey, J. R. "Unusual Meanings For Prepositions in the Greek New Testament," The Expositor. Series 8. XXV (June 1923), pp. 453-460.
- Margoliouth, D. S. "Baptizing with Fire," The Expositor. Series 8. XIII (1917), pp. 446-453.
- Meyer, F. B. John the Baptist. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1954.
- Meyer, P. W. "The Problem of the Messianic Self-Consciousness of Jesus," Novum Testamentum. IV (1959), pp. 122-138.
- Moore, George Foot. Judaism in the First Centuries of the Christian Era the Age of the Tannaim. I. II. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1927.
- Mowinckel, Sigmund. He That Cometh. New York: Abingdon Press, n.d.
- Murphy, Roland E. "The Dead Sea Scrolls and New Testament Comparisons," Catholic Biblical Quarterly. XVIII (July 1956), pp. 263-272.

- Murray, J. O. F. "The Witness of the Baptist to Jesus," Expository Times. XXXVII (1925), pp. 103-109.
- North, Christopher R. The Suffering Servant in Deutero-Isaiah. 2nd edition. London: Oxford University Press, 1956.
- Oepke, Albrecht. "βάπτω, βαπτίςω, βαπτισμός, βάπτισμα, βαπτιστής," Theological Dictionary of the New Testament. Edited by G. Kittel. Translated by G. Bromiley. I. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1964. Pp. 529-546.
- Otto, R. The Kingdom of God and the Son of Man. London: The Lutterworth Press, 1938.
- Perrin, Norman. The Kingdom of God in the Teaching of Jesus. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1963.
- Piper, Otto. "Christian Baptism," Scottish Journal of Theology. XIV (1961), pp. 370-379.
- Plummer, Alfred. "A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to St. Luke," The International Critical Commentary. 4th edition. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1906.
- Procksch, Otto. "ἄγιος," Theological Dictionary of the New Testament. Edited by G. Kittel. Translated by G. Bromiley. I. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1964.
- Theologie Des Alten Testaments. Guettersloh: C. Bertelsmann Verlag, 1950.
- Rengstorf, Karl Heinrich. "Das Evangelium Nach Lukas," Das Neue Testament Deutsch. Goettingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1949.
- Richardson, Alan. "Kingdom of God," A Theological Wordbook of the Bible. Edited by Alan Richardson. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1953. Pp. 119-121.
- Ringgren, Helmer. The Messiah in the Old Testament. Chicago: Alec R. Allenson, Inc., 1956.
- Robertson, A. T. A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research. 4th edition. New York: Richard R. Smith, Inc., 1923.
- Robinson, H. Wheeler. The Christian Experiences of the Holy Spirit. New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1928.
- Robinson, J. A. T. "The Baptism of John and the Qumran Community," Twelve New Testament Studies. London: SCM Press, Ltd., 1962. Pp. 11-27.

- . "Elijah, John, and Jesus: An Essay in Detection," New Testament Studies. IV (1957-1958), pp. 263-281.
- . "The Destination and Purpose of St. John's Gospel," New Testament Studies. VI (1959-1960), pp. 117-131.
- . "The New Look at the Fourth Gospel," Twelve New Testament Studies. London: SCM Press Ltd., 1962. Pp. 94-106.
- . "The 'Others' of John 4:38," Twelve New Testament Studies. London: SCM Press, Ltd., 1962. Pp. 61-66.
- Roth, C. "Why the Qumran Sect Cannot Have Been Essenes," Revue de Qumran. I (February 1959), pp. 417-432.
- Rowley, H. H. The Relevance of Apocalyptic, A Study of Jewish and Christian Apocalypses From Daniel to the Revelation. New and revised edition. New York: Association Press, 1964.
- . The Servant of the Lord and Other Essays On the Old Testament. London: Lutterworth Press, 1952. Pp. 3-88.
- Sauer, Alfred Von Rohr. "Problems of Messianic Interpretation," Concordia Theological Monthly. XXXV (October 1964), pp. 566-574.
- . "The Message of Law and Gospel in the Old Testament: The Servant of the Lord as the Mediator of Divine Grace," Concordia Theological Monthly. XXVI (April 1955), pp. 256-264.
- Schlatter, Adolph. Der Evangelist Johannes. Stuttgart: Calwer Verlag, 1960.
- . Die Geschichte Des Christus. Stuttgart: Calwer Vereinsbuchhandlung, 1921.
- . Johannes Der Täufer. Basel: Verlag Friedrich Reinhardt, 1956.
- Schmidt, Karl L. "βασιλεύς, βασιλεία," Theological Dictionary of the New Testament. Edited by G. Kittel. Translated by G. Bromiley. I. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1964. Pp. 574-593.
- Schmoller, H. Hand Konkordanz Zum Neuen Testament. Stuttgart: Württembergische Bibelanstalt, n.d.
- Schmiewind, Julius. "Das Evangelium Nach Markus," Das Neue Testament Deutsch. Goettingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1936.
- . "Das Evangelium Nach Matthäus," Das Neue Testament Deutsch. Goettingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1950.

- Schweizer, Eduard. "Πνεῦμα, Πνευματικός," Theologisches Wörterbuch Zum Neuen Testament. Edited by G. Friedrich. VI. Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer GMBH, n.d. Pp. 387-453.
- Scobie, Charles H. H. John the Baptist. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1964.
- Scott, E. F. "John the Baptist and His Message," The Expositor. Series 7. VI (1908), pp. 68-76.
- Sellers, R. V. "Our Lord's Baptism and Ours," Church Quarterly Review. CLXI (1960), pp. 402-409.
- Sjöberg, Erik. "Πνεῦμα, Πνευματικός," Theologisches Wörterbuch Zum Neuen Testament. Edited by G. Friedrich. VI. Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer GMBH, n.d. Pp. 373-387.
- Smith, Morton. "The Dead Sea Sect in Relation to Ancient Judaism," New Testament Studies. VII (1960-1961), pp. 347-360.
- " 'God's Begetting the Messiah' in IQSa," New Testament Studies. V (1958-1959), pp. 218-224.
- Smyth, Kevin. "The Teacher of Righteousness," Expository Times. LXIX (1957), pp. 340-342.
- Snaith, Norman. The Distinctive Ideas of the Old Testament. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1946.
- Stanley, David M. "John the Witness," Worship. XXXII, pp. 409-416.
- Stauffer, Ethelbert. Jesus and the Wilderness Community at Qumran. Translated by Hans Spalteholz. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1964.
- Steinmann, Jean. St. John the Baptist and the Desert Tradition. Translated by Michael Boyes. New York: Harper and Brothers, n.d.
- Stevens, Wm. Arnold. "John the Baptist: The Man, His Message, His Mission," Homiletic Review. XXII (August 1891), pp. 163-166.
- Strack, Herman L. and Paul Billerbeck. Kommentar Zum Neuen Testament Aus Talmud Und Midrash. I-IV. Muenchen: C. H. Beck'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1926.
- Strathmann, Hermann. "Das Evangelium Nach Johannes," Das Neue Testament Deutsch. Goettingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1949.
- Strong, James. The Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible. New York: Abingdon Press, 1890.
- Swete, Henry Barclay. The Holy Spirit in the New Testament. London: Macmillan and Co., Limited, 1921.

- Taylor, Arch B. "Decision in the Desert," Interpretation. XIV (1960), pp. 300-309.
- Taylor, T. M. "The Beginnings of Jewish Proselyte Baptism," New Testament Studies. II (1955-1956), pp. 193-198.
- Thomas, Joseph. Le Mouvement Baptiste en Palestine et Syrie (150 Av. J.C.--300 Ap. J.C.). Gembloux: 1935.
- Torrance, Thomas F. "Aspects of Baptism in the New Testament," Theologische Zeitschrift Für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft Und Die Kunde Der Älteren Kirche. XIV (1913), pp. 241-260.
- "The Origins of Baptism," Scottish Journal of Theology. XI (1958), pp. 158-171.
- "Proselyte Baptism," New Testament Studies. I (1954-1955), pp. 150-154.
- Torrey, Charles C. The Apocryphal Literature. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1945.
- Torrey, R. A. The Baptism With the Holy Spirit. London: James Nisbet and Co., Limited, 1904.
- Tyson, Joseph B. "Jesus and Herod Antipas," Journal of Biblical Literature. LXXIX (1960), pp. 239-246.
- Virgulum, Stephen. "Recent Discussion of the Title 'Lamb of God,'" Scripture. XIII (July 1961), pp. 74-80.
- Volz, Paul. Prophetengestalten Das Alten Testaments. Stuttgart: Calwer Verlag, 1949. Pp. 350-361.
- Von Rad, G. "βασιλεύς, βασιλεία," Theological Dictionary of the New Testament. Edited by G. Kittel. Translated by G. Bromiley. I. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1964. Pp. 565-571.
- Theologie Des Alten Testaments. II. Muenchen: Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1960. Pp. 264-290.
- Williams, R. R. "Baptize, Baptism," A Theological Wordbook of the Bible. Edited by Alan Richardson. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1953. Pp. 27-30.
- Wood, H. G. "Interpreting This Time," New Testament Studies. II (1955-1956), pp. 262-266.
- "The Present Position of New Testament Theology: Retrospect and Prospect," New Testament Studies. IV (1957-1958), pp. 169-182.

Yates, J. E. "The Form of Mark 1.8b 'I Baptized You With Water; He Will Baptize you With the Hly Spirit,'" New Testament Studies. IV (1957-1958), pp. 334-338.

Young, E. J. My Servants the Prophets. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1955.

Zenos, A. C. "The Place of John the Baptist in Gospel History," Biblical World. XV (1908), pp. 11-17.

Zimmerli, W. and Jeremias, J. The Servant of God. Naperville, Ill.: Alec R. Allenson, Inc., 1957.