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The Resurrection Faith of the Maccabean Martyrs

Harold N. Wendt

THE RESURRECTION FAITH OF THE MACCABEAN MARTYRS

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by

Harold N. Wendt

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Approved by: Robert H. Smith
Advisor

Holland R. Jones
Reader

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This thesis is to undertake a study of the resurrection faith of the Maccabean martyrs. In so doing, it will study two particular works, the canonical book of Daniel and the apocryphal book of Second Maccabees.

By "resurrection" is meant that act of God by which He calls forth the bodies of the dead and restores them to life again. This term implies something different from what is usually understood by such concepts as the immortality of the soul, translation and assumption.

The thesis will consider the nature of the faith embraced by these martyrs with regard to the following; the nature of that which was to be called to life again in the resurrection, the scope of the resurrection envisaged, the intermediate state between death and resurrection, and the function which resurrection served in the life situation of the individuals concerned. It will investigate those historical factors which were associated with the profession of a faith in a resurrection, and will try to assess the influence which these historical factors exerted upon the formulation of a belief in resurrection.

Martin-Achard writes, "Today, as at other times, the most confused ideas prevail on the subject of the beyond."[1] The truth

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[1]Robert Martin-Achard, From Death to Life, translated by J. P. Smith (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1960), Introduction, p. xi.

of that statement has been amply demonstrated for the present writer in terms of his own initial theological training, his association with many colleagues, and his contacts with laity in various parts of the world. Furthermore, the writing of this thesis has made it obvious that a study of the Scriptures does not substantiate the statement of Logan when he writes, "Nothing less than resurrection was in the mind of Abraham, and of all the faithful after him."[2] The Old Testament does not tell us specifically what Abraham had in mind about his lot after death, and it is hazardous to read back into his mind views of a much later date. The findings of this present study indicate that certain aspects of the biblical faith took considerable time to crystallize, and that largely in response to specific historical pressures. They did not all drop down from heaven in final, neatly tabulated, systematized form at creation.

Furthermore, this study has given the writer at least some insights into the importance of the history of the Jews in the period between the Testaments, and has enabled him to appreciate the significance of Andrew's statement:

> We must not ignore the interval between the two testaments. If the story of the Maccabean struggle for freedom does not appeal to us, the history of the development of Jewish theology ought surely to command our attention. God's revelation of Himself to Israel did not end with Ezra. It is impossible to think of Him as silent for four hundred, or even for a hundred and fifty years. There was no hiatus in the Divine preparation for the advent of the Messiah. The religious and political movements during this intermediate period profoundly affected the life and thought of the infant Church.[3]

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[2]N. A. Logan, "The Old Testament and the Future Life," The Scottish Journal of Theology, VI (June 1953), 169.

[3]Herbert T. Andrews, An Introduction to the Apocryphal Books of the Old and New Testaments (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1964), p. 11.

This present study has been limited to those insights which the book of Daniel and the Second Book of Maccabees give into the resurrection faith of the Maccabean martyrs. Though brief reference is made to other books bearing the title "Maccabees," these are not studied in any depth in this present paper, nor are references to the Maccabees in other Pseudepigraphical works taken into consideration. Attention is directed to Daniel in that it presents a significant development in resurrection thought over against earlier teachings. Attention is directed to Second Maccabees in that in it resurrection is presented as an established doctrine. The resurrection doctrine taught in both these works is later, with some refinements and developments, incorporated in the New Testament.

Chapter II deals specifically with the resurrection faith of the Maccabean martyrs. It considers what their beliefs with regard to life after death were, the scope of the resurrection envisaged, the function it served, the historical factors that called it into being, and those Old Testament passages which they drew upon in the formulation of their faith.

Chapter III considers more fully the Old Testament background to the resurrection faith of the Maccabean martyrs. It begins with a consideration of primitive concepts of Sheol and the part that Sheol played in Hebrew thinking about the after life. Then it gives consideration to certain exceptions to the rule, to gropings into the thought of continued fellowship with Yahweh as presented in some of the Psalms, and finally to those situations and beliefs which immediately preceded the Maccabean period. In the concluding chapter,

an effort is made to bring coherence to the findings and assess their importance and significance.

CHAPTER II

THE RESURRECTION FAITH OF THE MACCABEAN MARTYRS

In this chapter, consideration will be given to two writings in particular, the canonical book of Daniel and the apocryphal book of Second Maccabees. Both contain references, either direct or indirect, to the Antiochan persecution. Though isagogical concerns will be dealt with later in this chapter, it can be noted at this point that scholars generally believe that Daniel was written during the period 168-165 when the Antiochan persecution reached its climax. Second Maccabees on the other hand was put into its present form some time prior to the Roman conquest in 63. A gap of possibly one hundred years separates the writing of the two works. Daniel speaks to contemporaries in the midst of their agonies. Second Maccabees draws upon the examples of the past to instruct a later generation.

Nickelsburg makes some important points when he writes:

> Form criticism has reminded us that theological formulations and the traditions that carry these, circulate within communities of living people. The specific forms of the tradition reflect the situation in which they are used. Moreover, the theological formulations do not arise in a vacuum. They arise as a response to concrete historical situations, and to some extent they continue to function in this way among the persons or communities that perpetuate them. As such responses, they are frequently answers to problems, either practical or theoretical. An historian of religion does less than his job when he does not take into account the specific historical situation reflected in the texts. He must ask: "What situation or problem does the author see himself facing? How in his writing does he respond to this situation or answer this problem?"[1]

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[1]George W. E. Nickelsburg, "Resurrection, Immortality and Eternal Life in Intertestamental Judaism" (unpublished Doctoral Thesis, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass., 1967), pp. 4-5.

This chapter is to focus attention upon the insights which Daniel and Second Maccabees give into the resurrection faith of the Maccabean martyrs. Nickelsburg's statements point to the need to do several things in the course of this investigation. To begin with, it will be necessary to take note of the situation in which this resurrection faith arose. The resurrection faith itself must be considered from a descriptive point of view. Finally, the theological function of resurrection in each context must be examined.

The general context in history of the Maccabean revolt was the attempt of Antiochus Epiphanes to impose Hellenism as a way of life upon the subjects of his realm. The Jews were among those under his jurisdiction. After Antiochus' succession to the throne in 175, the Jews favorable to Hellenism built a gymnasium in Jerusalem and strove to appear uncircumcised (1 Macc. 1:11-15). Antiochus, while returning from a successful military expedition against Egypt in 170, plundered the temple in Jerusalem (1 Macc. 1:20-24; 2 Macc. 5:21) and caused bitter mourning and lamentation among the Jews (1 Macc. 1:25-28). Two years later in 168, Antiochus sent a tax collector (Apollonius according to 2 Macc. 5:24) who, after a show of friendship, plundered and destroyed part of Jerusalem (1 Macc. 1:29-32) and placed a garrison in a fortress known as the Acra. It was situated on Mount Zion (1 Macc. 1:33-36), and proved to be a thorn in the flesh for the Jews in that it was a Gentile stronghold in the midst of the Holy City. Jerusalem and the Temple were subjected to horrible indignities (1 Macc. 1:37-40).

Basic to Antiochus' dealings with the Jews was his desire to amalgamate the various national groups in his realm. His attempts to prescribe the Greek cults and culture were motivated by the desire to achieve this goal. He saw the religion of the Jews as an obstacle to achieving his ambitions, and therefore set about exterminating it. The practices of Judaism were forbidden under penalty of death. Heathen altars were erected through Judea. Some Jews promptly fulfilled his ordinances, but many of those faithful to the religion of their fathers went into hiding (1 Macc. 1:41-53). On the twenty fifth of Chislev in 168 there was placed upon the altar in the Jerusalem Temple "the abomination of desolation" (Dan. 11:31). This term, and others used in Daniel 8:13; 9:27; 12:11), were intentional deformations of the Phoenician name for the Greek god Zeus Olympius,[2] (1 Macc. 4:43; 2 Macc. 6:2). Sacrifices of swine were offered upon this "abomination," which is generally thought to have been an altar of Zeus placed on Yahweh's own altar of burnt offering. This commitment of a temple to the worship of a deity other than that for which it was intended was not without precedent so far as Antiochus was concerned, for but a short time previously he had dedicated the Samaritan temple to Zeus Xenios. In addition to the above desecration of the Temple, all religious observances of the Law of Moses were forbidden under penalty of death. The ritual of circumcision, the observance of the Sabbath rest, the celebration of the annual festivals, the mere possession

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[2]Louis F. Hartman, "Daniel," The Jerome Biblical Commentary (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1968), p. 457.

of a scroll of the Law were all now considered to be capital offences. Any copy of the scriptures, when found, was torn to pieces and burned. Also subject to the death penalty was any individual who gave any indication that he adhered to the Law (1 Macc. 1:56-57). Not only were the Jews forbidden to pursue the religion of their fathers, but they were also commanded to observe the practices of the heathen worship introduced to replace it. Altars for this purpose were erected throughout the land, and inspectors were appointed to keep the people under constant surveillance (1 Macc. 1:41-51).

Reaction to these edicts varied. Some, either through personal inclination or fear for their safety, forsook their ancestral faith and complied with the edicts (1 Macc. 1:43,52). Others, the Hasidim or "Pious," offered passive resistance to the new laws, and secretly in towns and openly in the wilderness continued to obey the Mosaic statutes. Many of the latter preferred to die rather than violate even the least of the dietary laws, and die they did (1 Macc. 1:62). Yet a third group, specifically the Maccabean revolutionaries and their followers, took to the hills, caves and wilderness and committed themselves to the use of force to rid the temple of its corruptions and the land of its foreign overlords.

The book of Daniel addresses itself to the above situation and its related problems. It does this, in its own cryptic manner, in its totality. The writer is an eye witness of what is transpiring in Israel. He himself is caught up in the agonizing situation to which his writing speaks. Second Maccabees refers to past history to teach a later generation. The ensuing discussion will concern

itself with the answer that Daniel gives to the problem at hand, and with the use that Second Maccabees makes of Daniel's answer at a later date.

The majority of scholars agree that the book of Daniel addresses itself to the Hasidim who were enduring intolerable burdens during the Antiochan persecution. They also generally agree that it was written prior to the cleansing of the Temple while the definite prospect of death still confronted those who wished to remain loyal to the Torah. Russell[3] is representative of those who date the book specifically in 165. Eissfeldt[4] allows a little more latitude and places the final compilation of the work between 167 and 163.

Though Daniel was produced during the Antiochan persecution, it addresses itself to the suffering Hasidim in an apocalyptic manner. It purports to have been written during the period of the Babylonian Captivity. The writer claims that he is foretelling the future and ultimate destiny of the people of God in relation to the exigencies of an unfolding history. The role of Alexander the Great is foretold, and the problems of division and struggle for power that followed on his death are outlined. The varying fortunes of the Ptolemaic and Seleucid dynasties are traced, and the eventual appearance of Antiochus Epiphanes upon the stage of human history is announced. The ultimate overthrow of the last named individual is predicted,

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[3]D. S. Russell, The Method and Message of Jewish Apocalyptic (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1964), p. 368.

[4]Otto Eissfeldt, The Old Testament: An Introduction, translated by P. R. Ackroyd (New York: Harper and Row, 1965), p. 521.

and the faithful are assured that the culmination of all their hopes and dreams will finally take place with the establishment of the glorious Messianic Kingdom.

The particular passage that is especially relevant to this present study consists of the first three verses of chapter 12. This section is strategically placed in relation to the overall structure of the book. Chapters 1 to 6 generally deal in a veiled manner with the problems confronting the faithful, and exhort them to refrain from eating the king's food. Chapter 2 predicts the passing away of all earthly kingdoms, including that of Antiochus. Chapter 3 exhorts the faithful to refuse to worship the false gods of the Syrian monarch, and assures them that God will deliver them despite any atrocities inflicted on them by Antiochus. Chapters 4 and 5 announce that Antiochus is soon to be cut down to size. His kingdom is about to be snatched from him. Chapter 6 repeats something of the spirit of chapter 2. In the five chapters that follow, the broad sweep of history is traced out, and the assertion made that "the time of the end" is at hand (11:40). When it comes, Antiochus will meet with a sorry end (11:40-45, a wrong prediction), and the long awaited Messianic Kingdom will be made manifest. The emphasis is upon hope. The righteous are exhorted to stand firm. The solution to their problems is at hand. God Himself is about to intervene on their behalf. The message of the book culminates with a specific reference to the hope envisaged (12:1-3):

> 1. At that time shall arise Michael, the great prince who has charge of your people. And there shall be a time of trouble, such as never has been seen since there was a nation till

that time; but at that time your people shall be delivered, every one whose name shall be found written in the book.

2. And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.

3. And those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the firmament; and those who turn many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever.

In commenting upon this passage, Nickelsburg[5] states that it is the earliest datable reference in the intertestamental literature to a resurrection from the dead. Rowley[6] declares the passage to be the only one in the Old Testament "where we have a clear and undisputed reference to the resurrection from the dead." The significance of the words "clear" and "undisputed" will become more apparent in Chapter II of this thesis. Daniel 12:1-3 will now be considered in some depth.

Nickelsburg[7] sees in the reference to Michael and the use of the verb נצל a judicial tone (12:1). Not only are the Jewish people to be vindicated over against their Syrian oppressors, but there is to be a setting right of apparent evil among the ranks of the Jewish nation itself. This time of vindication will be preceded by a time of trouble without precedent in severity. Nevertheless "that time" will come, and it will mean the deliverance of Daniel's people.

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[5]Nickelsburg, p. 11.

[6]Harold H. Rowley, The Faith of Israel (London: The SCM Press, 1956), p. 167.

[7]Nickelsburg, p. 21.

Those to be delivered are those whose names will be found "written in the book." Reference to names being written "in the book" occur also in Ps. 69:28-29, Ex. 32:32-33, Is. 4:2-6, and Mal. 3:16-18. In the Isaiah passage, the context is the envisioned restoration of Jerusalem. Its relationship to Daniel is therefore meaningful, in that the latter claims to be speaking of the actual fulfillment of that hope. In Mal. 3:16-18, the context is the imminent Day of Judgment, when Yahweh will render justice, and the wicked will burn as in an oven. The coming judgment will separate the wicked from the righteous. The latter alone will constitute the purged and purified community. When Daniel makes use of the term, no doubt he has in mind the true people of God among the outward Jewish community. Not all physical descendants of Abraham were his true spiritual sons, and therefore not all would have their names "written in the book."

Dan. 12:2 is of considerable importance for this present study. It teaches certain resurrection truths quite clearly. At the same time some questions are left unanswered as the following discussion will reveal.

The most obvious point is that Daniel envisages a resurrection. Charles[8] sees this hour of resurrection preceded by a preliminary judgment of the sword executed by the saints (Dan. 2:44), which will eventually be followed by the final world judgment carried out by God Himself (7:9,11,12). This will usher in the Messianic Kingdom.

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[8]Robert H. Charles, The Doctrine of a Future Life in Israel, Judaism and Christianity (New York: Schocken Books, c.1913), pp. 242-244.

In these final catastrophic events, the heathen nations will be destroyed as nations, and the righteous Gentiles who survive at the time of the final judgment will be converted to serve Israel (7:14). Henceforth only one kingdom will exist. God will be its king and it will be eternal.

Of major importance for this paper is Daniel's statement that there is to be a resurrection. But this resurrection is to be limited in scope. The term "many" (רַבִּים) indicates that only some of the dead are to be restored to life. The writer does not enter into more specific statistics. His concern is not to discuss the mathematics of resurrection but to offer hope to the persecuted, and to relate resurrection to the moral worth of those to be raised. It might be noted that there appear to be indications of a use of materials from the last Servant Song of Isaiah in Daniel's thought. The terms "righteous" and "many" appear in Is. 52:13-53:12 with some frequency, particularly in 53:10-12.

Daniel states that there is to be a double resurrection of some righteous and some unrighteous. The former are to be raised to "everlasting life" and the latter to "everlasting contempt." Hartman[9] notes that the term "everlasting contempt" (דִּרְאוֹן עוֹלָם) is used here for the first time in the Bible. Numerous writers comment upon the fact that at this point Daniel goes radically beyond Is. 26:19.[10] Isaiah speaks of a resurrection of the righteous in

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[9]Hartman, p. 459.

[10]For example, Robert Martin-Achard, From Death to Life, translated by J. P. Smith (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1960), p. 140.

Israel. Daniel goes one step further and posits a resurrection of the unrighteous as well as the righteous.

Charles[11] notes the dimension of a double resurrection and comments that the context throws light upon the scope of the resurrection envisaged. The hopes expressed in Daniel are not directed to any after-world beyond this life. They are rather directed to this earth. Retribution is to be meted out in this world, and this will happen when the new world-empire of Israel is established, and when all other surviving peoples are brought under the sway of the holy nation and its God.

Daniel does not extend either promise or threat to the average individual as such. His concern is rather with those persons who have in an extraordinary degree helped or hindered the advent of the Messianic Kingdom. It encourages the righteous to remain loyal to Yahweh at any price, and promises them that even martyrdom cannot deprive them of a place in the coming kingdom. The martyrs, the great saints and teachers (12:2,3), are assured of a blessed resurrection which will enable them to participate in the glorious things that Yahweh has in store for his people. But there is a different message for the wicked. The Jewish apostates who had forsaken the faith of their fathers and embraced Hellenism are told that they too will experience a resurrection. But they will not be raised for glory, but to shame and everlasting contempt. No apparent concern for the remainder of the nation is expressed. Apparently those who are neither exceedingly righteous nor exceedingly wicked

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[11]Charles, p. 211.

are to remain in Sheol. Their lot does not appear to concern Daniel, and one may assume that their destiny is unchanged. Though this latter point is admittedly an assumption, it may be considered a legitimate one in that Daniel seems to show a concern only for the moral extremes among the people so far as any involvement in a resurrection is concerned.

The text itself says nothing about the condition of those who are to be resurrected while they are waiting for that final event to take place. Rowley[12] assumes that Daniel held to the normal view of Sheol as a sphere that was morally neutral. Good and bad shared a common lot in it. This view is substantiated by the fact that the writer deems it necessary for a resurrection to take place so that just rewards might be meted out.

Eichrodt[13] draws attention to the fact that the text does not enter into specific details concerning the nature of the life to be experienced by those raised from the dead. He suggests that these details were considered unnecessary by the writer in that he was referring to things that were widely known. This latter point could be debated. But more to the point is the suggestion that the real issue is the function the message was designed to serve. Its function was to emphasize to both loyal and Hellenizing Jews that each would receive a just retribution for his respective deeds, and that ultimately one's decision for or against God would be made

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[12]Rowley, p. 168.

[13]Walter Eichrodt, Theology of the Old Testament, translated by J. A. Baker (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1967) II, 511-513.

visible. Eichrodt sees the resurrection hope in Daniel as elastic, lacking a fixed or dogmatic form. Details of the nature and manner of resurrection are not defined precisely, and the same can be said of the form of the resurrection existence. It is not spelled out whether or not the new life is to be an earthly or transformed corporeity. Eichrodt[14] however stresses that the resurrection does take place in a way consonant with Israelite ideas about the human condition after death. The dead "awake" (Is. 26:19) as before they "slept" (Ps. 13:4; Jer. 51:39; Job 3:13). They return with a total humanity supplied with a body. Death did not lead to a separation of body and soul, but both apparently were delivered to a shadow existence in Sheol. Furthermore, those raised were not resurrected merely with a transfigured spirit, for the text speaks of the dead as those who "sleep" in the "dust of the earth" who must one day "awake."

The text says nothing about the ultimate end of those raised to share in the Messianic Kingdom. Charles offers as his answer to this question and the continuing role of Sheol the following:

> It [Sheol] is the intermediate abode of the very good and the very bad in Israel, and the eternal abode of the rest of Israel and all the Gentiles. It is not improbable, likewise, that after the special class of the righteous have enjoyed an "aeonian life" in the kingdom they will finally descend forever to Sheol. Thus ultimately Sheol becomes sooner or later the eternal abode of all mankind, save the small class of Jewish apostates who are condemned to Gehenna.[15]

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[14]Ibid., II, 211.

[15]Charles, p. 211.

Charles suggests therefore that the only ones to remain permanently on earth will be those condemned to Gehenna. The rest of mankind eventually would have to descend to Sheol to make it their final, permanent abode.

If Charles is correct in what he says it would follow that ultimately the righteous would have to share the lot of humanity anyhow. Life on earth would remain a temporary thing for them also. They would however be spared the need to share Sheol with the extremely wicked. The latter would remain on display on earth in Gehenna. It would appear that the words "to everlasting life" (12:2) tend to argue against Charles' view. However, whether or not Daniel was concerned with such fine points of doctrine might be debated. His concern appears to have been a little more immediate, to offer comfort and hope to contemporaries enduring present agonies.

Scholars draw attention to the similarity between Dan. 12:2 and Is. 26:19. Snaith[16] dates the latter passage about 300 B.C., and interprets it as a specific reference to the resurrection of the righteous dead. He locates it in an historical context in which the people of God long for deliverance from those adversaries who have oppressed them for generation after generation. The historical setting in Daniel is markedly similar, though the writer goes a step further in positing a resurrection of the wicked.

In discussing the remarkable character of Dan. 12:2, Rowley says:

> I think the author was driven by the dynamic of his own faith to this as a corollary of that faith. He was writing in the

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[16]Norman H. Snaith, "Life after Death," Interpretation, I (1947), 309.

> period of the Maccabean revolt, and he knew of many who had given their lives as the price of their loyalty to that faith. He had encouraged men to resistance by the stories in the first part of the book, stories of men whose loyalty had brought deliverance. The three youths were delivered from the fire and Daniel from the mouth of the lions. The author was profoundly convinced that God would deliver if he would; and yet many of his contemporaries were not delivered, but suffered death. The author was also convinced that the day of deliverance for the saints as a whole was nigh at hand. The kingdom of righteousness was about to be established, and the dominion exercised through the saints of the Most High. If the stories of the deliverance with which he had inspired and encouraged men were not matched in their experience, it must be because God designed some more wonderful vindication, and they who had given their lives in their loyalty would not be excluded from the glories they deserved to share. If God had not delivered them from death He would restore them from the grave to share the blessings of the Kingdom. On the other hand, there were some of the enemies of the saints who had found in death too easy a fate, and who would be raised to receive the punishment they so richly deserved. These were probably the Jewish traitors who had helped the enemy against the saints.[17]

Rowley sees Daniel's motive in writing as a desire to instil his readers with courage, perseverance and hope. They are to remember that in the final analysis their God is in control of history, and though His immediate plans are not always apparent, eventually He will intervene upon the stage of human history to the glory and eternal welfare of His own people. Even those righteous who might appear to have been deprived of a place in the coming kingdom will be raised to share in it.

This note of encouragement is reflected also in Daniel 12:3, where the wise (מַשְׂכִּילִים) are told that they will shine like the brightness of the firmament, and those "who turn many to righteousness" are assured that they will shine like the stars for

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[17]Rowley, p. 167.

ever and ever. Prior reference is made to the "wise" in Dan. 11:33 as those who make many understand. Apparently they were teachers of the people, a class of wise men whose calling it was to instruct concerning the keeping of the covenant. Eichrodt[18] defines them as those who strengthened the faith of the people, and equipped them for patient endurance, encouraging them to cleave to the faith of their fathers. Dan. 11:33 indicates that some of them had to suffer severely as a consequence when it states that some from among their ranks "shall fall by sword and flame, by captivity and plunder, for some days." However, Daniel reminds them that despite what they might have to endure at the hands of Antiochus, possibly even death itself, eventually they would be transfigured with heavenly splendor and share in the divine glory. Though the righteous generally would be restored to life, those who were teachers would inherit a special degree of glory when they were resurrected.

Consistent with the methodology he stresses, Nickelsburg[19] discusses the historical situation of Daniel 12, and the function of resurrection theology within it:

> The Danielic resurrection belief is a theological formulation that answers a religious need in the Hasidic community out of which the Book of Daniel arose. Particularly in focus in Antiochus' persecution were the deaths of many Hasidic Jews. These deaths presented a specific theological problem. They were not accidental. These Jews had died specifically because they had wilfully chosen to obey the Torah. Conversely the Hellenizing Jews had saved their lives by what the Hasidic Jews considered to be a gross disobedience of the Torah. Thus

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[18]Eichrodt, II, 513.

[19]Supra, p. 1.

> piety caused death, and disobedience led to life. Clearly this confounded the Hebrew canons of justice and retribution. Resurrection to life, on the one hand, and to punishment, on the other, was an answer to this problem. It is not surprising that this answer would be explicitly given in a book whose central concern is the Antiochan persecution and which was written before the persecution had abated and while the problem was still continuing to manifest itself. Resurrection is mentioned in Daniel because it is an answer to a problem that was of serious and existential concern to the readers of this book.[20]

Nickelsburg believes that though Daniel has drawn upon Isaiah 26 he has not obtained his whole answer from this passage, for Isaiah speaks only of a resurrection of the righteous, while Daniel speaks of a twofold resurrection. Furthermore, in Isaiah the resurrection of the righteous is <u>in itself</u> a vindication. But in Daniel it is <u>a means</u> by which both the righteous and the wicked are enabled to receive their respective vindication or condemnation. Thus Daniel goes beyond Isaiah in that there is to be a punishment for the wicked who are already dead.

Nickelsburg[21] points to some noteworthy parallels between Third Isaiah and the situation associated with the Antiochan persecution. Is. 66:24 describes the ultimate end of the wicked in Gehenna, and notes the fact that the members of the new righteous community will be able to go forth to look at them there. The wicked who will be subjected to this contempt are indicted, among other things, for eating swine's flesh (Is. 65:4; 66:3,17), one of the cardinal sins of the Hellenizers of Daniel's time (1 Macc. 1:47, 2 Maccabees 6 and 7).

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[20]Nickelsburg, p. 33

[21]<u>Ibid</u>., pp. 34-35.

Israel is divided into two groups, the righteous called the "servants" or "chosen ones" of Yahweh (Is. 56:6; 65:8,9,13,15,22; 66:14) who hold fast to the covenant (56:2,4,6), and the wicked who have forsaken the Torah of Yahweh (Is. 58:2; 65:11). It will be noted that a similar split between Hasidic Jews and Hellenizers is described in 1 Macc. 1:11-15,41-53,62-64; 2 Maccabees 4 to 7. "Forsaking the covenant" is used as a description of the Hellenizers in Dan. 11:30; 1 Macc. 1:15,52.

A perverted cult is one of the chief sins of the wicked. They eat the abomination (Is. 66:3,17) and participate in the cult of the dead (Is. 65:4; 57:9), burn incense (65:3), and sacrifice to false gods (57:3-10; 65:11) and despise the sabbath (58:13). Furthermore, the temple is desolate (63:18; 64:10-11), and the pious are persecuted because they are pious (59:15; 66:5; 57:1). Third Isaiah reads like a description of Israel at the time of the writing of Daniel.

But Third Isaiah goes further and describes what surely will be the fate of both groups when the final Messianic Kingdom is established (Isaiah 65 and 66). Both the righteous and the wicked will receive due rewards, for the judgment will come (66:15-16). Yahweh will slay the wicked (66:16; 65:12), and their corpses will be despised by all flesh (66:24). But Yahweh's servants, his chosen ones, will inherit the new Israel (65:8-10). They are promised a long life when Yahweh creates the new heaven and earth, and the new Jerusalem (65:17-25). The prophet looks forward to the gathering of the remnant (65:8-10; 66:20) and the rebirth of the nation (66:7-14).

Of these parallels Nickelsburg writes:

> A pious Jew living during Antiochus' persecution, if he was equipped with apocalyptic premises, could hardly have avoided seeing in Third Isaiah a description of his own times. But although the wholesale slaughter of the righteous might fit the Isaianic description of injustice and persecution, the slaughter was certainly not in keeping with the prophet's promise that the servants of the Lord would live a long time in the new Jerusalem. Moreover, some of the Hellenizers must have died, and their bodies were not lying in full sight in the Valley of Hinnom. Yet, if the promises of God were to come true, those who had abstained from abominations and adhered to the Torah would live a long life in Jerusalem, and the wicked would burn in Gehenna in the sight of the righteous. But this could happen only if the dead were to come to life. Resurrection was a conclusion drawn from these Jews' understanding of the Scriptures and from their belief that God would keep His Word.[22]

In discussing the theological function and purpose of the resurrection in Daniel, Nickelsburg[23] points out that the unjust deaths of the righteous presented a problem for the Hasidic Jews. Obedience to the Torah was leading to death rather than life, and disobedience was the road to escape. The issue was further complicated by the understanding these Jews had of Third Isaiah, for in it they saw not a general statement of blessing for the righteous and curse for the wicked, but the specific promise that the righteous and the wicked <u>in their own time</u> would live a long life or be subject to eternal contempt. They believed this promise and posited a resurrection as a means by which it would be fulfilled. They found a specific scriptural promise of such a resurrection in Isaiah 26, and the language of this passage is evident in Daniel. Third Isaiah itself contains the theological premise for a belief

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[22] <u>Ibid</u>., p. 38.

[23] <u>Ibid</u>., pp. 38-39.

in resurrection, namely Yahweh's creative power. Yahweh would create new heavens and a new earth (65:17; 66:22), in which the faithful would live in the midst of paradise. Such creative power could bring life from the dust, even as it had done in the first creation. The prophet goes so far as to declare that Yahweh will cause Zion to give birth miraculously to sons who will populate the land. In a day, in a moment, the nation will be reborn.

It would appear, then, that in Daniel resurrection has a judicial function. Dan. 12:1 foretells the coming judgment, in which Antiochus will be struck down and a division made between the righteous and wicked of Israel. Yet verse two points out that God will judge not only those who are alive at the time of the judgment; he will also bring to life some of the dead. This resurrection is in the service of judgment. It is the means by which these persons are brought to judgment, and after that, to experience their deserved lot.

To sum up, Daniel is not a general treatment on theodicy, but a writing specifically designed to deal with the dilemnas caused by the Hellenistic-Hasidic controversy and the Antiochan persecution. Daniel points to the coming judgment as that point in history in which these problems will be resolved. The resurrection is to play a part in the resolution of these problems, in that it is connected with the judgment, and will positively incorporate in the judgment those particular people whose unjust treatment in this life presented a problem to the writer. He draws upon 3 Is. 66:24 for his materials in constructing a picture of the fate of the wicked, while the term

"eternal life" is one which he himself employs for the first time in Scriptures. In his work they refer specifically to the fate of the Hellenizers and the Hasidim respectfully. The judgment that the writer of Daniel envisages will serve as a prelude to the revival and reconstitution of the nation. The righteous who are to be resurrected are raised so that they might participate in the new nation. The wicked are to be raised so that their bodies might be exposed in the Valley of Hinnom. Daniel believes quite literally in a resurrection of the body, and drew upon a passage in Isaiah which taught just that in order to express his belief. He foresaw the wicked being exposed in Hinnom with literal bodies, even as he believed the righteous would participate in the new nation with literal bodies. He saw no practical problems connected with his belief and teaching. Those parts of Third Isaiah to which he referred spoke of God's power as being unlimited in the created order, and described His power at work in Zion miraculously giving birth to sons.

In bringing the consideration of Dan. 12:1-3 to a close, some comments by Martin-Achard seem appropriate:

> Here we have a text that, for the first time, unequivocally proclaims the resurrection of the dead; this passage, unique in the Old Testament, marks, at one and the same time, the end of a long quest and the beginning of a new way of understanding human destiny. The declaration contained in Dan. XII.2f. was forthwith adopted by a section of Judaism. This fact indicates that men's minds were ready to receive it, for though it meant the overturning of long existent ideas, it answered to the deep aspirations of the Chosen people.[24]

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[24]Martin-Achard, p. 140.

Attention will now be given to those books bearing the name "Maccabees," in particular to Second Maccabees. Of the four books that bear the name, only two are included in the Apocrypha, and only Second Maccabees speaks specifically to the subject of this study. Third Maccabees contains no reference to the Maccabees. Fourth Maccabees devotes most of its attention to the martyrdoms outlined in Second Maccabees, but treats the issue from a different point of view. Though brief mention will be made later to Third and Fourth Maccabees, Second Maccabees will receive particular consideration because of the attention it devotes to the question of the resurrection of the body. Reference is made to the subject specifically in four contexts: 6:18-31; 7:1-42; 12:39-35; 14:37-46.

The historical situation outlined in each book has in part been referred to above, in sufficient detail at least for present purposes. While Daniel was written within the actual historical context of the Antiochan persecution, First and Second Maccabees present themselves as works of history, and look back upon events which are past, as indeed they were.

As for the dating of First Maccabees, Eissfeldt[25] sees the answer limited by the statement in 16:23-24, that the other deeds of Hyrcanus (134-103) were written in the annals of his high priesthood. He considers that this note presupposes if not the death of Hyrcanus, at least the passing of a substantial part of his period of office. Accordingly he believes that the book could

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[25]Eissfeldt, p. 579.

hardly have been composed before the last or next to last decade of the second century B.C., most likely in Jerusalem.

In dating Second Maccabees, Eissfeldt[26] places the work of Jason of Cyrene which constitutes the essence of the present Second Maccabees towards the end of the second century B.C.. He believes that the epitomiser could hardly have done his work prior to the second half of the first century B.C., since the second of the letters which he placed before his summary appears to have originated about 60 B.C.. It is therefore most likely that Second Maccabees received its present form about then, and that the location of its author was Alexandria.

It is not within the scope of this study to enter into detail concerning the differences between First and Second Maccabees. It will be sufficient to refer to an observation by Metzger:

> The two books of the Maccabees give an account of the struggle of the Jews for religious and political liberty in the second century B.C.. The narratives, though independent of each other, cover much the same material, but are written by two different authors of quite different interests and capabilities. First Maccabees begins with the accession of Antiochus Epiphanes in 175 B.C., and ends about forty years later (in 134 B.C.) with the death of Simon, the last of Judas' brothers. The narrative is told in a simple and unadorned style, obviously the work of a plain and honest chronicler who set down the facts in historical sequence, with scarcely any attempt to theorize upon them or to emphasize their significance. The historical framework of II Maccabees, on the other hand, extends from the last year of the reign of Seleucus IV (175 B.C.) to the defeat of Nicanor fifteen years later (13 Adar, 160). The interest of the author is concentrated upon religion and his purpose is primarily to furnish instruction and admonition to the scattered and oppressed people.[27]

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[26] Ibid., p. 581.

[27] Bruce Metzger, An Introduction to the Apocrypha (New York: Oxford University Press, 1957), p. 141.

In short, Metzger sees the writer of First Maccabees as a sober historian who wished to glorify Israel and its heroic Maccabean leaders. The writer of Second Maccabees was a moralizing theologian who wished to emphasize the immeasurable superiority of Judaism over heathenism.

The writer of Second Maccabees declares that he has epitomized a larger work, consisting of "five books," composed by a certain Jason of Cyrene (2:23-28). Metzger[28] suggests that the epitomist's work must have been popular and well received, in that Jason's original five-volume history was lost to posterity, while the condensed version continued to circulate.

Andrews[29] believes that First Maccabees reflects a Sadducean point of view. Charles agrees with this and notes:

> As we might expect, this book is entirely wanting in eschatological teaching. Of the hope of a future life beyond the grave there is not a trace.[30]

Nickelsburg[31] considers that Charles' explanation is less than satisfactory in that it explains nothing but only states a purported fact. He points to Eissfeldt's[32] opinion that First Maccabees is a Hasmonean court history, written towards the end of the reign of John Hyrcanus or soon after his death. It rides on the crest of the

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[28]Ibid., p. 141

[29]Herbert T. Andrews, An Introduction to the Apocryphal Books of the Old and New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1964), p. 22

[30]Charles, p. 266.

[31]Nickelsburg, p. 254.

[32]Eissfeldt, p. 579

wave of Hasmonean successes. In keeping with his stress upon the need to see function served by a work, Nickelsburg comments:

> From the point of view of the royal court, there is no persecution or injustice to deal with and hence no necessity to posit a judgment. The writer of 1 Maccabees need not speak of a judgment and resurrection for the same reason that the rich and prosperous "sinners" need not do so. To be more precise, in historical reality the book of 1 Maccabees must have emanated from circles closely allied with "the sinners" of Enoch 94-104. Hence their theological viewpoints are the same.[33]

The outwardly calm and sober tone of First Maccabees is not repeated in Second Maccabees. The writer of the latter work has a theological bias, and lets it be known in what he says and in the way he says it. While Israel as a people and nation was of primary concern to the writer of First Maccabees, the Temple in Jerusalem is the pivotal point around which the action in Second Maccabees revolves.[34] Its importance is emphasized repeatedly (3:39; 5:15,19; 14:13,15). Pfeiffer[35] draws attention to the frequency with which the principle of ius talionis operates. He notes that this principle of just retribution functions with poetic justice in that God's punishments appear to conform with the transgression committed (Andronicus, 4:38; Lysimachus, 4:42; Jason 5:9; Callisthenes, 8:33; Antiochus, 9:8-10:28; Menelaus, 13:5-8; Nicanor, 15:31-35). The principle of just retribution is significant within the book in that it also plays a role in the doctrine of the resurrection which occupies a prominent place in the work.

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[33]Nickelsburg, p. 254.

[34]Robert H. Pfeiffer, History of New Testament Times, with an Introduction to the Apocrypha (New York: Harper, 1949), p. 512.

[35]Ibid., p. 513.

The hope of the irruption of the Messianic Kingdom was seen to occupy a prominent place in Daniel. Charles[36] discusses this concept in relation to Second Maccabees. While he admits that there is no direct and clear reference to a Messianic Kingdom, one might be justified in interpreting 2 Macc. 7:37 as an indirect reference to it, where the youngest of the seven brothers prays that "God may speedily be gracious to the nation." He also sees the hope of this kingdom implied in the expectation of the return of the tribes expressed in the prayer of Jonathan:

> Gather together our scattered people, set free those who are slaves among the Gentiles, look upon those who are rejected and despised, and let the Gentiles know that Thou art God. Afflict those who oppress and are insolent with pride. Plant thy people in thy holy place, as Moses said (2 Macc. 1:27-29).

A similar thought is expressed in 2:18, "For we have hope in God that he will soon have mercy upon us and will gather us from everywhere under heaven into his holy place." But, says Charles,[37] caution is necessary with regard to the last two passages, in that they do not belong to the original work, but to the two letters which were prefixed to it by the epitomiser of Jason's work at a later date. He summarizes his opinion on the matter by stating that though some kind of Messianic or theocratic kingdom appears to be expected, the reader is left in the dark with regard to the nature of that Kingdom.

Space has been devoted to the concept of retribution and the possibility of an expected Messianic Kingdom within the context of

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[36]Charles, p. 273.

[37]Ibid.

Second Maccabees. Attention must now be given to the doctrine of resurrection as it is presented in the work.

It was noted above that there are four contexts in Second Maccabees in which reference is made to life after death. The first of these is 1 Macc. 6:18-31. Here reference is made to life after death, but not specifically to resurrection. Eleazar, an aged scribe in his ninetieth year, was confronted with the demand that he eat swine's flesh. He refused to do this, spurned the unlawful sacrifice, and declared his determination to remain faithful to the Law. In so doing, he became a witness to the Law's importance, and its claims upon Jewish obedience. He refused to be a partner to the use of a deception as suggested to him by his friends and declared his position quickly, "telling them to send him to Hades" (6:23). An interesting thought appears in 6:26, where, after dismissing the thought of any use of deception, he declares, "For even if for the present I should avoid the punishment of men, yet whether I live or die I shall not escape the hands of the Almighty." Eleazar seems to be aware of the possibility of some kind of punishment after death for the sinner, even in Sheol. If this is so, the text demonstrates a development of earlier views of Sheol. At the same time, it would appear important to remember that the real function of the incident presented is not to offer instruction about life after death, but rather to underscore the need to remain true to the Law at any price, and to accept death rather than break it. The following chapter presents the reader with the examples set by young men and a mother in meeting death. Possibly the writer

wishes to urge faithfulness upon all, regardless of age or station in life. The text itself interprets the incident as "an example" (6:31), and that no doubt is its basic function. At the same time, Eleazar's reference in 6:26 to the fact that none can escape the hands of the Almighty, whether in life or in death, was designed to serve as a warning to his persecutors, and thus to any persecutor or oppressor of those Jews who wished to remain true to the Law. The lesson for the non-Jewish reader might well have been, "Persecution does not pay."

Apparently the writer wished it to be understood that Eleazar's example to the young was not wasted, for the following chapter gives the reader a detailed description of seven young men, together with their mother, demonstrating similar steadfastness and courage in the face of temptation and persecution. Not only old men, but also mothers and those of more tender years are prepared to pay the supreme sacrifice rather than deny the faith.

McEleney[38] comments that the event outlined in chapter seven appears to be a contrived story. An examination of the outline of the story would seem to substantiate his judgment. Its structure points to an obvious progression of thought which will be readily seen when it is set out as follows:

7:2 The just die rather than sin.

7:6 God will vindicate them.

7:9 God will raise them up. A resurrection is posited.

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[38]Neil J. McEleney, The Jerome Biblical Commentary (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1968), p. 483.

7:11 They will rise with bodies that are fully restored.

7:14 But there is no resurrection to life for the wicked.

7:17 Instead, God will punish them.

7:18-19 The just suffer for their sins, as will the wicked.

7:37-38 The death of the saints has expiatory value.

The progression seems to indicate that the writer has woven his story around a definite theological outline. He wished to do more than tell a spectacular story. The story serves as a living demonstration of the truth of the basic treatise. Nickelsburg[39] draws attention to the fact that the figure of the mother is a secondary figure in the structure of the story. She is mentioned only five times, and in four of these places reference to her can be excised without disturbing the grammatical structure (7:1,4,5, 41). The other mention of the mother is in a section which forms a unit in itself (7:20-29). Furthermore, the brothers are consistently called "brothers," but never "sons." The existence of other editions of the story is indicated by the following:

> It is related in IV Maccabees (17:1) that when the mother was about to be put to death she threw herself into the fire so that no one might torture her body. In the Talmud it is said that she committed suicide by throwing herself off the roof of a building, while according to the Midrash she went insane, fell off the roof and died. Josippon gives a different version: The mother while standing near the corpses of her children raised her hands to heaven, i.e., she prayed, and asked God that she might go to the place prepared for her sons. She died while praying and accompanied her sons to the place prepared for them. The difference in the versions is due to the fact that the sages considered suicide a crime, and held that anyone guilty of it would not share a portion in the future world; therefore the story was that she fell off

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[39]Nickelsburg, pp. 206-207.

the roof or lost her reason. According to Josippon, she died a natural death by appealing to God. The rabbis, however, were of the opinion that those who committed suicide in order to escape torture by their persecutors would not lose their share in the future world. The author of IV Maccabees was of the opinion that suicide committed to avoid torture was not a sin.[40]

The role of Antiochus in the story appears rather strange. That he should have been present seems remarkable. He exercised authority over his realm from Antioch. It would seem unlikely that the event described took place in that city, even as it also might be thought unlikely that Antiochus should have watched such an incident in Jerusalem. Apparently the writer's concern was to deliver a message rather than to write precise history.

Taking the story as it is, it tells of seven brothers and their mother who were put to death because of loyalty to the Torah. Their rescue by means of resurrection is anticipated, but not described. Each brother is brought forward, refuses to obey the king's command, is tortured, and makes a speech before he dies. In addition, the mother makes a lengthy speech, which is inserted between those of the sixth and seventh brothers.

The speeches can be divided into two categories on the basis of their contents. Firstly, those of the mother, the second, third and fourth brothers speak of dying for the Torah and of the hope of resurrection. Secondly, those of the fifth, sixth and seventh brothers speak of suffering for the nation, and of the punishment that awaits Antiochus. The first speeches do not mention the

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[40]Solomon Zeitlin, editor, The Second Book of Maccabees (New York: Harper and Row, 1954), pp. 168-169.

nation's suffering for its sins. Antiochus' punishment is mentioned at the end of verse 14 in contrast to the brother's resurrection, and perhaps as a transition to the next set of speeches. Of the last group of speeches, only that of the seventh brother mentions eternal life (7:36) and dying for the Torah (7:30,37). The first brother's speech sets the tone with "we are ready to die rather than transgress the laws of our fathers" (7:2), but it does not mention resurrection.

Nickelsburg[41] isolates what he classifies as a "Wisdom Novel Form" in the literature of the intertestamental period. He outlines this form as follows:

1. It is a story about a particular man and his enemies.
2. The protagonist claims to know God's will, and he purports to be God's spokesman, speaking out against what he considers to be the sins of the ungodly.
3. At the center of the controversy is the observance of the Torah.
4. The righteous man's stand for the Torah leads to his persecution and condemnation in a court of law.
5. He is rescued from death.
6. His former position is vindicated.
7. His enemies are (about to be) destroyed.

As examples of this "form" he analyses the stories of Joseph and his brothers, Ahikar, Esther, Susanna, and Daniel 3 and 6. He demonstrates that these features are found also in the passage under consideration. It speaks of a trial scene before a king. In this, the brothers must make a choice between two laws. They

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[41]Nickelsburg, pp. 85-86.

opt for the Torah and are condemned to death. The basis for their choice is their trust in God. They believe that God can or will rescue them. They express their confidence in a speech before the king, and in their comments act as spokesmen for the Lord. Though they actually die, they anticipate rescue after death.

The above analysis offers insights into the function of resurrection in the present context. It serves as a means whereby God delivers the brothers from the destruction that Antiochus inflicts upon them. It also serves as their vindication. They had died because of their obedience to God's laws. God rescues them for the very reason that they died on behalf of His Torah, and their resurrection implies that they are innocent before the Law that really counts. God and Antiochus are thus brought into a relationship of comparison, with the former emerging as the one who alone must be obeyed, as the one who alone possesses authority.

The resurrection envisaged in Second Maccabees is a quite literal one, and it is taken for granted that the body of flesh and blood will rise again (verses 7,9,11,14,22,23). From this it can be deduced that Sheol is considered an intermediate state, at least for the righteous. There is no repetition of the thought hinted at in 6:16 that God can visit retribution also upon those in Sheol.

The resurrection hoped for is not universal. Without doubt, Yahweh's righteous will be resurrected. But one is left in some doubt with regard to the resurrection of the unrighteous. Concerning Antiochus, the fourth brother states, "But for you there will be no resurrection to life!" Possibly the writer considered that Antiochus

received his just retribution in the vile death ascribed to him in chapter 9.

God's power in creation is appealed to as proof of the feasibility of the physical process of resurrection. This concept is appealed to twice by the mother in her speech (7:22,28). It is significant to note that in the latter reference, a belief in a "creatio ex nihilo" is explicitly taught.

A concern for life within the community of the faithful is hinted at in 7:29, where the mother encourages her seventh son with the words, "Accept death, so that in God's mercy I may get you back again with your brothers."

No reference is made to the nature of the life to be enjoyed by the resurrected faithful. The comments of Charles discussed above[42] suggest the possibility of a restoration to the Messianic community of the end time.

Nickelsburg[43] echoes the opinion of other scholars when he suggests that it is possible that originally the purpose of a wisdom novel was to give instruction with regard to proper behavior in the circles of the court. In describing Daniel chapters 3 and 6 and 2 Maccabees as wisdom novels, he suggests that their production may have been motivated by a desire to describe that kind of behavior that a true Jew should strive to emulate in a situation of persecution.

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[42] Supra, p. 29.

[43] Nickelsburg, p. 185.

Gutman draws attention to some of the purposes the writer may have had in mind when he writes:

> The book in general is intended for a non-Jewish reader, who might think that people who suffer in this way have no portion with God. The story in particular is directed to circles of authority, as a warning for them to keep their hands off the Jews.[44]

Gutman's statement could be substantiated from the book by several factors. The story itself indicates that suffering in itself does not necessarily indicate divine displeasure, for God ajudicates the death of His faithful ones by restoring them to life. The evil end eventually visited upon Antiochus would have served as a warning example to any other ruler contemplating following in Antiochus' footsteps so far as treatment of the Jews was concerned. Not only did Antiochus have to endure a shocking death in which he admitted the error of his way, but even during his actual acts of persecution his victims displayed a bravery and steadfastness that made him appear rather stupid and inept. They did this by choosing to obey an invisible King rather than him, and by electing to die rather than become recipients of his favors (7:24-25). The negative imperatives in 7:16,18,19,31,35 give the impression that the writer was disputing opinions offered by non-Jews as to why persecutions overtook the Jewish people.

Nickelsburg[45] believes that the writer of the story in Second Maccabees drew upon the Isaianic exaltation scene to describe

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[44]J.Gutman, "The Mother and the Seven Sons in the Haggadah and in the Second and Fourth Books of Maccabees," in In Memoriam Johannis Lewy, edited by M. Schwab and J. Gutman (Jerusalem, 1949), pp. 25-37. Quoted in Nickelsburg, pp. 187-188.

[45]Nickelsburg, p. 199.

the sufferings endured by the brothers. The brothers are called servants of God (7:6). The skin is torn from their head (7:7; Is. 50:6). The third brother puts out his tongue with the comment that he "got it from heaven" (7:10; Is. 50:4). The brothers were disfigured (7:4,7; Is.52:14; 53:2). The king was astonished at the manner in which the brothers bore their suffering (Is. 52:14). The Eleazar story also demonstrates a kinship to the last Servant poem in Isaiah in that the aged scribe refuses to become a hypocrite by pretending that he is eating swine's flesh when in reality he is eating his own food (6:21-25; Is. 53:9).

Attention was drawn above[46] to McEleney's comment that 2 Maccabees 7 appears to be a "contrived story." This statement is all the more justified when one notes the attention which scholars draw to stories in circulation which made reference to a father or mother figure who, together with sons (specifically seven in two cases), is called upon to face up to a situation of oppression and persecution. An obvious parallel to the story in 2 Maccabees 7 is that in Assumption of Moses 9. Charles[47] locates the story in Assumption of Moses 9 in the period of the Antiochan persecution, and links the father figure to Eleazar (2 Macc. 6) and the seven sons to those in 2 Maccabees 7. Furthermore, 1 Maccabees 2 speaks of a father figure Mattathias who has five sons. The situations in all three passages are related.

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[46] Supra, p. 31.

[47] The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament (Oxford, 1963 reprint), II, 420-421. Charles accepts Burkitt's interpretation that Taxo is a mistake for Taxoc=Ταξωκ= אלעזר , which by Gematria= 375, Eleazar.

It was pointed out above that there is reason to believe that the figure of the mother in 2 Maccabees is a later addition to the original story involving the seven brothers. Accordingly Nickelsburg[49] believes that it is very likely there was an original form of the story that told of seven brothers, with no mention of either a father or mother figure. In the case of Second Maccabees it is further possible that the story was divided, with the father figure being found in Eleazar. If this actually happened, what then is the source of the mother figure in 2 Maccabees 7? To answer this, Nickelsburg points to a close parallel in Baruch 4 where another mother, Zion, addresses her sons:

> 19. Go, my children, go . . .
>
> 21. Take courage, my children, cry to God,
> and he will deliver you from the power and hand of the enemy.
>
> 22. For I have put my hope in the Everlasting to save you,
> and joy has come to me from the Holy One,
> because of the mercy which soon will come to you
> from your everlasting Savior.
>
> 23. For I sent you out with sorrow and weeping,
> but God will give you back to me
> with joy and gladness forever.

In Baruch, the mother figure is Zion. In 2 Maccabees 7 it is theoretically a literal mother. In 3 Isaiah 65-66, God is the speaker, whether to mother Zion or to others about her. In the previous discussion on Daniel,[50] reference was made to 3 Is. 66:7-9 and to the motif of God's creative power in that context generally. The restoration of the community featured prominently in that

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[49]Nickelsburg, pp. 207-209.

[50]Supra, p. 22.

context, as it did also in Daniel which drew from it. Concepts of creation and resurrection and salvation were linked together. Nickelsburg[51] points out that Hasidic exegesis made it possible to interpret the Isaianic imagery of the new creation, the restoration of the sons of Zion, and the references to the miraculous birth for the barren woman as promises of a bodily resurrection.

In answer to the question of how the mother figure of 2 Maccabees 7 became a particular mother, Nickelsburg writes:

> First Maccabees preserves a number of poems, based on Third Isaiah, which describe Antiochus' devastation of Jerusalem and the enslavement of Mother Zion and the dispersion and murder of her children (1:36-40; 2:7-13). First and Second Maccabees both mention briefly the murder of mothers and their babies (1 Macc. 1:61; 2 Macc. 6:10). Some such event, of which there must have been many in the Antiochan persecution could well have been the historical nucleus for a story in which a mother, using the idiom of Second or Third Isaiah, specifically a tradition related to Baruch, but interpreting the story as a resurrection, speaks about the loss of her sons and her hope of their resurrection. Such a speech taken from such a story set in the Antiochan persecution could reasonably have become part of another story about seven brothers put to death in the same historical situation who also express their hope in the resurrection.[52]

Nickelsburg points to one further possibility in stating that it is possible that a story about a mother and seven sons, with its background in Third Isaiah, could have attracted to it elements from other biblical passages with similar motifs. He quotes as a candidate for consideration the Song of Hannah, in 1 Samuel 2.

> 5. The <u>barren</u> has borne <u>seven</u>.
>
> 6. The <u>Lord</u> kills and <u>brings to life</u>,
> he brings down to Sheol and <u>raises up</u>.

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[51]Nickelsburg, p. 18.

[52]Ibid., pp. 209-210.

8. The pillars of the earth are the Lord's,
and on them he has set the world.

Nickelsburg comments:

> The motifs of the barren woman and of God's creation of the world and man occur in Second Isaiah. God's creation of the world and of man and resurrection are mentioned in 2 Macc. 7, and there may be an oblique reference to miraculous birth. If the Song of Hannah, directed as it is against the mighty oppressors, did influence our hypothetical story about a mother and her sons, we would likely finish with a story about a mother and her seven sons. In such a case, a conflation of material from such a story with a story about seven brothers would be all the more possible.[53]

To summarize, 2 Maccabees 7 teaches a literal resurrection of the flesh. The righteous will participate in this. No judgment scene is posited, and it is not clear if the wicked are to rise. The fourth brother says specifically of Antiochus, "But for you there will be no resurrection to life!" (7:14). The resurrection functions as a means whereby God delivers his righteous ones from the agonies being inflicted on them. In this sense also it serves as their vindication, for they have died for the Law that really counts. Resurrection serves as a rescue from death and a remedy for persecution. Creation is pointed to to prove that what God has created He can and will re-create in the resurrection.

There is a brief mention of resurrection in 2 Macc. 12:39-45. It is set in a historical context in which Judas, having defeated Georgias's forces and rested on the sabbath, undertakes to gather the bodies of those of his men who had fallen in the engagement. He and his men found upon every one of the slain sacred tokens of the idols of Jamnia, a circumstance which is interpreted as the

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[53] Ibid.

reason for their deaths. Judas and his men offer prayers on behalf of the dead, "beseeching that the sin which had been committed might be wholly blotted out" (2 Macc. 12:42). A collection for a sin offering was then taken up and sent to Jerusalem on behalf of the slain. Judas is commended for this action, and it is stated that he did this "taking account of the resurrection" (12:43). The following verse points out that it would have been foolish to pray for the dead "if he were not expecting that those who had fallen would rise again" (12:44). Verse 45 points to the splendid reward that awaits those who fall asleep in godliness.

The incident therefore points to a belief in a resurrection, a belief in prayer for the dead, and a belief in the efficacy of sacrifice done on behalf of the dead. Verse 45 states specifically that the act of atonement was carried out that the dead might be delivered from their sin.

Charles[54] sees here an indication of a change in concepts concerning Sheol, in that a moral note is introduced. Admittedly, it is taken for granted that Sheol will give back again at least some of its dead. However, the text makes no explicit reference to any condition that the dead might have to endure in Sheol. A comment by McEleney is significant:

> The author sees Judas' action as evidence that those who die piously can be delivered from unexpiated sins that impede their attainment of a joyful resurrection. This doctrine, thus vaguely formulated, contains the essence of what would

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[54]Charles, p. 292.

become, with further precisions, the Christian theologian's teaching on purgatory.[55]

One final reference to the resurrection of the physical body is made in 2 Macc. 14:37-46. One of the elders of Jerusalem, Razis, commits suicide rather than fall into the hands of Nicanor. The account of his death is gruesome. Razis' strength is remarkable, even in a disembowelled condition. He believes that his body will be restored, basing his hope not upon any power of immortality within himself, but upon the power of the Lord. 2 Macc. 14:46 tells us that he called upon "the Lord of life and spirit" to give him back his entrails (and his body) again. The previous discussion concerning the morality of the act of suicide in a situation of persecution will also have relevance at this juncture.[56] No doubt it should be remembered that the aim of the writer is not primarily to present a doctrine of resurrection, but rather to depict how a righteous and pious Jew will conduct himself in a situation in which the glory of the Lord and the honor of the Jewish nation are at stake.

Though it is not the intention of the present study to enter into detailed discussion concerning Third and Fourth Maccabees, a brief mention of these two works will be made.

Even a cursory reading demonstrates very quickly that Third Maccabees has nothing to do with the account in Second Maccabees, and further has nothing to do with anything in connection with the

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[55]McEleney, p. 485.

[56]<u>Supra</u>, pp. 32-33.

Maccabean history. Eissfeldt[57] states that apart from the introduction in 1:1-7 the book is entirely of legendary character, and the events it relates can make no claim to credibility. He believes that its value lies in its reflection of the widespread anti-Jewish feelings which existed in the last two or three centuries prior to the Christian era in Egypt as well as in the East. He dates it toward the end of the first century B.C., and certainly before 70 A.D., for the temple at Jerusalem is still undamaged in its accounts.

Eissfeldt[58] considers the title of Fourth Maccabees misleading in that it is not a narrative work, but a diatribe, a philosophical treatise in the form of a speech. Its theme is that reason is the mistress of the passions, a Stoic principle. Eissfeldt believes that it uses Greek elements only to emphasize Jewish elements, and that this contact between the Jewish and Greek thought worlds would indicate a place of origin such as Alexandria, or possibly Antioch. The work presupposes the existence of Second Maccabees, and therefore could not have been written before the middle of the first century. Possibly it could have been written one hundred to one hundred and fifty years after that time. The real point of the work is the preservation of the Jewish Law, and the emphasis it sets out to make is that the power by which it can be kept is not the Stoic virtue of reason, but that of obedience to God. The

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[57]Eissfeldt, p. 582.

[58]Ibid., pp. 614-615.

Maccabean martyrs are introduced to demonstrate the obedience they displayed in the course of their suffering and martyrdom. 4 Macc. 3:20-4:26 describes the beginnings of the persecution of Jewish religion by Antiochus Epiphanes. 4 Macc. 5:1-17:6 gives lengthy descriptions of the martyrdoms of Eleazar, the seven brothers and the mother, to illustrate with living examples its basic contention. It was because of its use of these examples drawn from Second Maccabees that the book received its name.

The theme of the vindication of the righteous is present in the work. The martyrs are willing to die rather than disobey the Law, and are promised life after death. After death, they pass immediately into eternal life and immortality. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, together with all the forefathers, are already in heaven and await the heroes' deaths so that they can receive them into their presence. Thus the differences between Second and Fourth Maccabees become obvious. The former speaks of resurrection and immortality. The latter speaks of immortality and assumption, with Sheol being no longer a consideration. Nevertheless, the immortality and assumption concepts serve the same function as the resurrection and immortality language of Second Maccabees, namely vindication.

CHAPTER III

THE OLD TESTAMENT BACKGROUND TO THE RESURRECTION FAITH OF THE MACCABEAN MARTYRS

This chapter will endeavour to survey in a rather cursory manner what the Old Testament has to say about life after death and resurrection. It will not seek to do this from a systematic or dogmatic point of view. This kind of approach could well lead to a chapter composed largely of footnotes which merely note which passages receive the greatest number of scholar's votes in the continuing debate of "for" and "against" finding resurrection thoughts in various passages. The mere counting of votes will make no contribution towards understanding the unique nature of the resurrection faith that arose in Israel during the last two centuries before Christ. This chapter therefore will seek to study what the Old Testament has to say about resurrection and life after death in terms of a development. In so doing it will also endeavour to take into consideration those factors present in Israel's continuing history that contributed towards this development. This it will seek to trace the life of a people living in fellowship with Yahweh, a people experiencing both bane and blessing under his Lordship, a people at times literally grappling with him in their desire to comprehend his ultimate purposes for them both in life and in death.

Israel's ideas concerning the survival of the individual and the state of the dead cannot be considered in isolation, as though from the beginning of her history she alone among the nations had

been endowed with some special revelation. Hooke writes:

> From the earliest period of its history as a people Israel was exposed to the various currents of thought at work in the religious patterns of the nations by whom she was surrounded. Hence it is not surprising to find that early Hebrew ideas about the condition of the dead in the after-life closely resemble those which appear in the general Semitic background, especially in Babylonian and Sumerian religious texts. . . . It is against this background that the emergence and development of Israel's ideas of the state of the individual after death must be considered.[1]

Charles[2] points to the parallels between the Hebrew and Babylonian conceptions of Sheol, and concludes that they are ultimately both from the same source. The Babylonian Sheol is a mighty place situated under the earth. It is approached by the great ocean into which the sun dips at evening, which would indicate that it is in the west somewhere. It is without light, surrounded by seven walls, and provided with gates and bars. It is covered with dust and filth. The food of its inhabitants is dust, unless offerings of food are received from the living. There is no distinction made between good and bad. They are withdrawn from the control of the gods of the upper world, just as the inhabitants of Sheol were supposed to be withdrawn from the jurisdiction of Yahweh. But the Babylonian view differed in that its Sheol had its own gods, Nergal and Allatu. In the Babylonian view of life after death, those who dwell in Sheol are naked and without clothing. But the

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[1]S. H. Hooke, "Israel and the After-Life," The Expository Times, LXXVI (May 1965), 236-239.

[2]Robert H. Charles, Eschatology: The Doctrine of a Future Life in Israel, Judaism and Christianity (New York: Schocken Books, c.1913), p. 34.

more usual Hebrew view was that the departed wore in shadowy guise the customary attire of earth.

Rowley[3] stresses an important point when he reminds us that there is no evidence that it was ever part of the faith of Israel that a man wholly ceased to be when his body was laid in the grave. Israel never saw death as a process leading to annihilation. Nor did it ever share the Hellenistic view which saw escape from the body by an immortal soul as the desirable end and goal. Russell describes the Hebrew view of that which was thought to live on:

> What continues after death is not a man's soul, but his "shade," which is represented as a kind of double or replica of the once living man. It bears a shadowy resemblance to the man as he was in this life, but is bereft of all qualities of personality such as characterized him on earth.[4]

It would appear important to keep the above thoughts in mind inasmuch as they serve to throw light upon the origins of that belief which ultimately posited the emergence of something positive and concrete from the grave. Before entering in detail into the Hebrew concept of life after death, a useful purpose will be served by taking cognizance of some observations by Hooke.[5] True, Israel initially shared those views about life after death which were the common property of the ancient Semitic world. True, there is abundant evidence in the Old Testament to show that a belief in the continued existence of the individual after death formed part of

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[3]Harold H. Rowley, The Faith of Israel (London: SCM Press, 1956), p. 354.

[4]D. S. Russell, The Method and Message of Jewish Apocalyptic (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1964), p. 354.

[5]Hooke, LXXVI, p. 236.

the religion of Israel throughout its history. But, Hooke reminds us, it is clear that the complex of ideas and practices connected with death underwent in Israel a development totally different from that of any other people. He gives three reasons for this difference. Firstly, from a very early period in its history, Israel believed that her God, Yahweh, had established a covenant relation with her, with the purpose of making her the vehicle of his revelation of himself to the world. Secondly, and as a direct consequence of that relation, the appearance in Israel of a class of persons who were able, as a result of a special experience of Yahweh as a person, to interpret His purposes for Israel, both for the nation and for the individual. Thirdly, the recognition of the relation of the individual to Yahweh, so abundantly illustrated in the Psalms, gave a value to the individual which could not cease with death.

Before considering in detail Israel's views about death, some thought should be given to her views about life. To begin with, the reminder of Martin-Achard is useful:

> The Old Testament is little concerned to distinguish between "spiritual values" and "material realities," for there is a danger that the former may become no more than pure abstractions and the latter may be separated from the sovereign rule of Yahweh; in its various aspects, life, like creation, is one; it forms a whole, and expressed itself in righteousness and abundance alike, in power as in piety.[6]

For the Hebrew, life was a unified whole. All of life was lived out under the eyes of Yahweh. Israel would hardly have subscribed to any contemporary view that would want to divide life into any

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[6]Robert Martin-Achard, From Death to Life, translated by J. P. Smith (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1969), p. 9.

supposed spiritual and secular realm. She saw life as a totality, The Hebrew did not consider his religion to be an important part of life, for he saw his relationship to Yahweh as embracing the totality of life.

The Hebrew loved life. He met it with optimism. He saw it as a gift from God. Existence at its most physical and concrete level showed forth the bounty of Yahweh. The believer did not long to escape from this world, but rather to have length of days in it. He did not desire to be lifted up above earthly chance and change to some intemporal state, but rather to enjoy all the resources the Creator offered him in His creation. The ideal was to die in fullness of years, abounding in days and possessions, and to depart in peace after a blessed and long old age. This was especially the privelege of Abraham (Genesis 15), Jacob (Gen. 35:29), and Job (42:17). On the other hand, to die prematurely, to depart in the midst of one's days before having fulfilled one's being and exhausted the resources of life, was a great evil and a dire punishment (Ps. 102:3). Martin-Achard sees the primitive approach of the Hebrew view towards life here reflected in the Psalms. He writes of Psalm 128:

> There are the prayers of a peasant people: to live long on the land inherited from the fathers, to have many sons at one's side to endure the stint of the day, to see the fruit of one's toil, the abundance of one's reaping and gathering, the increase of one's flocks, and finally to share these blessings with a whole people and, especially, with the city of God.[7]

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[7]Martin-Achard, pp. 3-4.

One paragraph in particular by Martin-Achard is especially apt:

> The Hebrew is no mystic, longing to lose himself in an inexpressible rapture and to be absorbed in the deity in the extinction of his carnal and personal self; throughout all his life in this world he meets with the God of Abraham and of Isaac and of Jacob, and under His guidance goes forward with his brethren.[8]

The final words of the previous quotation, "with his brethren," point to an important dimension in the Hebrew's understanding. He considered that basically he could flourish only in contact with the Holy Nation, and in communion with Yahweh. This fundamental attitude helps to explain why he could see loneliness, suffering, sickness, separation and sin, disturb and prejudice the life that God gives to His creatures and to His Chosen People, disturb the order established by God, and threaten to bring chaos into it.

Eichrodt[9] takes the matter a step further when he points out that not only did the Hebrew consider it important that he should be attached to the life of the community, but he also considered that the problem of the individual's destiny lagged far behind the problem of the nation's destiny in significance. Yahweh was the God of the <u>people</u>.

The above has emphasized the importance which the Hebrew attached to life in time on earth. It might be asked whether or not Israel did not lose something by concentrating so much upon this life to the neglect of any developed concern for the next. Eichrodt answers this by making a comparison between Israel's

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[8]<u>Ibid</u>., p. 4.

[9]Walter Eichrodt, <u>Theology of the Old Testament</u>, translated by J. A. Baker (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1967), II, 222.

attitude and that of the surrounding nations:

> What the heathen religions here possessed was more of a burden than an enrichment, and brought more torment and fear than deliverance. Hence the Mosaic religion's explicit lack of interest often had the effect of a liberation.[10]

In this same context, Eichrodt draws attention to what might be considered two very significant factors so far as Israel's understanding of her relationship to Yahweh was concerned. Her concentration upon life here made possible a belief in a God who was near at hand. Secondly, it tended to root any ideas concerning retribution to this present world. The latter thought in particular will be seen to have no little significance as Israel's history progressed, in that she tended to look for fulfillment, hope and retribution in the earthly sphere of history until the centuries immediately preceding the coming of Christ.

Even when death did come to an Israelite, it was not originally considered a particularly agonizing problem. The Israelite dies, but Israel lives on. Individuals go "the way of all the earth" (Joshua 23:14), but the Chosen People continues to live on, and that is what matters. It was first and foremost with Israel as a nation that God had made a covenant, and it was with Israel as a nation that the story of salvation was carried on.[11]

But though the Israelite knew that physically he would be removed from the presence of his nation, he considered that in some way at least he would be able to continue among his brethren through

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[10] Ibid., II, 222

[11] Martin-Achard, p. 21.

his offspring. He was anxious to have children, especially boys. There was something solemn about the intimation that a man-child had been born (Jer. 20:15; Job 3:3; Is. 7:14; Ruth 4:13-17). On the other hand, sterility embittered a wife and was thought to bring shame (Gen. 30:1-24; 1 Sam. 1:4-17; Is. 54:1). To die without leaving a son was a great misfortune, the mark of reprobation of the living God (Gen. 15:2; Jer. 22:30). Mourning for an only son was the most bitter of all (Amos 8:10). When a man died without leaving an heir a whole family was cut off from the land of the living, for it had no "name" left (2 Sam. 14:7). Thus Absalom, who had no children, set up a memorial to himself during his lifetime to remedy a situation in which there was no son to continue his name and memory (2 Sam. 18:18). The Levirate requirements are to be understood as a procedure to remedy a situation in which a man died without offspring (Gen.38:6-8; Deut. 25:5-6; Ruth 2:20; 3:9; 4:1-17). Martin-Achard explains the presuppositions underlying the course of this action when he writes:

> For the Hebrew, there is nothing extraordinary in the thought that a human being continued to exist in his children; man is not an individual unrelated to his immediate or remote temporal and spatial environment. On the contrary, the Israelite forms an integral part of his family past and present, one body with his ancestors and descendants. His forefathers have part in his life, as he himself will share in his son's existence. The future and the past of the whole people are present in the destiny of every member of Israel. The Israelite is part of a community, which, beginning before and fulfilling itself in him, is yet his constant concern. His own story opens with Abraham, or even with Adam, and ends with the establishment of the Kingship of Yahweh.[12]

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[12] Ibid., p. 24.

Though it would seem that originally death was an event to be met normally and naturally, a variation to this is also met. Eichrodt[13] discusses both approaches. He points out that there is the attitude in which death is accepted quite normally. It is not considered a cruel power. It simply ends the life determined by God, and is to be accepted as readily as Yahweh's initial decision to give life, in tranquil submission, with an almost strict sobriety. No effort is made to overcome it by reasoning from nature, or through ritual. It is simply stated that the departed died "in good old age," "old and full of days" (Gen. 15:15; 25:8; 35:29; Job 42:17; 1 Chron. 12:1; 29:28). Yet there is also another attitude, in which there is lamentation over death as the deepest and most painful disturbance of the conditions of life established by God. The individual feels abandoned by that very God who gave life, abandoned to the "land of no return" where one is forever shut off from God and His work and His community on earth. Not only that, but death is thought of as having the power to reach into this life through such things as illness, war, imprisonment, sin and similar things. They are seen as menaces to earthly existence (Is. 38:18; Psalm 88; Ps. 6:4-5).

It would seem beyond the scope of this paper to enter into any extensive study of the Hebrew understanding of life in Sheol. Such a study would prove both lengthy and dreary. But certain aspects must of necessity be mentioned, inasmuch as they are related to the development of resurrection concepts.

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[13]Eichrodt, II, 500-502.

Generally speaking, it was considered that he who made the journey to Sheol made a one way journey (Job 16:22). He who went to Sheol stayed in Sheol. Secondly, he who went to Sheol suffered a separation from the corporate life of his people, and to be cut off from the corporate life of the family, the tribe, the nation, meant to be cut off from the enjoyment of all the blessings and priveleges of the covenant relationship with Israel's God. While many of the Old Testament passages which depict the wretched and shadowy nature of the condition of the dead resemble those held by the Babylonians, the marked difference is that the Hebrew descriptions lay stress upon the fact that the journey to Sheol means separation from God (Ps. 88:10-12). The Babylonians on the other hand believed that Sheol had its own gods.

A point that is significant when considered in the light of the views of Sheol held in the Maccabean period is that in the earlier conceptions of the state of the dead there is no suggestion of punishment or suffering as a result of sin associated with life in Sheol. One does not go to Sheol as a consequence of having committed sin. Rather, ones goes to Sheol because that is the place to which one goes after death. Furthermore, Russell makes a significant point when he writes:

> What is certain is that no moral distinctions prevail in Sheol; there is no difference there between the good and the bad. The repa'im are incapable of receiving rewards or punishments (Eccles. 9:5); "All things come alike to all; there is one event to the righteous, and to the wicked" (Eccles. 9:2).[14]

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[14]Russell, p. 355.

Thus, one does not go to Sheol as a punishment for sin. Furthermore, one does not endure punishments in Sheol. The dreary life that one must live there is part and parcel of the way of life in Sheol. Finally, there are no moral distinctions in Sheol itself. Both good and bad go there and live together there, all existing side by side in similar circumstances. How long did this "non-moral view" of Sheol exist? In answer to this question, Gaster[15] points out that "nowhere in the OT is the abode of the dead regarded as a place of punishment or torment. The concept of an infernal 'hell' developed in Israel only during the Hellenistic period."

Despite this observation by Gaster, it appears that there were some distinctions in Sheol nevertheless. Martin-Achard speaks of these when he writes:

> The differentiations prevailing among the departed are by no means contingent on moral considerations, but are essentially dependent, on the one hand, on the social status of the departed, and on the other, on the fate of his corpse. Highest in Sheol are the great of the present world, buried with honor due to their station, who continue to form a sort or aristocracy, that of the Rephaim; lowest of all, doomed to dwell in a sort of hole. . . "the depths of the pit," as A. Lods expresses it, along with the uncircumcised, are those who have died a violent death, suicides, executed criminals, murdered men, children dead before circumcision, and various tyrants, such as the Kings of Tyre and Egypt, and the arrogant despot mention in Is. xiv, who because of their crimes have deserved a particularly pitiless punishment.[16]

The above indicates that in a few Old Testament contexts a certain inequality prevails in the world of the dead, but the distinctions rest upon social and ritual considerations rather than moral worth.

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[15]T. H. Gaster, "The Abode of the Dead," The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible (New York: Abingdon Press, 1962), I, 788.

[16]Martin-Achard, p. 39.

Hooke reminds us that the Hebrews did not merely use the word "Sheol" as a figure of speech in conversations about death and the departed. He stresses the fact that they though of it as a specific locality with geographical dimensions to it. He writes:

> It appears that in early Hebrew thought the place where the dead maintained this shadowy existence was conceived of in spatial terms. Sheol, the abode of the dead, was a region under the earth, into which the dead went down. In Nu 16, in the story of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, we are told that the earth opened, and the sinners, with all that belonged to them, "went down alive into Sheol."[17]

It was stated above that the Hebrew who went to Sheol believed that he was going to a place where he would be cut off from Yahweh and the covenant community of Israel. He did not think of Sheol as a place which Yahweh had made, to serve as a kind of receptacle for the dead. Martin-Achard writes:

> Sheol is seen as a reality, in some sense autonomous, which is not the work of Yahweh, and which, by its dynamic, disputes the authority of the God of Israel over His creation and seeks to bring it back into primeval chaos again. Yahweh made the heavens and the earth, but not Sheol.[18]

Richardson[19] suggests that possibly the conception of Jehovah as a sky-god made it impossible to think of him in connection with the underworld. In commenting upon the emotions which this prospect of separation from Yahweh aroused in the Hebrew, von Rad writes:

> The dead were absolutely outside the cultic sphere of Yahweh, and Israel might not recognize any other cultic sphere. The dead were divorced from him and from communion with him, because

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[17]Hooke, LXXVI, 237.

[18]Martin-Achard, p. 45.

[19]Alan Richardson, "Hell," A Theological Word Book of the Bible (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1950), p. 106.

> they were outside the province of his cult (Ps. LXXXVIII.11-13). Herein lay the real bitterness of death, and the laments in the Psalms give pathetic expression to this experience.[20]

In Chapter II, attention was given to the death and resurrection of the Maccabean martyrs. It was noted that they were put to death in a violent and cruel manner, and literally dismembered. There was no suggestion that this condition would in any way influence their lot in Sheol, or prove an obstacle in any resurrection experience. Eichrodt discusses this matter in relation to earlier views in Babylon and Israel. In the context of his discussion of Babylonian thoughts on the matter, he writes:

> Life beneath the earth is influenced by events above to the extent that there is a relation between the treatment of the corpses of the dead person and his condition in the underworld. According to the Gilgamesh epic, the man who had been slain in battle is allowed to live on a couch and drink pure water so long as his relatives take trouble on his behalf. But if a man has found no grave his dead spirit knows no rest; he wanders about as a vagrant, and has to eat the leavings in the pot and the bits thrown out on the street.
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> This connection between the absence or inadequacy of burial and a worse lot in the underworld seems to have played some part in Israel also. In Is. 14 the refusal of honourable burial (vv. 19f) results in the dishonouring of the tyrant in the underworld (v. 11). Similarly in Ezekiel 32:23 the Assyrian is banished to the farthest corner of Sheol. This is why the Israelite attaches such value to regular burial (cf. Gen 23, and the care taken over the interment of the patriarchs), and feels that the prophet's predictions of the desecration of the graves and of the scattering of the bones of the dead are such an appalling threat: cf. II Kings 9:10; Jer. 8:1; 16:4; 22:19.[21]

In relating the conditions of life after death to the treatment the corpse received prior to burial, Eichrodt suggests that originally

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[20]Gerhard von Rad, Old Testament Theology, translated by D. M. G. Stalker (New York: Harper and Row, 1962), I, 277.

[21]Eichrodt, II, 211-212.

the common view held was that the grave itself was the dwelling place of the dead. He writes:

> Side by side with the Sheol conception we find another--and to all appearances older--view, according to which the dead dwell in the grave. Not only is the grave called the habitation of the dead (Is. 22:16), but great importance is attached to being buried alongside the members of one's family (cf. II Sam. 17:23; 19:38; Gen. 47:30; 50:25). This explains why to bury someone among the common people, as Jehoiakim did the prophet Uriah, is to dishonour him (Jer. 26:23). This too is the origin of the fairly common expressions 'to be gathered to one's fathers' and 'to go to sleep with one's fathers', (Gen. 25:8; 35:29; 49:49,33; Deut. 32:50; Judg. 2:10; I Kings 2:10).[22]

1 Sam. 26:19-20 is appealed to by some scholars to support their contention that early Israel confined the presence and influence of Yahweh to the land of Palestine and its people. If this idea is correct, something of a transformation takes place in the prophet Amos. The oracles of this eighth-century prophet show that Israel was by now confronted with the assertion that the rule of Yahweh extended beyond her own boundaries. Not only that, but even Sheol itself was under his control. In Amos 9:2 the prophet is reported as warning his hearers that there is literally no place to which they can go to escape him, for Yahweh's hand can reach even into Sheol to take them from there.[23] Hooke states that the gradual growth of this conception of Yahweh's rule over Sheol and its inhabitants may be traced through the prophetic writings and Psalms down to the Wisdom literature.[24] At this point, then, a useful purpose will be served by referring to a variety of passages

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[22]Ibid., II, 213.

[23]Hooke, LXXVI, 237.

[24]Ibid.

which are interpreted differently by different scholars. Some see in some of them at least references to resurrection. Others see adumbrations of resurrection thought in them. Others again see in them no reference at all to resurrection.

The Oxford Hebrew Lexicon[25] interprets 1 Sam. 2:6 in the Song of Hannah as a reference to Yahweh restoring the dead to life. Rowley disputes this interpretation and says:

> It is by no means certain that the meaning is that the Lord restores the dead to life, and brings up from Sheol those who have passed through its portal. The following verse says that He maketh poor and maketh rich, He bringeth low and lifteth up. Here it is most natural to understand the meaning to be that God makes one man rich and another poor, one humble, another exalted. So in vs. 6, it may well be the same, and the meaning be, not that God kills a man and then brings the same to life, but that the issues of life and death are in his hands, so that He brings one to death and another to birth. By parallelism this is repeated in the second half in different words, which say that He brings one down to Sheol and another up to life. . . . If, however, it be desired to press vs. 6 to treat of the same person throughout each half, in contrast to vs. 7, which speaks of two different persons in each half, there is still no reason to find here any thought of resurrection from the dead. . . . "Thou hast delivered my soul from Sheol" cries the Psalmist when he wishes to rejoice in deliverance from mortal peril. On this view, which is taken by many commentators, the meaning in the Song of Hannah is that God brings a man into dire straits and then rescues him.[26]

The above lengthy quote has been included inasmuch as it throws light not only on the Song of Hannah but also on other references to being rescued from Sheol which occur with some frequency in the Psalms and other portions of the Old Testament.

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[25]F. Brown, S. R. Driver, and C. A. Briggs, A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1952), p. 311.

[26]Harold H. Rowley, "The Future Life in the Thought of the Old Testament," The Congregational Quarterly, XXXIII (April 1955), 127-128.

In their discussion of the Song of Hannah, both Gaster[27] and Martin-Achard[28] concur with Rowley's opinion given above, and all three believe that Deut. 32:39 says basically the same thing as 1 Sam. 2:6.[29] Rowley[30] further says that he sees no reason to read a doctrine of resurrection into 1 Sam. 2:6, or to find it anywhere in the Old Testament, save in the form of Job's assurance of a momentary resurrection to witness his vindication, and the verse in the book of Daniel (12:2) which has reference to the contemporary situation of the author.

Hooke remarks that the stories of the raising of the dead by Elijah and Elishah are indications that as early as the ninth century there was a growing sense in Israel that Yahweh's power extended to Sheol. He draws no conclusions from this with regard to a wider resurrection hope for the individual.[31] Martin-Achard[32] points out that the incidents reported in 1 Kings 17:17-24; 2 Kings 4:31-37 and 13:21 are exceptional actions, and one learns nothing from them concerning a permanent victory over the grave. He sees them as signs attesting the power of Yahweh and authenticating the

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[27]T. H. Gaster, "Resurrection," The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible (New York: Abingdon Press, 1962), IV, 40.

[28]Martin-Achard, p. 55.

[29]Rowley, The Congregational Quarterly, XXXIII, 128.

[30]Rowley, The Faith of Israel, p. 169.

[31]Hooke, LXXVI, 237.

[32]Martin-Achard, pp. 57-59.

ministry of Elijah and Elishah. They reestablish an order overturned by premature death, but have no ultimate eschatological significance.

It might be pointed out that though the incidents of raising the dead ascribed to Elijah and Elishah hold out no real hope to the average individual in Israel, they at least demonstrate the belief of the writer that Yahweh was able to short circuit the usual processes which set in at death and reverse them. Without doubt Yahweh was stronger than Sheol, and could interrupt the normal cycle of events set in motion by death.

In the discussion of the meaning of 1 Sam. 2:6, reference was made to the fact that generally speaking commentators see in the thought expressed by such a passage a belief that it is God who brings a man into dire straits and who rescues him from danger and misfortune. Similar thoughts are expressed by another group of Psalms, namely Psalms 88; 30:2-3; 86:12-13; 103:1,3-5; Is. 38:17. In discussing these Psalms, Martin-Achard comments that they are Psalms in which sickness is often, though not always, the problem. The sufferer is spoken of as having lost his health, or freedom, or reputation. He is surrounded by foes, deserted by friends and even God. All is being threatened, even life itself. In the midst of his distress, he cries to God, his sole final source of help. He prays for healing, deliverance, pardon and peace. He is not reconciled to death, and will not believe the die is cast. In these Psalms there is no question of resurrection as it was understood in the Maccabean period. Rather, death is merely repulsed, warded off for a time. It is neither avoided nor

abolished. These Psalms speak of Yahweh's power to deliver, but not of the destruction of Sheol. They express fear of an evil death, a premature death, a death that disrupts the natural order. Israel lived with this conception for centuries, and more specific answers to the problem of death were only given late in the Old Testament period.[33]

Several other incidents and passages need to be considered in this context, namely the translation of Enoch and Elijah, and Psalms 16, 49, and 73.

In commenting upon the translations of Enoch and Elijah, it is significant to remember that they are basically translations and not resurrections. Charles[34] suggests that they are miraculous in character and exceptional incidents, and warns against basing any doctrine of a future life on them, so far as man is man. He sees them as belonging to an early period when the authority of Yahweh was still limited to this side of the grave, and the dead were thought to be beyond the exercise of his grace and power. The dead were beyond Yahweh's recall, but the living could be raised to immortality--to immortality with the body, not without it, and that before death, not after it. The following comment is significant:

> But since these translations, though miraculous, follow distinctively from the moral uprightness of Enoch and Elijah, we see herein an essential characteristic of the subsequent development. As it was a life of communion with God that led, though uniquely, to the translation of Enoch and Elijah, so it

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[33]Martin-Achard, pp. 60-65.

[34]Charles, p. 56.

was from the same spiritual root that the immortality of all who enjoyed such communion was derived in later centuries.[35]

Martin-Achard[36] in general reechoes the sentiments expressed by Charles, and stresses the fact that the translations of Enoch and Elijah are exceptional events, and too exceptional to give any general comfort. He believes, however, that they may have inspired the believer to hope that there was a chance that one day he too might have such fellowship with Yahweh. If anything is to be deduced from the passages concerned it is that in the translations of Enoch and Elijah Yahweh manifested his ability to translate them. But though His ability to do so emerges, any indication that this was His general will with regard to all men does not. When the passages describing the translations of Enoch and Elijah were written, Yahweh's concern was with the nation as a whole rather than with the individual as such. The concern of the nation and the individual was primarily to dwell as long as possible in the land given to them, and to remain in communion with Yahweh and one another this side of the grave.

Any discussion of Ps. 16:9-11; 49:15; 73:23-28 could lead to lengthy discussions, extensive footnotes, and a counting of noses with regard to those who vote "for" and "against" resurrection teachings in these writings. Opinion is obviously divided as to what is really implied by these writers, and some scholars see in them specific references to resurrection while others again see in

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[35]Charles, p. 56.

[36]Martin-Achard, pp. 65-72.

them nothing more than the usual thoughts of those Psalms referred to above.[37] It would seem important to bear in mind that the Psalmists need not necessarily have had in mind a literal resurrection of the body. They might simply have been expressing their conviction that in some way or other (which they do not describe), the believer continues in fellowship with Yahweh after death. Physical death does not necessarily demand any separation from the presence of Yahweh.

In discussing Ps. 16:10, Hooke[38] expresses his conviction that the poet has no suggestion of resurrection in mind, but is expressing his confidence that Yahweh will preserve him from death. Rowley[39] says that the Psalmist is cherishing the hope that in this life and beyond he may find in God his continuing portion, and so may be delivered from Sheol. Rowley finds here an incipient faith that God will continue to be the source of well-being of his own in the hereafter. He stresses that it is a hope, not a doctrine--a hope struggling to express itself in a milieu in which almost all men felt that death was the end of all for the individual life. Martin-Achard sees similar thoughts expressed in the Psalm.[40] He points out that the writer's concern is to praise God, and not any anguish about what may happen after death. His real concern is a

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[37] Supra, p. 62

[38] Hooke, LXXVI, 237.

[39] Rowley, The Faith of Israel, p. 175.

[40] Martin-Achard, pp. 147-53.

present and continuing communion with God, and the Psalmist expresses his conviction that there will be no end to this. He does not enter into speculation as to how this continuing fellowship will be possible, but he simply depends upon God, being quite sure that God will not leave far from himself the man for whom he is all. Gaster[41] sees in Psalms 16, 49, and 73 references only to a rescue from imminent death, and no allusion to any resuscitation after death. It might be pointed out that while Psalm 16 does seem to point to a continuing fellowship of some kind with Yahweh after death, it emphasizes only the nature of the hope but not the manner in which this hope will be achieved.

In discussing Psalms 49 and 73, Bertholet[42] expresses the opinion that if they do not refer specifically to resurrection, they express a belief in some kind of "transport" to God. Creager[43] considers that Ps. 49:15, together with Ps. 16:10 and Ps. 73:24, teach that death will not break the precious fellowship which the believer has with God. In discussing Ps. 49:15, Rowley appears to sum up the meaning rather well when he writes:

> The general thought of the Psalm is of the emptiness of the prosperity of the wicked. There is no need for the righteous to envy him, because whatever he has in this life he can carry nothing with him beyond the grave. The gloom of Sheol is all he can look forward to. In contrast to this, all that is said of the righteous is that God will redeem his soul from the

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[41]Gaster, "Resurrection," IDB, I, 40.

[42]Alfred Bertholet, "The Pre-Christian Belief in the Resurrection of the Body," The American Journal of Theology, XX (1916), 22.

[43]Harold L. Creager, "The Biblical View of Life after Death," The Lutheran Quarterly, XVII (May 1965), 114-115.

> power of Sheol, for He will receive him. There the meaning cannot be that . . . Sheol is the figure for distress and tribulation. In the first place, in the preceding verse Sheol, in relation to the wicked, is clearly the abode of the shades beyond the grave, so that the same meaning is required here to give it contrast. In the second place, if the meaning were simply that the righteous would be delivered from his distress, he would be still worse off than the unrighteous, who is promised no distress in this life in this Psalm. What the Psalmist is clearly saying is that the injustices of this life will be rectified beyond the grave, where the wicked will go to the miseries of Sheol, while the righteous will be taken by God unto Himself.[44]

Attention is drawn by some scholars to the use of the verb נפה in this context (49:15), and it is noted that this same term is used in connection with the translation of Enoch, of whom it is said that he walked with God and he was not, "for Good took him" (Gen. 5:25).[45] Briggs[46] writes that the verse implies the assumption of the righteous dead by God to Himself, though he holds the verse to be a late gloss.

There is a division of opinion with regard to Ps. 73:23-26, in which the crucial verse, verse 24, receives a variety of interpretations. Snaith[47] limits the concern of the Psalm to the earthly sphere, and insists that the word לקח is a reference to honor and prosperity; the Psalmist means that though he is at the very last extremity of life physically, so that the very core of life is failing, yet he still has God. God is his portion that

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[44]Rowley, "The Congregational Quarterly," XXXIII, 129.

[45]Rowley, The Faith of Israel, p. 172.

[46]C. A. Briggs, "Psalms," The International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1906), I, 41.

[47]Norman H. Snaith, "Life after Death," Interpretation, I (1947), 315-316.

none can take away. Sutcliffe shares Snaith's opinion, and comments:

> The conclusion . . . is that the Psalmist is manifesting his confidence that God would, in this life, vindicate his justice on the wicked and by some bestowal of honor on his servant show that virtue is what he desires and accepts.[48]

On the other hand, Rowley speaks for the other side of the argument when he states:

> The Psalmist begins by recording his envy of the lot of the wicked as contrasted with his own. He is tempted to conclude that virtue is unrewarded, but checks himself with the realization that he would be a public menace if he uttered such a word. He then turns to the thought that the prosperity of the wicked is fleeting, and that judgment will fall on him with swift destruction and all of his good fortune become as insubstantial as a dream when it is past. Yet this does not satisfy him. He then ponders his problem further, and asks himself what he has that the wicked has not. He has his misfortune. True, but he also has God. Therefore his lot is superior to that of the wicked, not alone in prospect, but even when he is in his distress and the wicked is in his prosperity. He enjoys that fellowship with God, which we have seen to be the basis of man's truest well-being. "Nevertheless I am continually with Thee," he cries, "Thou dost hold my right hand. Thou dost guide me with counsel, afterward wilt receive me to honour."
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> If the translation of the last line were secure it would be simpler to discuss this passage. In fact both translation and interpretation are uncertain.[49]

Rowley then discusses the interpretation which would limit the concern of the Psalm to this life, and which would see the Psalmist as seeking some bestowal of honor to indicate that virtue is what Yahweh desires and accepts. He dismisses this interpretation with:

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[48]E. F. Sutcliffe, The Old Testament and the Future Life (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1946), p. 107.

[49]Rowley, The Faith of Israel, pp. 171-172.

> It seems to me that if this is his thought he has an odd way of expressing it. He speaks of God receiving him rather than of His bestowing some material boon upon him. He first declares that he enjoys God's fellowship here and now, and if God is to receive him, it must be to future fellowship. If that is still in this life, nothing is added to the thought. It therefore seems likely to me that the meaning is that both before and after death he has a secure treasure in the fellowship of God. The God who delights to enrich him with the experience of Himself now will grant him fuller fellowship hereafter.[50]

The above comments with regard to Psalms 16, 49, and 73 can hardly be described as an adequate exegetical treatment, but it is not intended to be. The entire matter has been dealt with much more adequately by Martin-Achard, and the relevant literature and arguments are listed in detail by him.[51] But what has been written here, though brief, is intended to emphasize two points in particular.

Firstly, though there is a dispute with regard to whether or not these Psalms contain indications of a continuing fellowship with God beyond the experience of physical death, the weight of opinion seems to be that they do. It is not suggested that they contain specific teachings about a physical resurrection, but rather the accent is on some kind of continuing fellowship beyond death. The writers were not concerned about delving into the "how" of this fellowship, but merely stressed its facticity, basing their hope upon God's goodness and power.

Secondly, a most important point would seem to be that in each of the three Psalms discussed briefly above, the hope expressed is

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[50] Ibid., p. 172.

[51] Martin-Achard, pp. 147-181.

called forth by a certain situation in life, and serves a function in that situation.

In Psalm 16, the question is simply that of communion with the Living God. The writer foresees no end to this. He does not see how its persistence will be possible, but even that does not trouble his mind because all depends upon God. Even now, all things are his for Yahweh is with him. There is hardly a "problem" in the usual sense of the word expressed in this Psalm, though the writer is conscious of unfaithfulness on the part of some of his people (16:4). He himself has simply found a joy in Yahweh that is unending.

The problem in Psalm 49 is the scandal of the prosperity of the wicked. It gives a twofold answer. It states that no man is immortal, and that the wicked will meet a fearful end. The righteous man, however, remains assured of the protection of Yahweh, and need not fear any judgment or experience of death. The piety of the righteous one bids him consider the prosperity of the wicked in the light of his knowledge of Yahweh, and choose the fellowship of the living God in its stead.

In common with Psalm 49, Psalm 73 speaks of the scandal of the prosperity of the ungodly and the sufferings of the righteous. It asserts that eventually the former will be punished and the latter will receive salvation. It suggests that he who lives in Yahweh has a blessedness that is imperishable.

It would appear to be unwise to make fixed dogmatic assertions about these Psalms. Nevertheless, there also appears to be some justification for seeing in them some of the seeds which later

gave growth to more specific and concrete forms of resurrection faith. One might say that in them the righteous Hebrew takes his first glimpses of the resurrection hope through a key hole. The vision is limited, but the prospect seems glorious nevertheless. Only later will these first glimpses lead to the total door being opened, so that the view might be seen in all its splendour and glory.

One hesitates even to begin to mention the book of Job. Opinions vary so greatly, and the text in the crucial portion of chapter 19 is corrupt. It would seem inadvisable, if not hazardous, to make definite assertions about what Job actually teaches with regard to the life to come. Some see quite definite indications of a belief in resurrection and immortality in the book.[52] Rowley quotes a rather blunt assertion of Snaith to the contrary:

> Of this passage (Job 19:25ff) Snaith says that it "can be made to refer to life after death only by a most literal latitude in translation, a strong attachment to the Latin version, and reminiscences of Handel's Messiah. The Hebrew text is difficult, but it is unlikely that the vindicator is God, and Job almost certainly means that he will be vindicated before he is dead.[53]

Gaster sees Job 19:25 as expressing "a desperate hope for the impossible . . . rather than a confidence in the inevitable."[54] Snaith[55] quotes H. Wheeler Robinson as stating that "the book of

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[52]Alfred von Rohr Sauer, "Salvation by Grace: The Heart of Job's Theology," Concordia Theological Monthly, XXXVII (May 1966), 265-267.

[53]Rowley, The Faith of Israel, p. 90.

[54]Gaster, "Resurrection," IDB, IV, 40.

[55]Henry W. Robinson, "The Christian Doctrine of Eternal Life," a memoir by Ernest A. Payne, with seven unpublished lectures (London: Nisbet, 1946), p. 186. Cited by Snaith, Interpretation, I, 315.

Job would never have been written if its problem could have been referred to life after death." In summing up the arguments of scholars about the book of Job and Job 19 in particular, Martin-Achard[56] emphasizes that every word of the crucial passage is capable of various interpretations. He sees Job's concern as that of vindication. This Job wants in this world before he dies. He is not referring to any resurrection, nor to any judgment afar off. He seeks an intervention here on earth in this life, not after death.

In general it might be stated that though there is some justification for referring to Psalms 16, 49, and 73 as representing adumbrations of resurrection belief in the Old Testament, it would appear prudent to omit the Job references from any arsenal of proof texts as unreliable ammunition. Otwell[57] expresses his agreement with the judgment on two counts, firstly because of the garbled state of the Hebrew text, and secondly:

> The statements of the author and of the poetic Job elsewhere in the book provide us with some of our major sources of information about the view of death which pictures it most passively, most clearly as the realm of Rahab. To assume that this same author came eventually to sense the possibility of a radically different outlook with his 'wild surmise' affecting all other allusions to death in the poem is to require of him a disjunctiveness at odds with the character of the rest of his work. Furthermore, since the belief in the resurrection did emerge in later Judaism, it would be very strange indeed if a passage originally affirming it should have been corrupted in such a way as to obscure the belief at precisely the time

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[56]Martin-Achard, p. 166

[57]John H. Otwell, "Immortality in the Old Testament," Encounter, XXII (Winter 1961), 21.

when it was in the interest of part of Judaism to preserve the alleged original text intact.[58]

The space devoted to the incidents and passages treated above has been sufficient to make it necessary again at this point to locate the study in an historical context, and follow attitudes and developments related to resurrection theology as they unfold over the centuries. The individual passages dealt with have covered a wide range of time, with perhaps the last three Psalms and Job being post-exilic products.[59] The previous historical context of the discussion was in connection with the prophet Amos. He had asserted the power and ability of Yahweh to reach even into Sheol, a thought reiterated in Hos. 13:14; Deut. 32:32; Ps. 139:8; Prov. 15:11.

Hooke[60] points to some important developments in the thought of Israel which were to result from the work of Jeremiah and Ezekiel. In the pre-monarchic and early monarchic periods, the covenant relation with Yahweh was conceived of mainly as concerning Israel's corporate life as the assembly of Yahweh. The individual enjoyed the blessings of the covenant, and was involved in its responsibilities, as a member of the corporate body. The relationship of the individual to the total assembly was that which was stressed. The individual was involved in the sin of Israel, and his sin affected the whole corporate body. Death cut him off

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[58]Otwell, ibid.

[59]Otto Eissfeldt, The Old Testament, An Introduction, translated by P.R. Ackroyd (New York: Harper and Row, 1965), p. 470.

[60]Hooke, LXXVI, 238.

from membership in the community, and therefore from his relationship with Yahweh.

But in Jer. 31:29 and Ezek. 18:1-32, an announcement is made which both these prophets regard as a new interpretation of the relation between Yahweh and the individual. They affirm the direct responsibility of each individual to Yahweh. They do not abolish the conception of the corporate relationship between Yahweh and His people, but they introduce an additional aspect of Yahweh's sovereignty. Hooke writes:

> "All souls are mine" ("souls" meaning persons) is the tremendous assertion which Ezekiel puts into Yahweh's mouth; whether on earth or in Sheol, the individual belongs to Yahweh. This immensely significant change in the horizon of the individual Israelite was bound to have far reaching effects upon the whole conception of the after life.[61]

Before considering the implications of Hooke's last sentence, a further elaboration of the significance of Ezekiel's individualism is in place. Charles writes:

> In pre-exilic times, the individual soul had been conceived of as the property of the family and the nation, but Ezekiel now teaches that every soul is God's, and therefore exists in a direct and immediate relation to God, Ezek. 18:14. Ezekiel's individualism here receives its most noble and profound expression. Never hitherto had the absolute worth of the individual soul been asserted in such brief and pregnant words as those of the prophet speaking in God's behalf: "Behold, all souls are mine." From this principle Ezekiel concluded that if the individual is faithful in his relation to Yahweh, he is unaffected whether by his own past (18:21-28), or by the sins or the righteousness of his fathers (18:20; 14:12-20). Righteousness raised him above the sweep of the dooms that befell the sinful individual or the sinful nation. And since this righteousness is open to his own achievements, he possesses moral freedom, and his destiny is the shaping of his own will (18:30-32). Hence there is a stricly individual retribution.

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[61]Hooke, LXXVI, 237-238.

> Judgment is daily executed by God, and finds concrete expression in man's outward lot.[62]

To return to Hooke.[63] He points out that not only was there a growing stress in Israel upon the role of the individual in relation to Yahweh, but there also appeared chinks of light in the traditional beliefs about Sheol. Until these appeared, the future remained dark indeed, but when they did, light began to dawn. He sees the first glimmer of light in Job 14:13-15, and some of the Psalms, including two of those discussed above, namely Psalms 16 and 73.

It would appear that several obvious factors resulted from Ezekiel's emphasis upon the individual. Charles[64] points to one of these when he says that because, in Ezekiel's view, all retribution was necessarily limited to this life, and because further, it had to do with material blessings and was strictly proportioned to a man's deserts, it inevitably followed that a man's outward fortunes were the infallible witness to his internal character and to the actual condition in which he stood before God. This thesis was to meet with strong opposition, one example being the book of Job.

Another factor resulting from Ezekiel's individualism, the growing sense of God's relation to the individual and the possibility of communion with him, was a deeper sense of sin.[65] It would be wrong to say that this sense of sin was not present prior to Ezekiel,

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[62]Charles, pp. 61-62.

[63]Hooke, LXXVI, 238.

[64]Charles, p. 63.

[65]Hooke, LXXVI, 239.

but his teaching helped to intensify the sense of sin experienced by the individual as such, a sense of sin expressed by the writer of Psalm 51, and earlier by Isaiah in his vision of Yahweh in His holiness enthroned in the Temple.

It has already been pointed out that in the earlier conceptions of the state of the dead in the underworld, there is no suggestion of punishment or suffering as a result of sin. Any kind of retribution is entirely confined to this life. Hooke writes:

> Any kind of retribution for sin is entirely confined to this life. Sickness, loss of prosperity, bereavement, are interpreted as signs of Yahweh's judgment on the individual's sin; famine, plagues, locusts, foreign invasions, are the signs of his judgment on national sin; but all these things are confined to this life and the historical scene. While the prophets were mainly concerned with the state of the nation, and interpreted the disasters which overtook, first northern Israel and then Judah, as the judgment of Yahweh upon the national sin and apostasy, they were also deeply conscious that national sin was the result of individual sin. We have a reflection of this in a vivid passage in Is. 33:14, "The sinners in Zion are afraid; trembling hath surprised the godless ones. Who among us shall dwell with devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?" This sense of the reality and nearness of the divine presence, not only for mercy, but also as a consuming fire, was to have its effect upon the conception of the afterlife. We can see this in a passage written possibly in the Persian period, "They shall go forth (i.e. from Jerusalem), and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me: for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh" (Is. 66:24). Here we have the idea, expressed in crude and violent imagery, that Yahweh's wrath against sin pursues the sinner into the after-life, an idea which we find still persisting in the time of Christ.[66]

In spite of the agony of conscience which the exiles must have suffered when in captivity in Babylon, they were not left without

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[66] Ibid., LXXVI, 239.

hope. Jeremiah had assured them that though they had broken the covenant with Yahweh, he had not cast them off forever but would make a new covenant with them (Jer. 31:31-34). Furthermore, Ezekiel himself was to inform them that eventually the nation would be revived again (Ezekiel 37) and would return to its own land. The prophet known as Second Isaiah brought comfort to their consciences in his depiction of the Suffering Servant and the expiation for sin accomplished through his agonies (Is. 52:13-53:12). Of this latter most significant concept, Eichrodt writes:

> In his picture of the great turning point in the national destiny, he does not pursue further the idea of a resurrection from the dead; but the passage through the darkness of death is for him the heart of God's saving work in the case of one figure, namely the Servant of God in Is. 53. In that the messianic redeemer is not spared descent even into this deepest darkness of human suffering, indeed, that he has affirmed it as an expression of God's wrath on sinners, and has vicariously taken it upon himself, the greatness of God's work of salvation is for the first time fully revealed to the prophet. Because death, as the punishment for sin, is overcome by the offering of the Servant's own life, a new fellowship between God and sinners is made possible, since by the atonement here wrought the godless are justified. The reference is admittedly first and foremost to a new people of God in a new world of God, and not to resurrection and immortality. It is no accident that one is constantly faced with the problem that the resurrection of the Servant himself is nowhere explicitly stated. And yet the passage seizes on the decisive aspect of the conquest of death, namely the point at which, in the character of the judgment of divine wrath, it pronounces men guilty, and rejects them from fellowship with God. Even though the prophet says nothing more about the survival of those who are inwardly one with the Servant, and therefore pardoned, yet he has stripped death of its terror, because its sting has been broken by expiation of sin. In this way a concern with the achievement of salvation opens up a vision of the breaking of the power of death which inevitably exercised a continuing influence in the succeeding period.[67]

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[67]Eichrodt, II, 508.

The above quotation from Eichrodt certainly does not deal with all the problems raised by the Servants Songs of Second Isaiah, but it does at least impinge upon one cardinal point so far as the present study is concerned. Ezekiel had given the individual a sense of individual responsibility for sin in the presence of Yahweh. The frustrations of the exile, with the accompanying loss of the nation and everything that a Hebrew held precious until that time would no doubt have given rise to many troubled consciences, particularly so among those who had grasped the import of earlier prophetic utterances about sin, responsibility and punishment. But Eichrodt's statement points to the comfort brought to them by the prophet in the midst of their despair and dilemna. The suffering of the Servant effected expiation, and brought about a reconciliation between the sinner and Yahweh. It provided an answer to the individual with regard to the sense of sin he felt not only as a member of a rebellious and disobedient nation, but also as a sinful individual before Yahweh. It made it possible for a real and continuing hope to exist.

Mention will be made later of the development of apocalyptic thought in Israel. In connection with this, a significant preliminary factor was the development of monotheism. Though this latter concept received particular stress in Second Isaiah, it was emphasized already before the exile by Jeremiah (10:7,10,16). Israel was now able to conceive of history not just in terms of Yahweh pitting his strength against the gods of other nations, but as the only God, controlling all things in heaven and on earth

(including the nations!) for the ultimate glory of his chosen people.

Hooke[68] draws attention to two factors at work which had an important bearing on the development of the ideas of the future life during the post-exilic period. The first of these was a growing sense of insecurity and frustration with regard to Yahweh's dealings with the individual. He finds an expression of this in Psalm 73, where the prosperity of the wicked provokes a profound disturbance in the Psalmist who feels that in vain he has cleansed his heart for he is in distress while the wicked prospers. The second factor was the failure of the glowing hopes raised by the fall of Babylon and the conquests of Cyrus. He finds this reflected in the prophecy and oracles of Third Isaiah, for example 63:15, "Where are thy zeal and thy might? The yearning of thy heart and thy compassion are withheld from me," and in verse 19 the returned exiles say, "We have become like those over whom thou has never ruled, like those who are not called by thy name." The result was, Hooke says, that the horizon of fulfillment in the present world and life seemed to recede so far as both national and individual hopes were concerned. The prospect of Israel attaining to a position of glory among the nations became increasingly remote. The hopes of political grandeur for Israel diminished. She remained in subjection to the Gentile nations round about her. Any hope of the situation being reversed appeared dim.

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[68]Hooke, LXXVI, 239.

Hooke emphasizes that it was at this point that the prophetic point of view began to yield to apocalyptic. The prophetic point of view had looked for fulfillment of Israel's hopes within the dimension of a continuing earthly history. But apocalypticism cut loose from the historical scene, and projected the fulfillment of Yahweh's purposes into a new heaven and earth (Is. 65:17; 67:22). It was at this point that the idea of resurrection as a feature of Jewish eschatology began to emerge, tentatively at first, in veiled language, but in the later apocalyptic literature it is fully and explicitly asserted.[69]

Russell outlines the relationship between resurrection and eschatological hopes when he writes:

> According to the Old Testament the future hope was expressed, not in terms of individual destiny, but rather in terms of God's dealings with the nation. It was concerned not with solitary immortality, but with the establishment on earth of an everlasting kingdom in whose untold blessings righteous Israel would share. Its blessings would be experienced by those Israelites who would be living at the time and also, some thought, by the Gentiles who would come to acknowledge God's chosen people. They would be rewarded with political and material security and enjoy the blessings of "length of days."
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> There were certain people in Israel, however, who could not rest content with such a belief as this. They were convinced that not only should the righteous nation share in the coming kingdom, the righteous individual should share in it also. This being so, God must raise men up so that they might take their place with the righteous nation in the kingly rule of God. A synthesis of the eschatologies of the nation and of the individual had been attempted by Ezekiel within the sphere of the present life; but it had broken down in the face of the hard realities of human experience. It was only when men looked beyond this life to the next that a solution became possible. With the apocalyptist "the separate eschatologies of the individual and of the nation issue finally in their

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[69] Ibid., LXXVI, 239.

> synthesis: the righteous individual no less than the righteous nation will participate in the messianic kingdom, for the dead will rise to share therein". The full and final solution lay in the hope of the resurrection of the dead.[70]

In discussing these developments, Charles[71] points out that until the time of the exile, factors relating to the "individual" and the "nation" pursued their independent course, but from the exile onwards they began to exert a mutual influence on each other. Charles sees no true synthesis until the close of the third century or early in the second century B.C., when they became complementary sides of a single religious system that subsumes and does justice to the essential claims of both. They fused when the immortality of the faithful was connected with the hope of the coming Messianic kingdom.

Charles[72] further points out that while in the pre-exilic period the "day of the Lord" had been thought of as a coming day of doom for Israel, in the post-exilic period it was thought of as that day which would mark the advent of Israel's period of messianic blessedness. In connection with this hope, the claims concerning the individual had pressed themselves so firmly upon the minds of the people that no eschatology of the nation could do justice to the pople's hopes unless it included and embraced also the hopes of the righteous individual. The righteous nation and the righteous individual were to be blessed together. The righteous individual

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[70]Russell, pp. 366-367.

[71]Charles, p. 129.

[72]Ibid., p. 129.

was to experience a blessed resurrection so that he might share the new life with his surviving brethren in the coming kingdom. This kingdom would be established on earth. The righteous individual had no thought of being raised to any distant heavenly abode. Even during the period of waiting for resurrection, the righteous dead would have to exist in Sheol together with all other dead, whether righteous or unrighteous.

The concluding portion of this section will devote some attention to Isaiah 24 to 27. Martin-Achard[73] notes that this passage is considered to be one of the latest additions to the book of Isaiah and a product of the post-exilic period. He adds that there the agreement ends, and beyond that point there is merely an abundance of hypotheses. Most scholars locate the section approximately in the fourth century B.C., at the end of the period of Persian supremacy, and somewhere about the time of Alexander the Great. He considers it likely that it reflects conditions during the upheavals after Alexander's rule, when Israel was experiencing extreme difficulties. She had to tolerate the passage of foreign armies, famine, trouble with Persian authorities and neighbouring peoples, and factions among the people themselves. He suggests that during this time some of the Hasidim had to pay with their lives. Russell[74] dates the passage somewhere in the vicinity of the third to fourth century B.C., and sees as its background persecution and possible martyrdom. He suggests that light may be cast upon the

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[73]Martin-Achard, pp. 130-138.

[74]Russell, p. 367.

actual situation by an obscure reference in two ancient sources to the deportation of Jews to Hyrcania during the reign of Artaxerxes Ochus (358-338 B.C.). He considers it just possible that some such historical event marked the time of writing of Isaiah 24 to 27, and the emergence of resurrection belief in Israel.

If the above assumptions concerning the background to the writing of the Isaiah apocalypse are correct, a significant point emerges in that the first Old Testament passage considered by a majority of scholars to teach a resurrection of the body was produced in a time of political stress, persecution and martyrdom.

Rust[75] states that the Isaiah apocalypse describes Yahweh's coronation feast on the holy mountain, a time when Yahweh will strip the mourning shroud from humanity and destroy death forever. Charles[76] states that the writer looks forward to the setting up of the kingdom, to the city of strength, whose walls and bulwarks are salvation, and whose gates will open so that the righteous nation may "enter in" (26:1,2). Martin-Achard[77] considers that Is. 25:8 was not in the original text, in that it interrupts the original flow. He sees it as a gloss by a commentator who went too far, and points out that it breaks the rhythm and natural sequence of the immediate context. He explains how this might have happened when he writes:

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[75]E. C. Rust, "The Destiny of the Individual in the Thought of the Old Testament," Review and Expositor, LVIII (July 1961), 309.

[76]Charles, p. 132.

[77]Martin-Achard, p. 128.

> A reader probably supposed that these verses were telling, not only of the end of all sorrow whatever, but also of the decisive destruction of that which is seen as the first and final cause of human suffering: death.[78]

In expressing himself in this manner, he points out that this opinion in no way detracts from the importance of the passage, for the Bible is no dead letter, but a living witness in which every generation in its turn receives the messages it needs. "To reckon up the glosses and then discard them is not enough. We must rather welcome them as a valuable commentary on a dynamic Word through which God never ceases to speak to men."

Is. 26:19 is a disputed passage, with some seeing in it a reference similar to Ezekiel 37, but with the majority seeing it as a specific reference to the resurrection of the bodies of some members of the chosen people.[79] Snaith sees in it a certain, indubitable reference to the resurrection of the dead, with the demand for justice as the motivating factor. He writes:

> The prophet looks forward to a final vindication of oppressed Israel. Righteous Israel has been ceasely oppressed by one conqueror after another. But according to v.14 the fate of those oppressors will be the death they deserve; there will be for them no rising again, but the destruction of even their memory. But Israel will triumph and spread. Further, the faithful dead of Israel will rise in order to partake of this final vindication. "Thy dead shall live," their dead bodies shall arise. Those that dwell in the dust shall awake and sing. A life-giving dew will give them new life and the earth will bring to birth the shades of the dead. Here the principle of individual justice is maintained, and all who

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[78] Ibid.

[79] Rowley, The Faith of Israel, p. 166

> deserve to share in the blessed consummation shall certainly share in it, even though they have not lived to see that day.[80]

In describing the presuppositions underlying the thought of the passage, Martin-Achard writes:

> The faithful Jews demands that Yahweh's righteousness should be made manifest; the difference between the righteous and ungodly must be made apparent to the eyes of all the earth (vv. 7ff), and, if need be, even after death. The Hasidim who have paid for their faithfulness to the God of Israel with their lives cannot suffer the same lot as their adversaries, who are Yahweh's enemies as well; the latter vanish for ever, the former will be restored to life. The divine righteousness involves the resurrection of "God's dead," vs. 19 is the answer to vs. 14, the ultimate destiny of the departed is dependent on the attitude they have adopted to God during their lifetime.[81]

Martin-Achard makes one final comment which would seem to be particularly significant in view of the fact that at this point Chapters II and III meet. He points to the function which resurrection serves in Is. 26:19 with these words:

> The resurrection is particularly bound up with a requirement of justice; the lot of Yahweh's dead cannot be identical with that of His enemies. It is, in the first instance, concerned with the martyrs. It is primarily to secure not, as some think, the increase of the people, but the retribution of the faithful; it also bears witness to the powers of Yahweh over the forces of death; at the same time it reveals the care of the God of Israel who does not forget His own, even when they are lying among the dead, and His righteousness, which is to be made manifest in striking fashion on the last day; it is thus at the service of the Living God.[82]

At this point Chapter II and Chapter III meet. Beyond Is. 26:19 there is only one more verse in the Old Testament that is the product

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[80]Norman H. Snaith, "Justice and Immortality," The Scottish Journal of Theology, XVII (September 1964), 317.

[81]Martin-Achard, p. 135.

[82]Ibid., p. 137.

of a later pen. That verse is Dan. 12:2. It has already been considered in some detail in Chapter II. Suffice it to say at this point that the situation underlying the writing of Daniel resembled that which apparently called forth Is. 26:19. But in Daniel there is one final development. The writer of the Isaiah Apocalypse foresaw only the resurrection of the righteous. Daniel went one step further and posited a resurrection of both some righteous and some wicked, and that for reasons set forth in Chapter II.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

The books of Daniel and Second Maccabees both contain materials related to the Syrian persecution of the Jews. Daniel was written during the actual persecution carried out by Antiochus Epiphanes, and speaks within the historical situation itself to those suffering and facing the real prospect of death. Second Maccabees theoretically draws upon the experiences and examples of the oppressed to instruct a later generation. Both books make specific references to a belief in the resurrection of the body.

The writer of Daniel teaches a resurrection of the bodies of some righteous and some unrighteous Jews. Sheol is viewed as the intermediate abode for both groups to be resurrected. One may deduce that Sheol is to remain the permanent abode of those Gentiles and morally "in-between" Jews who were already dead. No moral value is ascribed to entering or existing in Sheol. The life that the resurrected righteous are to live is not described, though one may assume that they are to be restored to a renewed physical life on earth in order to experience the Messianic Age. Nothing specific is said about the kind of life that the resurrected unrighteous are to live beyond the generalization "everlasting contempt." The writer's concern is moral. He wishes to inspire hope in the righteous and assure them that justice will be done. His concern is not to reveal to his readers any new truths about the nature of

the Messianic Age, but to assure the righteous that not even death could deprive them of a place in it.

The writer of Daniel presents a fusing of concern for both the nation and the individual in relation to the coming Messianic Kingdom. Older national concerns, and those resulting from the emphases of Jeremiah and Ezekiel, receive due attention. Both the righteous nation and the righteous individual are to participate in the Kingdom of the end time. There is reason to believe that the writer drew upon Is. 26:19 and portions of Third Isaiah in formulating his beliefs and expressing his convictions.

The specific historical situation that gave rise to the views expressed in Daniel was the persecution conducted by Antiochus Epiphanes, an event in which many Hasidim lost their lives. The writer's concern is fundamentally theocentric. He believed that Yahweh held sway over the universe, the nations and even Sheol. All these had to yield to His will so that finally His glory might be made manifest and visible to the nations.

Resurrection in Daniel serves as a means of bringing back to life both the exceptionally righteous and wicked, so that each in turn might receive due recompense for deeds committed on earth prior to death. Resurrection makes it possible for the righteous to be restored to fellowship with Yahweh and His community. It also enables the wicked to receive the deserved punishment they did not receive prior to death. The note of vindication is strong. Yahweh's righteousness is to be demonstrated visibly. The commitment of the resurrected righteous to ultimate truth is finally to be revealed.

Daniel's teaching marks an important advance over earlier views. Is. 26:19 had posited a resurrection of the righteous, but Daniel goes one step further and proclaims a resurrection both of some righteous and some unrighteous.

Second Maccabees also contains materials supposedly describing some of the events in the persecution conducted by Antiochus Epiphanes and the Maccabean uprising. However, it must be noted that the book was written approximately one hundred years after the events it claims to describe. Though earlier materials are incorporated in the work, it does not necessarily follow that the book's descriptions of the deaths of the martyrs are eye-witness accounts. It is more likely that a writer with a fertile imagination has made use of older materials to construct an account designed to edify a later generation. His concern was not to proclaim hope to the victims of Antiochus Epiphanes, but to point to examples from the past in order to inspire steadfastness and loyalty in his contemporaries.

By the time Second Maccabees was finally produced, belief in the resurrection of the righteous had become an established article of faith among at least some of the Jews. However, the reader is left in some doubt as to whether or not there is to be a resurrection of any unrighteous. There is a possible hint of retribution for evil after death in Sheol in the speeches of Eleazar in 2 Maccabees 6. Generally however Sheol is viewed as the intermediate abode of righteous Jews, but it continues to serve as the permanent abode after death for the rest of humanity.

The writer of Second Maccabees believed in a very literal resurrection of the body. The form of the resurrection body will in no way be affected by any abusive treatment it has endured prior to death. The resurrected righteous will be restored to the fellowship of the righteous community of Israel.

A strong Jewish spirit pervades the work. The Temple is viewed with religious fervor. The Torah must be obeyed at any price, and those who obey it are assured that not even death can permanently cut them off from fellowship with Yahweh and the community. He who gives up life rather than obedience is assured of final vindication in the resurrection.

The persecution by Antiochus Epiphanes was past history by the time Second Maccabees was written. However, the writer appears to be drawing upon the past for the sake of both Jews and Gentiles, and possibly also for the sake of both righteous and unrighteous in Israel itself. He urges Jews to constancy and perseverance in persecution, but he also warns Gentile authorities of the futility and danger of raising a hand against the people of God. The bitter end which Antiochus had to endure should serve as a warning against all would-be persecutors of the Jews. The resurrection of the righteous martyrs was to serve as a demonstration to all disobedient that only he who remained faithful to Yahweh's Torah had divine approval.

While the concern of Daniel was theocentric, that God's glory should be manifested among the nations, Second Maccabees demonstrates a development of anthropocentric concerns, with stress being placed

upon human merit and reward. The doctrine of retribution and chastening is worked out with particular care. The worst punishment is to be without God, a condition in which the pagan nations find themselves. The difficulties which the Jews have to endure are chastenings designed to prevent them from lapsing into the excesses of the godless Gentiles. Thus the Jews are spared the shattering retribution of God which is visited upon the pagans even in this life. The very sufferings of the martyrs, though brought about by the sins of the nation, serve to expiate God's just anger on their fellow-countrymen (2 Macc. 7:33-38).

The resurrection doctrines set forth in Daniel and Second Maccabees show a marked development over earlier Old Testament views. At the same time it needs to be remembered that they are a development. The indications are that Israel always accepted some kind of continued existence for the individual after death, even though this continued existence was thought of in gloomy terms. The prospect of Sheol could hardly be thought of as "pie in the sky." True, there were exceptions. Enoch and Elijah were translated. Some of the prophets had brought dead individuals back to life, but those raised still had to die again. The power of death and the inevitability of Sheol remained. Some of the psalmists gave expression to a faith in continued existence in Yahweh's presence after death, though the hope remains nebulous and the essential character of the continuing life is not described. The hopes of the people remain fixed upon a golden age that would one day be ushered in upon earth itself, and not in any beyond. In

the time immediately preceding Daniel, Jewish apocalyptic is taking its first faltering steps. It is being proclaimed that Yahweh Himself will intervene in a cataclysmic manner to establish the Messianic Kingdom. He would manifest Himself to the nations of the earth, destroy the wicked, and establish and glorify His own people Israel. He would not even forget His righteous dead. They too would be raised to share in the golden age.

The above indicates that Israel did not seek to manipulate Yahweh in the manner of the pagan fertility cults. Instead, she saw herself as subject to the power, will and grace of Yahweh. Her hopes were placed in Him, for He alone was in control, and would act positively and concretely at the designated time to His own glory.

Martin-Achard[1] suggests that Israel's faith in the resurrection assumed definite form as a result of Yahweh's having revealed Himself to His people as a God Who is powerful, just and gracious. The indications are that Israel took these three qualities of Yahweh seriously enough to extract from them meaningful insights into their implications for life after death. She did this in particular when caught up in a succession of national difficulties and persecutions. A quotation by Jensen seems rather appropriate at this point:

> The fact that belief in a future life arose in response to the problem of retribution does not reduce it to the level of human logic or invalidate it as revelation. It is a conclusion

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[1]Robert Martin-Achard, From Death to Life, translated by J. P. Smith (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1960), p. 207

> of faith from the nature of God as revealed to Israel. That the belief should arise in this context shows that revelation is progressive and historically conditioned; it appears as a response to need, not as a whisper detached from time and place.
>
> Given the Hebrew conception of man, it is understandable that a future life should be thought of only in terms of a resurrection of the body. Yet this aspect of Biblical faith should not be considered primitive and materialistic, something inferior to the more spiritual concept of the immortality of the soul. God's redemptive work touches man precisely as man. The Old Testament belief in the resurrection of the body is a resounding affirmation that God does not despise the work of His hands.[2]

The last word on the subject of resurrection was not spoken by either Daniel or Second Maccabees. It would be more correct to say that the words they spoke were among the first. It might, however, be said that Daniel spoke the last word on resurrection so far as the canonical Old Testament is concerned. At the same time, it is significant to note that Second Maccabees occupies a unique place among the apocryphal writings in that it alone professes a faith in a resurrection of the body. Others cling to traditional views of Sheol (Ecclesiasticus, Tobit) and yet another sets forth what appears to be a Platonic view of the immortality of the soul (The Wisdom of Solomon). This study has made no mention of the Pseudepigraphical writings. Even a cursory reading of some of these works will reveal how speculation continued apace once the possibility of meaningful existence after death became established in the minds of the devout in Israel in the period between the Testaments.

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[2]Joseph Jensen, God's Word to Israel (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1968), p. 281.

The last word would be spoken only with the irruption of the New Age. It was only when the Word became flesh that the final resurrection word was spoken. This final unfolding of truth began when Christ walked with men, and was completed when the Risen Christ through His Spirit led His own "into all truth" (John 14:26). In the New Age refinements would yet take place with regard to the scope of the resurrection, the nature of the resurrection body, and the sphere of the final and eternal existence. Above all, it was to be made clear to the New People of God that eternal life was something bestowed by a gracious God completely as a gift, by virtue of the death and resurrection of His own Son. Any notions of human achievement meriting eternal life were ruled out once and for all (Rom. 6:20-23). In Christ, the end time has broken in. Furthermore, those who belong to Him in faith already possess a fellowship that death does not break. In that respect, the hopes expressed both in Israel's earlier eschatology and in her psalms are fused and fulfilled.

Daniel and Second Maccabees did not speak the last word on the subject of resurrection, but they did speak that word which later was to be reflected in God's final revelation to His people. It has been pointed out that even the word which Daniel and Second Maccabees spoke did not arise in a vacuum. Hence Martin-Achard's adaptation of a famous saying by Tertullian is not only correct, but also an appropriate way to bring this study to a close:

The blood of the martyrs was a seed of immortality.[3]

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[3]Martin-Achard, p. 222.

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