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William John Hausmann

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

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**AN HISTORICAL AND EXEGETICAL STUDY
OF THE MESSIANIC HOPE
OF THE POST-EXILIC PROPHETS**

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

by

William John Hausmann

June 1955

Approved by:

George V. Schick
Advisor

Agnes Ann Rosebauer
Reader

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Objectives of the Study

The Messianic hope of the Old Testament is the focal point of the theology of the Old Testament. Messianic prophecy is the key which opens the door to the understanding of the history, religion and theology of the Old Testament. Messianic prophecy deals with the fact of sin, of man's separation from God through sin, of man's need for redemption from sin, of the divine Saviour promised by God who redeemed man from sin. Israel as a nation was chosen to be the bearer of God's promise of redemption. This thesis endeavors to determine the content, character and particular emphasis of the Messianic hope of the post-exilic prophets: Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi.

Messianic prophecy has its origin in the divine revelation of the Old Testament. It is not the product of the religious and historical experiences of Israel. Some scholars have contended that the Messianic hope originated in the post-exilic period. Against such a view of the Messianic hope Edersheim says:

If the Messianic hope had sprung up during or immediately after the exile we should scarcely have expected it to cluster round the House of David, nor to centre in the "Son of David." For nothing is more marked than the decadence and almost disappearance of the House of David in that period . . . the descendants of the Davidic

house seem in great measure to have become lost in the mass of the people. Throughout the Old Testament Davidic descent is always the most prominent element in all Messianic pictures, while in later writings it recedes into the background, as something in the long past which must be brought forth anew.¹

Edersheim further states that there is no trace of the growth or origin of the Messianic hope in the history and literature during the time of the Exile.² The viewpoint that the desire for a Messiah was exilic and post-exilic and that passages in the pre-exilic prophets which speak concerning the Messiah were later additions is now universally discarded.³

This study of the Messianic hope of the post-exilic prophets has reached the conclusion that the concept of the Messiah according to the post-exilic prophets is essentially the same as that found in the earlier writings of the Old Testament: the Pentateuch, the historical books and the literary prophets prior to and during the Exile. In dealing with the person of the Messiah the post-exilic prophets speak both of His human nature, of His descent from the House of David and of His unique relationship to Yahweh which reveals His divine origin and equality with God. They view the coming of the Messiah for judgment and redemption as one event which

¹ Alfred Edersheim, Prophecy and History in Relation to the Messiah (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1885), p. 17.

² Ibid., pp. 14 f.

³ Paul Heinisch, Theology of the Old Testament (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1950), p. 327.

is in accordance with the prophetic perspective of the entire Old Testament. The prophetic perspective views several events as if they were taking place at the same time while in reality there may be a time element involved between each event as they occur. The post-exilic prophets foresee the Messiah as a Shepherd who has been rejected by His own people. They view His suffering and death as an atonement for sin although they do not explicitly state the manner of His death. The Messiah bears the double office of priest and king. The Messiah is the agent of Yahweh who establishes the Kingdom of God. The Messianic age or kingdom is identified with the Kingdom of God. In the Messianic age the Kingdom of God fills the whole earth and brings about the conversion of the Gentile nations. The post-exilic prophets express an intense and immediate expectation of the Messiah and His kingdom.

The Limitations of the Study

This study of the Messianic hope of the post-exilic prophets is based on the massoretic text of the Old Testament with due regard to the Greek of the Septuagint and to the New Testament quotations of the Messianic prophecies of the post-exilic prophets. For the traditional views of Judaism on the Messianic hope the works of Cohen, Greenstone, Baron, Hengstenberg and the Jewish Encyclopedia were consulted. Various Protestant views are represented by Oehler, Riehm, Edersheim, Orelli, Briggs, Keil, Delitzsch, Hengstenberg and

CHAPTER II

MESSIANIC PROPHECY IN GENERAL

The Definition and Significance of the Term Messiah

What is the meaning of the terms Messiah and Messianic?

מָשִׁיחַ is a passive verbal noun which is derived from the verb מָשַׁח which means to spread over, to anoint with oil¹ (Exodus 29:2; Leviticus 2:4; 7:12). In the Old Testament to anoint occurs in connection with the sacred rite of inauguration and consecration to an office or for a function. Aaron and the priests were consecrated to their office by the anointing with oil (Exodus 28:41; 30:30; 40:15; Leviticus 4:5, 16). Kings were anointed as a sign of their having been set apart for their office (1 Samuel 9:16; 10:1; 16:13). The prophets also were anointed (1 Kings 19:16; Isaiah 61:1).

מָשַׁח also occurs in connection with the consecration of inanimate objects which were set aside for sacred purposes (Genesis 28:18; 31:13; Exodus 29:36). The tabernacle, the ark, the table and the various vessels employed in the cultic worship of the Pentateuch were anointed (Exodus 30:26-28).

The terms Messiah and Messianic as related to the divine

¹Willis Judson Beecher, The Prophets and the Promise (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1905), p. 299.

Deliverer are derived from Psalm 2:2 and Daniel 9:25, 26.²
 The promised Messiah is presented as one whom God anoints
 with His Spirit (Psalm 45:7; Isaiah 11:2).

**The Distinction Between the Terms Messianic Predictions,
 Messianic Prophecy and Messianic Doctrine**

The Messianic hope includes such elements as predictions,
 prophecies and doctrine or theology concerning the person and
 work of the Messiah and the Messianic kingdom as found in the
 Old Testament.³ The Messianic predictions deal with specific
 facts concerning the Messiah such as the place of His birth
 (Micah 5:2), His entry into Jerusalem on a donkey (Zechariah
 9:9), His burial in a rich man's grave (Isaiah 53:9). They
 deal with individual details concerning the Messiah. Messi-
 anic prophecies relate more specifically with the relation-
 ship of the Messiah to the plan of salvation revealed by God.
 Delitzsch says:

Messianic prophecies in the most common acceptation of
 the term, are such as connect the hope of salvation and
 the glory of God's people with an ideal king, who orig-
 inating in Israel is to rule the world.⁴

Messianic prophecy, therefore, is generally understood
 to mean all the Old Testament promises which refer to the con-

²E. W. Hengstenberg, Christology of the Old Testament
 (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1864), IV, 259.

³Ibid., pp. 175 f.

⁴Franz Delitzsch, Messianic Prophecies, translated by
 Samuel Ives Curtiss (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1880), p. 1.

summation of God's purposes for Israel and the world. Finally, Messianic doctrine is the comprehensive view or theology of an individual book or of the entire canon of the Old Testament concerning the Messiah. All three elements will be treated in the study of the Messianic hope of the post-exilic prophets.

Messianic Prophecy in the Wider and Narrower Sense

Messianic prophecy is used both in a wider and a narrower sense. The wider includes all that relates to the consummation and perfection of the Kingdom of God, the fulfillment of the covenant promises of God to Israel.⁵ The narrower deals with the royal figure in the perfect condition of the Kingdom.⁶ The post-exilic prophets contain Messianic prophecies in both the wider and the narrower sense. To the former group belong such passages as Haggai 2:6-9; Zechariah 2:10-13; 3:8-10; 13:1, and to the latter such passages as Zechariah 9:9-11; Malachi 3:1-6 where the royal figure of the Messiah and the divine Deliverer appears directly. Neither type of Messianic prophecy may be excluded from a study of the Messianic hope of the post-exilic prophets. Von Orelli says:

⁵ Edward Riehm, *Messianic Prophecy*, II Edition, translated from the German by Lewis A. Muirhead (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1891), pp. 15 f.

⁶ Ibid.

After the Babylonian exile Messianic prophecy revives both in a narrower and a broader sense. Haggai and Zechariah at first had in view the rebuilding of the Temple as the place where Yahweh would reveal himself more sublimely than ever before. But this future revelation of the invisible God can not be separated from the elevation of the House of David (Hag. 2:20 sqq.), nor from the appearance of the 'sprout' of this race which springing from such small beginnings, is to complete the divine structure on Zion and unite the royal with the priestly dignity for the blessing of his people (Zechariah).⁷

The fundamental and principle idea of the religion of the Old Testament is the covenant which Yahweh entered with Israel (Exodus 9:5-6). If Israel would obey the voice of Yahweh and keep the covenant, she would be exalted above all nations and become a kingdom of priests unto Yahweh. The covenant is based on Israel's divine deliverance from Egypt and reception of the Law at Mount Sinai (Exodus 6:2-8). Israel broke the covenant relationship through her disobedience to the Law (Exodus 31:7-10). Yahweh, however, is not only a God of holiness but a God of mercy and grace, a God who forgives iniquity and transgression (Exodus 34:5-9). God's intention in establishing the covenant was not to be frustrated, for God would establish a new covenant with Israel and remember her sin no more (Jeremiah 31:31-34). Throughout the Old Testament, and notably in Isaiah, God has revealed Himself as the Redeemer from sin (Isaiah 59:20-21;

⁷Conrad von Orelli, "Messiah," The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge, edited by Samuel Macauley Jackson and George William Gilmore (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1950), VII, 324.

62:11-12; 63:7-12). The redemption of Israel by Yahweh runs parallel with the salvation which the Messiah will bring (Isaiah 9:6-7; 11:1-10; Ezekiel 34:23-24; Zechariah 9:9-11).

A General Survey of Messianic Prophecy in the Old Testament
up to the Time of the Post-Exilic Prophets

Some have objected to the belief in the existence of Messianic prophecies in the Old Testament. Hengstenberg states:

The question of primary importance here is whether there are really any Messianic prophecies in the O. T. Schleiermacher answers this in the negative. He found nothing but indefinite presentiments, utterances of a subjective consciousness of the need of Redemption. . . .⁸

The fact remains that the Jewish and Christian traditions have always accepted the existence of Messianic prophecies in the Old Testament. For the traditional view of Judaism Greenstone writes:

The belief in the coming of the Messiah, the treasured hope of the Jew through-out all the centuries of misery and persecution, is regarded by most Jewish thinkers as a dogma of Judaism. Some of them, indeed, would not make this belief essential to Judaism. They consider it merely as a 'branch' or corollary to others more important but almost all agree that the belief in the coming of a Messiah is an important feature of Judaism.⁹

Such authoritative Jewish commentators as Aben Ezra, Rashi, Kimchi and Abarbanel are unanimous in the view that a personal

⁸Hengstenberg, op. cit., p. 266.

⁹Julius H. Greenstone, The Messiah Idea in Jewish History (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1943), pp. 8 f.

Messiah is taught through-out the entire Old Testament Scriptures.¹⁰ The idea of a personal Messiah according to the Jewish Encyclopedia is the natural outcome of the prophetic future hope.¹¹ There can be no question about the New Testament's view concerning the existence of Messianic prophecies in the Old Testament. The New Testament presents the life and death of Jesus Christ as the fulfillment of the Messianic hope (Matthew 1:22-23; 26:56; Mark 1:1-3; Acts 13:32-37; Romans 1:1-2).

We turn next to the consideration of the origin and development of the Messianic hope in the Old Testament. Delitzsch states the position of the traditional Protestant views when he points to the proto-evangelium in Genesis 3:15 by which the Mediator of salvation is made known for the first time in the Old Testament.¹² The proto-evangelium gives the promise of the Seed of the woman, who is the conqueror of evil in mankind. This is Messianic prophecy in the wider sense, since the royal figure of the Messiah is not explicitly referred to in this passage. The book of Revelation refers to this prophecy of the Seed of the woman and the enmity between the Woman's Seed and the serpent (Revelation 12:1-17).

¹⁰ David Baron, Rays of Messiah's Glory (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1886), pp. 19 f.

¹¹ Moses Bottenwieser, "Messiah," The Jewish Encyclopedia, edited by Isidore Singer (New York and London: Funk and Wagnalls Company, 1907), VIII, 506.

¹² Delitzsch, op. cit., p. 26.

The Seed of the woman is the instrument of God to restore the harmony in creation disrupted by sin and to reconcile God and man. The proto-evangelium is the only Messianic prophecy which the Pentateuch has preserved from the revelations which God gave to the ante-diluvian world.¹³

The Mediator of salvation is next made known as the Seed of the Patriarchs, who is the One in whom all the nations of the world would be blessed (Genesis 9:26-27; 22:15-18).

Judah is the tribe designated as the one from which the Messiah would descend (Genesis 49:8-12). In the Mosaic age the prophet Balaam speaks of a "Star out of Jacob and a Sceptre that shall rise out of Israel that shall have dominion" (Numbers 24:17-19). Here the royal figure of the Messiah is clearly depicted. Moses speaks of the prophet like unto himself (Deuteronomy 18:16-19). The prophetic office of the Messiah is revealed. Briggs relates the above mentioned prophecies to the proto-evangelium and states that they are all of one common type of prophecy.

He writes:

They are generic in character, for they represent the future redemption as coming in the Seed of the woman, the Seed of Abraham, the tribe of Judah. They do not explicitly point to an individual although the individual Messiah is ever implicitly involved.¹⁴

We turn now to the Messianic hope in the Davidic period.

¹³ Charles Augustus Briggs, Messianic Prophecy (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1891), p. 77.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 111.

The period of the Judges does not contain any new progression of the Messianic idea. Briggs points out three reasons why the period of the Judges was not adapted for the development of the Messianic hope. In the first place, there was the failure to drive out the Canaanites from the Promised Land according to God's command; secondly, the people of Israel allowed their religious life to be corrupted by the influence of the people of the land. Finally, the Mosaic ideal as contained in the Pentateuch was not realized.¹⁵ The above view does not state that the Messianic hope is a product of the historical and religious experiences of Israel but the reasons why God did not make any further revelations to Israel. The Messianic idea in the Davidic period is based upon God's covenant with David (2 Samuel 7:11-16; 1 Chronicles 17:10-14). In the covenant with David God gave His pledge of assurance that the House of David would continue forever. The covenant included the erection of the House of Yahweh, the Temple which the Seed of David should build. There is a clear reference to the exaltation of the Seed of David to the rank of sonship with God. Oehler points out that the choice of the House of David forms the foundation of the Messianic idea in its stricter sense, that the covenant with David is the starting point for the more definite form of the Messianic idea.¹⁶ The royal

¹⁵Ibid., p. 121.

¹⁶Gust. Fr. Oehler, Theology of the Old Testament, translated by Sophia Taylor (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1875), II, 409 f.

figure of the Messiah appears frequently in the Psalms (Psalms 2, 45, 72, 110). It is Gressmann's contention that here is precisely where the Messianic hope began, that the Messiah is conceived of in terms of political aspirations on the part of Israel. He says:

Von hier aus ergibt sich auch die Unmöglichkeit, den Messiasglauben bis in die mosaische Zeit zurückzudatieren. . . Für diese These fehlt es nicht nur an äusseren Zeugnissen, sondern auch an der inneren Wahrscheinlichkeit. Denn erstens ist der Messias vom König und vom Hofstil nicht zu trennen; solange Israel kein Königtum besass und keinen Hofstil kannte, konnte es auch keinen Messias erwarten.¹⁷

This one-sided view of Messianic prophecy overlooks the wider sense of the Messianic hope and of the need of deliverance from sin which is clearly stated in Genesis 3:15. The Messianic king is known in the pre-mosaic time (Genesis 49:10). Balaam speaks of the future royal Deliverer in the Mosaic age (Numbers 24:17-19). From David's time on the royal figure of the king becomes a type of the promised Messiah. David himself becomes the ideal type of the future king who shall bring salvation (Jeremiah 33:15-17; Ezekiel 34:23-24).

We now touch briefly upon Messianic ideas of the literary prophets up to the time of the return from the Babylonian captivity. Amos prophesied the rebuilding of the ruined tabernacle of David (Amos 9:11-12). Hosea declares that in the latter days the children of Israel shall seek the Lord their God and David their king (Hosea 3:4-5). Isaiah speaks of the

¹⁷ Hugo Gressmann, Der Messias (Goettingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1929), p. 276.

everlasting reign of the Messiah (Isaiah 9:6-7), of His descent from Jesse (Isaiah 11:1), of His work as the Servant of the Lord (Isaiah 42:1-7), of His suffering as an expiatory sacrifice for sin (Isaiah 52:13-53:12). Micah speaks of the Messiah as the Ruler from Bethlehem whose goings forth have been from eternity (Micah 5:2). In Jeremiah the Messiah is described as the Righteous Branch (Jeremiah 33:14-22). Ezekiel beholds the Messiah as the Shepherd of His people (Ezekiel 34:11-31; 37:21-28). The prophet Daniel in a vision sees the Messiah as the Son of man coming with the clouds of heaven and appearing before the Ancient of days and to the Messiah was given an everlasting kingdom (Daniel 7:13-14). The death of the Messiah is also foretold by Daniel (Daniel 9:24-27). The prophets speak both of the suffering and glory of the Messiah, of His death as an atonement for sin, and of His victory and salvation. We see unfolded before us the progression of God's plan of salvation as revealed throughout the Old Testament. Riehm summarizes it thus:

Messianic prophecy is to be regarded as being in its main features the organic development of germs which the Old Testament religion from the first carried in its bosom. The same is true of the individual Messianic passages. They contain no new features which cannot be shown to stand in some sort of organic or genetic connexion with those already existing.¹⁸

¹⁸ Edward Riehm, op. cit., p. 121.

The Historical Character of Messianic Prophecy

Messianic prophecy is an ideal in contrast to the misery and wretched character of the present condition. The full meaning of the Messianic hope unfolds itself more and more from Genesis to the post-exilic prophets.¹⁹ The ideal points forward to the establishment of the Kingdom of God by the Messiah. We cannot separate the development and unfolding of the Messianic ideal from the historical conditioning and preparation of it. The prophets who uttered the discourses concerning the Messiah viewed Him and the Messianic age in terms of the historical and political situations of the times.²⁰ Although there is essentially only one Messianic hope, each individual prophet differs from the other in the details which they present. This aspect of Messianic prophecy is stated by Riehm:

The details of the picture, however, vary very considerably with the times and with the prophets. At one time the prominent feature in the Messianic delineation is external, earthly prosperity - the power and prestige of the people of God, security against enemies, the wonderful fruitfulness of the holy land, etc.; at another, prominence is given to spiritual salvation - the forgiveness of sins, the ethico-religious renewal of the people by the outpouring of the Spirit of God, the intimate communion of life and love which every individual will enjoy with God. In one place the blessing is promised exclusively - to Israel alone; in another the promise is universal - to all people.²¹

¹⁹ Charles Augustus Briggs, op. cit., p. 63.

²⁰ Edward Riehm, op. cit., p. 125.

²¹ Ibid., pp. 125 f.

That Messianic utterances were influenced by the times and political situations can be seen from the following examples. In the seventh chapter of Isaiah, Ahaz, king of Judah, we are told, sought an alliance with Assyria against the threatening alliance of Rezin, the king of Syria and Pekah, king of Israel. This is known in history as the Syro-Ephramitic War which took place in 735-732 B.C. Yahweh sent the prophet Isaiah to Ahaz to assure him that the combined efforts of Syria and Israel to dethrone Ahaz would fail. The prophet gives a sign as a pledge of Yahweh's faithfulness to His word. It is the sign of the miraculous birth of Immanuel from a virgin. In the name of the child, Immanuel, was the pledge that Yahweh would ever be with His people to save them.

The Messianic hope is conditioned by the political situation. The prophet Obadiah pronounces judgment on Edom because of her enmity to Israel. When Jerusalem was plundered the Edomites rejoiced over the destruction of Judah. Yet, out of this catastrophe Obadiah pronounces that there shall be deliverance upon Mount Zion and the kingdom shall be the Lord's (Obadiah 17-21). The prophet Daniel sees four world empires, Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome, in their struggle for world conquest finally passing into oblivion when the Kingdom of God is established (Daniel 2:36-45). Micah speaks of the Messiah as the man who shall be the peace when the Assyrian shall come into the land (Micah 5:5). From a human standpoint this variety among the prophets in

their presentation of the Messianic hope may be due in part to their mental peculiarities as individuals, to their particular religious emphases or insights.²²

The unfolding and progression of Messianic prophecy appears to reflect two different elements. There is the ideal element free from the local and historical factors of the present situation in which the prophet found himself. There is also the more concrete and historical element related to the political situations of the times.²³ The ideal element is free from the local, the temporal and circumstantial elements in prophecy and is related to the fundamental ideas of the Old Testament revealed by Yahweh as essential and basic to the true religion. The concrete and historical element is rooted in the prophet's acquaintance with the political and historical circumstances of the present and of his own perceptions and experience. When the circumstances of the time changed, the details and general features of the Messianic hope appear in a different form. Haggai's conception of the Messianic age was closely related to the glorification of the temple rebuilt by Zerubbabel and Joshua. Zechariah speaks of the temple which the Messiah himself shall build and advances from the concrete to the ideal. Regarding the differences in the circumstances of the time and how this affected the presentation of the Messianic hope, we turn to the prophets

²² Ibid., p. 127.

²³ Ibid., p. 139.

Zechariah and Malachi. Zechariah bids the returning exiles to rejoice because their King is coming who will speak peace to the heathen and establish universal peace in the world (Zechariah 9:9-11). Malachi beholds the apostasy of the established community. He, therefore, sees the advent of the Messiah as an execution of God's judgment upon Israel for her sin and apostasy (Malachi 2:17; 3:1-5).

As in the case of the seventh chapter of Isaiah we see how the prophets do not always distinguish between the impending future of God's Kingdom and its final goal in the completed redemption but combines them as a single event. This raises the question of the prophetic perspective in relation to time. Heinisch states that the prophets do not present events in historical order but place the future either alongside or before the present or intersperse present and future events without any regard for actual sequence.²⁴ The prophet Haggai connects the return from the Exile with the advent of the Messianic kingdom (Haggai 2:6-9). The prophet Zechariah links the two together also (Zechariah 2:6-13). This prophetic perspective is carried over into the New Testament and especially in the ministry of John the Baptist (Matthew 3:11-12).

²⁴ Paul Heinisch, Theology of the Old Testament (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1950), p. 299.

CHAPTER III

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE POST-EXILIC PROPHETS

The Exile

For a clear understanding of the Messianic hope of the post-exilic prophets it will be necessary to review the historical background beginning with the Exile. The year 612 B.C. marks the fall of Nineveh and the decline of the Assyrian empire and the rise of the Neo-Babylonian empire. The only historical source material for the period of the Exile and for the conditions of that time is found in the books of Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Isaiah.¹ The books of Kings record the siege of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, when Jehoiachin was king (2 Kings 24:10-13). The second book of Kings records only two deportations. The first occurred when Jehoiachin surrendered to Nebuchadnezzar (2 Kings 24:14-16). The second deportation is recorded as having taken place in the time of Zedekiah (2 Kings 25:1-11). The books of Chronicles make mention of only one deportation (2 Chronicles 36:11-20). The prophet Jeremiah, however, distinctly mentions three deportations (Jeremiah 52:28 f.). In the book of Daniel we find that in the third year of

¹C. von Orelli, "Fall of Jerusalem and the Exile," The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge, edited by Samuel Macauley Jackson and George William Gilmore (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1950), VI, 53.

Jehoiakim's reign some Jewish youths of the royal family and other noble families were carried to Babylon (Daniel 1:1-3).

The situation may be summed up as follows: Early in 606 B.C. Nebuchadnezzar made his first invasion in the third year of Jehoiakim.² In the summer of 606 B.C. Nebuchadnezzar conquered Jerusalem in his first associate year and in the fourth year of Jehoiakim.³ The first general deportation took place in the spring of 598 B.C.⁴ Late in 588 B.C. the second general deportation occurred.⁵ The final siege of the city and the destruction of the temple after the city was captured occurred in 586 B.C.⁶ In the ninth year of his reign Zedekiah made an alliance with the Pharaoh of Egypt, Hophra, to break the Babylonian yoke. The Babylonians, however, defeated the Egyptians and carried away into captivity the king and those of social rank and nobility.⁷ Gedaliah was appointed governor and made his residence in Mizpah but he was assassinated and many of those who remained in the land fled to Egypt (2 Kings 25:22-26).

² Cyclopaedia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature, John M'Clintock and James Strong (New York: Harper and Brothers, Publishers, 1894), p. 395.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ C. von Orelli, op. cit., p. 53.

⁷ Ibid.

What the conditions of the exiles were can be gleaned from Jeremiah's letter to the exiles (Jeremiah 29:1-7), and the prophetic writings of Ezekiel and Daniel and the book of Esther. Many of the exiles like Daniel attained positions of authority (Daniel 1:3 f.; Esther 10:3). The Babylonian exile which began partially in 598 B.C. and more generally in 586 B.C. ended in the first year of the reign of Cyrus in 538 B.C. (2 Chronicles 36:22-23).

The Restoration Under Zerubbabel, Ezra and Nehemiah

Some fifty years after the destruction of Jerusalem the Babylonian empire came into the hands of the Medo-Persians headed by Cyrus. Babylon was captured in 539 B.C.⁸ In the first year of Cyrus' reign the exiles received permission to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the temple (Ezra 1:1-4). We are told in the book of Ezra that 42,360 males together with their servants and their maids which numbered 7,337 availed themselves of this opportunity. Under the leadership of Zerubbabel and Joshua, the high priest, the people left for Jerusalem and probably arrived in the year 538 B.C.⁹ In the second year of their arrival in the land of Judah the builders from among the people laid the foundations of the temple (Ezra 3:8-13).

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

The Samaritans, however, opposed the rebuilding of the temple when Zerubbabel and Joshua refused them permission to join in the work (Ezra 4:1-6). They wrote a letter of accusation against the Jews to King Artaxerxes and received authority to stop the efforts of the returned exiles to rebuild the temple (Ezra 4:7; 23-24). The reconstruction of the temple was then deferred until the beginning of the reign of Darius, in his second year, which was 520 B.C.¹⁰ The prophets Haggai and Zechariah encouraged Zerubbabel and the people to resume the task of rebuilding the temple (Ezra 5:1-2). This resumption was made possible after Darius' favorable decree when he read the decree of Cyrus which previously had been lost but was discovered at Achmetha in the palace archives (Ezra 6:1-12). The completion of the temple occurred in the sixth year of the reign of Darius (Ezra 6:15) which was in the year 516 B.C.

We turn now to the return under Ezra and Nehemiah. We cannot concern ourselves with the problem of whether Ezra came before Nehemiah or whether Nehemiah preceded Ezra. Young makes the statement that it appears right to place the ministry of Ezra during the reign of Artaxerxes I (465-424 B.C.)

¹⁰ Gust. Fr. Oehler, Theology of the Old Testament, ninth edition (New York and London: Funk and Wagnalls Co., 1963), p. 427.

and gives the historical evidence.¹¹ The return under Ezra took place in the seventh year of Artaxerxes or 458 B.C. Artaxerxes himself decreed the return under Ezra (Ezra 7:13). The work of Ezra upon reaching the Holy Land can be summarized as a reformation and restoration, a reformation of the lives of the people and a restoration of the Mosaic law. Ezra made the people to put away their heathen wives (Ezra 9). Moore says of the ministry of Ezra:

Ezra reformed the ecclesiastical abuses, established synagogues and houses of prayer, where regular instruction in the law could be received; restored the observance of the Sabbath and the Passover; gave dignity and influence to the priesthood and generated a reverence for the written law. . .¹²

In the twentieth year of the reign of Artaxerxes I, which is 445 B.C., Nehemiah returned to Jerusalem when he heard that the Jews in Palestine were in great difficulties and that the walls were broken down and the gates burned with fire (Nehemiah 1:1-3; 2:1-9). It was Nehemiah's task to rebuild the walls. The work of Nehemiah, however, was opposed by Sanballat, Tobiah, and Geshem (Nehemiah 2:19-20). The wall was finally completed in fifty-two days (Ezra 6:15). In the thirty-second year of Artaxerxes or in 423 B.C. Nehemiah returned a second time to Jerusalem and introduced reforms concerning the Sabbath and marriage (Nehemiah 13:1-31).

¹¹ Edward J. Young, An Introduction to the Old Testament, (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1953), p. 374 f.

¹² T. V. Moore, The Prophets of the Restoration (New York: Robert Carter and Brothers, 1856), p. 31.

The Prophetic Activity of Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi

We know that the activity of Haggai began in 520 B.C. the second year of the reign of King Darius (Ezra 4:24-5:1; Haggai 1:1). Concerning the personal life of Haggai practically nothing is known.¹³ Haggai directed his message to the people and rebuked them for not resuming the work of rebuilding the temple. The attitude of the people had been that the time was not ripe (Haggai 1:2-5). The prophecy of Haggai falls into four divisions. The first message deals with the neglect of the Sanctuary and the announcement that the blessing of the Lord upon their agricultural and economic life had been withheld because of their neglect. As a result of the prophetic message of Haggai the people began to complete the work in the temple (Haggai 1:5-15). The second message foretells the coming of the Messianic age and the surpassing glory of the temple as compared with the one built by Solomon (Haggai 2:2-9). The third and fourth revelations are messages of comfort in the blessing of the Lord upon the people and the destruction of the heathen and reestablishment of the Davidic kingdom in Zerubbabel which is symbolical of the Messianic kingdom (Haggai 2:10-23).

Zechariah was a contemporary of Haggai (Ezra 5:1; Zechariah 1:1). Just as in the case of Haggai, little is known

¹³ Edward Young, op. cit., p. 268

about Zechariah beyond what can be gathered from his prophetic writings.¹⁴ Together with Haggai Zechariah addressed himself to the task of encouraging the people to rebuild the neglected Temple. The prophetic utterances of Zechariah give indications of the progress of the people in rebuilding the temple.¹⁵ The prophecies of Zechariah are rich in Messianic content comparable to the Messianic prophecies uttered by Isaiah. It has been disputed whether Zechariah is actually the author of chapters 9-14 of his book. There is considerable lack of agreement among those who reject the Zecharian authorship of these chapters.¹⁶ A satisfactory alternative to the Zecharian authorship has not been discovered.¹⁷ Zechariah received messages from God through a series of visions or images by which a divine message was conveyed to him.

The prophet Malachi is the last of the post-exilic prophets. Nothing is known either of the identity or personality of Malachi beyond the book that bears his name as the title.¹⁸ Most commentators, ancient as well as modern, are

¹⁴A. Cohen, editor, The Twelve Prophets (Bournemouth, Hants: The Soncino Press, 1948), p. 267.

¹⁵Ibid.

¹⁶Edward Young, op. cit., p. 273.

¹⁷Ibid.

¹⁸A. Cohen, op. cit., p. 335.

of the opinion that Malachi is an epithet which describes the mission of the prophet since Malachi means "my messenger."¹⁹ Cohen states that the book does not furnish us with specific dates; yet from the conditions described therein one may reasonably conclude that the prophet ministered in Jerusalem before the advent of Ezra and Nehemiah.²⁰ The condition appears to be that the Temple had long since been rebuilt and that the Temple service had fallen into disrepute (Malachi 1:7-10; 3:8). These descriptions seem to be identical with the conditions which prevailed in the time preceding Ezra and Nehemiah.²¹ It was, therefore, the task of Malachi to call the people to repentance. Malachi foretells the coming of the Messiah as a judgment upon the apostasy of the people. The Messiah will restore the true worship of Yahweh (Malachi 3:1-6).

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid.

By chemdath kol-haggoyim most of the earlier orthodox commentators understood the Messiah after the example of the Vulgate, et veniet desideratus gentibus and Luther's "consolation of the Gentiles." But the pl. ךְ שׁוֹׁבֵי is hardly reconcilable with this. If chemdath were the subject of the clause we should have the singular שׁוֹׁבֵי ךְ י .³

The "Desire of all nations" has been interpreted as the valuable possessions of the heathen and this view is supported by verse eight of this prophecy. The Gentiles are to bring their gold, silver, treasures and riches in fulfillment of God's promise to glorify His temple.⁴ Other commentators have interpreted the "Desire of all nations" as the best or noble among the heathen.⁵ The LXX renders the phrase "Desire of all nations," $\text{καὶ ἡ ψεῖς τὰ ἐκλεκτὰ πάντων τῶν ἔθνων. τὰ ἐκλεκτὰ}$ are the choiced things, the select, the best of its kind or class.⁶ שׁוֹׁבֵי ךְ י י has a variety of meanings in the Old Testament. It can mean desirable things (Daniel 11:8), something pleasant (Jeremiah 3:19), loveliness (Isaiah 53:2), the desire for women (Daniel 11:37), precious things (Daniel 11:38). Saul is called the object of the desire of all Israel (1 Samuel 9:20). That the Messiah is the object

³ C. F. Keil and Franz Delitzsch, "The Twelve Minor Prophets," Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1900), II, 192 ff.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ The LXX translation appears not to have interpreted this passage messianically.

of the "desire of all nations" is not explicitly stated by Haggai. $\overline{\text{ס}}$ $\overline{\text{ל}}$ $\overline{\text{ר}}$ $\overline{\text{ב}}$ $\overline{\text{ל}}$ may be viewed as a noun of multitude.⁷ This appears to leave room for both interpretations that the valuables of the nations are referred to and that the personal Messiah will soon appear to usher in the Kingdom of God and fulfill God's promise to deliver Israel and bring about the conversion of the Gentile nations. The Messianic hope presupposes the Messianic king (Daniel 9:6-7; Daniel 7:13, 14; 2:44-45; Hosea 3:5). The prophecy ultimately speaks of the Kingdom of God.

The Coming of the Messiah to the Temple

The post-exilic prophets see the glorification of the temple as the beginning of the fulfillment of the Messianic hope. Through Haggai Yahweh promises to fill the temple with glory and that the temple which is being rebuilt by Zerubbabel will surpass the temple built by Solomon in wealth and outward splendor (Haggai 2:7-9). Keil sees the fulfillment of this prophecy in the bringing of the gifts for the temple by the Gentiles.⁸ Other commentators refer the glorification of the temple to the appearance of the Messiah in the temple as recorded in the New Testament.⁹ Ezra speaks of the wealth

⁷T. V. Moore, The Prophets of the Restoration (New York: Robert Carter and Brothers, 1856), pp. 76 f.

⁸C. F. Keil and Franz Delitzsch, op. cit., p. 194.

⁹Ibid.

Artaxerxes commanded to be taken from the province of Babylon and to be used for the temple in Jerusalem. Isaiah had prophesied of the wealth of the Gentiles for Yahweh in their conversion. The wealth of the Gentiles is the means by which God would beautify the sanctuary (Isaiah 60:5-13). Some commentators see the fulfillment of this in the time of the Maccabees and also in the time of Herod.¹⁰ Hengstenberg rejects these opinions on the basis of the fact that the glorification of the temple was to proceed from the Gentiles and could not refer to the beautifying of the temple under the Maccabees.¹¹ The basis for rejecting the reference to the work of Herod on the temple is found in the fact that the glorification of the temple was to be done by Gentiles who had been brought to repentance and faith.

Zechariah foretells the building of the temple by the Messiah and broadens the concept of the temple (Zechariah 6:12-13). Haggai's prophecy concerning the temple is limited or restricted to the local and historical situation. Zechariah's view of the temple is stripped of the local and historical and is more spiritualized. The earthly temple is a type of the spiritual temple which the Messiah shall build. Isaiah and Micah foretell the glory of the temple in the Messianic age (Isaiah 2:1-4; Micah 4:1-2). The temple symbol-

¹⁰ E. W. Hengstenberg, op. cit., p. 289.

¹¹ Ibid.

izes the Kingdom of God. Malachi speaks of the actual appearing of the Messiah in the temple (Malachi 3:1). Although the concept of the temple may include the literal temple at Jerusalem, the theocratic people (Jeremiah 7:14), and the Kingdom of God, it appears that Malachi is referring to the literal temple. Malachi is directing his message against the corruptions of the priesthood in their administrations (Malachi 1:6-2:4). The people had fallen into unfaithfulness in their mixed marriages (Malachi 2:11-17). The people were murmuring against God that if He has no pleasure in the ungodly why does He not manifest Himself (Malachi 2:17). Hengstenberg says that the discontent of the people after the Exile was occasioned by the unfulfilled promises of God contained in the book of Isaiah and that they charged God with breaking the covenant.¹² Yahweh promises to come in judgment. The Messiah would come to His temple (Malachi 3:1).

The Advent of the Messiah Preceded by a Messenger

Malachi states that a messenger would precede the advent of the Messiah. There are views regarding the identity of the messenger including such conflicting opinions as that the messenger is to be identified with Malachi himself, with the angel of Death, the prophets, Elijah, an angel from heaven, an ideal

¹² E. W. Hengstenberg, Christology of the Old Testament (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1864), IV, 183.

person in whom the whole company of the prophets is represented, a priest or even the Messiah.¹³ According to Malachi the messenger is distinct from Yahweh Himself, the Lord who comes to His temple and the messenger of the covenant who is the Lord of the temple. Malachi identifies the messenger with Elijah (Malachi 4:5). The New Testament places the fulfillment of Malachi's prophecy in the ministry of John the Baptist (Matthew 11:10; Mark 1:2-4). Malachi's prophecy of the advent of the messenger is similar to that of Isaiah's voice in the wilderness (Isaiah 40:3-5).

The Messiah Viewed as Having Been Sent by Yahweh

The post-exilic prophets reveal the consciousness of the Messiah of being divine. The Messiah is aware that His mission is a divine one, that He has been sent by Yahweh. In the book of Zechariah the messenger Himself speaks and reveals His awareness of His divine mission as having been entrusted to Him by Yahweh (Zechariah 2:8-11; 6:15). The traditional Jewish view concedes that these passages refer to the Messianic times.¹⁴ These passages are important in connection not only with the divine mission of the Messiah but also with the relationship of the Messiah to Yahweh. The person and work of the Messiah is revealed in connection

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴E. W. Hengstenberg, op. cit., III, 317.

with the divine mission given by Yahweh. There are many passages in the Old Testament which clearly indicate the divine mission of the Messiah which stand in direct relation to the prophecies of Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi concerning the divine mission or sending of the Messiah by Yahweh (Deuteronomy 18:15, 18; 2 Samuel 7:12-16; Isaiah 55:4; 61:1-3; Jeremiah 23:5-6).

... of the Messiah which reveal the divine nature of the Messiah. Isaiah calls the Messiah "My servant" (Isaiah 42:1). Zechariah and Malachi use this term to designate the Messiah (Isaiah 42:1; 49:1; 52:7; 55:12-55:13). Zechariah points out that this is an Old Testament title which is so wonderfully described as that of the servant of Yahweh. He states that the term may refer to the entire nation of Israel; it may also refer to the Church which is faithful to God in His dispensation, the faithful remnant of the Jews. Finally it refers to the Messiah himself.² Zechariah says: "Sometimes these three factors are combined together in this notion of the servant, sometimes they are separated."³ Ezekiel applies to the Messiah the term "My servant" (Ezekiel 34:23-24). In the Old Testament prophecies, therefore, speak of the Messiah as the servant of Yahweh. The term "My servant" in the Old Testament means both slave and worshiper. It is a term

² Franz Delitzsch, *Prophecies of the Messiah*, translated by James I. Davison (Leipzig: T. and T. Clark, 1880), pp. 22 f.

³ Ibid., pp. 22 f.

CHAPTER V

THE PERSON OF THE MESSIAH

His Human Origin and Descent

The prophet Zechariah applied certain terms such as "Servant" and "Branch" to the person of the Messiah which reveal the human nature of the Messiah. Yahweh calls the Messiah "My servant," $\text{אֲנִי יְהוָה וְאֵלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל}$ (Zechariah 3:8). Isaiah had already used this term to designate the Messiah (Isaiah 42:1; 49:3; 50:10; 52:13-53:12). Delitzsch points out that there is no Old Testament idea which is so wonderfully developed as that of the Servant of Yahweh. He states that אֲנִי יְהוָה may refer to the entire nation of Israel; it may also refer to the Church which is faithful to God in its dispersion, the faithful remnant of the Exile. Finally it refers to the Messiah Himself.¹ Delitzsch says: "Sometimes these three factors are combined together in this notion of the Servant, sometimes they are separated."² Ezekiel applies to the Messiah the term "My servant" (Ezekiel 34:23-24). The Old Testament prophets, therefore, speak of the Messiah as the Servant of Yahweh. The term אֲנִי יְהוָה in the Old Testament means both slave and worshipper. It is a term

¹ Franz Delitzsch, Messianic Prophecies, translated by Samuel Ives Curtiss (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1880), pp. 83 f.

² Ibid., pp. 84 f.

which describes a position of trust (Genesis 40:20). It also is a term which designates man's position before God (Leviticus 25:55; Deuteronomy 34:5). The term "Servant" as applied to the Messiah by Zechariah indicates that the Messiah has come as the representative of Yahweh. The Messiah subordinates Himself to the will of Yahweh. The Messiah does not come of Himself but is sent by Yahweh as indicated by the statement, $\text{הִנֵּנִי שְׂפָתַי יְבָרֵךְ וְאֶתֵּן אֶת־עַבְדִּי$, "behold, I will bring on the scene my Servant," (Zechariah 3:8). This expression indicates the unique relation of the person of the Messiah to Yahweh.

Zechariah adds the term "Branch" or "Shoot" to that of "Servant." Twice he refers to the Messiah as the "Shoot" (Zechariah 3:8; 6:12). Zechariah clearly presents the human nature of the Messiah by calling Him a man, אִישׁ יְשׁוּעָה . The term "Shoot", פִּיטוֹת , is derived from the verb פָּטַח which means to spring forth or sprout (Genesis 2:5; Exodus 10:5). The LXX translates it with the term Ἀνατολή which means a rising in reference to the sun and stars. Hengstenberg finds in the term פִּיטוֹת an allusion to the lowliness of the Messiah who at first will resemble not a proud tree, but a sprout which grows but gradually into a tree.³ Cohen takes a modern Jewish position and explains the term "Shoot" as a reference to Zerubbabel. He states:

³E. W. Hengstenberg, Christology of the Old Testament (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1864), VIII, 330 f.

Modern as well as ancient interpreters agree in explaining the Shoot as the expected Messiah. Shoot (tsemach) means that which sprouts or shoots from the ground. The translation of R.V., 'the Branch' is unsuitable. The term designates Israel's ideal ruler (cf. Jer. xxiii.5), and has quite naturally been applied to King Messiah. The prophet has in mind Zerubbabel who is referred to as the Shoot in vi.12. 'The old tree of the Jewish State was dead, but the prophet foreshadows a new shoot of David's house' (Barnes). With Zerubbabel the Prince and Joshua the High Priest the picture of rehabilitated Israel is complete.⁴

Such a view contradicts the earlier Messianic prophecies which clearly designate the Messiah by the term "Shoot" (Isaiah 4:2; 11:1; Jeremiah 23:5; 33:15). Baron states that Jeremiah 23:5 is the verse most generally quoted by Jews as a proof that the Messiah is to be the Son of David.⁵ He further states:

Kimchi and Rashi interpret, 'My Servant the Branch', of Zerubbabel, but they themselves acknowledge that the older interpretation among the Jews was of the Messiah, and they give no good reason for departing from the received interpretation. Here again the Targum Jonathan introduces Messiah by name.⁶

Kimchi himself acknowledges that "Branch" is a term to designate the Messiah.⁷ Abarbanel states that the prophecy cannot refer to Zerubbabel because he never attained to royalty, dominion or any other dignity beyond that

⁴ A. Cohen, editor, The Twelve Prophets (Bournemouth, Hants: The Soncino Press, 1948), p. 282.

⁵ David Baron, Rays of Messiah's Glory (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1886), p. 76.

⁶ Ibid., p. 107.

⁷ Ibid.

which he already possessed.⁸ The Messiah is called the "Branch" because He shall spring up from the House of David. He is a descendant of the royal family of David (Jeremiah 23:6; Isaiah 11:1). He is the son of David.

Zechariah says of the Messiah that He shall shoot up out of His place, $\pi \eta \zeta \cdot \eta \pi \eta \eta \eta$, (Zechariah 6:12). The name of the Messiah or the term "Shoot" describes the origin of the Messiah as one of lowliness. The LXX translates the Hebrew text thus: $\text{Καὶ ὑποκάτωθεν ἀνατελεῖ}$ and He shall grow up from under. This expression of Zechariah that the Messiah will grow below upwards, from lowliness to eminence is indicated in other passages of the Old Testament. Isaiah speaks of the lowliness and exaltation of the Messiah (Isaiah 53:2; 10-12).

The Divine Origin of the Messiah

Not only do the post-exilic prophets speak of the human nature and lowly origin of the Messiah but they also speak of His divine origin and nature. Malachi speaks of the Lord, $\eta \eta \tau \sigma \tau$, who shall come to His temple but who is at the same time clearly distinguished from Yahweh (Malachi 3:1). The LXX translates $\eta \eta \tau \sigma \tau$ with Κύριος which is used also for Yahweh. $\eta \eta \tau \sigma \tau$ is used of God Himself in the Old Testament (Psalm 114:7; Isaiah 1:24). The prophet

⁸Ibid.

speaks of the temple as belonging to the Lord, $\overline{\text{ל}} \overline{\text{י}} \overline{\text{י}} \overline{\text{ה}} \overline{\text{א}} \overline{\text{ל}} \overline{\text{ה}} \overline{\text{י}} \overline{\text{י}} \overline{\text{ה}}$, who is a separate person from Yahweh. That the Messiah is signified by the term "Lord" as used by Malachi can be derived from the fact that David refers to the Messiah as "my Lord," $\overline{\text{ל}} \overline{\text{י}} \overline{\text{י}} \overline{\text{ה}} \overline{\text{א}} \overline{\text{ל}} \overline{\text{ה}} \overline{\text{י}} \overline{\text{י}} \overline{\text{ה}}$ (Psalm 110:1). The Temple is the possession of the Messiah. Zechariah says that the Messiah shall build the Temple of Yahweh and bear the glory of it (Zechariah 6:13). The word for glory is $\overline{\text{כ}} \overline{\text{ב}} \overline{\text{ד}} \overline{\text{ו}} \overline{\text{ד}}$, which means weight, importance, splendor, majesty (Numbers 27:20). It is a term which frequently is used with reference to God in the Old Testament (Psalm 8:1; 148:13). Such statements of the post-exilic prophets that the Messiah shall bear the glory of the Temple reveal the exalted nature of the person of the Messiah.

The Messiah is Identified with the Angel of Yahweh

Malachi equates the Messiah with the Messenger of the covenant (Malachi 3:1). The verb $\overline{\text{ש}} \overline{\text{ל}} \overline{\text{ל}} \overline{\text{א}} \overline{\text{ל}} \overline{\text{ה}} \overline{\text{י}} \overline{\text{י}} \overline{\text{ה}}$ which is singular indicates the essential unity of the Lord who comes to His Temple and the Messenger of the covenant. The Lord and the Messenger of the covenant stand in parallel relation. The Messenger of the covenant is the Angel of the Lord who is so frequently referred to throughout the Old Testament.

Hengstenberg presents the various conflicting views concern-

ing the Angel of the Lord.⁹ Some have interpreted the Angel of the Lord to signify not a person connected with God by unity of essence but an inferior angel through whom God issues and executes His commands and who represents God. Others have interpreted the Angel of the Lord as a natural phenomenon or visible sign, by which Yahweh made known His presence.¹⁰ Still others view the Angel of the Lord merely as a form in which Yahweh Himself appeared.¹¹ Such views cannot be maintained in view of Malachi's identification of the Angel or Messenger of the covenant with the Lord (Malachi 3:1). Zechariah clearly identifies the Angel of the Lord with God (Zechariah 12:8). The divinity of the Angel of the Lord is indicated in the following passages: Genesis 32:24-30; 48:16; Exodus 3:1-6; 23:20-21; Joshua 5:13-15; Judges 13:20-22; Isaiah 63:9.

Briggs states concerning Malachi's prophecy of the advent of the Messiah:

The advent is a divine advent, for the Malakh of the covenant is the ancient theophanic angel, who so often appeared in the early history of the nation to guide and deliver them. He comes to judge Israel according to his covenant keeping. He comes suddenly to His temple, when men will not expect Him, although His advent had been heralded. He comes as judge and as

⁹E. W. Hengstenberg, Christology of the Old Testament (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1864), IV, 306 f.

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹Ibid.

redeemer in the day of doom.¹²

That the Messenger of the covenant, מְשִׁיחַ בְּרִית, refers to the Messiah is indicated in Isaiah where it is said of the Messiah that Yahweh will give Him "for a covenant of the people" (Isaiah 42:6; 49:8). The Old Testament defines the מְשִׁיחַ בְּרִית as the name of the expected Mediator of a new covenant. Jeremiah defined the content of that covenant (Jeremiah 31:31-34). It was a covenant of mercy and forgiveness. The Angel of the Lord is said to forgive and redeem (Genesis 48:16; Exodus 23:20-21).

The Equality of the Messiah with Yahweh

The equality of the Messiah with Yahweh and the personal distinction is brought out in a number of passages. Zechariah distinguishes between Yahweh who declares that He will dwell in the midst of His people and Yahweh who sends this divine personage (Zechariah 2:10-13). Isaiah speaks in a similar vein (Isaiah 48:16; 59:20-21; 61:11). Concerning this prophecy of Zechariah Hengstenberg comments:

It is evident from ver. 11, 'and I will dwell in the midst of thee, and thou shalt know that the Lord of hosts hath sent me unto thee', that the person, who announces here that he will glorify the church with his presence, is the angel of the Lord, who was afterwards to appear, as the prophets had predicted, in the Messiah himself. Consequently, He who was to dwell in the midst of the covenant nation, just as He

¹²

Charles Augustus Briggs, Messianic Prophecy (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1891), p. 475.

had formerly been present in the pillar of cloud and of fire, was the very same person, who was now sent by the supreme God to convey this glorious intelligence through the prophet to the nation, who is called Jehovah in ver. 10, and who is here designated the messenger, to distinguish him from the sender.¹³

Zechariah hears Yahweh call the Messiah "the man that is near unto Me." **יְהוָה יְהוָה יְהוָה** (Zechariah 13:7). The word **יְהוָה יְהוָה** means family, company or fellow (Leviticus 18:20; 19:11; 24:19). In what sense does Yahweh call the Messiah "My fellow" or "neighbor"? Keil states that **יְהוָה יְהוָה** implies more than unity or community of vocation on the basis that no owner of a flock or lord of a flock would call a hired or purchased shepherd his **יְהוָה יְהוָה**.¹⁴ Keil states that **יְהוָה יְהוָה** involves not only the idea of similarity in vocation, but community of physical or spiritual descent so that the Messiah is presented not as a mere man but as one who participates in the divine nature, or is essentially divine.¹⁵ **יְהוָה יְהוָה** is a word which is peculiar to the Pentateuch but subsequently has become entirely obsolete. It is used eleven times in the Pentateuch. It is used of laws relating to injuries done to near relations to indicate the seriousness of the crime done to one who is

¹³E. W. Hengstenberg, op. cit., III, 316.

¹⁴C. F. Keil and Franz Delitzsch, op. cit., 397.

¹⁵Ibid.

related both bodily and spiritually by a common descent.¹⁶
 The divinity of the Messiah is clearly revealed by the post-
 exilic prophets and this is in accord with previous state-
 ments of the Old Testament and of the doctrine of the Angel
 of the Lord.

¹⁶E. W. Hengstenberg, op. cit., IV, 109.

For the prophet had no occasion whatever to employ the
 plural participle in an unusual sense; for if this had
 been the meaning he might as well have said, "I am the
 Lord," which is found in some MSS.

CHAPTER VI

THE SUFFERING OF THE MESSIAH

The Lowly King

Zechariah is the only one of the post-exilic prophets who directly refers to the suffering of the Messiah. He speaks of the lowly condition of the Messiah in connection with His advent (Zechariah 9:9). One of the difficult words of this passage is יָשַׁבְתִּי which describes the Messiah as He appears to dwell among His people. יָשַׁבְתִּי is the Niphal participle singular masculine of יָשַׁב which means to save, deliver. The question is whether to translate it as a passive or as a reflexive on the basis of the context. The LXX renders יָשַׁבְתִּי with the expression $\sigma\ \acute{\upsilon}\ \beta\ \omega\ \nu$, using the active present participle. According to Hengstenberg יָשַׁבְתִּי occurs no less than twenty times in the Niphal and always in a passive sense and never as a reflexive.¹ As a further proof of the passive meaning of יָשַׁבְתִּי he states:

Now the prophet had no occasion whatever to employ the Niphal participle in an unusual sense; for if this had been the meaning he wished to express, there was the word יָשַׁבְתִּי , which is found in more than

¹E. W. Hengstenberg, Christology of the Old Testament (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1864), III, 397.

thirty passages.²

Cohen agrees that יְשׁוּעָה is a passive participle but he renders it by "the recipient of salvation."³ The Jewish expositor, Kimchi, translated יְשׁוּעָה as a passive which means that the Messiah has been saved or delivered.⁴ Keil, however, states that יְשׁוּעָה should not merely be translated as a passive but in a more general sense, that the Messiah is one who has been endowed with salvation or help from God.⁵ In Deuteronomy 33:29 Israel is viewed as a people saved by Yahweh. In the light of this passage and Psalm 53:16 יְשׁוּעָה is best translated as a passive. That the prophet Zechariah was speaking of the Messiah's deliverance from and triumph over suffering can be supported in view of the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah which speaks of the humiliation, suffering and exaltation of the Servant of Yahweh who is the Messiah Himself.

יְשׁוּעָה must be viewed in the light of the Old Testament in general. Isaiah says of the Messiah that He is the Salvation of the daughter of Zion. He uses the term: יְשׁוּעָה , thy Salvation (Isaiah 62:11). The Messiah in the

² Ibid.

³ A. Cohen, editor, The Twelve Prophets (Bournemouth, Nants: The Soncino Press, 1948), p. 306.

⁴ E. W. Hengstenberg, op. cit., p. 398.

⁵ C. F. Keil and Franz Delitzsch, "The Twelve Minor Prophets," Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1900), II, 333 f.

Old Testament is presented as the Saviour who bears in His own person the promised salvation of Yahweh. The Messiah brings salvation through His suffering according to Isaiah 53. The Messiah is called the Servant of Yahweh by Isaiah. Zechariah likewise identifies the Messiah with the Servant (Zechariah 3:8). The Messiah is the suffering Servant of Yahweh.

יָשׁוּב יְיָ must also be viewed in the light of the meaning of יָשׁוּב יְיָ which also is a description of the Messiah in the same passage. The question arises as to whether the prophets by יָשׁוּב יְיָ referred to meekness or suffering. In the Old Testament יָשׁוּב יְיָ has the meaning poor or lowly (Deuteronomy 24:15; Jeremiah 22:16; Psalm 10:2, 9). יָשׁוּב יְיָ also has the meaning of suffering or affliction (Isaiah 49:13; Psalm 22:24). The LXX renders יָשׁוּב יְיָ with $\pi\rho\alpha\upsilon\sigma$ which means gentle, mild and meek. The New Testament also renders יָשׁוּב יְיָ with the word $\pi\rho\alpha\upsilon\sigma$ (Matthew 21:5). Hengstenberg is opposed to translating יָשׁוּב יְיָ in the sense of meek or gentle since this is the meaning of יָשׁוּב יְיָ.⁶ Isaiah referred to the Messiah, the suffering Servant of Yahweh, "as a man of sorrows," because He is despised and rejected of men and because He is acquainted with grief (Isaiah 53:3). In the light of this we see that the suffering of the Messiah and His lowliness

⁶E. W. Hengstenberg, op. cit., p. 400.

is an integral part of the Messianic hope of the Old Testament which reappears again in the post-exilic era and notably in the prophecy of Zechariah. In the New Testament the Apostle Paul described the Messiah as one who emptied Himself or laid aside the full use of His power and majesty and took upon Himself the form of a servant (Philippians 2:6-7).

The Messiah as the Rejected Shepherd

The Messiah is presented by Zechariah as a shepherd who has been rejected by the nation (Zechariah 11:10-14). Elsewhere in the Old Testament Jehovah is presented as the Shepherd of His people (Ezekiel 34:11-12). Concerning the identity of the Shepherd who is rejected Keil says:

The shepherd depicted by the prophet can only be Jehovah Himself, or the angel of Jehovah, who is equal in nature to Himself, i.e., the Messiah. But since the angel of Jehovah, who appears in the visions is not mentioned in our oracle, and as the coming of the Messiah is also announced elsewhere as the coming of Jehovah to His people, we shall have in this instance also to understand Jehovah Himself by the shepherd represented in the prophet.⁷

The Lord asks for His wages and the people respond with ingratitude by paying Him thirty pieces of silver which is the value of a slave (Exodus 21:32). The New Testament records the fulfillment of this prophecy in the betrayal of Jesus by Judas (Matthew 27:5). Briggs states that the prophecy of the rejected shepherd is not direct prophecy but is

⁷C. F. Keil and Franz Delitzsch, op. cit., p. 358.

typical. It symbolizes the rejection of the Messiah of the New Testament.⁸ The rejection of the Messiah is found in the Old Testament prior to the post-exilic period in such passages as Psalm 22:6-8; 69:4; Isaiah 53:1-3.

The Messiah's Death by Violence

We now come to those passages in Zechariah which treat of the Messiah's death by violence. Zechariah speaks of the Messiah as having been pierced and as one for whom a great lamentation is made (Zechariah 12:10-13). Yahweh is the speaker in this passage who says that they shall look upon Him whom they have pierced. The difficulty in this prophecy is how we can speak of a slaying of Yahweh and refer this as taking place in the person of the Messiah. Hengstenberg gives the history of Jewish interpretation of this prophecy. He states that some of the commentators sought to get rid of the idea of a piercing of Yahweh by giving to $\gamma \rho \bar{\iota}$ which means "to pierce," the figurative meaning of "to grieve" instead of the literal meaning. This would signify the contrition of the Jews on account of the sins committed by them against Yahweh.⁹ But Hengstenberg further states that this passage was also used by other Jews in con-

⁸ Charles Augustus Briggs, Messianic Prophecy (New York: Charles Scribner's Cons, 1894), p. 190.

⁹ E. W. Hengstenberg, Christology of the Old Testament (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1864), IV, 78 f.

nection with the doctrine of a suffering Messiah.¹⁰ Concerning the Jewish doctrine of a suffering Messiah Hengstenberg writes:

. . . the earlier Jews were not strangers to the doctrine of a dying Messiah and that, in whatever way his death might occur, they associated it with the sin of the nation. In the course of time, however, this view was found to be inconvenient; and the attempt was made to get rid of the difficulty by adopting the fiction of two Messiahs, the son of David and the son of Joseph, to the latter of whom all the passages were applied, which appeared to speak of a dying Messiah. . . .¹¹

In a number of instances in the Old Testament ך פ ת
means "to pierce" or "run through" with a weapon (Numbers 25:8; Zechariah 13:3). The one who is pierced, of course, is not the invisible God who is a spirit but the Angel of Yahweh, the rejected shepherd, the Messiah who has entered into time and become man but who nevertheless is equal to Yahweh (Zechariah 13:7). That the prophet is actually speaking of a death effected by violence is indicated by the great mourning and lamentation which will follow and which he compares to a lamentation which is made on the occasion of the loss of an only child (Zechariah 12:10). The lamentation is also compared to the great mourning which was made for Josiah after he was killed in the plain of Megiddo (2 Kings 23:29).

ך פ ת does not indicate the manner of the Messiah's

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 82.

¹¹ Ibid.

death but simply depicts the fact of the suffering and death which the Messiah will experience, for in chapter 13 verse 7, Zechariah speaks of the Messiah's death by a sword as a picture of death by violence. Hengstenberg says:

The prophecy before us would evidently lose much of its meaning and importance if the verb ךָ פָּרַח were to be understood as relating simply to the one fact of the piercing with a spear. It is rather to be regarded as depicting the whole of the sufferings with which the death of the Messiah was attended. That the death itself is the essential point, and not the instrument employed or the manner of the death is evident from chap. xiii.7, where a sword is mentioned, whereas ךָ פָּרַח points rather to a spear.¹²

The transition of the first person, אֲנִי , to the third person, יָרֵחַ , indicates that the person slain is essentially one with Yahweh and at the same time is personally distinct from the supreme God. This excludes the idea that the prophet is speaking of some historical figure other than the Messiah, such as Zerubbabel to whom Cohen thinks the prophecy may refer.¹³ This prophecy is quoted in the New Testament as having been fulfilled when Jesus was pierced by a spear after His death on the cross (John 19:34, 37; Revelation 1:7). The Messianic element is clearly brought out by the fact that the death of the One who is pierced is connected with the forgiveness of sin (Zechariah 13:1). Gressmann sees in this prophecy of "the Pierced One" an indication that salvation is connected with the coming Messiah

¹² Ibid., p. 77.

¹³ A. Cohen, op. cit., p. 322.

and, therefore, the Messianic hope is an eschatological concept:

Der Name des Durchbohrten wird nicht genannt, aber er ist ohne zweifel ein König, da das ganze Land, von den Gliedern des königlichen Hofes an bis zu den Frauen herab, an die Bahre herantritt; ja, es muss notwendig der messianische König sein, nicht nur weil unter ihm der eschatologische Angriff der Völker stattfindet, sondern vor allem deshalb, weil mit der Klage um ihn die Heilszeit anbricht.¹⁴

The death of the Messiah is spoken of by Isaiah as the means by which God forgives sin (Isaiah 53:5-6; 10-12).

Daniel also speaks of the redemption and salvation which the Messiah accomplishes by His death (Daniel 9:24-27). The death of the Messiah is a doctrine contained in the Old Testament and this includes His suffering (Genesis 3:15; 2 Samuel 7:14; Psalm 22:1-18; Isaiah 53:1-12; 63:3-9; Daniel 9:26). It is, therefore, not surprising to find the death of the Messiah in Zechariah. Yahweh Himself is the cause of the death of the Messiah (Zechariah 13:7). The human agents were His instruments. Jesus referred to His suffering and death as the fulfillment of this prophecy (Matthew 26:31 f.).

¹⁴Hugo Gressmann, Der Messias (Goettingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1929), p. 330.

CHAPTER VII

THE WORK OF THE MESSIAH

The Messiah as Priest

Zechariah directly attributes the office of priest to the Messiah (Zechariah 6:12-13). In the Old Testament the priests were the mediators between God and the people of Israel. Their work consisted in bringing offerings and sacrifices to make atonement for the sins of the people (Leviticus 4:22-35; Hebrews 5:1). The concept of the priesthood of the Messiah is found in the book of Psalms where David calls the Messiah "a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek" (Psalm 110:4). In the third chapter of Zechariah's prophecy the prophet beholds Joshua the High Priest engaged as a priest in the service of the Angel of Yahweh. The High Priest is on trial. Satan is present to accuse him. Joshua as High Priest stands as the representative of the nation and is burdened with the sins of the people. This representative function of the High Priest is clearly present in the Old Testament (Leviticus 16:11; Judges 20:27-28). The role of Satan as a prosecutor is found in the book of Job and in the New Testament (Job 1:6-12; Revelation 12:10). Zechariah sees Joshua clothed in filthy garments which symbolizes the sinfulness of the people (Isaiah 4:4; 64:6). The Angel of Yahweh silences Satan and commands that

the filthy garments be taken off from him which indicates the removal of the sins from the people (Zechariah 3:3-4).

Yahweh thereafter promises to bring forth His Servant, the Shoot, and to remove the iniquity of the land in one day (Zechariah 3:8-9). The appearance of the Messiah and the removal of iniquity is closely connected. The concept of the Messiah's work as involving the removal of sin is clearly taught in the Old Testament prior to the post-exilic period (Isaiah 53:10; Daniel 9:24-27). The prophet's speaking of the removal of sin in one day, $\text{וְיִסְרֹף־בְּיֹמֵי־אֶחָד}$, stands in contrast to the numerous and repeated sacrifices of the Levitical priesthood. By the phrase "in one day" the prophet refers to the perfection of the atonement made by the Messiah of which the New Testament also speaks (Hebrews 7:26-27). In relation to the Messianic hope Joshua as High Priest is clearly presented as a type of the Messiah even as Melchisedek is a type of the Messiah.

The Messiah as Ruler

Zechariah also speaks of the Messiah as a king and as one who shall rule upon His throne, $\text{וְיָשִׁיב־עַל־כִּסֵּא־דָוִד}$ $\text{וְיָשִׁיב־עַל־כִּסֵּא־דָוִד}$. The prophet receives a command from Yahweh to make crowns of silver and gold and set one upon the head of Joshua the High Priest (Zechariah 6:9-11). It appears that the Jews who still were in exile in the Babylonian captivity sent a deputation bearing gold and silver to Jerusalem in

order to contribute toward the work of restoring the Temple.¹

Concerning the significance of the crowning of Joshua Keil says:

The crowning of Joshua the high priest with a royal crown which did not properly belong to the high priest as such, as his headdress is neither called a crown ('atarah) nor formed part of the insignia of royal dignity and glory, had a typical significance. It pointed to a man who would sit upon his throne as both ruler and priest, that is to say, would combine both royalty and priesthood in his own person and rank.²

That the crowning of Joshua was symbolical is indicated in the next two verses in which Yahweh speaks of the Shoot who will build the Temple and reign as priest and king (Zechariah 6:12-13). The Old Testament speaks clearly of the kingship of the Messiah (Genesis 49:10; Numbers 24:17-19; 2 Samuel 7:12-16; Psalm 2:6; Isaiah 9:6-7; Jeremiah 23:5). In the Old Testament the king was God's representative, for Yahweh is the King (Psalm 29:10; Isaiah 41:21; 52:7). In the beginning of Israel's history as a nation, no earthly king ruled over the people. Yahweh alone ruled (Judges 8:22-23). God, however, promised to give Israel human kings (Genesis 17:6; 35:11). Israel, later, demanded from Yahweh a king to rule over them (1 Samuel 8:1-7). The ideal king is the Messiah in whom Yahweh Himself shall reign (Micah 5:2-5).

¹ A. Cohen, editor, The Twelve Prophets (Bournemouth, Hants: The Soncino Press, 1948), p. 292.

² C. F. Keil and Franz Delitzsch, "The Twelve Minor Prophets," Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1900), II, 298.

Zechariah declares that the Messiah will build the Temple of Yahweh. He clearly distinguishes the Temple which the Messiah will build from the Temple which Zerubbabel was completing. That this Temple which the Messiah will build cannot refer to the local Temple seems clearly indicated by the reference to the future coming of the Shoot whose task it is to build the Temple of Yahweh, וְיָבִיטְךָ יְהוָה וְיִבְנֶה לְךָ בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא בַּיְמֵי הַשְּׂמֵרָה (Zechariah 6:13). The Temple referred to here is not the local Temple but the spiritual Temple or the Kingdom of God which the Messiah shall establish (2 Samuel 7:13, 16; Isaiah 2:2-3; Micah 4:1-2; Hosea 8:1). Hengstenberg makes the pointed observation that it is not stated that the Messiah will build a Temple to the Lord but that He will build the Temple of the Lord.³ In defence of the interpretation that the Temple does not refer to the Temple rebuilt by Zerubbabel Keil states:

That these words do not refer to the building of the earthly temple of stone and wood, as . . . Hitzig with the Rabbins suppose, is so obvious, that even Koehler has given up this view here, and understands the words as Hengstenberg, Tholuck, and others do, as relating to the spiritual temple, of which the tabernacle and the temples of both Solomon and Zerubbabel were only symbols. . . .⁴

³ E. W. Hengstenberg, Christology of the Old Testament (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1864), III, 356.

⁴ C. F. Keil and Franz Delitzsch, op. cit., 299.

The Exegetical Problem of the Relationship
of the Messiah to these two Offices

There are commentators who object to the Messiah's reigning with a double office and prefer to translate the words $\text{וְיָשָׁב עָלָיו הַכֹּהֵן וְהַדָּבָר שָׁלֵם}$ and $\text{וְהָיָה שָׁלֵם בֵּינָם וּבֵין הַכֹּהֵן וְהַדָּבָר שָׁלֵם}$, "and there shall be a priest upon His throne and the counsel of peace shall be between the two persons" instead of, "And He shall be a priest upon His throne and the counsel of peace shall be between the two offices" (Zechariah 6:13).

Riehm rejects the view that the Messiah unites the kingly and the high priestly office in his own person.⁵ Riehm argues as follows:

The prophet Zechariah does not, as is usually supposed, mean to announce that the Messiah will unite in his person the kingly and the high priestly office. Rather he shows us the Messianic high priest alongside of the Messianic king in the perfected Kingdom, the former sitting beside the latter on the royal throne, and both working together --- as at that time Zerubbabel and Joshua actually did --- in harmonious cooperation for the weal of the people of God and in the interest of the theocracy. The prophet, indeed, represents the rule of the Messianic kingdom as emphatically a unity, and as a government by king and high priest; but this unity is not effected by the union of both offices in one person; but by the elevation of the high priest to the throne of the Messiah, and by the perfect oneness of wind and spirit, in which the Messianic king and the Messianic high priest conduct their common

⁵ Edward Riehm, Messianic Prophecy - Its Origin, Historical Growth and Relation to New Testament Fulfillment, second edition, translated from the German by Lewis A. Muirhead (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1891), p. 199.

government.⁶

The LXX takes the view that two persons are meant and not two offices combined in one person, καὶ ἔστακ ὁ ἱερεὺς ἔκ δεξιῶν αὐτοῦ καὶ βουλή ἐκ ἐπιτακῆς ἔστακ ἀνὰ μέσον ἀμφοτέρω. Such a viewpoint is untenable for the following reasons: In the first place, nowhere in Scripture do we find a distinction between a Messiah who is king and a Messiah who is a priest. David clearly refers to the Messiah as a king and a priest (Psalm 2:6; 110:1-7). In the second place, Scripture knows of individuals who bore two offices at the same time, Melchizedek (Genesis 14:18), David (2Samuel 6:14). The New Testament clearly unites the two offices of priest and king in the work of the Messiah (Hebrews 8:1; Revelation 1:5-6). Orelli makes a strong argument for the uniting of the two offices in the person of the Messiah when he says:

The unique importance attributed by Zechariah to the true Servant of the Lord, makes it improbable. . . he would have ascribed to him but one of the two equally warranted powers and thought of their dualism as continuing in the period of consummation. Moreover, the union is indicated already in iii.8, by the fact that the regal Zemach, undeniably Davidic in origin, appears in order to consummate the high priesthood.⁷

The statement "and a counsel of peace shall be between

⁶ Edward Riehm, op. cit., p. 199.

⁷ C. Von Orelli, The Old Testament Prophecy of the Consummation of God's Kingdom, translated by J. S. Banks (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1885), pp. 441 f.

the two of them," reveals that the Messiah will unite in His own person the two offices in contrast to the disharmony and conflict between the individuals who had administered these two different offices (1 Samuel 13:13). What the priesthood and kingship of the Old Testament period failed to accomplish, the Messiah effects in his own person something which witnesses to the divine nature of His person and work.

The Messiah is the Executor of God's Judgment upon Sin

As Zechariah presents the Messiah as the Priest who atones for sin, so Malachi presents the Messiah as the Executor of God's Judgment upon sin. The people had cried out, "where is the God of justice" (Malachi 2:17). The people were complaining that there was no evidence of a just Judge of the world because they saw the wicked prospering and God seemingly did nothing to punish the wicked. יְהוָה יִשְׁפֹּט signifies the due administration of judgment. God will do that which is right and just (Genesis 18:25). Yahweh gives the promise of the coming of the Messenger of the covenant to vindicate His justice. The Messiah will come to His Temple (Malachi 3:1). The advent of the Messiah will be a day of terror to the wicked.

Malachi asks the question, "Who may abide the day of His coming? And who shall stand when He appeareth?" This coming of the Messiah stands in contrast to the description of the advent of the Messiah as presented by Zechariah

(Zechariah 2:8-11; 9:9). The prophet Malachi says of the Messiah that He is like a refiner's fire, **אֵשׁ יִצְרֶה** (Malachi 3:2). **הַיִּצְרָה** is the participle Piel of **צָרָה**, "to refine," "to smelt."

The prophet continues and says that the Messiah is like fuller's soap, **בִּרְיֵת כֶּבֶד בְּרִיָּה** is alkali, lye. Hengstenberg says that the two figures of the fire and the lye may be understood in a double sense. In contact with dirt they burn it up, but in contact with metal and clothes they cleanse and purify.⁸

The coming of the Messiah to execute judgment is for the purpose of cleansing the people from sin (Malachi 3:3). The prophet says that the Messiah will purify the sons of Levi, **וְיִצְרֶה אֵשׁ יִצְרֶה**. The prophet uses a series of words to refer to washing such as **קָבַע** which is also used in the Old Testament in reference to washing out guilt (Micah 7:19; Psalm 51:9). **קָבַע** means to declare something clean or pure ceremonially (Leviticus 11:32; Psalm 51:4). **פָּקַד** means "to filter," "refine" (Job 28:1). Concerning the Old Testament concept of Purification Girdlestone says:

The process whereby moral impurity was to be done away was typified or shadowed forth by the purifications of the Levitical ritual; and the word which is in general use in the O.T. to express the process is *thaher*

⁸E. W. Hengstenberg, *op. cit.*, IV, 193.

($\aleph \bar{\aleph} \beth$), which signifies in the intensive form, to make clear, bright, or shining, and hence to make or pronounce clean.⁹

Malachi describes the effect of this process of purification when he states that there shall be those who will offer unto Yahweh offerings in righteousness (Malachi 3:3-4). The word for offering is $\bar{\aleph} \aleph \beth$ which is rendered gift (Psalm 45:12), sacrifice (1 Kings 29:36), oblation (Isaiah 1:13). According to Girdlestone $\bar{\aleph} \aleph \beth$ must be regarded as a token of love, gratitude and thanksgiving to God. It was an acknowledgment on the part of man that God is the source of all things.¹⁰ How the Messiah will effect this cleansing is not clearly indicated, just as Jeremiah does not state how God will forgive sin in the period of the new covenant (Jeremiah 31:31-34). Ezekiel dwells on the same thought when he writes that God will sprinkle clean water upon His people and they will be clean and He will give them a new heart and a new spirit (Ezekiel 36:25-28).

The prophet, nevertheless, declares that God will draw near in judgment against the sorcerers, adulterers, false swearers, the oppressors, those who are unhospitable to strangers and who do not fear God (Malachi 3:5). The double task of the Messiah in bringing salvation and executing

⁹ Robert Baker Girdlestone, Synonyms of the Old Testament (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1951), p. 143.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 191.

judgment against the wicked was taught already by Isaiah (Isaiah 11:4). The prophet Malachi views the Messiah's coming for redemption and judgment as one event which is again in accordance with the prophetic perspective of the Old Testament.

In describing the Messianic Kingdom Ezekiel says that the dominion of the Messiah shall be from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth (Ezekiel 40:5). Some scholars such as Hiebert and Abrahamson have also used the expression לְרֵגְלֵי הָאָרֶץ literally to denote the ends of the earth. Hiebert states that Ezekiel refers to the kingdom of Israel the whole world, from the head sea to the Mediterranean, from the Tiber to the desert of Arabia.³ Engelbrecht explains this view as follows:

לְרֵגְלֵי הָאָרֶץ is never applied to the boundaries of the Jewish kingdom, but always denotes the universal scope of the entire earth. (a) The word sea must be the most remote of all the seas. (b) As the whole sentence occurs in Is. 40:5, and Ezekiel used therefore have had this passage in his mind. . . . But in the *Psalm* we find from the words which follow, that, not Palestine alone but the whole world, with all its tribes and countries, is to serve the King. (c) The explanation sometimes given to לְרֵגְלֵי הָאָרֶץ from the *Dead Sea*, or from the *Red Sea*, to the Mediterranean is inadmissible on grammatical grounds.⁴

Still stronger the phrase לְרֵגְלֵי הָאָרֶץ from the

³ A. V. Brunt, *Geography of the Old Testament* (London: S. and S. Clark, 1913), III, 411.

⁴ *Ibid.*

CHAPTER VIII

THE ESSENTIAL FEATURES OF THE MESSIANIC AGE

The Universal Reign of the Messiah

In describing the Messianic kingdom Zechariah says that the dominion of the Messiah shall be from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth (Zechariah 9:10). Some scholars such as Eichhorn and Abenezra reject the view that the expression $\text{פְּרֹךְ} - \text{יָם} \text{וְיָם}$ literally includes the ends of the earth. Eichhorn states that Yahweh gives to the kingdom of Israel its widest bounds, from the Dead Sea to the Mediterranean, from the Euphrates to the desert of Arabia.¹ Hengstenberg opposes this view as follows:

(1) $\text{פְּרֹךְ} - \text{יָם} \text{וְיָם}$ is never applied to the boundaries of the Jewish kingdom, but always denotes the uttermost parts of the entire earth. (2) The second sea must be the most remote of all the seas. (3) As the whole sentence occurs in Ps. lxxii.8, and Zechariah must therefore have had this passage in his mind. . . . But in the Psalm we find from the verses which follow, that, not Palestine alone but the whole earth, with all its tribes and countries, is to serve the king. (4) The explanation sometimes given to $\text{יָם} \text{וְיָם}$, from the Dead Sea, or from the Red Sea, to the Mediterranean is inadmissible on grammatical grounds.²

Keil interprets the phrase $\text{יָם} \text{וְיָם}$, from the

¹E. W. Hengstenberg, Christology of the Old Testament (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1864), III, 411.

²Ibid.

river as from the Euphrates as in Micah 7:12 and Isaiah 7:20. The Euphrates is considered the remotest eastern boundary of the land of Israel according to Genesis 15:18 and Exodus 23:31 so that the Euphrates is the terminus a quo to which the ends of the earth are opposed as the terminus ad quem.³ The universality of the Messianic kingdom is a clear teaching of the Old Testament. Thus in the book of Psalms Yahweh promises to give His Anointed One the uttermost parts of the earth for His possession (Psalm 2:8; 72:8, 11). The prophet Daniel sees the Messianic kingdom as a stone that became a great mountain which filled the whole earth (Daniel 2:31-45). The Messiah shall rule not only over the land of Canaan as did David and Solomon but over the entire earth.

The Messiah's Reign Establishes Peace

The prophet Haggai foretold that in the Messianic age Yahweh will give peace. This giving of peace is closely associated with the Temple (Haggai 2:9). Zechariah speaks of the Messianic age as a time when Yahweh will destroy all weapons of war (Zechariah 9:10). The prophet further states that the Messiah will speak peace to the Gentiles. Hengstenberg says of this passage:

³G. F. Keil and Franz Delitzsch, "The Twelve Minor Prophets," Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1900), II, 336.

The subject of $\aleph \beth \daleth \beth$ (and he speaks) is the king. What worldly kings can only accomplish by force of arms, He effects by a simple word.⁴

Hengstenberg views this ninth chapter of Zechariah as a prophetic account of the expedition of Alexander the Great.⁵ Before the advent of the Messiah Yahweh will cut off from Israel the chariot and the horse and the battle bow and bring Israel down to the lowest depth of humiliation. Without the means of military equipment the Messiah will establish universal peace. The Old Testament sees in the Messianic kingdom the time of universal peace. Isaiah calls the Messiah "the Prince of Peace" and says that of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end (Isaiah 9:6-7). Other passages which refer to the peace and harmony that shall prevail in the Messianic age are Isaiah 11:5-10; Jeremiah 23:5-6; Ezekiel 34:23-25; Micah 5:5; Zechariah 3:10.

The Messianic Age Brings About the Conversion of the Nations

The salvation which the Messiah brings is not confined to Israel alone but to all nations of the world. The post-exilic prophets foretell of the nations turning to Yahweh. The Messiah will accomplish this at His advent. Zechariah says that in that day, the Messianic Age, many nations shall

⁴ E. W. Hengstenberg, *op. cit.*, p. 410.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 369.

join themselves to Yahweh (Zechariah 2:15). Yahweh explains what this joining themselves to the Lord signifies. He declares that they will be His people. The universalistic note of God's salvation in the Messianic age is clearly seen in Zechariah 8:22-23 where the prophet foresees the nations coming to Jerusalem to seek Yahweh and His favour. Heinisch says concerning the conversion of the nations in the Messianic era:

When the prophets described the glory of Israel, they did not refer to contemporary Israel, but the Israel of messianic times, that Israel which is intimately united with God and which includes all Gentiles converted from paganism.⁶

That Yahweh included the Gentile nations, the non-Israelites, in His plan of redemption is a clear teaching of the entire Old Testament. Yahweh revealed that in the patriarch Abraham and in his seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed (Genesis 12:3; 18:18; 22:18). Yahweh declares to His Anointed One that He will give Him the nations for His inheritance (Psalm 2:8). Isaiah foretold that the nations will seek after the root of Jesse (Isaiah 11:10). Yahweh has given the Messiah for a light of the nations (Isaiah 42:6). The Messiah is the salvation of Yahweh unto the end of the earth (Isaiah 49:6). Isaiah sees nations coming to the light of Yahweh (Isaiah 60:3). Other passages which speak of the salvation of the nations during the

⁶Paul Heinisch, Theology of the Old Testament (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1950), pp. 292 f.

Messianic age are Amos 9:12; Zechariah 14:16-17.

The Material Aspect of the Messianic Age

In the Messianic age Zechariah says that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem (Zechariah 14:8). Concerning the material aspect or prosperity of the Messianic era Cohen says:

Jerusalem will be the source of perennial streams which will irrigate and fertilize the whole land. Similarly, a fountain is spoken of in Joel iv.18 as coming forth out of the house of God, and Ezekiel xlvi.12 pictures waters issuing from the Sanctuary which will transform the face of the land.⁷

Zechariah states further that this situation will continue in both summer and winter. The living waters will flow in summer as well as winter (Zechariah 14:8). The Old Testament in general speaks of the material prosperity which Yahweh will give in the ideal future which is the age of the Messianic kingdom. Isaiah declares how the desert shall blossom as the rose (Isaiah 35:1-10). Other passages which treat of the material prosperity of the Messianic age are Isaiah 29:17; 32:15; Jeremiah 31:12; Ezekiel 47:1-12. This material prosperity of which the prophets speak is the result of the transformation of nature which Yahweh will bring about during the Messianic era. After the fall of man into sin in the Garden of Eden Yahweh had pronounced a curse upon the earth (Genesis 3:17-19). The curse of God was a judgment

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A. Cohen, editor, The Twelve Prophets (Bournemouth, Hants: The Soncino Press, 1948), p. 328.

upon man and nature (Judges 5:23; Numbers 22:6). This curse is the wrath of God (Deuteronomy 27:15). The Messiah removes this curse and in its place brings the favour and blessing of God upon man and nature. The New Testament also speaks of the transformation of nature, of new heavens and a new earth (2 Peter 3:10-13; Revelation 21:1-22:5). What the nature of this transformation of the universe is has not been revealed to us. In describing the glory and blessedness of the Messianic age the prophets no doubt spoke in highly poetic forms. God has spoken to men through the prophets in terms which the people of that time could understand.

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