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THE MESSIAH IN JESUIC AND POSTJESUIC  
ESCHATOLOGICAL PROPHECY

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

Short Title

MESSIAH IN ESCHATOLOGICAL PROPHECY, Wadewitz, S.T.M., 1962

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THE MESSIAH IN EXILIC AND POSTEXILIC  
ESCHATOLOGICAL PROPHECY

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

by

Werner Karl Wadewitz

May 1962

18485

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

For about four centuries before the coming of the Christ the voice of prophecy was silent, which fact became an important factor in the rise and spread of apocryphal literature and apocalyptic treatises. This same fact, however, serves to underline the importance of exilic and postexilic times and writings for the correct understanding of Israelite history and the origin of Scriptures or the Canon. The prophecy of the exile and the postexilic period is therefore the last of the "sure prophetic words" which we have received by tradition. And since Jesus says of Himself that it is the Scriptures of the Old Testament "which testify of me," prophecy concerning Him must by that time present the whole of the Old Testament statement of Christological import, the picture of the Christ, the Mashiach. Even if additions or other modifications (redactions) be admitted after 440 B.C., the core, the main body of the canon of prophetic writing, the Nebi'im, had been assembled together with the Torah and the Kethubim. In fact, it is by what these prophets had spoken and written for them, that future generations lived by, and by which they nourished their hope and expectation of Him that was to come.

The witness of Christ to the prophecy of the Anointed in the Old Testament we take quite seriously. For those who do not, the Words of the Christ might apply: "O foolish men, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken!" (Luke 24:25). The risen Christ Himself began to explain to His hearers His sufferings and glory



"beginning with Moses and all the prophets," and "he interpreted to them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself" (v. 27). "Die Schrift steht zu gewaltig da." Without hedging or apologizing or rationalizing we make bold to believe the very "words which I spoke to you, while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the prophets and the psalms must be fulfilled." We hope to be among those to whom He "opened their minds to understand the Scriptures" (Luke 24:44,45).

It appears as clearly evident from such words as these, that Jesus indicates, presupposes, and posits a unity of the New Testament with the Old Testament, showing the relationship that exists between them, especially also as concerns His own person and work. By the same token He demonstrates the unity of the Old Testament and the principle upon which such unity rests and is constituted: the Old Testament Scriptures all speak of Him, in all of them something is written about Him, be it in the Nebi'im or in the Torah or in the Kethubim. If then the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of Christ, has illumined and opened our hearts and minds to understand Scripture, we should be able to verify and appreciate His contention. Old Testament Scripture seems to receive recognition as to its purpose and significance from the statement of our Lord: "They testify of me" and "everything written about me . . . must be fulfilled."

Fichrodt sees this as the concern of the theology of the Old Testament, as its

Aufgabe, die alttestamentliche Glaubenswelt in ihrer strukturellen Einheit zu begreifen und unter Beruecksichtigung ihrer religioesen Umwelt einerseits, ihres Wesenszusammenhanges mit dem Neuen



Testament andererseits in ihrem tiefsten Sinngehalt zu deuten.<sup>1</sup>

#### The Exilic and Postexilic Prophetic Books to be Considered

The exilic and postexilic writings of prophecy to be considered in this paper are the books of Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi.

According to the ancient view and in agreement with most of the best modern scholarship, Jeremiah is the prophet of the time just before the exile and during the same, who perished in unknown parts, possibly by suffering a martyr's death.

Ezekiel, priest and prophet like Jeremiah, presents himself as being of and among the golah in Babylon, to whom he also directs the bulk of his exhortations, denunciations, consolations, and hopes for the future. He appears to presuppose also the existence of and clearly shows knowledge of the Torah, especially also of Deuteronomy, the Priestly and the Holiness Code. In Ezekiel's vision in Chapters 40-48 the Levites will be substituted by the Zadokite Levites only in the new order of things in the temple services. In fact, Israel will become a holy nation of priests and kings as seen in Ex. 19:5-6; Deut. 7:6; 14:2,21; 26:19.

Daniel was placed among the Hagiographa by the Jews, for he was not a prophet by profession nor a priest, but rather a statesman and minister of State. His book, however, contains prophecy and originated in essence at least in exilic and postexilic times. The apocalyptic

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<sup>1</sup>Walter Eichrodt, Theologie des Alten Testaments: Teil I. Gott und Volk (5. Neubearbeitete Auflage; Stuttgart: Ehrenfried Klotz Verlag; und Goettingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1957), p. 6.



passages in Daniel appear more sober and less fantastic than some of the later intertestamental apocalyptic products.

Haggai and Zechariah are postexilic prophets mentioned in Ezra 5:1, their books confirming the date as being in the reign of King Darius, the time of the building of the second temple.

Malachi closes the Dodekapropheton and the line of prophets, and stands as one gazing in vision across the threshold of the New Testament at the coming of the forerunner of the Christ, Elijah, whom Jesus Himself identified for us as John the Baptizer.

We are well aware of much of critical scholarship being divided in its opinion concerning the dating of these books. But since it is very often a question of one theory against another, and since also the best of them do not agree with each other, and since for these reasons there is no such thing as a consensus of opinion on the isagogical problems related to these writings, we shall take the position of the traditional view, tempered here and there with some restraint and with readiness to accept proven and substantiated corrections that honest research has been able to offer with convincing argument. We do this with all open-mindedness and even with admiration for the zeal and thoroughness with which man's critical faculties have gone to work on many problems relating to the text and its interpretation. But it seems to us that as a general observation, it is true that very often the attitude taken toward the Bible is not one of reverence for the inspired Word of God and of humility in the face of "the law and the Words which the LORD of hosts had sent by his Spirit through the former prophets" (Zech. 7:12). All human findings can at best constitute a certain degree of progress and a stage which has been reached in the search for facts. There is nothing definitive about



such assured results of science, however, for the search continues. We agree though that much can be gained by examining all the problems concerning these books again and again and to penetrate ever more deeply into their compositional structure, their background and history, and their message. Scientific analysis and concern for the text as well as more accurate renderings in the vernacular are most welcome and helpful. Also, the theories and hypotheses of the scholars are quite interesting, even ingenious and downright brilliant in their method and development. However, the Book claims to be more than just a book among books. It is the Christ-book, God's revelation of His own Self, work, and purposes. It is the Spirit-breathed book differing from all others by dint of its origin, content, self-authentication (autopistia), and efficaciousness. On the basis of the above general considerations and for other reasons of an isagogical order, we are here excluding Isaiah 2 and Deuteronomy as not being properly and truly books of the exilic or postexilic period.

The Traditional Picture of the Messiah in Pre-exilic Times and Prophecy

The traditional picture of the coming Messiah can best be characterized by reference to the work of the evangelist of the Old Testament, Isaiah, chap. 52:13-53:12, actually the whole of Isaiah 2, chapters 40 to 66. The unity of this part of the book of Isaiah has been ably defended and upheld by modern scholars of high calibre (Jos. Klausner, Ed. J. Young, et al.), including some of those who ascribe this portion of the book to a Second Isaiah, some "great unknown," follower and/or disciple of the postulated school or circle of Isaianic thought and literature.



This prophecy pertaining to the Lord's Suffering Servant, the Ebed Yahweh, who is Himself the Lord, and with reference to the lamb who keeps silence before its shearers, is well known and we shall make only brief reference to it here. The Servant would be the son of David, therefore true man. He shall be a prophet like unto Moses and a high priest like Joshua (Zechariah). He was to suffer and die for the transgressors, for the sins of the whole world, in utter humiliation, but effecting the vicarious atonement for all sinners. He is the Just to die for the unjust, the objective justification becoming historical fact. He is the Shepherd to leave His life for the sheep. He would be sent by God to His own people and chosen from among them. He would deal righteously and prudently, so that no sin would be found in His mouth, a clear reference to divine attributes and powers. After His humiliation He would be exalted and His gospel would be preached to all men everywhere, indicating the universal validity and scope of His soteria. He, as the eternal priest according to the order of Melchizedek (Ps. 110), offers up His own sacrifice continually in our behalf as our Mediator and Intercessor, for our forgiveness and blessing. He would pour out His Spirit upon all flesh and instruct men in the way of salvation. All references to His being an earthly Potentate must be understood as figurative of His spiritual kingship, Old Testament concrete language being used to describe New Testament mysteries and situations. His throne endures forever. His kingdom swallows up all other kingdoms of the earth because His kingship, although spiritual in essence, will finally vanquish all enemies. He is the Prince of peace, whose conquest of the enemies is a kind of opus alienum, for His proper sphere is peace on earth and in eternity. He is eternal God, yet a child born unto us, true God and man



possessing two natures. He is the true Emmanuel, God with us, Yahweh in human form.

The Christology of the Old Testament will show that even though the constitutive elements that make up the picture of the Messiah are found in many passages scattered throughout the Old Testament, yet when they are collected, it will be seen that the doctrine concerning the Christ will be rather complete in its essential characteristics and loci. The divine and human natures united in one person emerge with a clarity that leaves nothing to be desired. His qualities as soteriological, eschatological Person are set forth in astoundingly lucid terms. The purpose of God's prophecies and of man's salvation are shown to be accomplished in and by the Fbed Yahweh to the glory of His people Israel. God Himself is the prime mover, initiator and executor of His divine plan of salvation, and the Holy Spirit is the One Who continues to apply to mankind the work of redemption after the humiliation and glorification of the Christ.

The Church, the body of Christ, is painted with glowing colors of Old Testament imagery. There appears a rather detailed Ecclesiology of the New Testament in Old Testament pictures in Ezekiel 40-48. The time of this more glorious temple to be built at the coming of the Messiah is purposely left indefinite. It would be at a time of spiritual drought and desert condition (Is. 53:2) of the Church, when also the family of Jesse would be an insignificant stump or root.

#### The Concept of the Eschaton in Prophecy

Related to the appearance of the Anointed One is the concept of the eschaton. Prophecy of exilic and postexilic times take up this term and the concept as a traditional locus in Old Testament theology. Modern



theological writers have used this term and derivatives rather loosely, thus confounding the true meaning of the term. "In Gen. 49 and in Num. 24:15ff. ist, unabhaengig von einander, die Beziehung auf die Endzeit gesichert . . . redet ausdruecklich von der Endzeit (acharith Hayyahim)." Again:

Waere der Messias weiter nichts als der kommende israelitische Weltkoenig, so waere in der Tat alles in schoenster Ordnung. Aber es gesellt sich noch das eschatologische Element hinzu, das von Anfang an dem Messiasglauben innewohnt und das sich trotz der verzweifelten Anstrengungen der Exegeten schon aus den beiden aeltesten vorprophetischen Zeugnissen nicht beseitigen laesst.<sup>2</sup>

To show more precisely the implications of the term eschaton, we quote the words of Gerhard von Rad:

Die prophetische Weissagung, die in engster Anlehnung an alte Erwaehlungstraditionen, aber zugleich in einer kuehnen Neuinterpretation von einem Neueinsatz des goettlichen Heilshandelns spricht--sie, aber nur sie--, sollte man eschatologisch nennen.

And again in another place:

Da, wo Israel von seinen Propheten aus dem Heilsbereich der bisherigen Fakten herausgestossen wurde und wo sich sein Heilsgrund mit einemmal in ein kommendes Gottesgeschehen hinaus verlagerte, da erst wird die prophetische Verkuendigung eschatologisch.<sup>3</sup>

The Greek vocable eschatos can have reference to things, space, and time. "Aus der Bedeutung des zeitlich Letzten entsteht die eschatologische Wendung der Vokabel."<sup>4</sup> The Septuagint mirrors this meaning in its translation of b<sup>e</sup>acharith hayyamim. More directly, the meaning of

<sup>2</sup>Hugo Gressmann, Der Messias (Gettingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1929), p. 225.

<sup>3</sup>Gerhard von Rad, Theologie des Alten Testaments: Die Theologie der prophetischen Ueberlieferung Israel (Muenchen: Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1930), pp. 196, 132.

<sup>4</sup>Gerhard Kittel, "Eschatos," Theologisches Woerterbuch zum Neuen Testament (Stuttgart: Verlag von W. Kohlhammer, 1935), II, 694-95.



eschaton related to the prophetic word concerning the day of Yahweh. "Das Ende (eschaton) hat begonnen mit der Erscheinung Jesu, Heb. 1:2; 1 Pet. 1:20 - ep' eschatou toon hemeroon."<sup>5</sup> The ancient Christian writers in their own time saw the last times as being characterized by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, also by the appearance of evil days, of persecutions, and of Anti-Christ. At the same time their eyes were lifted in longing toward the coming last day with the defeat of the last enemy and their own final salvation.

W. Eichrodt in his Eschatologie says that this concept has as its basic ingredient the "Gewissheit eines endgueltigen Abbruchs der Geschichte und ihrer Aufhebung in dem Anbruch eines neuen Aeons."<sup>6</sup> Eschatology accordingly is not "eine gleichgueltige oder gar minderwertige Zutat zu der prophetischen Gedankenwelt. . . . Ja, in den eschatologischen Schilderungen erst vollendet sich die prophetische Botschaft."<sup>7</sup>

An additional characteristic of Old Testament Israelite eschatology is this that

no distinction is made between the 'olam habbah and the 'olam hazzeh; everything takes place on earth, including the renewal of the people, and even the restoration of the world of paradise; peace among the animals and paradisaic fertility are seen as new conditions on this earth.<sup>8</sup>

Georg Fohrer speaks of the description of the eschatological

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

<sup>6</sup>Eichrodt, op. cit., p. 258.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid.

<sup>8</sup>Th. C. Vriezen, An Outline of Old Testament Theology (London: Basic Blackwell, 1958), p. 25.



situation in terms of Old Testament empirical facts and calls these the Entsprechungsmotive, of which he says, they

sind durchweg dem geschichtlichen Bereich entnommen und nur in den Bezugnahmen auf Schoepfung und Paradies um urspruenglich mythische Vorstellungen ergaenzt und erweitert worden, weil diese allein dem erwarteten eschatologischen Geschehen entsprachen.<sup>9</sup>

And since the message of the prophets is ultimately and fundamentally dominated by the application of the eschatological expectations, always current and alive in Israel, the true heart of the Old Testament prophecy and of New Testament fulfillment is, therefore, the eschatological perspective.<sup>10</sup>

One can say, then, that eschatological thinking is a particular form of theological thought, and as such it is by no means strange to Israel, although it appears not to be of any prominence nor even truly to be found in any other Oriental religious systems. Vriezen comments:

The eschatological vision is an Israelite phenomenon which has not really been found outside Israel--as has rightly been maintained by Mowinkel against Gressmann. . . . Eschatology is the expression of the belief that God holds history in the hollow of His hand, and that He will make the history of the world end in complete communion between God and man, so that He will come as King; or, in other words, so that He may be all in all.<sup>11</sup>

Besides the expression yom Yahweh the term is found in the plural form eschatai hemerai, indicating that not only one certain terminal day of judgment and of destruction of this aeon is intended, but that the whole Endzeit is meant, the "days of the Messiah" (Luke 17:22), of which the last day would constitute the ultimate conclusion as

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<sup>9</sup>Georg Fohrer, "Die Struktur der alttestamentlichen Eschatologie," Theologische Literaturzeitung, LXXXV (June, 1960), Col. 418.

<sup>10</sup>Vriezen, op. cit., pp. 57, 100.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., pp. 369, 371.



Gerichtstag. Says Fohrer:

Die Beispiele zeigen, dass die eschatologische Prophetie gewöhnlich nicht ein Ende der Welt und der Geschichte ueberhaupt meint, sondern die eschatologischen Geschehnisse sich in geschichtlichem Rahmen abspielen sieht.<sup>12</sup>

The term "Messiah" has always been associated with the eschaton. The Messiah is an eschatological figure (S. Mowinckel), since the title became a technical term for the king of the final age. Or to speak with Ernst Sellin, "the future hope and eschatology are ultimately based on Yahweh's revelation at Sinai, and on the promises implied, and the faith in the people's future thereby created."<sup>13</sup> In accord with the future hope of Israelite religion--not its national or political aspirations--it was the promise of Yahweh and the glory of His faithfulness which nourished the certainty that He would ultimately realize His promises. Thus, the very content of the future hope was increasingly becoming characterized by purely religious motifs (S. Mowinckel), which is the very essence of Israelite eschatology.

By the same token, eschatology included increasingly more space and time, encompassing, in its restoration as well as destruction concepts, a worldwide situation, and finally a catastrophe of cosmic dimensions. It may be true, as has been said, that hope of restoration is not yet eschatology, but is perhaps only "futurism." Yet with Israel we have a religious, theological, theocratic situation in God's choosing His people and giving to them His promises. He establishes a covenant with

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<sup>12</sup>Fohrer, op. cit., Col. 411.

<sup>13</sup>Ernst Sellin, Der Alttestamentliche Prophetismus (Leipzig: n.p., 1912), p. 148, quoted by Sigmund Mowinckel, He That Cometh (New York: Abingdon Press, 1954), p. 133.



His people, and appoints a complex cult of sacrifices, ceremonies, ablutions, etc., to be observed, and specifies as well the time and place of this cultic activity. Eschatology is not, as Mowinckel suggests, dependent upon later prophets, who by their messages give rise and basis to an eschatology, but rather eschatology begins at least at Sinai, the giving of the covenant, as Sellin suggests, if not indeed with the Protoevangelium and the covenants made with the patriarchs.<sup>14</sup> For when Christ says (John 8:56): "Your father Abraham rejoiced that he was to see my day; he saw it and was glad," it appears to become evident that in the faith of Abraham we find trust in the eschatological fulfillment of the hope of deliverance as it was given in the covenant promise, which in future years illumined the history and faith of Israel, the seed of Abraham. The believers of all times lived by this promise, the realization of which was the telos of all Old Testament hope and yearning for the fulness of time. The very fact that faith existed in the Old Testament would lead to the inevitable conclusion that this faith demands an eschatology, for it is a faith in the promises of Yahweh which must be fulfilled ultimately and finally to His glory.<sup>15</sup>

A view which seems to us to introduce extraneous ideas into the scriptural pattern of thought is that expressed by Joh. Lindblom: "Die älteste Form der universalen Eschatologie ist die Gerichtseschatologie."

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<sup>14</sup>Sellin, loc. cit.

<sup>15</sup>Hans Steubing, "Das Grundproblem der Eschatologie," Zeitschrift fuer Systematische Theologie, VII (1930), 475.



Die universale Heilseschatologie ist spaeteren Ursprungs."<sup>16</sup> A similar concept is found again and again in other writers with only slight variations in focus and accent. The supposition is that the former prophets were Unheilspropheten only and that the later ones were purely Heilspropheten. The prophets of doom and harbingers of judgment were superseded by the prophets of hope and restoration. Vriezen puts his finger on the same incorrect view stating: "Die prophetische Heilspredigt laesst sich nicht loesen von der prophetischen Gerichtspredigt, wie man es in der heutigen Theologie leider weithin zu tun pflegt."<sup>17</sup> Or again, the thought is expressed that the Old Testament does not know of an Eschatology, but that it arose from popular beliefs and superstitions. Such a conception of Eschatology would hardly be doing justice to the seriousness with which Scripture treats the subject. Mowinckel sums up the Christian view thus:

The concept of the Messiah and the Messianic hope came into existence because at an early period God proclaimed through the bearers of his revelation a series of Messianic promises in which believers put their trust. Therefore, even primitive Christian theology (e.g., the Epistle to the Hebrews) believed that the patriarchs lived in the hope of the Messiah, and that this hope formed an essential part of their religion (Heb. 11; cf. John 8:56).<sup>18</sup>

On the basis of 1 Sam. 12:12 and Deut. 33:5 Otto Eissfeldt has shown that Yahweh is or will be the king of Israel; and from another selection of passages, he draws the conclusion that the manifestation

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<sup>16</sup>Joh. Lindblom, "Gibt es eine Eschatologie bei den alttestamentlichen Propheten?" Studia Theologica, VI (1953), 96.

<sup>17</sup>Th. C. Vriezen, "Die Hoffnung im Alten Testament," Theologische Literaturzeitung, LXXVIII (1953), 577ff.

<sup>18</sup>Sigmund Mowinckel, He That Cometh (New York: Abingdon Press, 1954), p. 128.



of the kingship of Yahweh is awaited or that its full realization lies in the future, so that the epithet of Yahweh melek has taken on an eschatological content or coloring. In the Authorized Version, the pertinent phrase is translated with "the Lord will reign" and "their king . . . the Lord." (Cf. Mich. 2:12,13; Is. 33:22; Zeph. 3:15; Ez. 20:33,34; Is. 24:23; 52:7; also Ex. 15:1-18 and Ps. 146:10.)<sup>19</sup>

The eschatology of Jesus included the concept of the new age. He not only announced the kingdom as coming or as present, but also took its present reality for granted in all His activity and throughout His teaching ministry.<sup>20</sup> He not only concerned Himself with the flaming end of all history, so much as He did with a new beginning of history, the new age continuing out of the old, as a new people of God who was formed around Him.<sup>21</sup> Jesus exclaimed: "Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing" (Is. 61:1,2; Luke 4:21).

So we can sum up the Scriptural meaning of Eschatology with a quote from Clarence E. Hoopmann: "According to Scripture, 'the last times' are the days of the New Testament dispensation, the Messianic era, the days preceding the end of the world and Christ's return to judgment."<sup>22</sup> At the same time we are well aware of the observation of

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<sup>19</sup>Otto Wissfeldt, "Jahwe als Koenig," Zeitschrift fuer alttestamentliche Wissenschaft, XLVI (1928), 81-105.

<sup>20</sup>Frederick C. Grant, "Realized Eschatology," Christendom, VI (Winter, 1941), 82.

<sup>21</sup>Wm. D. Chamberlain, "Till the Son of Man be Come," Interpretation, VII (January, 1953), 9.

<sup>22</sup>Clarence E. Hoopmann, "The Meaning of the Term, 'The Last Times' or its Equivalent, as Used in the Bible," Australasian Theological Review, VII (January, 1936), 7-12.



Paul Althaus: "Die endgeschichtliche Eschatologie als Bild der letzten Zeit hat theologischen Charakter immer nur dann gehabt, wenn sie mit Naherwartung des Endes verbunden war."<sup>23</sup> This comment was offered in a passage against the Chiliasts. And finally, we are in entire agreement with Georg Fohrer, who points to Hag. 2:15-19 as a key passage for the understanding of Old Testament eschatology; for verse 15 begins with the words "Consider what will come to pass from this day onward" and again in verse 18, leading up to the word of Yahweh in verse 19: "From this day on I will bless you." Fohrer sees here the Umschwung aller Dinge, the Wende der Zeiten, and the Abschluss und Beginn.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>23</sup>Paul Althaus, "Zur Frage der 'endgeschichtlichen Eschatologie,'" Zeitschrift fuer Systematische Theologie, VII (1930), 363.

<sup>24</sup>Fohrer, op. cit., Cols. 401ff., passim.



## CHAPTER II

### THE FIGURE OF THE MESSIAH

#### The Attributes of the Messiah, Divine and Human

There is here no need to prove the unique centrality of the figure of the Messiah in exilic and postexilic eschatological prophecy, as indeed in all eschatology. Without it there would be no doctrine of the eschaton. Because He initiates and creates the eschaton, He controls its development and guarantees its existence, and guides and directs all of its experiences and events. Who, then, is this Man that the winds of empirical happenings and the waves of upheavals and catastrophies are obedient to Him? He is the eschatos, as He has been the archee, Alpha and Omega.

The attributes given Him are given to the one person, to the two natures in communion and communication with each other. Most prominent are the divine qualities attributed to this person, since it is these which distinguish Him from similar official persons of the Old Testament, such as kings, shepherds, judges, and rulers. Indeed, His name shall be called "the LORD," the Yahweh, who is the Son of David in a very special sense (Ps. 2:7). Zechariah can tell us in a telling revelational Oracle (title of the chapter!) that "on that day shall the feeblest among the inhabitants of Jerusalem be like David, and the house of David shall be like God, like the angel of the Lord, at their head" (Zech. 12:8). The italics are ours, of course. This seems to be only another way of stating what is found in Zech. 2:10,11: "Sing



and rejoice, O daughter of Zion; for lo, I come and I will dwell in the midst of you, says the LORD . . . I will dwell in the midst of you, and you shall know that the LORD of hosts has sent me to you."

If we may believe some exegetes, Jer. 31:22 seems to indicate also the supernatural birth of this LORD: "For the LORD has created a new thing on the earth: a woman protects (courts?) a man."<sup>1</sup>

This Person is to be a king, who comes to Zion triumphant and victorious yet humble and riding on an ass, the colt of an ass (Zech. 9:9). He is raised up by God for David, and "he shall reign as king and deal wisely . . . and Israel will dwell securely" (Jer. 23:5,6). He is quite different from the rulers mentioned in Jer. 22, whom God has to reject because of their conduct being at such great variance with the standards of a king. This king will restore the fortunes of Israel together with Judah, uniting the kingdom again under one scepter, and "they shall serve the LORD their God and David their king, whom I will raise up for them" (Jer. 30:3,9). The king will be accepted and respected, even honored and worshiped as God Himself, by the faithful Remnant, the ones who are saved, for the LORD God calls to them: "Return, O faithless sons, I will heal your faithlessness. . . . Behold, we come to thee; for thou art the LORD God" (Jer. 3:22). "At that time Jerusalem shall be called the throne of the LORD, and all nations shall gather to it, to the presence of the LORD in Jerusalem. . . . In those days the house of Judah shall join the house of Israel, and together they shall come" (Jer. 3:17,18). This is significantly underscored by

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<sup>1</sup>Paul Heinisch, Christ in Prophecy, translated from the German by William G. Heidt (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1956), p. 116-117.



Jer. 30:21: "Their prince shall be one of themselves, their ruler shall come forth from their midst." Yet at the same time He is "the King, whose name is the LORD of hosts" (Jer. 51:57).

The prophet Ezekiel points out this act of making of His people one nation and that one king shall be king over them all as an act which is a manifestation of the glory of the LORD God (Ez. 37:22). The LORD's servant David shall be king over them; and they shall all have one shepherd, who shall be their prince forever (Ez. 37:24,25). In order to reinforce this revelational promise, by an oath He confirms this fact: "As I live, says the LORD God, surely . . . I will be king over you" (Ez. 20:33). And again in chapter 34 the LORD declares categorically that it is He who will set up one shepherd, His servant David. "And I, the LORD, will be their God, and my servant David shall be prince among them" (Ez. 34:23,24).

According to our view, the nasi' passages in Ezekiel 40-48, which treat of the Prince, belong here; for this figure presented by Ezekiel exhibits traits, qualities, functions, and an office which are quite compatible with the office of the Messiah King upon completion of His redemptive work, as He dwells in the midst of His people, a holy nation, priests all (universal priesthood of all believers) with Him as Provider for the sacrifices in the sanctuary.

The ascription of Yahweh melek to the Messianic King is drawn in an apocalyptic perspective by Zechariah, to show that this will be the last and permanent condition created by the LORD God. Beholding the day of the LORD's coming, when "the LORD your God will come, and all the holy ones with him" (Zech. 14:5), the prophet sees the kingship confirmed and



perpetuated, for "the LORD will become king over all the earth; on that day the LORD will be one and his name one" (Zech. 14:9). Then all survivors of the nations will have come to Jerusalem "to worship the King, the LORD of hosts" (v. 16,17), and everything, even the bells on the horses, will be "holy to the LORD" and "sacred to the LORD of hosts" (v. 20,21).

This eschatological kingship of Yahweh is what Daniel beheld in the vision of the great statue, which was destroyed by "a stone that was cut from a mountain by no human hand," so that "in the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed, nor shall its sovereignty be left to another people." This was revealed to Daniel by Him, whom the heathen king Nebuchadnezzar called "God of gods and Lord of Kings" (Dan. 2:44,47).

Next to the attribute of kingship and the well defined quality of shepherd, we find that this king is termed a priest. He is to be priest and king at the same time, thus uniting in his person the two offices, which in the Old Testament had been kept separate by divine injunction. The man, whose name is the Branch, shall build the temple of the LORD. He shall bear royal honor, and shall sit and rule upon his throne. And the crown shall be in the temple of the Lord, peaceful understanding being found between the priest and the throne (Zech. 6:12-14). The two offices appear united here. The flock of this shepherd is called jewels of a crown, people who shall shine on his land (Zech. 9:16). The two persons mentioned, Zerubbabel and Joshua, appear as types prefiguring the Priest-King, in whom their two separate charges are fused, the secular, governmental, or royal, and the high priestly and ecclesiasti-

"Then the nations will know that I the LORD sanctify Israel" (Ex. 31:21).



cal. This is an arrangement which will be in force under the new covenant of the eschaton.

The Messianic King is also holy, since it is the LORD Himself Who will establish Him, Who will be king over God's holy people and will be worshiped by these people as their God-King. This attribute is found expressed and implied in every passage, in which this great opus of the LORD is declared to be just that, the work of the holy God. Because He dwells in Zion, the city is the "holy mountain" (Zech.8:3). This is the splendor of the latter house of the Lord, which was predicted as being greater than the former glory (Hag. 2:9). When He has gathered His people, He will manifest His holiness in them in the sight of the nations as "the Holy One in Israel" (Ez. 39:7). Ezekiel here uses a phrase descriptive of God which Isaiah used so very often, whose writings he no doubt knew. Then they will know that He is the LORD their God, because of His holiness manifested among them. The sanctuary of the LORD is located in the "holy portion" or terumah, in the midst of His people (Ez. 48:10), and the city shall be named "The LORD is there" (Ez. 48:35). His holy name shall no longer be defiled, for the people are a holy nation of holy priests, of the "saints of the Most High" (Dan. 7:18ff.). God's holiness was certainly dramatically symbolized as coming to and dwelling with His people by the appearance of "the glory of the LORD" in the vision of chapter one of Ezekiel. See also Ez. 36:21,23: "I had concern for my holy name" and "I will vindicate the holiness of my great name," which will come about by establishing with His people the new covenant.

Not only is He holy in Himself, but the LORD makes His people holy. "Then the nations will know that I the LORD sanctify Israel" (Ez. 37:28).



For God will save them from backsliding and all sin, separate them from sin, i.e., make them holy, and He will cleanse them from all idolatry and transgression, "and they shall be my people, and I will be their God," the God Who sanctifies them by giving His holiness and righteousness to His people (Ez. 37:23).

The soteriological activity of the Messiah is most directly related to His priestly office, for it is as priest that He sacrifices Himself in the people's behalf and makes atonement for their sin. He pays the lutron as the Redeemer, thereby furnishing the basis because of which forgiveness of sins can be granted, and becomes the Mediator for His people (Jer. 33:34). Healing comes from the hope of Israel (Jer. 17:13, 14) and salvation from the LORD, trusting in Whom a man is blessed. After the seventy weeks of years (Dan. 9:24) there will be put an end to sin, iniquity will be atoned, and everlasting righteousness will be brought in. This is high priestly activity, to atone for sin. Thus the LORD will remove the guilt of the land in a single day, when He brings His servant, the Branch (Zech. 3:8,9), for He has returned to Jerusalem with compassion (Zech. 1:16). There shall be opened for all the inhabitants of Jerusalem a fountain to cleanse them from sin and uncleanness (Zech. 13:1). There shall be no more curse (Zech. 14:11), for He became a curse for them, removed the curse from the land. Such ever recurring phrases as "they shall know that I am Yahweh" and "they shall be my people and I shall be their God" presuppose the soteriological act of God's deliverance from sin, redemption by way of expiation and atonement. Matthew refers to Zech. 13:7 quoting words of Christ Who relates these words as fulfilled to Himself: "I will strike the shepherd and the sheep of the flock will be scattered" (Matth. 26:31).



The blessings to be forthcoming from the heilsgeschichtliche intervention of the LORD for the salvation of His people are not only vaguely suggested as something remotely possible or desirable, but the divine gift of salvation and blessedness, the fruits of the soteria of the Priest-king, these are promised and vouchsafed to the people by the establishment of the New Covenant, which figures prominently in the prophecies concerning the Christ of the eschaton. With crystal clear words, Jeremiah refers to the days which are coming, when the LORD will make a new covenant, will write His law upon their hearts, not on stone as before on Sinai. They shall thus be made His people, for they shall all know Him, "for I will forgive their iniquity" (Jer. 31:31ff.). They shall fear Him, worship Him in holy reverence, for their own good and that of their children (Jer. 32:3), and the covenant will be an everlasting one, that they may not turn from Him (v. 40; Ez. 16:60,62,33). The LORD will sprinkle clean water upon them to cleanse them from all sin, and will give them a new heart and a new spirit, and give them a heart of flesh for the heart of stone (Ez. 36:25,26). He will make a new berith, not a circumcision covenant in the flesh, but a circumcision of the heart and mind. This will be an everlasting covenant of blessing for them (Ez. 37:26). The mediator of this new covenant or testament is David, the Branch, the LORD's servant, the "prince for ever," the "LORD" and the "messenger of the covenant" (Mal. 3:1).

There can, therefore, be no doubt but that the citizens of the kingdom of the eschaton are the children of the New Covenant, whose glory surpasses that of the old covenant. The basis of this covenant is the removal of iniquity, the cleansing from all uncleanness, the forgiveness of all sin; the essentially spiritual character of the covenant



is quite clearly evident. The Anointed One is the key figure in this transaction or "operation new covenant" in the eschaton.

For the specific purpose of making the objective soteria wrought by the Mediator of the new and everlasting covenant become subjectively efficacious, the Holy Spirit is given and sent, who opens their dead souls, and makes them alive through the knowledge of the LORD, their Savior (Ez. 37:13,14). And as the LORD gives His gifts in abundance, as the gifts of forgiveness, life, and salvation, so does He also give His Spirit in abundance, for He will pour out His Spirit on His people (Ez. 39:29). And the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel said: "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the LORD of hosts" (Zech. 4:6). The act of pouring out on Jerusalem a spirit of compassion and of supplication is spoken of (Zech. 12:10) and at least calls attention to the fruits of the Spirit, which has been poured out in abundant measure on the LORD's people, if it does not refer to the Spirit Himself. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of the LORD who becomes the King David, for He sends His Spirit and pours it out. A parallel is drawn between the activity of the Spirit in the new covenant and in that of old, for "the law and the words which the LORD of hosts had sent by His Spirit through the former prophets" had fallen on adamant hearts and ears (Zech. 7:12). Under the new covenant the Spirit would be given to the people with the word of the LORD being written into their renewed hearts of flesh.

The fact that the servant of Yahweh, the Branch, was Himself full of the Spirit, one can gather from the highly figurative passage (Zech. 3:9), regarding the "stone which I have set before Joshua, upon a single stone with seven facets" or eyes, if the parallel be Zech. 4:10 ("these seven are the eyes of the LORD") and Rev. 5:6, where the Lamb has seven



horns with "seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth." The promise of the LORD stands: "My Spirit abides among you; fear not" (Hag. 2:5), to which New Testament parallels abound. Yahweh Melek dwells with His people as does His Spirit, and so does the Branch, the man: this differentiation appears to be made in the interest of distinguishing the persons in the Holy Trinity.

This great David, triumphant King yet humble Servant, with a united realm and one people, with universal jurisdiction, an everlasting government, Whose garment is holiness and Whose people worship Him in the beauty of holiness as a holy, royal priesthood, blessed by Him with a new covenant which gives wisdom and knowledge of God into the heart and forgives sin, this Anointed One Who is the LORD as well as the Son of David is characterized, as by holiness according to which He is separate from sin and sinners in an absolute sense, so by righteousness, wisdom, and justice.

Again and again in the Messianic prophecies mention is made of particularly these qualities and qualifications. In the admittedly Messianic passage Jer. 23:5,6 and its parallel 33:15,16, the coming David is a "righteous Branch" who shall "deal wisely and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land." And the name by which he will be called is "THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS." In those days which are coming, the new covenant Messianic times, also the city of Jerusalem, the assembly of His people, the Church, will be called THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS, for they are the body of which He is the Head. Now it is true, that "righteous Branch" above may simply mean a "legitimate offspring" or "rightful shoot" from the trunk of David's lineage. The name THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS, however, appears to be much more



comprehensive in scope and more significant in meaning. For He not only is righteous in Himself, for His own person and character, knowing and doing justice perfectly, but He is "our righteousness," which points quite definitely in the direction of "justification" of His people by the King of Righteousness, giving His righteousness to them, the aliena iustitia which is pro nobis.

Zechariah quotes the Lord of hosts as saying that they shall be His people and He will be their God "in faithfulness and in righteousness" (Zech. 8:8). According to the covenant, the people walk with Him in "peace and uprightness." The relationship between King and people will be marked by righteousness, uprightness, peace, and justice.

Thus also Daniel describes the Messiah's activity as atoning for iniquity to "bring in everlasting righteousness" by the coming of an "anointed one, a prince" (Dan. 9:24). Quite in contrast to the tyranny and despotism known among Oriental monarchs, this King will be equitable and fair in His dealings, but with a heavenly, divine justice and motivated by love and compassion, grace and mercy, not according to deserts nor merits. In a beautiful poetic stanza Malachi brings this out by calling the Anointed "the sun of righteousness with healing in its wings" (Mal. 4:2). As the sun in meridian splendor radiates light and heat and energy, so the Messiah-King will possess and emit, exercise, and spread righteousness, the righteousness of salvation, the forgiveness of sins which is the "healing" from our natural unrighteousness. Also those "who are wise and turn many to righteousness shall shine like stars," "like the brightness of the firmament" (Dan. 12:3), for they continue the office of the LORD OUR RIGHTHOUSNESS and shall be like Him, ministers of the Gospel which reveals the righteousness of God from faith for faith



(Rom. 1:17).

Wisdom also is predicated of this King, who will be a shepherd "who will feed you with knowledge and understanding" (Jer. 3:15). He "will deal wisely with His people" (Jer. 23:5). He will also give His wisdom and understanding to His people by giving them His Spirit and a "heart of flesh," so that as children of the new covenant they shall know that He is the LORD. This is wisdom unto salvation. However, also through the manifestations of His wrath and justice will He make Himself known among men, "when I judge you" (Ez. 35:11). Among God's people "those who are wise," theologian or layman, "shall shine like the brightness of the firmament and turn many to righteousness" (Dan. 12:3), which is the greatest wisdom, yet it is foolishness to the world and natural man. The people will "speak the truth to one another, render in their gates judgments that are true and make for peace . . . for they love truth and peace" (Zech. 8:16,19). Therefore, he who glories "let him glory in this that he understands and knows me, that I am the LORD who practice steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth; for in these things I delight, says the LORD" (Jer. 9:24). All this happens in the days when the LORD pours out His Spirit (Jer. 39:29), the Spirit of wisdom and knowledge and understanding.

Other divine attributes of the Anointed One that are to be found in these Scriptures are glory, power, and dominion.

The "one like a son of man" coming from heaven like God received dominion and glory and kingdom and "his dominion is an everlasting dominion" (Dan. 7:14). One is certainly reminded here of the Doxology of the Our Father, the kingdom and the power and the glory for ever and ever. His people share with the Son of man these honors, for they also shall



possess the kingdom forever, as the body of Christ and as "the saints of the Most High" (Dan. 7:18). Where the Servant is, there shall His servants be also. Jerusalem shall be called "the throne of the LORD" (Jer. 3:17), and all nations shall gather "to the presence of the LORD" to pay homage to the King and recognize and acclaim His kingship, power, and glory. The LORD will not only "shake the heavens and the earth," but He will make the "latter splendor of this house greater than the former, and in this place I will give prosperity" (Hag. 2:9). This is the holy temple, which the man, whose name is the Branch, will build (Zech. 6:12). His glory is as much His triumph and victory, as His humility and peace (Zech. 9:9,10). He will reveal His power, might, and strength by destroying the strength of the kingdoms of the nations (Hag. 2:22; Dan. 2:44).

Everlasting and universal dominion are attributes of the King of the eschaton. The visions of the "glory of the LORD" filling the temple in Ezekiel's book may justly be related to the mysterious glories of our King, spiritual and otherwise. The people of the kingdom will partake of this glory, for it is His will "that they might be for me a people, a name, a praise, and a glory" says the LORD (Jer. 13:11). And beyond the pale of His own state the LORD "will set His glory among the nations, and all nations shall see my judgments" (Ez. 39:21), vindicating His holiness by punitive vengeance, but also by redemptively bringing back His own people, gathering His own elect from the dispersion. Again, the glory of the new sanctuary of the Branch is this: "The LORD is there" (Ez. 48:35).

The glorious and mighty pantokrator King's glory is that of the LORD Himself, for He will be honored and worshiped even as God. For His



people shall "worship the King, the LORD of hosts" (Zech. 14:16,17). "And it shall come to pass in that day, says the LORD of hosts . . . they shall serve the LORD their God and (waw expletivum: "that is") David their king, whom I will raise up for them" (Jer. 30:8). "They will call on my name, and I will answer them" (Zech. 13:9). For "the LORD will become king over all the earth; on that day the LORD will be one and his name one" (Zech. 14:9). In fact, here the words of the LORD apply: "And you shall be my people, and I will be your God" in the person of the Messiah, Redeemer, King, the Prince for ever. Then they shall know that He is God, "for they shall return to me with their whole heart" (Jer. 24:7). David, God's servant, is the prophesied Branch, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. This is the very heart of worship: To acknowledge Him to be the KYRIOS IESOUS CRISTOS. He is the hope, the mikveh, the Hoffnungsquell, of Israel, its savior in time of trouble, and "we are called by thy name" (Jer. 14:8,9). For His people to glory in their LORD with knowledge and praise are things in which He delights (Jer. 9:24). In those days, in the presence of the LORD, His people will rejoice in His glory and confess: "Behold, we come to thee; for thou art the LORD our God. . . . Truly in the LORD our God is the salvation of Israel" (Jer. 3:17,22,23). This is the true Israel's true glory and reflection of His divine glory.

The Titles of the Messiah: Descriptive Terms for His Person, His Office, the Personal Union, the Purpose of His Coming

(1) David, David my servant, my servant David (Ez. 34:23,24). The



prophet Ezekiel seems to identify the Messiah with David,<sup>2</sup> but the historical David lived long before. Does he think perhaps in terms of a David redivivus? On the basis of other passages and this one, it appears to be the meaning that somehow David will relive in the Son of David, "the sure mercies of David" in person, so that "David" simply is meant to stand for that future, greater, eschatological Messiah-David, who shall be glorious and mighty in absoluto to extend the kingship that was David's in a sublimated sense to the far corners of the earth. Jer. 30:9 and Ez. 34:23,24 distinctly affirm that the LORD God shall do this, and that it is an "Eingreifen Jahwes . . . ein Phaenomen von kosmischer Bedeutung."<sup>3</sup> The LORD will be their God, and David their "prince for ever among the people." The emphasis is very strong on the LORD's own acting: "Behold I, I myself will search for my sheep" (Ez. 34:11). More than that, "the ruler of the future is presented with pictures of the Golden Age and a strong stress on the presence of Yahweh Himself."<sup>4</sup>

Ezekiel takes up the same matter again in the dry bones chapter (Ez. 37:22,24,25), referring to the oneness of the nation over which God will set a king, "my servant David," who shall be king over them, Israel and Judah being united again. Could this "servant" reference possibly

<sup>2</sup>Hugo Gressmann, Der Messias (Goettingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1929), p. 255.

<sup>3</sup>Gerhard von Rad, Theologie des Alten Testaments. Band II: Die Theologie der prophetischen Ueberlieferungen Israels (Muenchen: Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1960), p. 137.

<sup>4</sup>Cyril Wm. Emmet, "Messiah," Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, edited by James Hastings, et al. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1916), p. 570-581.



be an allusion to or an echo of the Suffering Servant of Isaiah's prophecies? Bentzen thinks so; and C. R. North thinks of this as the "ultimate interpretation and fulfillment of the prophecy to which we all ultimately come thinking of the Servant as Christ."<sup>5</sup> Zechariah 3:8 adds another stone to the mosaic with the words: "I will bring my servant, the Branch." So it can be admitted that the equation Yahweh-Yahweh Sidkenu-David = my Servant = Branch = Messiah is scripturally correct.

We seem to hear in these references also words from 1 Sam. 13:14, where David is described as "a man after his own heart; and the LORD has appointed him to be prince over his people." "The LORD has sought him out." This same language is used when speaking of the new David, chosen by God, a man after the LORD's own heart, in whom He is well pleased, and who is to be the prince for ever over His people. The new David will, however, be king according to a new covenant (Jer. 31:31ff.), which is an everlasting covenant, one that God had promised and sworn to David (2 Sam. 7:12-19). This Son of David will be sent by the LORD, from heaven, from pre-existence, and be raised up in the incarnation, according to his human nature, to whom He will give an everlasting kingdom (Dan. 7:13,14) according to the terms of the new covenant.

It appears that Jeremiah did not see David as the promised ruler, for he writes: "I will raise up for David a righteous Branch," reminding himself and others of the "rod from Jesse's stem" (Is. 11:1) promised long ago. It could be that Jeremiah means to comment on the problem of David himself returning as king. The Branch will be raised

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<sup>5</sup>Christopher R. North, The Suffering Servant in Deutero-Isaiah, (Second edition; London: Oxford University Press, 1956), p. 239.



up by the LORD for a dawidum, which Mowinckel contends on the basis of Mari texts was a title, an appellativum with the meaning of "chief, prince." Since David was the Inbegriff of what a king should be, then the name stood for the best of kings, for the office incumbent par excellence, somewhat like calling the organists in central Germany simply "Bach," because all good organists were of that family. Mowinckel also insists that this king will be "more soteriological than political," which fact is signaled by the title YAHWEH SIDKENU (Jer. 33:14-16 and Jer. 30:8,9). This king shall be established "in that day" when God restores the fortunes of Israel and Judah and the people serve their God and David their king, or their Prince, the nasci'.

Merkwuerdig ist allerdings, dass Jeremia in Kapitel 23:5f. von einem Gesalbten in der Deszendenz Davids redet, waehrend er in Kapitel 30:9 von einem wiederkehrenden David spricht. . . . Der Gesalbte hat bei Jahwe Immediatverkehr; er hat Zugang zu den geheimsten Beratungen des Weltenkoenigs . . . Jer. 30:21 . . . zeigt, dass dieser Zugang zu Jahwe auf seiten des Gesalbten nur mit dem Einsatz seines Lebens moeglich ist.<sup>6</sup>

So much is sure, as can be seen from this statement by von Rad, that much more is predicated of this David than could ever be said of any only human king.

Zechariah helps us further to identify and characterize the Messianic King, for the feeblest among the inhabitants of Jerusalem on that day shall be like David, and the house of David shall be like God, like the angel (Angel?!) of the LORD, at their head (Zech. 12:8). The LORD shall be king, a man, and this man shall be the LORD Himself: The God-manhood of the Messiah-King is here strenuously asserted.

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<sup>6</sup> von Rad, op. cit., p. 230.



Phil. 2:6,7 seems to take up the strain from the prophetic writings: "He was in the form of God . . . taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men."

Closely allied with the events of the eschaton is the role played by the Holy Ghost. In reference to His participation in the soteria Zechariah informs: "On the house of David . . . the LORD will pour out a spirit of compassion and supplication . . . and on that day shall be a fountain opened for the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to cleanse them from sin and uncleanness" (Zech. 12:10,13). Spiritual cleansing through the means of grace is here spoken of as being accomplished by the agency of the outpoured Spirit in the time of the Messiah. Wells of living water are symbols of the abundance and freshness of divine gifts of forgiveness and new strength. We disagree with Hugo Gressmann, who sees in the Messiah simply the idealized political ruler of the eschaton,<sup>7</sup> but we do agree with his reference to the Jacob-Blessing (Gen. 49) regarding Shiloh and the scepter of Judah, and the Balaam-Prophecy (Num. 24) as being fulfilled in this king.<sup>8</sup>

(2) THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. This term has been brought to our attention before, but its deeper significance must yet be noted. Jer. 23:5 and 33:16 both contain this title which certainly arouses the curiosity of reader and scholar. The righteous Branch raised up for David is called Yahweh Sidkenu. The possible reference to Zedekiah, the

<sup>7</sup>Gressmann, op. cit., p. 225.

<sup>8</sup>Sigmund Mowinckel, He That Cometh (New York: Abingdon Press, 1954), p. 21ff.



reigning king ("Yahweh is my righteousness") can be only "ironic"<sup>9</sup> and the contrast between the two figures is direct and marked.<sup>10</sup> This LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS is faithful, bringing back the Remnant out of the north country and all countries (Jer. 23:8), the result being that His people will again bless each other and say: "The LORD bless you, O habitation of righteousness, O holy hill" (Jer. 31:23). Measured with this standard the figure of the all too human figure of King Zedekiah looks impossible of being considered implied here.

He will be a righteous sprout . . . and will be a righteous descendant . . . in that he will embody in his person the two-fold concept which the name his subjects call him implies, "The Lord is our righteousness," where "righteousness" means not only the righteousness of the king's character but also his mediation to the whole nation of justice (righteousness) and salvation.<sup>11</sup>

The name of each member of this kingdom shall be Zedekiah, the LORD is my righteousness, for the LORD is our, that is the believers', righteousness. They are called "the saints of the Most High" (Dan. 7:18) because "I the LORD sanctify Israel" (Ez. 37:28). This is the essence of the new covenant, for the LORD declared: "I will forgive their iniquity" (Ez. 16:63; Jer. 31:34), and this we call justification by non-imputation of guilt and by imputation of His righteousness. With the coming of the Anointed One (Dan. 9:24,25), there was decreed atonement for iniquity and the bringing of everlasting righteousness.

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<sup>9</sup> Emmet, op. cit., p. 572.

<sup>10</sup> Elmer A. Leslie, Jeremiah (New York: Abingdon Press, 1954), pp. 217-18.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.



Again, the active participation of the Holy Spirit is indicated by the name mashiach which means "anointed" or "the anointed one," and which could possibly be interpreted as being a noun derived from a Pi'el form of the verb mashach, being therefore an intensive form, the meaning being that the Anointed One was being anointed over and over, many times, constantly, for ever, as has been suggested.<sup>12</sup>

A very poetic reference in postexilic Scriptures to the righteousness of the Anointed One is found in Mal. 4:2. Here He is "the sun of righteousness with healing in its wings." For "in the Messiah Jehovah came to His people . . . and Jehovah's presence is Israel's salvation" (righteousness, justification).<sup>13</sup>

This thought is echoed in the Formula of Concordia, in the Epitome, chapter 2, where we read:

Since it is unanimously confessed in our churches, in accordance with God's Word and the sense of the Augsburg Confession, that we poor sinners are justified before God and saved alone by faith in Christ, and thus Christ alone is our Righteousness, who is true God and man, because in Him the divine and human natures are personally united with one another, Jer. 23:6. . . .<sup>14</sup>

(3) The Son of Man. The locus classicus is Dan. 7:13ff., where the prophet sees in night visions divine revelations, that with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man (k<sup>e</sup>bar enash) and was presented before the Ancient of Days in a mysterious as glorious theophany.

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<sup>12</sup>Archibald Duff, "The Rise of the Title 'Messiah,'" Expositor, Series 8, XXV (March, 1923), pp. 205-215.

<sup>13</sup>A. B. Davidson, The Theology of the Old Testament (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1910), p. 370.

<sup>14</sup>"Formula of Concord," Triglot Concordia: The Symbolical Books of the Ev. Lutheran Church (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1921), p. 791.



To Him was given everlasting dominion and glory and kingdom (Rev. 1:13-15). This figure disappears from the scene as it had made its appearance unexpectedly and suddenly. Later it is related that the saints of the Most High shall also receive the kingdom for ever in the future, the same which previously had been given to the Son of man.

This "one like a son of man" is certainly presented as an individual and as distinct from the saints. The arguments for this are formidable.<sup>15</sup> Only He is presented to the Ancient of Days and only He, not the saints, came with the clouds and from heaven, designating His divine origin as LORD and His pre-existence in "uebermenschlicher Wesenheit."<sup>16</sup> To Him alone also is given "Besitz der Allmacht und Richtergewalt." This interpretation is in accord with the Words of Christ as to His coming in the clouds of heaven, in His eschatological discourses and under oath before the high priest and the Sanhedrin. Among the modern interpreters who favor the individualistic exposition we find Th. C. Vriezen: "This figure is at all events represented as the bearer of the kingly dignity of the eschatological kingdom!"<sup>17</sup> Also Gerhard von Rad<sup>18</sup> and Walter Eichrodt who writes: "Die Deutung auf das Volk der Heiligen ist zweifellos eine Umbiegung des

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<sup>15</sup>Ludwig Fuerbringer, "Kleine Danielstudien," Concordia Theological Monthly, IX (August, 1938), 583.

<sup>16</sup>Albert Gelin, Die Botschaft des Heils im Alten Testament, translated from the French by Flenore Beck (Duesseldorf: Patmos-Verlag, 1956), p. 62.

<sup>17</sup>Th. C. Vriezen, An Outline of Old Testament Theology (London: Basil Blackwell, 1958), p. 367.

<sup>18</sup>von Rad, op. cit., p. 325.



urspruenglichen Sinnes."<sup>19</sup> Also L. Fuerbringer and Leupold in his commentary on Daniel. Many are those who make the son-of-man likeness out to be a representative or collective representation of the people or part of them, the Remnant, or even of the Israel of today (Messianism). In answer to such an interpretation it can be urged that this figure receives and possesses divine attributes and functions the like a simple human being never does nor indeed can possess. In other passages in which power and authority is given to the Messianic King, an individual is to be understood. Our Confessions declare the gifts which Christ received to have been "not created gifts, but divine, infinite properties . . . given and communicated to the man Christ, . . . Dan. 7:14." Reference is made to this passage in the Catalog of Testimonies, I, and again in the Formula of Concord, saying that "also as man (Christ) rules from sea to sea and to the ends of the earth . . . Zech. 9:10."<sup>20</sup>

(4) He Who Comes, Whose Right it is. Ezekiel pronounces judgment against the "unhallowed wicked one, prince of Israel whose day has come, the day of final punishment." But things shall not remain as they are, "a ruin, ruin, ruin I will make it" says the LORD, "until he comes whose right it is, and to him will I give it" (Ez. 21:27). The "it" here refers to the crown. This verse very strongly reminds one of the Shiloh blessing and promise in Gen. 49:10, the promise being given that the scepter shall not depart from Judah until he comes (Shiloh) to

<sup>19</sup>Walter Eichrodt, Theologie des Alten Testaments: Teil I. Gott und Volk (5. Neubearbeitete Auflage; Stuttgart: Ehrenfried Klotz Verlag; und Goettingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1957), p. 331.

<sup>20</sup>"Formula of Concord," op. cit., pp. 1033, 1113, 1024.



whom it belongs. The German translation of Prof. Menge has it thus (Ez. 21:32): "Zu Truemmern, Truemmern, Truemmern will ich die Stadt machen; auch dies soll nicht so bleiben, bis der kommt, der ein Anrecht darauf hat: dem will ich es geben."<sup>21</sup> Luther has a slightly different accent: "Ich will die Krone zunicht, zunichte, zunichte machen, bis der komme, der sie haben soll; dem will ich sie geben." On this passage Gerhard von Rad comments: "Jahwe wird die dem Thron Davids beigelegten Verheissungen noch einmal einloesen, 'bis der kommt, dem das Recht zusteht' (Hes. 21:27;32) . . . vom kommenden Gesalbten gesprochen."<sup>22</sup>

The person "whose right it is" shall be one who will act by divine right (mishpat), whose authority comes from Yahweh, of whom such honor and position has been predicted in connection with the new covenant, or as Hag. 2:21,22 tells us, he will be a king because of whom the LORD shall shake the heavens and the earth. He will be made the LORD's signet ring, "for I have chosen you, says the LORD of hosts." By eternal decree this person has been selected and designated, who should come forth from the people's midst as their ruler and prince equipped by Yahweh with special prerogatives, but also as their Mediator. For Jeremiah tells us that the LORD will make him draw near to Himself, because in him He is well pleased, and "he shall approach me, for who would dare of himself to approach me?" (Jer. 30:21). Plainly, here is "the One whose right it is" to be Mediator, High Priest, Intercessor,

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<sup>21</sup>Hermann Menge, Die Heilige Schrift Alten und Neuen Testaments (Stuttgart: Privilegierte Wuerttembergische Bibelanstalt, 1928), p. 1016.

<sup>22</sup>von Rad, op. cit., p. 249.



Who is able to approach the holy God, besides being prince and ruler of God's people (Jer. 30:22).

(5) Zemach, the Branch. The general concept of "he whose right it is" is taken up again and confirmed by Jer. 23:5. The LORD will raise up a righteous (legitimate, rightful, whose right it is, having and giving righteousness) Branch or Shoot, parallel to Is. 11:1-5. This Rod shall reign as king, deal wisely in His government and in all His doings He shall execute justice and righteousness (fulfill God's law and justice) and shall be called Yahweh Sidkenu. His the zedek as well as the zedeka.

The prophet Ezekiel brings a somewhat similar idea in speaking of a sprig or branch taken from the lofty cedar and planted on the mountain tops of Israel, which shall flourish and the birds of the heavens shall build their nests in its branches (Ez. 17:22-24). Of more than passing interest is the fact that Ezekiel uses the same vocable yonek (sapling) that is used in Isaiah 53:2. This righteousness branch or sprig is to spring forth as scion for David's lineage (Jer. 33:15; Is. 53:2) and in him will the LORD fulfill the sure love and sure mercies of David (Is. 55:3).

In Zech. 3:8 the high priest Joshua is addressed and to him it is said: "I will bring my servant the Branch . . . and I will remove the guilt of this land in a single day," with evident emphasis on the soteriological importance and purposes of this Branch, making a spiritual interpretation mandatory. Zechariah takes pains to portray this astonishingly unique situation: Behold the man (ECCE HOMO) whose name is the Branch. He shall grow up in his place. He shall build the temple. He shall bear royal honor, rule on the throne; and the crown



shall be in the temple. He shall be priest on his throne. Kingship and priesthood will be in peaceful understanding, united upon one person, which was not licit in Old Testament times (Zech. 6:12). The reference is plainly to the future, so that neither Zerubbabel nor Joshua, ruler and priest then flourishing, nor Jehoiachin, as Joseph Klausner and others think, are here meant. These were two distinct persons, while upon the Branch the two distinct offices were to be conferred and united without conflict nor fear of illegality.

This Branch concept, more specifically the yonek and nezer (Is. 11) idea conveys the thought of a tender shoot coming forth from an apparently dead stump of David's family, and may be looked upon as a veiled reference to the Virgin Birth. His sprouting forth under the conditions is nothing short of miraculous.

(6) Shepherd. This title is closely connected with the kingship of the Messiah-King. The activity of governing and ruling is described in detail as caring for and shepherding His people. This is in marked contrast to the kings and shepherds of Israel and Judah, as also to the priests and prophets and magistrates, which defiled their office and despoiled God's people. "Behold, I, I myself will search for my sheep, says the LORD God . . . I will save my flock . . . I will set up over them one shepherd, my servant David . . . He shall be prince among them, and I, the LORD, will be their God" (Ez. 34:11ff.). His people are the sheep of His pasture, He will feed them in justice (v. 16), truly and faithfully as a good shepherd. Only one flock is envisioned made up of Israel and Judah as there is only one shepherd (Ez. 37:24). This shepherd called "prince" (Ez. 46:10) goes in and out with His people. And what is more, "I gather the house of Israel . . . and manifest my



holiness in them . . . they shall dwell securely" (Ez. 28:25). Even if this were said of a human king, it would have to be taken figuratively. The holy Shepherd and Bishop of our souls has one holy flock, the Una Sancta. He is holy and sanctifies others for Himself, and in this the Shepherd's care for His flock goes far beyond the doing of the ordinary chores of the pastoral profession (Ez. 34). He is even slain for His sheep.

In those days He will give shepherds after His own heart, who will feed the people with knowledge and understanding (Jer. 3:15). This implies spiritual activity, specifically that of the ministers of the Word. It implies leading people into all truth by the Holy Spirit. "Judah and Jerusalem will be saved and dwell securely" (Jer. 33:16), for "on that day the LORD their God will save them for they are the flock of his people" (Zech. 9:16). The soteriological aspect of the shepherd's care for the sheep is emphasized: "I will save my flock" (Ez. 34:22). Only those who are saved belong to the flock. He Himself will gather them by giving them knowledge and understanding of their own sin and of His grace, of law and gospel, under the new covenant, which concept Ezekial relates directly to that of the Shepherd (Ez. 34:25-31).

(7) The Chosen One. Reference has been made to this title before, and we mention it again here to give it emphasis. On that day, in the eschaton, the LORD will make Zerubbabel-Messiah, like a signet ring. This is to be in the future and not be considered a past event. "For I have chosen you, says the LORD of hosts." This predestination from eternity is an act of God in His own free will and power, a determination that comes from the eternal counsels of the Holy Trinity. This



One will be unique, coming with divine approval and doing divine work with authority and authorization from above. He is the LORD in human form who, God-man, acts in God's and man's behalf. Unlike Zerubbabel, which means "a shoot from Babel," this person was to be the righteous Branch, the scion from David's stem, who comes from heaven (Dan. 7:13). It is possible that much was expected of Zerubbabel and that many hopes were linked to his person and his activity, but nothing came of it.

"He disappears we know not where nor how."<sup>23</sup>

The eternal selection and choice of such a Messiah-King, and the decision that He be God-man, a unique person, this was communicated to man by God through the channels of divine prophecy. This Chosen One was finally the one in Whom the Father was well-pleased, the Ancient of Days bestowing on Him, the Son of man, all glory and dominion and eternal kingship. He was a Shepherd, yet He was the pascal lamb chosen by God, chosen also to sit at the right hand of the Father, His Chosen One.

(8) The Prince (nasi'). In the mysterious prophecy of Ez. 40-48, we could say that "the Messianic King gives places to the new figure of a prince"<sup>24</sup> in the sense that a different aspect and function of the same Messianic King is there described, in a different situation and relationship. This figure merits our attention in a discussion of Messianic titles, especially since it appears only in the eschatological visions of Ezekiel. To him it surely must have meant something.

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<sup>23</sup> John Paterson, The Goodly Fellowship of the Prophets (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1948), p. 217f.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., p. 175.



What purpose might such an enigmatical personage serve in such a purely eschatological frame of reference and context? What other possible and also plausible significance could attach to this Prince, especially since we have become acquainted with this title in earlier chapters of Ezekiel (34:23-25). It seems that some affinity can be established between the prince there and here.

David my servant shall be their prince for ever, "the perfect priest-king"<sup>25</sup> established according to an everlasting covenant, and the LORD shall bless them and be in their midst for ever. This is in drastic differentiation from Gog of the land of Magog, the prince of Meshech and Tubal (Ez. 38, 39). Later in a vision of the temple, Ezekiel writes that he heard "one speaking out of the temple: 'Son of man, this is the place of my throne,'" and he had written before that the glory of the LORD filled the temple; now comes the speaking voice of His glory, the logos. "I will dwell in the midst of my people for ever" (Ez. 43:6-9). The Levitical priests, sons of Zadok (from zedek- "Righteousness"), shall come near, "approach the LORD" (Jer. 30:31) like their High Priest-King for offering sacrifice and for ministering before their LORD whom they worship (Jer. 30:9).

The Prince is distinguished from "the princes of Israel" who are unjust to the people (Ez. 45:9); he has his portion of land next to the sanctuary, and the tribes all around him (48:21ff.). This Prince provides and furnishes everything pertaining to all sacrifices, the regular ones and those on feast and festival days (45:17). Only he

<sup>25</sup> Geo. A. F. Knight, A Christian Theology of the Old Testament (Richmond, Va.: John Knox Press, 1959), p. 311.



enters the temple by the East gate and vestibule; otherwise the gate is closed. He takes his stand by the post of the gate and he worships at the threshold of the gate (46:2). Only the prince may sit in it (i.e., the East gate vestibule), to eat bread before the LORD (44:3), for the sacrificial meal. When the people go in, the Prince shall go in with them, and shall go out with them. He goes through the East gate alone, for it is by this gate that the glory of the LORD, the God of Israel, in special theophany, had entered the temple. Through this gate the LORD's glory and manifestation now comes in the form of the Prince, who dwells in the midst of His people (46:10; John 1:14; Luke 17:21).

The prince's sons may receive gifts from him for an inheritance, to keep for ever (46:16). Taking "sons" in its wider meaning, the Messiah-Prince certainly does bestow gifts on His brethren and spiritual sons and daughters for ever (Ps. 68:18). Besides, we find these "sons" referred to only in a conditional sentence.

In Ez. 45:13-17 it is generally agreed that the Prince "collects" contributions. However, the Hebrew certainly admits of other interpretations. All the people . . . shall be to, shall be of, shall be present at this offering to or of (lamd auctoris) the prince of Israel. It could just as well mean that the people shall be present or be held to sacrifice with him, when the Prince's offerings are being presented in the temple.

"And the name of the city henceforth shall be, The LORD is there" (Ez. 48:35), the last verse of the book, seems to point in this direction that in the person of the Prince for ever Yahweh Himself is present and the city is His, for He is there with His presence as King, Prophet, and eternal Melchizedek, King of Righteousness (Ps. 110), the



Intercessor for the people and for the officiating priests (Jer. 30:21).

On this S. Mowinckel comments:

Among the sayings about the future king, there is the passage in Jer. 30:21f. in which his priestly office as intercessor between Yahweh and the re-established Jacob is emphasized in a way rather different from that of Ps. 110. . . . The king should be a cultic leader . . . Yahweh must Himself appoint and authorize a man for this task, a king of David's line; and through his constant intercession in the cult, the new covenant will be upheld for ever.<sup>26</sup>

And in another passage:

In Israel the knowledge of Yahweh was increasingly regarded as the special function of the priest and the prophet, particularly the prophet . . . and from the function of the prophet it was taken over as a fundamental feature in the picture of the future king.<sup>27</sup>

Even if perhaps unwittingly or only very slightly, Mowinckel seems to sense the Messiah-King in the person of the Prince and stops to comment and to pay more attention to him than most of the commentators do.

Now it is true that the Prince does not himself sacrifice, i.e., perform the actual offering-up of the animals, etc. He is definitely presented, however, as the one and only one who provides and furnishes the sacrificial animals and other materials for offerings. In fact, in Ezekiel this Prince's sole activity is in the temple services. No other function of his receives anything but passing attention. Might this not just be an Old Testament way of saying that His own sacrifice was completed (this is now the eschaton, the fulness of time) and through Him all sacrifices to God are truly pleasing and acceptable (Ex. 43:19,27), but only those which He supervises, authorizes,

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<sup>26</sup>Mowinckel, op. cit., p. 238.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid., p. 180.



provides, and in general makes possible on the basis of the new covenant. His atonement takes the imperfections out of the offerings of the universal priesthood of all believers who offer up continually and daily their gifts and sacrifices to God through the mediation of their Prince Jesus, the Anointed One. "Then the offerings of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the LORD" (Mal. 3:4). He is ever present with His people in the Church according to His promise. He governs, guides, directs, and orders all things in His kingdom. His action is nothing visible, but an all-pervading influence, the Presence, which we know to be something quite real. His Handlanger are the ministry on earth and all Christians in their service to God. His blessings are available to us, and His sacrifice is eternally valid and can save to the uttermost, needs no repetition. For this reason the Prince is not actually sacrificing in the temple, is not immediately engaged in the slaying of victims and in other priestly activity; for He now represents and symbolizes the sacramental presence and action of God toward His people besides mediating for the people before God. He is the LORD incarnate as the Prince, the Emmanuel continually, enthroned on the praises of the new covenant Israel. As He was "the Chosen One," so His people are the chosen nation, holy unto the LORD (as was written on the gold headband on the forehead of the high priest). The warfare is over, enemies cannot harm the holy city: The LORD is there! He is the Prince of peace.

In this presentation made with Old Testament figures and language, it might appear as though the Prince had not much authority nor much to do. But actually all that goes on is possible only because He provides and authenticates the sacrifices of His people.



Without Him no sacrifices to God were possible, there would be no new covenant under which man could dare to approach the holy LORD. He still is the Prince of His people with all the dignity and honor connected with such office, occupying a distinguished place in the temple, enjoying entrance and exit privileges, and exercising supervisory function during the ministrations. It appears as if Ezekiel wanted to give emphasis to this aspect of the Messiah's activity, since the other areas of his concern as King, Shepherd, etc., had already been presented by other writers.

Scholars have always dealt with this figure of the Prince of Ezekiel in their interpretations, but as it appears, they have found no significant contribution in it. In fact, of course, the last nine chapters of Ezekiel have been dubbed by critics with sundry derogatory epithets, such as being a plan for a "political Utopia of a scribe" and "dream of Ezekiel,"<sup>28</sup> even as Gressmann calls it "ein ertraeumtes Staatswesen," if not a kind of make-shift for a "dreary interrugnum."<sup>29</sup>

Others find in Ez. 40-48 a blueprint for a postexilic, empiric kingdom with the Zadokite priest caste taking over and relegating the Davidic scion to political oblivion, to a position of no importance nor consequence, and with no military power nor administrative authority,<sup>30</sup> as a Statthalter, Wohlfahrts = und Friedensbeamter (thus

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<sup>28</sup>Joseph Klausner, The Messianic Idea in Israel, translated from the Hebrew by W. F. Stinespring (London: G. Allen and Unwin, Ltd., 1956), pp. 131-132.

<sup>29</sup>Mowinckel, op. cit., p. 168.

<sup>30</sup>Georg Fohrer, "Die Struktur der alttestamentlichen Eschatologie," Theologische Literaturzeitung, LXXXV (June, 1960), Col. 414, Fn. 73, 74.



Sellin, Duerr, Gressmann, and Fohrer). "Die Konsequenz fordert, dass er das Feld räumt," says Gressmann very peremptorily. The Prince has nothing else to do than to provide for the sacrifices. As Handlanger to the priesthood all real priestly functions seem to be denied him and all regal functions are foreign to him. The Messiah stands in inner contradiction to the theocracy . . . and therefore he retires into quasi non-being. "Ezekiel hat die Messiashoffnung gaenzlich aufgegeben."<sup>31</sup>

Mowinckel seems to us to penetrate much deeper with his observation that "the Servant's task is not political, but purely spiritual."<sup>32</sup> However, the Prince appears to him as

too unimportant and insignificant to be of any interest in a historical account of the Old Testament expectation of a Messiah . . . Ezekiel 40-48 deals not with the last age, but with a historical interregnum, and with a prince as he actually was in the dreary interval between the return and the establishment of the glorious kingdom.<sup>33</sup>

Yet he agrees that "it is Yahweh who is king in the future kingdom" and that He is "the prince of peace."<sup>34</sup> Also, the "godly and righteous king of Israel's own dynasty will be the true and legitimate priest, the mediator between the people and God; and the covenant made at Sinai will again become a reality."<sup>35</sup> Here he seems to want to attach more meaning and importance to the Prince than he conceded before.

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<sup>31</sup>Gressmann, op. cit., pp. 255-56.

<sup>32</sup>Mowinckel, op. cit., p. 229.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid., p. 168

<sup>34</sup>Ibid., p. 172.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid., p. 179.



"The Servant displaces the king, and himself becomes king. . . . The Servant will receive princely rank and dignity."<sup>36</sup>

Is this not true of the Prince in Ezekiel? He is the king, for there is no other. His is the position, distinction, and dignity, and the people receive and honor Him as such. And it is very true, no political or secular importance attaches to His person, since the interpretation is entirely spiritual. He is the Prince of peace in a very real sense.

Nor does it seem quite accurate to say "that the Messianic King gives place to the new figure of a prince (nasi') who is completely subordinated to the hierarchy."<sup>37</sup> This "subordination" is only apparent and is in no wise substantiated by the text, nor is it to be found in the fact that the Prince provides the sacrificial animals and produce. In fact, He is being spared the priestly chores, if we may call them this, and occupies rather a position similar to that of a high priest. There is here no indication of a Holy of Holies into which the blood of the atonement still has to be taken or which contains the Ark of the Covenant. The Prince is the New Covenant mediated between God and man, the God-man. All importance here in Ezekiel attaches to the ministrations of the temple and the dwelling together in holy communion of Prince and people. The Holy of Holies as part of the temple precinct is only referred to briefly in Ez. 41:4. Old Testament sacerdotal and levitical language does not seem sufficient to express the new situation.

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<sup>36</sup>Ibid., p. 256.

<sup>37</sup>Paterson, op. cit., p. 175.



The opinion exists that Ez. 40-48 is a blueprint for the post-exilic ecclesiastical restoration in Palestine, even for its political organization as the community of God. But this never took place in history nor was the construction of such a temple as the one envisioned by Ezekiel ever attempted, for it could not be built according to the specifications here presented. This is all one great spiritual allegory. The spiritual interpretation shall be found the only one possible, as the Prince is important as spiritual King with a spiritual kingdom and kingship, the new role of the priesthood is likewise according to new standards in contrast with the Old Testament ceremonial stipulations. A position as that of the Prince here was possibly held by a king in the Old Testament, when he attended services, and by a high priest when he was not officiating himself; but many other details are added for this Prince which fit no human situation and go beyond the Old Testament law. We refer again to the significant name given in a last addendum in Ez. 48:35: "The LORD is there!"

Another very current opinion reads like this:

Ezekiel was acquainted with the popular hopes of an individual Messiah and, in particular, with the promises attached to the Davidic dynasty; these were too strong to be ignored, but the priest-prophet himself had little real interest in them.

This opinion is held on the supposition that "the Prince is only one of a series of kings and plays a very subordinate part in the reformed Jerusalem."<sup>38</sup>

Perhaps another look at Chapter 47 will eliminate the idea that the prophet has in mind an actual Palestinian situation, and strengthen

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<sup>38</sup> Ernest, op. cit., p. 573.



the spiritual interpretation, which will appear as the only acceptable one. Water is issuing from below the threshold of the temple to the East, coming from the altar and first flowing South. The water increases quickly in depth as it follows its course eastward toward the Dead Sea, whose waters are rendered "healed" and sweet. "Everything will live where the river goes" (Ez. 47:9). On the banks trees are standing whose leaves shall not wither nor their fruit fail every month. "Their fruit will be for food, and their leaves for healing" (v. 12). It does not escape our notice that the water issues at the threshold of that gate, by which the Prince and only He enters and exits, and where He sits to eat bread before the LORD. The water of life has become a common figure for the blessings deriving continually and flowing from the Messiah Priest and King, our Emmanuel, Sidkemu. This is indeed "the Gate Beautiful."

Joseph Klausner writes:

Indeed, what else is there for him to do? Then no one will commit willful transgressions, and for transgressions by error sacrifices will atone. Thus there will be no need for the prince to act as judge of the land. There will be no more war . . . no need for the prince to maintain an army. Nor will it be necessary to look after the economic needs . . . everything will be in abundance. It will remain for him, therefore, only to look after the needs of the temple. Such a person will not be a king, nor even indeed a prince, but only an official of the LORD's house . . . the high priest was actually such a person in Judah. . . . Political power is not indicated here at all. On the contrary, the name "The Lord is there," by which Jerusalem, the holy city, will be called, shows that the city will be entirely spiritual.<sup>39</sup>

As was remarked before, this goes a long way toward the Messianic interpretation of the Prince conceding that he has status and function

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<sup>39</sup>Klausner, op. cit., pp. 132-133.



similar to yet more sublime than that of the high priest in the time of the second temple.

Or again:

Where the prophet Ezekiel speaks in great detail of the restoration of the land, the revival of the nation, the rebuilding of the temple, the king of the house of David is not mentioned at all (as in Ez. 34:23-25 and 37:22-25), or in his place comes the Prince.<sup>40</sup>

This is the connection that should be established and the relation that need be clearly recognized which exists between the servant David as prince for ever in earlier chapters and the Prince of these later portions. He is the nasi' schlechthin, THE PRINCE of all princes, as He is the LORD of lords and King of kings, in the superlative sense. We have here "a truly genuine Yahwism, purged from nationalistic, worldly and secularized expectations by the religious prophetic criticism,"<sup>41</sup> especially in exilic and postexilic times, when the religious community of Israel seems to have lost its dream of secular greatness. It is quite evident, then, "das Wirklichwerden der Jahweherrschaft ist nichts Empirisch-Rationales, sondern etwas Numinos-Pneumatisches."<sup>42</sup>

On the strength of the above considerations we submit that the Prince prophecies in Ezekiel 40-48 are Messianic, setting forth the Person and Office of the Anointed One as King, Priest, and Prophet, on the backdrop of New Testament ecclesiology given in Old Testament language. The work of redemption is considered already accomplished, as suggested or foreshadowed by the return of the Remnant from Babylon

<sup>40</sup>Ibid., p. 117.

<sup>41</sup>Vriezen, An Outline of Old Testament Theology, p. 369.

<sup>42</sup>Richrodt, op. cit., p. 261.



to Judea and the building of the second temple, 516 B.C. We see here shown not so much the soteriological as the sanctifying work, the worship life and communion within the Church, as also the close relation that exists between the LORD and His people in the Mediator.

#### Types of the Messiah

(1) Joshua. In a vision the prophet Zechariah is shown the high priest Joshua standing before the angel of the LORD. Since Satan is also present in the role of accuser of Joshua, it seems that the scene is forensic rather than cultic. The high priest is not now officiating. His robes are exchanged for new, clean, rich apparel, new garments and a new turban on the head, the vestments of his high office. He is now symbolically invested again with full authority as high priest. And the angel of the LORD was standing by (Zech. 3:1-5). This "reformed" high priest, in this vision, hears the news that the Branch will be coming, and according to the inscription on the mysterious stone before Joshua, this servant of the LORD, the Branch, "will remove the guilt of this land in a single day." As quickly as the high priest had his defiled clothes exchanged for a beautiful new robe, so guilt will be removed from the people with one mighty act.

As the vision continues in Chapter 4 with the appearance of two olive trees, Zerubbabel and Joshua are told that "not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the LORD of hosts" will this come about (Zech. 4:1-6). This is taken up again in verse 10 with the figure of "the seven eyes of the LORD," the Spirit, upon the stone. And the two olive trees or branches are said to represent "the two anointed ones who stand by the LORD of the whole earth" (v. 14). Now



Zerubbabel and Joshua were two such anointed ones, "sons of the olive tree" or "branches," the first as the pechah or political governor, the second as anointed high priest of the LORD. When a crown is then placed upon the head of Joshua, the high priest, the two offices of ruler and high priest are said to have been united in one person, namely, the Branch, and no conflict is found to exist between the two (Zech. 6:11-14).

From these considerations we conclude that Joshua is a type of the Messiah, the King and High Priest of the new covenant. It may not be amiss to call attention to the name Joshua as being the Old Testament form of the name of Jesus, a fact that appears not to be altogether fortuitous. And being a symbolic figure of the Savior, "for He shall save His people from their sins," he prefigures the soteriological significance and work of the Messiah, the Anointed One, anointed with the same Spirit as the Joshua of the vision and of the time of Ezra, the historical Joshua, who through his office mediated the power of the Holy Spirit of God to the people.

The anointing is one being effected with and by the Holy Spirit. Zerubbabel and Joshua were in their day the LORD's representatives to the people. They above all, as leaders in their respective offices, stood in need of orientation and the sustaining power of the Spirit of the LORD of hosts, especially in such crucial times. It was their duty to keep the lampstand with the seven lamps, the spiritual life of the community of God's people burnished and burning. Possessing the chrism of the Spirit, they could mediate the charismata among the Remnant which returned to rebuild the religious community above all, symbolized by the second temple. It was not to be by means of



political power or prestige or military prowess, by impressive progress and conquest. These would only distract the mind of the people from the Spirit's work. But the task was to be achieved by God's own method, by the Spirit of the LORD, by persuasion and instruction, by spiritual edifying and strengthening.

As in the case of most types and their fulfillment, so also in Christ all these essential features are "enorm gesteigert," the relationship also here being that of "shadows" to the "body." The Messiah as High Priest needs no "reform" as Joshua experienced in the vision, even if also accused and maligned by the Adversary in the presence of the LORD. He is the perfect High Priest, and as to being anointed, He is anointed with the Spirit without measure, His human nature being sustained to be able to receive the fulness of the Spirit. The Spirit is that of the Messiah; He sends and gives it, as He Himself possesses it.

But we believe, teach, and confess that God the Father has so given His Spirit to Christ, His beloved Son, according to the assumed humanity (on account of which He is called also Messias, i.e., the Anointed). . . the entire fulness of the Spirit has been communicated by the personal union to Christ according to the flesh, which is personally united with the Son of God.<sup>43</sup>

There are here clear indications as to the distinction between the high priest Joshua being acted upon and receiving as gift the Spirit, while in the Anointed One the Spirit emanates from His divine nature, and the unction does not need to exercise any sanctifying function as in the case of the prototype Joshua. Interesting also is the distinction being made between the LORD, the angel of the LORD, and the

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<sup>43</sup>"Formula of Concord," op. cit., p. 1041.



Spirit, all of which appears to have reference to Old Testament theology concerning the Holy Trinity.

(2) Zerubbabel. Much of what has been said concerning Joshua as one of the "anointed ones" signified by the two branches of the olive tree in Zechariah's vision (4:12-14) may be here adduced in the case of Zerubbabel, legitimate Davidic descendant and postexilic ruler. He is not autonomous king, however, but only the governor of Judea for the Persians after the Exile, representative of the government of Darius, king of Persia. It might be noted here that this king of David's lineage is also symbolized by a branch, that of an olive tree, full of the oil (Hebrew "gold"), a fact which seems significant enough in the reference to the person typified, the Anointed One, the Branch without peer.

Beyond that which Zechariah said and saw, the prophet Haggai gives us another message from the LORD, which came to him to be announced to Zerubbabel, with reference to a mighty act of the LORD. He is about to shake the heavens and the earth, kingdoms will be overthrown and destroyed and a great battle is waged. The picture appears to be apocalyptic. "On that day" in the future - this is the eschatological phrase; for what catastrophic upheavals took place in post-exilic days? "I will take you, O Zerubbabel my servant" says the LORD, "and make you like a signet ring; for I have chosen you, says the LORD of hosts" (Hag. 2:23).

Since the setting is clearly eschatological, and since Zechariah has included some significant information concerning the future of Zerubbabel in his vision concerning the coming of the Branch, the man, upon whom the offices of high priest and of ruler are to be united, we



conclude that Zerubbabel is a type, a figure of the Messiah, of the royal office of the Anointed One. He shall grow up in his place, and he shall build the temple of the LORD, although Zerubbabel and Zechariah were witnesses of and instrumental in the building of the second temple. There was to be another temple much more glorious, which the Branch would build. "Ja, er ist's, der den Tempel des Herrn bauen und Herrlichkeit gewinnen wird; und er wird auf seinem Throne sitzen und herrschen und wird Priester sein auf seinem Throne." Thus Prof. Menge translates Zech. 6:13, "and the crown shall be in the temple of the LORD" (Zech. 6:14).

Like Zerubbabel, the Messiah-King was to be a descendant of David, David's greater Son and LORD. Again we see the "enorme Steigerung" from the qualities of the figure or "shadow" to the fulfillment in the "body" which is the Christ.

(3) A Horn. A single and perhaps minor reference, but one which bears being remembered and noted. The prophet Ezekiel writes:

On that day . . . I will cause a horn to spring forth to the house of David, and I will open your lips among them. Then they will know that I am the LORD. . . . But when I speak to you, I will open your mouth, and you shall say to them, "Thus says the LORD God." (Ez. 29:21; 3:27).

After announcing the doom of Egypt at the hands of Nebuchadrezzar, who had labored in vain at the siege of Tyre, which city he could not take, there appears this observation. Egypt was to lose its splendor and become a lowly kingdom, after years of oppression, and then will spring forth the horn. Chapter 30 takes up again the lament over the doom of Egypt running into three long chapters.

Joseph Klausner says: "Ezekiel emphasizes in general that the



LORD will 'cause a horn to shoot up unto the house of Israel."<sup>44</sup>

When the LORD judges the nations around Israel, then He will turn the fortunes of Israel by means of the appearance of a horn, symbol of strength, His almighty power, by which the Messianic era is to be ushered in. The horn is also the symbol of refuge, as the horn of the altar for one who caused the death of someone by accident. The "horn of salvation" will be raised and the prophet's lips were to be opened. Now Ezekiel never returned to Palestine, as far as we know, nor did he there open his lips to prophesy after the Exile. So the prophecy must be to a future day when God visits His people and a prophet will open his lips among them, "him shalt thou hear." Zechariah of the New Testament seems to allude to our verse in his Benedictus:

The Lord God of Israel has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David, as he spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets of old . . . and to remember his holy covenant the oath which he swore to our father Abraham . . . (Luke 1:69,70,72).

Zechariah, like Ezekiel, had become dumb for a time, but his lips were opened at the appearing of the "horn." And with the coming of the Prophet, the lips of prophecy would again be opened to announce the salvation of the LORD by the mouth of multitudes of evangelists.

(4) A Stone. "Reference is suddenly made to a stone. Upon it are seven eyes, a detail reminding us of Yahweh's seven eyes in Zech. 4:10."<sup>45</sup> It must be a precious stone. However, it is not here a cornerstone or foundation stone, as P. Heinisch takes it, but rather

<sup>44</sup>Klausner, op. cit., p. 129.

<sup>45</sup>Heinisch, op. cit., p. 165.



"the top stone," the head or capstone which completes the arch of a building. This stone is brought forward "amid shouts of 'Grace, grace to it.'" The seven eyes upon it are those of Yahweh "which range through the whole earth" and appear to have reference to His omnipresence and omniscience, as well as referring to qualities of the Holy Spirit. We think of Rev. 5:6, where the Lamb is described as having seven horns and seven eyes, "which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth." And again reference is made to Ez. 10:12 for instance, where the glory of the LORD has appeared as a wheel within a wheel, whose rims and spokes were full of eyes round about. The glorious revelation of God in the Word and the Ministry has as the guiding and vitalizing element the Holy Spirit, which is the spirit of knowledge and Who leads men to see and understand the truth. This stone is then a very good even if mysterious figure of the One Anointed with the Spirit.

(5) A. Sprig. Chapter 17 of Ezekiel speaks of the carrying away of the nobles, the princes and the royal seed to Babylon as the breaking off of the topmost twigs of a cedar of Lebanon. They had despised the covenant of the LORD. Now, by contrast, "says the LORD God: I Myself will take a sprig from the lofty top of the cedar," a branch of the house of David. He shall plant it on the mountain heights of Israel and it will sprout and bear fruit and become a "noble cedar." Birds of every kind will nest in its branches, a veritable tree of life. All shall know that the LORD maketh high the low tree and makes the dry tree to flourish. According to the parallel, the shoot of Jesse was to come from a dry stump. "I the LORD have spoken, and I



will do it." With an oath, solemnly divine, in accordance with the promises given to David, this work of the LORD, His opus magnum, shall be accomplished (Ez. 17:22-24), "that he who overcame by a tree, by a tree might be overcome" on Calvary. Did Christ have this Sprig Chapter in mind when He spoke of the kingdom of God as being like a seed that grows into a mighty tree? Mary in the Magnificat expresses much the same thoughts: "He has put down the mighty from their thrones, and exalted those of low degree" (Luke 1:52).



### CHAPTER III

#### THE FUNCTION OF THE MESSIAH

##### Exercise of Divine Power and Providence by the Messiah

(1) The Conquest of Babylon as a type. In their prophecies against Babylon the prophets have been very outspoken as to the judgment of God which is to strike down the proud Chaldean power and city (Jer. 50,51; Dan. 2:7; possibly Hag. 2:6,21) by the shaking of heaven and earth, including a note of comfort: "I will set your captives free. . . . Return . . . O prisoners of hope" (Zech. 9:11,12). The prophet Ezekiel refrains from speaking out against Babylon, perhaps for understandable and justifiable reasons, although surely not simply for the sake of expediency. Cowardice would not have kept him from speaking forth against Babylon, nor fear, if the Word of the LORD had thus directed him to do so. For him the more immediate great act of God was the return of Israel after the years of exile, and his office it was to give spiritual counsel to the Remnant while still in exile. Nebuchadrezzar is at various times presented as a powerful ruler (Ez. 29:19; 26:7ff.; perhaps the "princes of the north" include those of Babylon, 32:30), and as instrument in the hands of God against godless Israel and Judah and against Egypt (Ez. 30:25).

Babylon must fall (Jer. 51:49) for the sake of the slain of Israel and because of the fierce anger of the LORD. He will punish them for the sake of their god Bel (51:44). He will do it by stirring up the spirit of the kings of the Medes for this act of



vengeance for His temple (51:11). Babylon had sinned against the LORD (50:14), the city full of the spoil and plunder of many nations. The people of Israel have been oppressed more than captives (50:33). God will be their Redeemer and plead their cause in the courts of justice (50:34). The city is to be completely depopulated for ever (50:39-40). At her fall the earth shall tremble (50:46). In a very real sense Babylonia delenda est!

The fall and devastation of Babylon has become the type for the action of the LORD God against His enemies in general, and by a process which we might call that of "corresponding motifs" the same powerful manifestation is attributed to the Messiah. Heaven and earth shall shake at the coming of the Branch and the overthrow of kingdoms at that time shall be tremendous in intensity and extent (Hag. 2:21-23). Ezekiel takes up this motif in Chapter 38 and 39 picturing the battle of decision against Gog of Magog, using the language of Jeremiah, which he had used against Babylon. The LORD will have the uttermost parts of the north bestir themselves and vindicate His holiness upon Gog and upon them (Ez. 38:14-16) by their complete overthrow (39:2ff.). God had sent His people into exile because of their sins (39:23,28), but it is also He Who will again gather them into their own land, "when I pour my Spirit upon the house of Israel, says the LORD God" (Ez. 39:29). So intimately is the historical experience of the eventful destruction of Babylon interwoven and intertwined with eschatological elements, that passages referring to the historical present and the Messianic future appear side by side without change of perspective or distinction of



the intervening time between events.

All this shows the "konkrete und bildhafte Denk = und Ausdrucksweise" of the Old Testament Hebrew man, who does not deal in pale abstractions. The unknown future events will occur similar to known events of the past. Yahweh's activity in human and national events and His direction of history is the foundation upon which the Messiah develops His soteriological activity, so that Geschichte becomes Heilsgeschichte and Heilandsgeschichte.

With the coming of the Messianic Age, the apocalyptic view of the Last Judgment is also closely connected, as in Mal. 4:1-4. When the sun of righteousness will first come, that day will already burn like an oven for the wicked, like a refiner's fire for the LORD's people to be purified, but for those who fear His name there is also salvation under His wings. Judgment Day is not an Old Testament theophany, but a Christophany in particular, with the purpose of vindicating His holy name "on the day when I act, says the LORD of hosts." The New Testament references to this fact are quite numerous. It is in such passages as the ones we are here considering that the purposefulness of all acts of God in history is seen. The aim and telos of all events and experiences on earth is the establishing of His kingship and governance, and the means of achieving this goal of all history is by way of the Messiah.

(2) The Second Temple as a Type. While the construction of this rebuilt temple was going on, having been stimulated by the prophets Haggai and Zechariah, the Word of the LORD comes to Haggai. "I am with you" and "my Spirit abides among you; fear not" (Hag. 2:4,5).



These words clearly have a new covenant ring and overtone. But as for this temple being glorious, its real glory shall be much greater than that of Solomon's temple and infinitely greater than the edifice of lesser material qualities which was the second temple of postexilic times. The LORD will shake the heavens and the earth and then His glory will fill the house (Hag. 2:6-9). True, the overthrow of Babylon was such a shaking of heaven and earth in a sense, and under Zerubbabel and Joshua a new temple was built and dedicated with much rejoicing, but also with tears by those who remembered the glory of Solomon's temple. Yet the prophecies given are much greater than that they can be limited to that remote time only and to that juncture of history. Zerubbabel becomes a type of the Branch or Shoot of David. Zerubbabel means "planted in Babylon" and the real Branch will be planted in Israel's land under divine interference in the course of events (Ez. 16:22-24). One Who is chosen, the Chosen One of the LORD, will come with divine authority, like God's signet ring typifies, and He will be ruler in a much greater sense than was Zerubbabel in his day. He disappears from the stage of human and sacred history and from the pages of the record.

Zechariah takes us the next step declaring that the man whose name is the Branch, "he shall build the temple of the LORD" and shall bear royal honor, and "shall be priest upon the throne" (Zech. 6:12,13), as reads the translation of Luther, Menge, and Almeida. Cf. also Zech. 1:16.

And then there are those monumental chapters 40-48 in Ezekiel, which seek to describe the glory of this temple of the LORD, which He



will build, of which the second temple was like a faint "shadow." The Levitic priest-prophet Ezekiel seems to revel in Levitical circumstantiality and detail, much of which cannot be interpreted adequately. The general impression is that of beauty, uniqueness, and mysterious grandeur. Taken as a spiritual allegory, an "enorm gesteigerte" vision of the new covenant house of God in the language of levitical and empirical past, the whole project is the work of Yahweh through his servant David, the Prince, who presides in this temple. This is the telos of Heilsgeschichte, for it presents in symbolical language the communion of God with His people, which has been re-established, having been broken and disrupted by sin.

#### Exercise of Divine Grace and Protection by the Messiah

(1) Redemption and liberation of Israel and Judah. The destruction of Babylon and of all enemies likewise, as also the building of the second temple and of the more glorious spiritual temple of the New Testament ekklesia, not only manifests the power and providence of the Messiah, but also brings with it the revelation and exercise of grace and protection for His people. He will liberate and redeem them, He will cause them to return to Him as their God, and a new covenant will fix the new relationship which characterizes the new era, the Messianic eschaton.

So great a redemption will be wrought by bringing Israel back out of Babylon, that its glory will be even greater than that of the liberation from Egyptian bondage and slavery.

For the days are coming . . . when it shall be said "As the LORD lives who brought up the people of Israel out of the north country and out of all the countries where he had driven them"



rather than "As the LORD lives who brought up the people of Israel out of the land of Egypt."

This is to set forth how much greater was the restoration after the Exile than the deliverance out of Egypt (Jer. 16:14,15; 23:7,8), great though that act of God was.

The LORD will restore the fortunes of Israel (Jer. 33:11 et passim) by bringing Israel to health, by cleansing it from guilt of sin, by forgiving all their sin and rebellion. The LORD will do good unto the city of Jerusalem and provide prosperity for it (Jer. 33:6-9). All this is to come to pass "in those days" when the righteous Branch shall spring forth unto David, who shall execute justice and righteousness in the land (Jer. 33:14-16; 23:5,6). The top stone shall be brought forward amid shouts of "Grace, grace to it!" (Zech. 4:7). It should be quite clear that no political or national restoration and an economic paradise is here foretold. All such references mean only to bring out the loving kindness, faithfulness, mercy, compassion, and the riches of God's grace in dealing with His people. In the eschaton the grace of God will open new floodgates to have salvation and peace stream forth into all the earth like a river (Ez. 47:1-12).

In those days Judah shall be joined again to Israel (Jer. 3:17, 18) and they be set in a pleasant land and beautiful heritage, and they shall call the LORD "My Father" (Jer. 3:19), and shall say: "Truly in the LORD our God is the salvation of Israel" (v. 23). When the princes and craftsmen were led away into exile about 597 B.C., the LORD swore: "I will set my eyes upon them for good . . . I will give them a heart to know that I am the LORD . . . they shall return to me with their whole heart" (Jer. 24:1-7). In steadfast love and



grace the LORD was with His people even when He had to punish them. Again, the return is not so much geographical as it is an inward turning to the LORD, the metanoia of the heart.

"In that day" the yoke of bondage on the neck of Israel, the oppression of the enemies and the idolatry surrounding them in the exile and causing them much heartache and temptation, this shall be broken and they shall serve the LORD their God and David their king, "whom I will raise up for them," says the LORD (Jer. 30:8,9), much different from Zerubbabel or any other postexilic ruler or monarch, most of whom ruled by the grace of foreign powers, and not by the grace of God. "For I am with you to save you, says the LORD . . . I will restore health to you, and your wounds I will heal" (Jer. 30:11,17). "I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore, I have continued my faithfulness to you. Again I will build you, and you shall be built, O virgin Israel!" (Jer. 31:3,4). All this is not to be understood in a narrow Judaistic manner, but rather in its universal application, to all of God's people whoever and wherever they may be found, for He gathers them from the north country and from all countries.

(2) The LORD will make a new covenant with His people. With manifestations of glory equal to those of the old covenant of Sinai (Zech. 9:14) the new covenant of grace shall be given, "for they shall all know Him, since He will write His law upon their hearts, for I will forgive their iniquity," says the LORD (Jer. 31:31-34). For Israel to come out of its miserable condition, it would have to come on the LORD's terms. Actually, many Jews prospered in Babylon and few in fact ever returned to the province of Judea. Whoever would accept the invitation of God to return would be enriched spiritually and



became heir of the promises. For "their Redeemer is strong; the LORD of hosts is His name" (Jer. 50:33,34). He it is who will act. The people shall dwell securely under the divine protection of their King in a new kind of 'arez Israel, of which the Promised Land in Palestine was only a "shadow." Cf. Ez. 28:26; Zech. 2:5; 9:15. The LORD will give them one, a new heart and will put a new spirit within them (Ez. 11:19; 36:27; 37:14; 39:29). This means that their's will be a profound spiritual experience, like a new creation within them, a rebirth under the new covenant or testament. The LORD's servant David among them will be a shepherd to care for the flock (Ez. 34:11-16). "I am for you . . . and I will do more good to you than ever before" (Ez. 36:9,11; Jer. 32:41). All uncleanness shall be taken away (Ez. 36:25,33), for it is uncleanness that separates from God. The LORD will bless them and dwell in their midst in intimate communion with them (Ez. 37:26,27). God re-establishes the happy communion of Eden, however, not on the basis of man's perfect obedience, but on the terms of the new covenant, on Christ's obedience, which became our righteousness and removed our guilt and the curse.

(3) Universal Redemption. The prophets do not confine themselves to Israel and Judah only, but include with a universal sweep all nations in the salvation that shall be wrought and extended to the ends of the earth. Judah and Israel are types, for as they had been the Old Testament people of God under a covenant with Him, so the new spiritual Israel is the people of God under a new covenant. "He shall command peace to the nations; his dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth" (Zech. 9:10).



These are again Old Testament concepts and ways of describing the universality of the King's reign. "Peoples shall yet come . . . to seek the LORD of hosts and entreat the favor of the LORD" (Zech. 8:20ff.), for they say, "we have heard that God is with you," with the people of God (Zech. 3:10). Quite true, God is with us, Emmanuel, in the Messiah-King. Even the priest-prophet Israelite Ezekiel sees the Messianic era as offering "the aliens who reside among you" full participation in the blessings of the people of the new covenant and they receive their inheritance (Ez. 47:22,23).

In the midst of the denunciation of the nations, the prophet Jeremiah finds words of comfort for them. Egypt will be punished, but the LORD will not make a full end of it (Jer. 46:28). Moab shall be duly judged by God, but yet will He restore the fortunes of Moab in the latter days (Jer. 48:47); also the Ammonites (49:6) and Elam (49:39). Others, however, like Philistia, Edom, Syria, and Babylon shall be utterly destroyed according to specific predictions by the LORD. Only to Egypt does Ezekiel announce the favor of God (Ez. 29:13-16). These instances are types of the universal application of the redemption in the eschaton to people who were not God's people to become His.

Because of the peculiar situation which obtained in the exilic and postexilic times it appears that in these prophetic writings universal redemption is not as clearly brought out as, for example, in Isaiah. This prophet's book was known; no need therefore to repeat what he said. And the more urgent problem at hand was that of God's people who needed instruction and comfort, much like our Saxon forefathers before the Altenburg Debate, April, 1841. They had to



hear it said and repeated that God's promises concerned them, that they could be trusted fully, and thus the edification of the religious community of the time could proceed. In Messianic times the essential concern is the universal application of God's promises. Even if universal redemption is not too much in evidence, but rather God's favor to Israel, the implications are there.

#### Exercise of Divine Kingship and Rule in Zion

(1) Yahweh returns to Zion and establishes His government through the Messiah. "Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion; for lo, I, your king, come . . . in that day . . . and will again choose Israel" (Zech. 2:10-12; 9:9). The LORD has returned to Jerusalem with compassion, and will comfort her and again choose her (Zech. 1:16,17). The LORD is jealous for Zion. He will return to her and Jerusalem shall be called the faithful city and the holy mountain (Zech. 8:3). The Branch shall build the temple of the LORD and shall bear royal honor and shall sit and rule upon his throne (Zech. 6:12,13). He shall be a priest upon the throne. At that time Jerusalem shall be called the throne of the LORD (Jer. 1:17) and the people shall serve the LORD their God and David their king, whom the LORD will raise up for them (Jer. 30:9). The shepherd, the servant David, shall be their prince among them and the LORD will be their God (Ez. 34:23,24). One king shall be king over them all (Ez. 37:22), even as David and his son Solomon. There will be peace and an everlasting covenant to establish the throne (Ez. 37:24-26). The LORD God Himself will be king over them, as He has brought them out of exile (Ez. 20:33). When the LORD



shall be king, then many of the nations will come to Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts (Zech. 14:16). "I am a great King, says the LORD of hosts, and my name is feared among the nations" (Mal. 1:14). All this is to take place and God will do it in that day. The Anointed One shall be established as king according to the promise and the new covenant.

Yahweh exercises His kingship by means of the Messiah, to whom for this reason kingship and dominion are attributed directly. Also according to His human nature He exercises such rule, for the man, whose name is the Branch, whom God causes to spring forth from the lineage of David, He received such authority as Son of man from the Ancient of Days. The King Himself is the LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. The genus idiomaticum can be observed in this locus perhaps in its purest form.

(2) Reconstruction and Reunification. Israel and Judah shall return to Palestine, the land of their fathers, the Land of Promise, and they shall again be one nation as under David (Jer. 3:18; 30:3). God's way of dealing with His people is marvelous. Under ordinary conditions at home such reunification seemed altogether impossible. By means of judgment and tribulation it becomes a reality, in the hands of God. It was sin that had caused the split between Israel, the ten tribes, and Judah (Zech. 11:7-14). They shall be joined together as two sticks, one for Judah, the other for Joseph, "that they may become one in your hand" (Ez. 37:15). God will make them one nation (Ez. 37:22), but the basis for unity is not national or political or social, rather spiritual. One shepherd and one flock, for one and the same Spirit operates in all.



The LORD says that He will build again Jerusalem (Jer. 31:4), the fallen hut of David. Religious life was to be revived. The city shall be for Yahweh a name of joy, a praise and a glory before all the nations of the earth. They shall fear and tremble because of all the good that the LORD does for them and all the prosperity He provides for it (Jer. 33:9). Such great salvation as that of the eschaton staggers human minds, and the goodness of the LORD is overwhelming; for we have deserved nothing but wrath and punishment for our sins. His people shall dwell in security, for He shall make them dwell in safety (Jer. 32:37). The LORD is there! This is their boast, their glory, the basis for their reunification and reconstruction, and the assurance for continued peace and happiness.

Here our attention might once more focus on Hag. 2:19, where this turning point is emphasized by the Word of the LORD: "From this day on I will bless you." Here is the break-through from the former to the new day. This is the time designated by the expression hayyom nahuh, the day of the eschatological Umschwung der Dinge, the pivot of history. In God's economy of things everything that happened had to precede the Heilszeit as a kind of necessary preparation, through a process of maturation.

When Haggai speaks of the installation of the Messianic order (2:23), he foresees quite a bit of commotion in heaven and in earth. The nations that are enemies of God's people will have their aggressive powers neutralized, if not destroyed and wiped out. But also in the new covenant community itself reconstruction and reunification goes on and on and brings with it much commotion, spiritual unrest, and searching of souls. But the process of fermentation that



produces finally the pure wine might be seen as parallel to the purification of the Church. The unclean will be excluded (Hag. 2:10-14). The visions of the flying scroll and the woman in the ephah serve to visualize the truth that wickedness shall be taken away through divine means (Zech. 5:1-11).

Thus we see that the reconstruction is rather spiritual than material or social or economic. God's true people really always have been only one flock. But now under the new covenant of the eschaton Gentile nations shall have part in the spiritual blessings with Israel in fullest measure, and the Jew shall have no advantage over them. The final aim of God's acts toward His people is concretized in this Oneness, even as He is One.

The reason and origin and innate power of this eschatological Umwaelzung lies exclusively in the Erloesungswillen of God. His was the plan, He had caused the same to be announced through His prophets. It was His promise freely given that He would turn the fortune of His people and establish His kingship and dominion, spiritual communion and abiding presence with His people through the Messiah, the Zemach. It is therefore not in any way man's initiative, nor is the Umkehr a condition for or a means of gaining forgiveness, but it is the consequence of God's Erloesungswillen. "Weil Gott vergeben hat und vergibt, kann und soll der Mensch umkehren." Man's action is always and only a response, and God's act is always the preventient cause for this response. To the Wort of God man gives his Ant-Wort.

Now, the words of Zechariah appear to contradict this order: "Return to me, says the LORD of hosts, and I will return to you" (Zech. 1:3). This is law, a call to repentance. And this is always in order,



does not, however, expect of man to take the first step for his redemption. He is already being called by God Who takes the initiative. At this point the words of Jeremiah are in order: "Heal me, O LORD, and I shall be healed" (Jer. 17:14). This is still the only possible ordo salutis out of the human predicament.

(3) Purification. Reference has already been made to the weeding out of the unclean from the new covenant religious community. This thought we meet with in other contexts. "On that day there shall be a fountain opened for the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to cleanse them from sin and uncleanness" (Zech. 13:1). Such purification can be effected only by the forgiveness of sin. This is the fountain that cleanses inwardly and removes the stain of guilt and the curse. This is the fountain of Baptism, the washing of regeneration and purification that we daily need. By comparison, that which the world offers or human beings can furnish from their own resources, is stagnant water which contaminates and kills. The Messianic gospel is a wellspring of living waters.

The messenger of the covenant is coming from the LORD, and in the day of His coming He shall be like the refiner's fire and like the fuller's soap. He will purify the sons of Levi, the Old Testament picture and type of sanctification and purification of the New Testament priesthood of the believers (Mal. 3:1-4). And the woman in the ephah representing wickedness was removed far away by God (Zech. 5:5) for purification of His land and people. The LORD will bring His servant the Branch . . . and He will remove the guilt of this land in a single day (Zech. 3:9). This appears to be a clear reference to the eph'apax character of the atoning sacrifice vicariously offered by



the great High Priest once for all times, having permanent universal validity.

Ezekiel not only likens this cleaning to a sprinkling with clean water (Ez. 37:25), but he envisions a much more profound change, a completely new creation. The old heart of stone shall be substituted by a new spirit and a new heart of flesh, which exchange the Holy Spirit will bring about (Ez. 37:26; 2 Cor. 5:17). This means that the purification here intended is not a superficial ablution, but a thorough-going, radical renewal. No earthly abrasive or detergent has such power. This is the Holy Spirit's work.

This cleansing and purification is, of course, of the very essence of the new covenant to be made between the LORD and His people and mediated by the Branch, "for I will forgive their iniquity" (Jer. 31:31-34). His people are called rightly "the saints of the Most High" (Dan. 7:18ff.) and shall be entirely holy with all they are and have unto the LORD (Zech. 14:20). Jerusalem shall be a habitation of righteousness and a holy hill (Jer. 31:23). Also their offerings have been purified and are now pleasing to the LORD (Mal. 3:4).

This purification of His people shall be an ongoing process; for the LORD will give shepherds after His own heart who will feed the people with knowledge and understanding (Jer. 3:15). He who glories, who wants to boast, let him glory in this that he understands and knows the LORD (Jer. 9:24). Thus continuous purification comes with the faithful use of the Word and the Means of Grace. Instruction in the word of wisdom will purify away the dross of false notions and doubts. This instruction going out from Jerusalem by means of the gospel is likened to a river, which will not dry up in summer like a



wadi, but will grow ever deeper the farther it flows (Ez. 47:1-12; Zech. 14:8).

(4) Paradisaal Blessings: the Heilsgut of the Eschaton. With the change of heart, the basis for the bestowal of untold blessings through the Messiah is laid. Now man is ready to receive such spiritual gifts. Without it the new covenant truths cannot be apprehended nor appreciated. In the renewal and purification spiritual life is engendered, faith sprouts forth, and for faith there is no limit of treasures it may receive from God's storehouses.

This abundance of blessings is collectively termed "prosperity" (Hebr. tōb), with which the cities of Judah will overflow when the LORD comforts and chooses again Jerusalem. Again Old Testament concepts and picture language are used to describe New Testament glories. Inundations are in general disastrous, but not so with the rivers of spiritual gifts. This is also the reason why from Jerusalem on that day living water shall flow forth abundantly and life-giving (Zech. 14:8; Ez. 47:1-12). Trees furnish leaves for healing and fruit for food every month, and the fertility of the land will be nothing short of equal to that of the Garden of Eden. Fohrer observes that "letztlich lassen sich beide Aspekte, aeußere Segensfulle und religioeses Heil, nur kuenstlich von einander trennen; fuer das damalige Verstaendnis gehoeren sie zusammen."<sup>1</sup> We add: For the correct understanding even today it is essential that the outward

<sup>1</sup>Georg Fohrer, "Die Struktur der alttestamentlichen Eschatologie," Theologische Literaturzeitung, LXXXV (June, 1960), Col. 413.



conditions serve to portray the inward glory and wealth and happiness of the Messianic epoch. In Palestine there have not since the Exile existed such conditions as these here spoken of, and in modern Zionist times only at great cost is the land producing anything.

There are some phases which seem to be quite comprehensive in that they globalize all the Heilsgüter in a kind of concise statement, as for instance: the LORD will be their God and they are to be His people; they shall know that He is the LORD, and He shall dwell in their midst. These occur quite often and this is the reason. Their cumulative impact and significance dare also not be overlooked here. Not only in contrast with the vanity of idolatry, but more directly by the fact that He is the God of heaven and earth (which He can shake at will!), the One who determines and does all things, who can mark the day when He will act in entire freedom of volition and action (Mal. 3:17; 4:3), the blessings are declared to be divine in origin and divinely guaranteed as to their quality and abundance and effect. He also vouches for the continuance of such state of affairs into all eternity.

This whole Deus pro nobis concept underlies and becomes operative in the new covenant, according to which this new creation shall be secure and merits the divine placet: "and behold it was very good!" This is sure, for "the LORD is there" is the very name of it.

There is one more concept to be examined briefly, and that is the Remnant, which is declared to be the recipient of all the eschatological blessings. This Remnant is not to be conceived of as a despicable, miserable leftover from the once glorious nation, a shambles. Rather, these are the "ausersehene Träger der Heilszukunft." This



may be understood in an exclusive sense, so that it is only these who enjoy the Messianic benefits. However, there will be still another "remnant" to share with them, so that their numbers may be multiplied through the accretions from the Gentile nations (Zech. 9:20ff.), and the universal character of the Messiah's work and merits and kingship be realized to their full extent. Such converts shall cleave to the Remnant people (Zech. 8:23) because of their great God, and shall go with them to worship the LORD, their King (Zech. 14:16).

In a strange way Fohrer sees in the situation just pictured first of all a simplification and thereby a falsification of the image of God through the prophets, in that they emphasize certain aspects at the expense of others. He calls this an Uminterpretation of the message of the great pre-exilic prophets in exilic and postexilic times. He thinks also that a disastrous change has taken place, "dass die eschatologische Prophetie gewöhnlich nicht eine wesenhafte Wandlung und neue Daseinshaltung des Menschen . . . erhofft." And finally he sees a danger in the duration of this condition: "Damit entnimmt die eschatologische Prophetie den Menschen der Notwendigkeit einer immer neuen Entscheidung, sobald er sich im Heilszustand befindet, und versetzt ihn in einen Ruhestand des Geniessens."<sup>2</sup> We believe that we have shown on the basis of the prophets' own writings that most of the above contentions do not apply. We grant, however, that a danger may arise as to the last point adduced, that people become secure, complacent, self-reliant.

The change that takes place at the point of the breakthrough of

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<sup>2</sup>Ibid., Col. 419.



the eschaton is represented at times as restoration and at other times as a completely new creation. When the return from the Exile and the restoration of the kingdom as under David is promised, when the LORD will turn the fortunes of Israel and Judah, the idea of a transformation by restoration is quite evidently in the foreground. However, when a prophet wishes to emphasize and set forth very dramatically the contrast between the former and the latter things, former and latter days, the picture tends to be that of a new creation, with the accent on the cosmic dimension of the operational extent. The idea of the Remnant seems to favor the restoration concept, as also the rebuilding of the temple. But the new covenant concept gives much more reason to believe the new situation will be fundamentally different from what it had been. "If anyone be in Christ, he is a new creation." The Messianic King shall dominate over the whole earth and for ever, in an absolute sense. Never has there anyone been king like this one. He is the eschaton in person, the ultimate One in more than superlative sense, for he cannot be compared with anyone. He comes with a "break-through of a living dynamic, coming from God, into the present, so that this encounter changes mere existing into existence."<sup>3</sup> In fact, so different from any this worldly experience and event is this new age that "the eternal Messianic Kingdom can attain its consummation only in the world to come, into which the righteous should enter through the gate of resurrection."<sup>4</sup> The conditions of the land as be-

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<sup>3</sup>Rudolf Staehlin, "The Church and the Break-Through of the Eschata," Lutheran World, III (December, 1956), 251.

<sup>4</sup>R. H. Charles, "The Messiah of Old Testament Prophecy and Apocalyptic and the Christ of the New Testament," Expositor, Series 6, V (April, 1902), 247-248.



ing extremely fertile are hardly natural and demand a spiritual interpretation. The kingdom will experience a much more than simply peaceful political existence (Zech. 3:10), and the duration of it is described as eternal, which exceeds ordinary natural dimensions. This extraordinary situation with its supernatural characteristics has been adequately presented by these prophets in their visions and prophecies concerning the eschaton. Among the others, we believe that this is the burden of Ezekiel 40-48 with its exciting but heaped minutiae and yet its grandezza of vision and conception.

Different scholars take differing positions, and we shall consider at least some of their remarks. Hugo Gressmann claims:

Der Messias ist damals, das kan mit voelliger Sicherheit behauptet werden, der politische Idealkoenig der Endzeit gewesen, dessen Regierung man herbeisehnte; sittlich-religioese Zuege passen in dies Gemaelde nicht hinein.<sup>5</sup>

Gressmann is defending the thesis that these Messianic-King prophecies have as their basis ancient oriental mythological festivities. According to Mowinckel, it is not the Tammuz circle of legends or cult, but the annual New Year's "Thronbesteigungsfest" which celebrates the revival of nature.<sup>6</sup> There is nothing in Scripture to warrant such conclusions, and other scholars have pointed this out. Gressmann is correct, however, we believe, in saying that the "Messiaserwartung aelter ist als David; sie musste laengst in Israel gelaeufig sein, wenn David in dieser Weise gefeiert werden konnte." Only this hope

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<sup>5</sup>Hugo Gressmann, Der Messias (Goettingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1929), p. 225.

<sup>6</sup>Sigmund Mowinckel, He That Cometh (New York: Abingdon Press, 1954), p. 109.



for a Messiah is not imported religious lore from the Orient. He also grants that the political aspect of the figure of the Messiah had become "ethisch-religios vertieft von den aelteren Propheten," which emphasis in turn becomes the prevalent one to a certain extent. And as to Zechariah's picture of the Messiah, Gressmann agrees that he emphasizes especially "sittlich-religioese Erwartungen: Recht, Gerechtigkeit, Treue, Froemmgkeit - Der Geist Gottes ruht auf ihm. Er ist der Friedensfuerst."<sup>7</sup> This is a far cry from Oriental myths, but we shall never deny that certain exterior similarities may exist, which, however, cannot be urged to establish any kind of close relationship.

Wichrodt is one of those scholars who take issue with Gressmann: "Die Postulierung einer kanaanaeisch-amoritischen Messiasgestalt, die ihrerseits wieder aus Babylonien oder Aegypten entlehnt waere, bedeutet eine Flucht ins Leere."<sup>8</sup> So, against the "Thronbesteigungstheorie" of Mowinckel, L. Koehler and D. Michel, Delling and G. von Rad, whose comment is: "unwahrscheinlich."

It is true that God vindicates His holiness before the nations (Ez. 36:23), and this in a way that is clearly a public affair rather than an inner or spiritual experience and operation, such as acts of judgment. However, Ezekiel also shows by the words so often used "and they shall know that I am the LORD," that "das ist also das letzte Ziel des goettlichen Waltens, dass Jahwe von denen anerkannt

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<sup>7</sup>Gressmann, op. cit., p. 271.

<sup>8</sup>Walter Wichrodt, Theologie des Alten Testaments: Teil I. Gott und Volk (5. neubearbeitete Auflage; Stuttgart: Ehrenfried Klotz Verlag; und Goettingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1957), p. 340.



und angebetet werde, die ihn bisher noch nicht oder noch nicht richtig erkannt haben." The telos of God's workings will be found to be properly speaking spiritual. The very fact that Ezekiel sees the new covenant Messianic community under the guise of a temple and the people and priests engaged primarily in bringing sacrifices, spiritual activity, life and worship in the presence of the Prince and of God. The essence of the new covenant condition is not outward prosperity, that may or may not exist, but usually the cross dominates. The main interest is in the spiritual, inward realm. That is why the city is called "The LORD is there!"

Mowinckel contends: "The Servant displaces the king, and himself becomes king. The Servant will receive princely rank and dignity . . . and be overlord of kings." This "development" is said to have begun with the Servant Songs, for there it is said we see that "he is neither a king nor a scion of David; and he has nothing of the political element which is essential to the Messiah throughout the Old Testament period."<sup>9</sup> Surely not even Mowinckel would want to insist that the writers must always present the Messiah under the same prism and detail the same facets of his complex figure. And if this Messiah is Servant and King at the same time, why demand an either - or, when the both-and solution is so near at hand. It could also be that what is here termed by Mowinckel "political element" has been interpreted in too earthly a manner, and that He Whose kingdom is not of this world must needs appear quite removed from such "political elements!"

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<sup>9</sup>Mowinckel, op. cit., p. 238.



This view is supported also by the union of the "two swords" or offices of king and priest which shall come about in the time of the Zemach. This is new wine; old skins will not do.

Thus we have seen that the Heilsgueter of the eschaton must needs be interpreted as being foremost spiritual, as the Messianic kingdom is in essence. Many are the figures used by the prophets that would support and demand that the external details and conditions have first of all a religious, ethical, spiritual message. So for instance the river coming from the temple and the trees on its banks, and the effect upon the water of the Dead Sea. The LORD will be to the city a wall of fire round about and the glory within her (Zech. 2:5). The activity of the Messianic king is said to be that of feeding the people with knowledge and understanding (Jer. 3:15). In brief, the political ideas and concepts of the Messiah's kingdom has always constituted a trap for false interpretation of the real, final interest and intent of the figurative language of the Old Testament. An equal danger seems to lie in the desire to find some larger degree of connection between the religion and cult of Israel and that of the Orient. At least in regard to the figure of the Messiah, the attempts are vain and forced, although slight resemblances will always be detected between the Biblical Messiah and some legendary or mythological figure.

#### Exercise of Divine Judgment Upon the Nations and the Remnant

(1) Fulfillment of threats against the enemies. Such threats may be found in almost all prophetic writings, not only in the so-called "Unheilspropheten," but also in the "Heilspropheten." It appears to be a divinely inspired pedagogical principle that the promises of God



given to His people carry on the reverse side eo ipso the denunciations and warnings and threats against the enemies of God, the Gentile nations, unbelievers. As the promises of God find only partial fulfillment in actual history quite often, the fuller, greater, and more perfect fulfillment being found in Messianic times or even in eternity, so also the destinies of the heathen nations are in part fulfilled in history. They receive severe punishments in the course of events, only to serve as types for the greater, more extensive and intensive punitive treatment to be meted out to God's enemies in the eschaton on the last day.

God may move slowly, but He does fulfill His threats against the enemies. Now who are these? They are known as enemies of God and of His people, such as Assyria, Babylon, Egypt, Syria, the enemy of the North, Gog of the land of Magog, these are actual enemies who become Old Testament prototypes of the opposition of evil against the Messiah and of God and of the Church, instruments and allies of the "gates of hell" that shall not prevail against Him. The heathen rage and the "Ansturm der Voelker" under Gog of Magog and/or Anti-Christ finally assumes the proportions of a concentration of all enemy powers with which God deals with definitive finality.

The reason for their being enemies of God and of His people is not only the fact that they are godless or idolaters. God called the Persians and Cyrus to do His will; they became His instruments and tools in dealing with the chosen people. Yet because they oppressed His people beyond measure with unbridled lust for blood and wickedness, God did check their disobedience, arrogance, and wickedness and punished them with their own sins, often destroying one with the



other and by the other. They incurred God's wrath and indignation for not remaining within His will and within the purposes God had set for them.

The nations, in accord with their differing deserts, received also different kinds of judgments and retributions from the hand of God. They were, of course, excluded from the "tōb" or prosperity (Zech. 1:17; 3:2) of His chosen people, whom He had chosen again for the eschaton. The destruction announced to these nations might be complete annihilation in "the nether world, among primeval ruins, with those who go down to the Pit," as was spoken against Tyre. Babylon is to become a desert and a horror among the nations (Jer. 51:41,43). Many of the nations will experience, however, a turn of their fortune, beginning with Egypt (Jer. 46:26) and some of the smaller enemy states as Moab, the Ammonites (Jer. 48, 49), and Elam. The judgmental visitations of God upon these nations are truly great and frightening, and their final deliverance seems to point to the eschaton during which at some time the gracious visitation of God will bring them His favor in the gospel.

The person of the judge appears in many passages to be Yahweh. Since on the other hand, however, the dominion and kingship and glory and honor have been given to the Anointed One, the one like the son of man, it is clear that to the Son of man - Christus Victor et Judex - the authority to judge has been given. This harmonizes in full with the New Testament picture of the Last Judgment and of the exousia being exercised by the Son of man. As the kings of Israel were the final court of appeal, so the Messiah-King and Shepherd-King is the final judge. When He comes triumphant and victorious, "He commands



peace to the nations; His dominion shall be from sea to sea" and "He shall set the captives free" (Zech. 9:10,11). He will vindicate His own and give them final redemption from all earthly woes. From His sentence no appeal is possible.

This, then, is properly the setting for the unfolding of the yom Yahweh, the fulness of time for the Gerichtsgeschehen. Briefly stated, as presented in Daniel, this day "bringt das Endgericht die Vernichtung der Weltreiche und die universale, ewige Herrschaft des Jahwevolkes."<sup>10</sup>

Cossmann makes the observation that in Dan. 7 the one like the Son of man actually appears on the scene after the judgment has taken place: "Wenn hier uebrigens (Dan. 7:13) wirklich von der Einzelperson des Messias die Rede sein sollte, so ist zu beachten, dass sie auch hier nichts mit dem Gerichtsvollzuge zu tun hat, sondern erst nach dem Gericht erscheint."<sup>11</sup> Actually it appears as if at the end of verse 10 the court scene is temporarily interrupted or adjourned just for the purpose of introducing the one like a Son of man, and to Him was all authority delivered. His divine credentials were presented and made manifest. Evidently only He was one qualified to receive such honors. Now, no sentence had as yet been passed according to this text. The vision then continues, and the little horn makes war against the saints of the Most High, until "judgment was given for the saints of the Most High, and the time came when the saints received

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<sup>10</sup>W. Cossmann, Die Entwicklung des Gerichtsgedankens bei den alttestamentlichen Propheten (Glessen: Toepelmann, 1915), p. 222.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. 146.



the kingdom" (v. 22). Thus it seems that the judgment court in session paused long enough to permit the entrance of one k<sup>a</sup>bar enash as the Chief of Justice of this Supreme Court of the Most High, and He now passes the judgment. The authority just given Him by the Ancient of Days was quite evidently delivered for just this purpose. Christ said that all judgment was given Him by the Father.

Thus the events of the eschaton and of the final yom Yahweh are seen in the same view without distinguishing differences in perspective. In fact, things will continue to gather speed in happening and build up the intensity of the drama to such a degree that the final day will appear to be merely a kind of capstone of the whole eschaton, a synthesis or concentration of its essential elements, both as to judgment and as to salvation.

The judge is also the executor of the sentence upon the wicked, and it is He also Who works justice in favor of the saints. "When the shattering of the power of the holy people comes to an end all these things would be accomplished" (Dan. 12:7). The purifying and sifting process of God's people will cease; their tribulation shall be shortened for the elects' sake. Then all the Heilzwecke which God had in mind all along will finally through the Gerichtszwecke come to fruition in a most perfect and universal and overwhelmingly glorious manner.

Alle Zwecke kommen in dem Endgericht zur Ruhe: Durchsetzung des Ethischen, Prinzipalitaet Jahwes, Trost und Rechtfertigung Judas, seine Befreiung, seine Rache, sein Glueck, seine Weltherrschaft und prinzipielle Erhebung in dem Abschluss der Weltgeschichte.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., pp. 223-24.



(2) The Day of Salvation for His People, the Remnant. This Remnant has been described above as consisting of all Jewish true believers and of the Remnant from the Gentile nations who come to faith in the eschaton for their salvation! They put their trust in the God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and in Him in Whom Abraham rejoiced in faith. They come from the four corners of the earth and together with Jewish converts will constitute the whole Israel, God's people, His eklektoi.

Although the believers have to undergo tribulation, yet are they already the saints of the Most High, which high honor they do not lose just because they are being tempted and show weaknesses. The day of their final salvation is approaching. The powers of evil which pounce upon and harass the Remnant are called or gathered under the name of Gog of the land of Magog (Ez. 38, 39). The LORD is with us, His flock, and He will come Whom you seek and purify unto Himself a holy people (Mal. 3:1-3). Their day of salvation already is; they are His royal priests and a peculiar people. In this new relationship "the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the LORD as in the days of old and as in former years" under the old covenant when all sacrifices were specified and covered by ceremonial prescriptions (Mal. 3:4). Among and in His people is the Priest-King's righteousness applied and becomes operative efficaciously for justification and sanctification to the LORD. The salvation situation is outwardly characterized by the fact that the sacrifices now being brought are pleasing and acceptable before God through the Messiah's mediation, in His name, on the basis of His work and merit. Only because "The LORD is there" is God's favor assured and experienced. He is the people's



protection; they need not fear (Zech. 9:15). And across the centuries comes the voice of the Anointed One: "Fear not, it is I!"

It is in this new relationship between God and His people through the mediation of the Messiah that the new covenant will be completely and gloriously realized, here on earth in spite of Gog of Magog and the enemies of God, and even more manifestly and perfectly hereafter. Body and soul shall rejoice in their Creator (Dan. 12:2), their reunification being alluded to by Judah and Israel joining up again. The new spiritual life with the imago Dei restored is like to Adam's and Eve's before the Fall. All of paradise, however, would be incomplete if this were not true: The LORD is there! The eschaton is like the narthex of the great eternal temple, where our Prince is all in all.



## CHAPTER IV

### CONCLUSION

The figure of the Anointed One has been seen to emerge rather complete in many details. The occasion for such prophecies was always given by some historical setting in the Israelite past. The present moment at that point in history was taken as the starting point for pointing to Him that cometh, the erchomenos, in the 'olam habbah. The experiences of the Exile in particular were of such nature that from them prophets could draw divine instructions, exhortations, and consolation for the people of God. But it was only the point of departure, the "then and there," which however served the prophets as illustration for what was to happen in the eschaton. The present situation was always considered imperfect, transitory, while the situation in the eschaton would be permanent and perfection itself. By a process of Steigerung, a stepping-up and intensification of an experience or a concept, the locally circumscribed events would be generalized into cosmic dimensions in the eschaton. Priests and even high priests there had been many; but then would come the great High Priest. Of all prophets He was to be the Prophet, and of all kings He would be King of kings, the King absolutely.

To this eschaton all the prophets looked forward in some way or another. That day (hayyom hahuh) and the latter days (yammim acharith) and the day that is coming (hayyom habbah) are concepts they all knew and used for the purpose of showing that God is



directing history in His way, for it is after all the yom Yahweh on which God's objectives are achieved. Such prophecies are truly eschatological, and because they relate directly to the King-Priest of the eschaton, they are truly Messianic.

As to the person and attributes of the Messiah, as to His offices, work, functions, stance, and influence as Prophet, Priest, and King of the eschaton, a compilation and analysis of all the elements scattered throughout these exilic and postexilic prophetic writings will bring out and bear out several truths. They were without a doubt building up on a Messiah concept which had become traditional (in a good sense) among God's people through the centuries. Older prophets had already enlarged and widened the scope of the Messianic panorama. Such older Messianic themes did not need to be reiterated, the same ground need not be covered again, especially because among the Hebrews religious materials were passed from generation to generation by way of mouth, being in time also reduced to writing for better and more exact transmission to posterity. The canonic scriptures as far as they were extant in any given prophet's time were basis and source for preaching, expounding, and writing more. These appear to us presuppositions that can with propriety be postulated. The references of younger prophets to the writings of older forerunners in the office are clear enough to permit such affirmation to stand as true. Most scholars appear to regard such a core of Messianic utterances as having existed, whether these be titled "popular" or as logia of the Old Testament or testimonia, most of the formulations originating with the pre-exilic and more ancient prophets, beginning at least with the nabi'im



rishonim (Joshua etc.) through the nebi'im gedolim and ketannim. The book of Daniel was not classified among the prophets in the Hebrew canon for unknown reasons; very much Aramaic in it might have raised objections. The "new covenant" passages in our basic reference group of prophetic writings from exilic and postexilic times seem to point to the time of the patriarchs and of Moses, who were men of God in a position to have knowledge of Messianic promises as being an integral part of their religion and their hope under the old covenants.

We hope to have shown on the basis of the Messianic elements in these exilic and postexilic eschatological prophecies, that by the time the last books of the Old Testament canon were being written and added--of which these were the last prophetic books--the picture of the Messiah was such as God wanted to reveal in the time of "shadows," till the "body" would come. If the portrait of the Messianic Priest-King is not as clear nor complete as we would like to see it, perhaps the thinking behind this was that for this reason people would become more curious about this Messiah, to learn what there was to learn and to yearn for what was to be revealed in the eschaton. The angels had desire to see into this mysterious salvation being prepared for fallen men.

Judaism thought the Messiah presentation incomplete and in the nearly four centuries B.C. produced all kinds of apocalyptic writings and apocryphal and pseudepigraphical tracts and treatises in order to supply what they thought was lacking. Much of this literature is worthy of our attention also at this late hour. Much of what had been revealed about the Messiah was not to their liking. Their wish was for a powerful Deliverer and not for a humble servant and sufferer.



The reproach of the cross was being rejected long before it became reality. Nationalistic ambitions and the Sucht for greatness surged into the foreground and fettered the minds with roseate visions of the future. The idea was found at large that "we be Abraham's seed" and that for this reason they had a claim to preferred treatment by God in His plans for the future. As it happened, the spiritual interpretation of the Messianic prophecies was more than vindicated by the fulfillment in the Christ and in the New Covenant, and more than brushed aside all other considerations and fond dreams of an earthly paradise, Judaistic or Chiliastic or otherwise.

This sector of the Theology of the Old Testament opens up many new insights into Christology as it was believed in those remote days, and beckons on to further depth study along all the newly opened avenues. Books on Old Testament Theology are multiplying, and the work of scholars and critics goes on apace. Their individual findings may vary violently, yet their witness is impressive: the Old Testament is worth being studied! The future may bring many turnabouts in opinion and evaluation as new contributions keep appearing. In the meantime, the latter days are running out into the last day. May the true image of the Christos be enshrined in our hearts on the basis of Scripture and with the help of faithful witnesses to the truth!



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