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**A BRIEF SURVEY OF SOME MODERN VIEWS ON THE
HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE KINDS OF GOD CONCEPT
IN THE OLD TESTAMENT**

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

by
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June 1937

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KINGDOM OF GOD

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The mission of the church today is to proclaim the Kingdom of God and the extension of God's rule to the entire world. In order to better understand the task of the Church the author attempted in this thesis to make an historical investigation, and sketch the growth of the concept of the Kingdom of God in the Old Testament. How did the idea of a Kingdom of God originate in the Old Testament? What did the common people believe about the Kingdom of God? In what manner did the concept of the Kingdom change during the ages? What was the relationship of the Messiah and the earthly king to the concept of the Kingdom of God? These are some of the questions that are discussed in this thesis.

In attempting an historical survey of the concept of the Kingdom of God one must remember to keep separate the historical investigation from the theological dogmas of the present day and age. It is true that often historical investigation and theological investigation coincide, but it must be emphasized that God progressively revealed His truth to mankind in His time and in His way. It is not denied in this thesis that the germs of all doctrines of the Church lie deep within the Old Testament. However, it also cannot be denied that the New Testament gave a

clarification of the truths of Scripture. As a result it cannot be denied that the Israelite who lived long before Christ did not know as much about the Kingdom of God as is known today by Christians of the New Testament Age. This thesis in no way wishes to deny any of the doctrinal affirmations of the Church but does proceed upon the premise that there was a development, a progressive development of the concept of the Kingdom of God in the Old Testament. An historical approach to the growth of the basic concepts of the Old Testament is absolutely essential in this day and age when many feel that the study of the Old Testament is superfluous. Nearly all scholarly critics emphasize an historical approach to the Old Testament and an historical tracing of its concepts. It has been pointed out by many authorities that the writers of the Old Testament were men of their ages and of their environment. The writers of the Old Testament had a message for their day and enlarged upon what went before in the realms of theology and history.

The concept of the Kingdom of God involves the total message of the Bible. It is granted that the unity in Scripture is in Christ and that the theme of redemption is of paramount importance, but these truths revolve about the idea of a people of God called to live under God's rule and about the idea of the coming of God's Kingdom. This theme is found in virtually every part of the Old

Testament and forms an unbreakable link with the New Testament.

The author referred to the New Testament concept of the Kingdom of God only superficially. The New Testament concept of the Kingdom of God lay outside the scope of this paper. The author did refer occasionally to the state of affairs which Christ encountered in the Jewish people with respect to the Kingdom of God, but this was done only when the attitude of the Jewish people would shed light upon the Old Testament concept of the Kingdom of God.

As a rule the author of this thesis accepted the traditional authorship and dating of the Old Testament books. It was not the purpose of the author to enter into a discussion on Old Testament introduction. An exception to this rule is that the author assumed, for the purpose of this paper, the existence of a Deutero-Isaiah.

The author of this thesis feels constrained to make the following comment concerning the inspiration of the Scriptures and the conservative, orthodox interpretation of the Hebraic books of the Old Testament. The author of this thesis personally believes that the Scriptures are the verbally inspired Word of God and that their veracity can be questioned in no way. God's word is truth and is revealed to man by God Himself. The New Testament

says that Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, and to this the author subscribes without reservation. The author of this thesis does not wish in any way to deny the uniqueness of Israel as God's chosen people, or to deny God's special intervention in Israel's history, or to deny God's special revelation to Israel through His inspired prophets. With regard to the Messianic hope of the Scriptures the author agrees with Dr. Martin Luther who said that the true theologian sees Christ on every page of Scripture and that the true theologian must endeavor to see Christ everywhere in the Scriptures. Christ gave us the key to the theological interpretation of Scripture when He said that they, and Christ meant the Old Testament, are they which testify of me. The thesis itself, however, is an historical study which attempts to report what many representative scholars believe. The use of historical language in the thesis is not to be construed as constituting a denial of the reality of revelation or the very real uniqueness of Israel as the bearer of God's revelation and the Messianic hope.

The thesis is divided into five main chapters. The first deals with the fact that God operates in history and evaluates how the Hebrew people reacted to His activity. The second treats three of the typological types of the Kingdom of God in the Old Testament, namely, the theocracy, the reign of God and the formation of a people through

the covenant. The third discusses the rise of the monarchy and growth of kingship in Israel. The fourth concerns itself with the growth of the Messianic ideal and how this affected the conception of the Kingdom in Israel. The fifth part deals with the eschatological elements of the Kingdom such as the Day of Yahveh, the Suffering Servant, and the Son of Man. The author has endeavored to show through this analysis how God operated in history to establish His Kingdom in His time and in His way.

The author of this thesis is primarily indebted to J. Bright, S. Kowinkel, H. Ringgren, and various authors of books that dealt with Old Testament Theology.

CHAPTER II

IMPORTANCE OF AN HISTORICAL APPROACH TO THE PROBLEM

A. God of History

A development of the concept of the Kingdom of God in the Old Testament is undeniable. This development, however, must be viewed less as an evolution than as a development outward from a concept that was normative in Israel's faith from the beginning. Since Israel's faith was monotheistic from the beginning, this faith naturally led to the realization that Yahweh controlled the events of history so that He could establish His Kingdom. The one God was active in history, and He summoned men to obey His righteous will.¹ It is around this idea of called men that the theme of redemption revolved and with it the hope of the coming Kingdom of God.² Israel was convinced through revelation all through her history that God had chosen her and had made the earthly nation His people. Israel began her history as a nation summoned by God's grace to be His people and to serve Him, and to obey His covenant. It was right here that the notion of

¹John Wright, The Kingdom of God (New York: Abingden Press, c.1953), pp. 25-26.

²Ibid., p. 10.

the Kingdom of God began.³ John Bright quotes Alfred Edersheim as follows:

The rule of heaven and the kingship of Jehovah were the substance of the Old Testament; the object of the calling and mission of Israel; the meaning of all its ordinances, whether civil or religious, the underlying idea of all its institutions. It explained alike the history of the people, the dealings of God with them, and the prospects opened up by the prophets. Without it the Old Testament could not be understood; it gave perpetuity to its teaching and dignity to its representatives. This constituted alike the real contrast between Israel and the nations of antiquity and Israel's real distinction. Thus the whole Old Testament was the preparatory presentation of the rule of heaven and of the Kingdom of its Lord.⁴

The fundamental idea in Israelite history was always the kingly rule of Yahweh. The final goal of history was for all men to honor Yahweh as King. This concept was the central religious Jewish idea of the hope of the Kingdom.⁵ Therefore, a lively hope was engendered in Israel. The faith of Israel became eschatologically orientated, for Israel felt that Yahweh was guiding history to a planned destination. This belief gave the Israelite nation a tremendous confidence in the future. Israel held that Yahweh would accomplish His purpose and establish His

³Ibid., pp. 26-28.

⁴William F. Arndt, "The New Testament Teaching on the Kingdom of God," Concordia Theological Monthly, XXI (January, 1950), 9.

⁵S. Mowinkel, He That Cometh, translated by G. W. Anderson (New York: Abingdon Press, 1951), p. 144.

purpose and establish His Kingdom through acts in history.⁶

It cannot be denied that the prophets of Israel recognized the fact that God directed the events and acts of history to further the progress of His Kingdom.⁷ In fact, this was one of the major emphases of the prophets of Israel. It was believed without reservation that God was directly responsible for the progress of history.⁸ It can be stated that the dominant idea in the Old Testament era was that Yahweh directed all events and history in the world for the benefit of His people.⁹

The nation of Israel was a weak nation judged by worldly standards. Israel was usually weak politically, economically, numerically, and diplomatically when compared with the great powers of antiquity. As a result national frustration set in among the people. Therefore, the Hebrew people developed a hope for a golden age in the future. Israel was not great, but Israel hoped that this would change in the future and that all nations would

⁶Bright, op. cit., pp. 28-30.

⁷Reverend F. Weidner, Biblical Theology of the Old Testament, based on Oehler (F. H. Revell Co., 1926), p. 185.

⁸Otto J. Baab, The Theology of the Old Testament (New York: Abingdon Cokesbury Press, 1931), p. 177.

⁹C. Niebuhr, Theology of the Old Testament, translated from the French by H. G. Mitchell (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell & Co., c.1895), p. 130.

stream to Zion.¹⁰ This hope was reflected in Israel's great literary men who extolled the future, the coming golden age when Yahweh would establish His Kingdom. Pagan nations extolled the past. Israel primarily looked forward to future history.¹¹ It was in the framework of this historical concept that the nation of Israel discovered its mission. The nation regarded itself as belonging to Yahweh who was to accomplish His purpose through the nation.¹²

Since Israel often suffered defeat, it was necessary that a special interpretation of history had to be developed. Israel's history of doom and defeat was an important preparation needed to further the desire and need for the Kingdom of God which was to come in the future.¹³ Therefore, as the Jewish people watched empires come and go and the fortunes of history change, the Israelite nation enlarged upon the idea that Yahweh ruled history. The doctrine grew that a great final catastrophe was coming and that it would be followed at once by the foundation

¹⁰Genb, op. cit., pp. 157-159.

¹¹David H. Foster, "Christ's First Proclamation of the Kingdom," The Review and Expositor, XVI (January, 1919), pp. 33-38.

¹²Genb, op. cit., pp. 185-186.

¹³Ibid., p. 159.

of the everlasting Kingdom of God.¹⁴ The reason for this consensus of belief in Israel can be laid in part at the doorstep of Israel's peculiar interpretation of history.

B. Philosophy of the People Concerning the Kingdom of God

According to Bernhard Duhn the idea of the Kingdom of God does not appear too often in the "legends" and the "folklore" of the great mass of the people of early Israel. This critic feels that the early peasant of Israel had little impulse to think of such lofty concepts. In fact Bernhard Duhn maintains that the primitive Israelites appear to have had little thought even of a life after death. Their early worship seems to have concerned the material present and had little to do with a future hope of a Kingdom of God.¹⁵ W. J. Beecher holds that for many years the majority of the Israelites were ignorant of the fact that God had chosen Israel for the purpose of blessing mankind in the future Kingdom. The hope was eventually fostered especially by the leaders of the nation, and this doctrine of the coming Kingdom was at least relatively known and accepted so that the prophets of the eighth century were able to appeal to the promise of a Kingdom in

¹⁴Bernhard Duhn, The Everlasting Kingdom, translated by Dr. A. Duff of Bradford (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1911), p. 55.

¹⁵Ibid., pp. 16-20

their preaching.¹⁶

It seems to be the case that during the time of the prophets, at least at first, that the majority of the people felt that the Kingdom of God would be national, material, and political in character. George Harris asserts that the spiritual concept of the Kingdom may have been almost nonexistent among the common people.¹⁷ The Hebrew nation often wanted a Kingdom of God so that it could serve the nation's own selfish natures and plans.¹⁸ H. W. Robinson maintains that the new order of life contemplated in the Kingdom in the Old Testament was, in the opinion of the primitive Israelites, to be realized wholly on the earth. It was believed that the earthly Kingdom itself was to be the final stage. There was no sense of a contrast with some heavenly Kingdom which was to follow the earthly Kingdom.¹⁹ B. Duhn adds that at the time of Isaiah the common people had so little hope of a future Kingdom that their philosophy was to eat and to drink and

¹⁶ Willis J. Beecher, The Prophets and the Promise (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co., c.1905), p. 399.

¹⁷ George Harris, A Century's Change in Religion (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., The Riverside Cambridge Press, c.1914), pp. 180-184.

¹⁸ Estes, op. cit., p. 39.

¹⁹ H. W. Robinson, The Religious Ideas of the Old Testament (London: Gerald Duckworth & Co., Ltd., 1913), p. 194.

to be sorry.²⁰ Nevertheless, it must be stated that this crass materialism was foreign to the Yahweh inspired ancient traditions of Israel. This crass materialism was never approved by Yahweh or by His prophets.

The average Israelite felt that he belonged to Yahweh's Kingdom because Yahweh needed him to render worship and sacrifice. Morality was often a side issue.²¹ C. A. Allington asserts the average Israelite felt that the fortunes of Yahweh were tied up with the fortunes of the state. In this way the national and spiritual aspirations were made synonymous. Divine triumph was bound up with a triumph of the earthly nation of Israel itself.²²

Adversity and defeat smashed this belief. The hope came to be one of restoration in the average mind. Amos and Jeremiah contributed with their prophecies of doom. Adversity slowly fostered and crystalized the hope of a future Kingdom in the minds of the Hebrew people.²³

It must be noted that there certainly were exceptions from the general run of the mill of the common people. There was in Israel a certain minority of individuals

²⁰ ibid., op. cit., p. 22.

²¹ ibid., p. 29.

²² C. A. Allington, The Kingdom of God (London: The Centenary Press, 1940), p. 115.

²³ Nowinkel, op. cit., pp. 133-138.

among the common people of Israel who had an immediate and real communion with Yahweh. This communion was founded in the belief that God would watch over the welfare of the people and would establish His Kingdom for His faithful.²⁴

Perhaps, the basic hope of the Israelite people can best be seen in the benediction which the priests of Israel proclaimed every morning from the steps of the temple. It consisted of the following form:

- May Yahweh bless thee and guard thee, May Yahweh make bright His face toward thee, and be gracious to thee. May Yahweh lift up His face toward thee and appoint for thee well doing and peace.²⁵

This came to be the hope of the common people with regard to the Kingdom which Yahweh was to establish.

²⁴Zuhls, op. cit., p. 32.

²⁵Robinson, op. cit., p. 104.

CHAPTER III

SYMBOLIC TYPES OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD

A. Theocracy

Yahweh is King. The basis for approaching the concept of the Kingdom of God in the Old Testament is that Yahweh was King of Israel. Yahweh ruled directly.¹ This seed had been planted in the Hebrew nation by Moses who emphasized the real and actual kingship of Yahweh. This concept was unique in that it sprouted and grew in Israel more so than in the rest of the ancient Near East. The idea that Yahweh reigned became the dominating principle of the Hebrew nation down through the ages.²

The form of government in the new nation was the government of Yahweh, the theocracy. Yahweh was the direct King of Israel. God regarded Israel as His special possession and never relinquished His kingship. Earthly kings were His vassals and received their authority from Yahweh.³ Before the monarchy in the period of the Judges, Yahweh ruled directly through His designated representative. The

¹Otto J. Busb, The Theology of The Old Testament (New York: Abingdon Cokesbury Press, 1931), p. 164.

²S. H. Hooke, The Kingdom of God In The Experience of Jesus (London: Gerald Duckworth & Co. Ltd., 1949), p. 159.

³F. F. Bruce, "The Kingdom of God; A Biblical Survey," The Evangelical Quarterly, XV (October, 1943), 263-268.

idea of the establishment of an earthly monarchy was consciously rejected, for Israel thought that to have an earthly king was equivalent to rejecting Yahweh.⁴ The prophets emphasized the point to the people that Yahweh was the real Ruler of Israel, more than the human kings.⁵ Many of the Psalmists viewed Yahweh as the King of Israel and added the belief that Yahweh was also the King of the world who would bring victory to His people.⁶

The Old Testament represents Yahweh as becoming Israel's King and Father by the deliverance of the exodus⁷ (Exodus 4:22, Deuteronomy 32:6, Isaiah 43:15). In fact fellowship with Yahweh in the Old Testament consisted in this that Yahweh was the King and Father of His people. It must be granted that the idea of the fatherhood of Yahweh was not emphasized by the average Israelite.⁸ In time the fatherhood of Yahweh over Israel came to be one of a moral relationship. It was not a relationship of nature or of blood but one of grace. The Israelites were

⁴Willis Judson Beecher, The Prophets and the Promise (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company Publishers, c.1905), pp. 291-292.

⁵Ibid., op. cit., p. 167.

⁶Ibid., p. 164.

⁷Georgardus Vos, The Teaching of Jesus Concerning The Kingdom of God (New York: American Tract Society, c.1905), p. 131.

⁸Hilding Brodeur, "Fellowship With God According To Jesus," The Annetans Quarterly, XVII (1938), 77-82.

called to be Yahweh's sons, but each son of the nation had to be moral and righteous to qualify as Yahweh's son. It must be admitted that often the nation regarded itself as the son of Yahweh and believed that the success or failure of the nation depended on the outward obedience of the nation to Yahweh.⁹ On a whole, however, each citizen was directly responsible to Yahweh, the King. Religion and government in primitive society were democratic and free. Each man, in the primitive theocracy, was his own priest and his own judge. The personal relationship between the individual citizen and the national God at least existed. The ideal was a "kingdom of priests and a holy nation." To what degree this was the case in primitive Israel is difficult to judge.¹⁰

The theocracy served a typological purpose and pointed to the future Kingdom. King David welded the tribes into a unit, a people, an earthly Kingdom. Worship was centralized at Jerusalem. David developed a worship with specific cultic, liturgical features, and as a result the state and the cult supported one another. The cult interceded with Yahweh for the state. The concept spread that the state was Yahweh's Kingdom, comprised of Yahweh's chosen people.

⁹John Adams, Israel's Ideal (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1961), p. 49

¹⁰Henry J. Cadbury, National Ideals In The Old Testament (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, c.1920), p. 85.

and ruled by his son, the earthly king.¹¹ However, John Bright tenders the plausible theory that many Israelites, especially the nomads, the purists, and the free desert tribesmen, rebelled against the idea that the Davidic Solomonic state was actually Yahweh's Kingdom. Note the rebellion which split Israel into two parts.¹² This tension continued for many years. In Judah the idea gained popularity among the vast majority of people. The prophets, however, utterly rejected the tying of the progress of Yahweh's Kingdom to the national destiny of the nation. In Israel Elijah, Elisha, and Micah fought against the error that the state was Yahweh's Kingdom.¹³ In Judah Amos was one of the first to blast the "Pet Nation" theory. (Amos 5:18, 9:7)¹⁴ Somehow the belief grew that just as the kings were representatives of Yahweh so the earthly kingdom, the state, also was simply a type that foreshadowed the Kingdom that was to be established in the future by Yahweh.¹⁵ L. Berkhof says that the Old Testament typical theocracy pointed to a spiritual government of Yahweh and that all of the relations of the earthly life were to be

¹¹John Bright, The Kingdom of God (New York: Abingden Press, c.1953), p. 42.

¹²Ibid., pp. 46-49.

¹³Ibid., pp. 51-54.

¹⁴John Bright, "The Prophets Were Protestants," Interpretation, I (April, 1947), p. 179.

¹⁵Vgs. op. cit., p. 19.



brought under the direct dominion of Yahweh in His spiritual Kingdom.¹⁶

The priestly view of the theocracy consisted in this that the priests pictured a theocracy in which Yahweh would rule through consecrated men equipped with priestly lore, priestly skill, and holiness of person for the task of mediating to men the will of the holy Yahweh of Israel. The Kingdom of Yahweh amounted to the extension and perpetuation of holiness in the whole world by means of the exaltation of the temple in Jerusalem and of the priestly class within the temple priesthood.¹⁷ The primary purpose of Israel's theocratic government was not to teach the world the principles of civil government but to reflect the eternal laws of the religious intercourse between Yahweh and man as they would exist in the consummate life at the end.¹⁸ The priests and the scribes looked to the future for the glory that it should bring to the theocracy and for the government of the whole world by the Jews who were called the members of the "Kingdom of priests."¹⁹

The defeat and exile of the nation deeply affected

¹⁶ L. Berthoff, The Kingdom of God (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, c.1951), p. 74.

¹⁷ Baab, op. cit., p. 179.

¹⁸ Vos, op. cit., p. 85.

¹⁹ Bernhard Luhn, The Everlasting Kingdom, translated by Dr. A. Duff of Bradford (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1911), pp. 46-47.

the future hope of Israel. It was during the exile that the hope of the establishment of the rule of Yahweh flourished amazingly. It was during the exile that the hope received its profoundest expression. The three views of the defeat were as follows: (1) The gods of Babylon were more powerful than Yahweh; (2) The Lord, Yahweh was not fair and was punishing the land for the sins of the fathers; (3) The doom announced by the prophets had fallen, for the people had broken Yahweh's covenant. Jeremiah and Ezekiel had insisted that the exile was Yahweh's doing and Yahweh's judgment upon the Israelite nation. This philosophy enabled the faith of the nation to survive and to even be strengthened in the eventual establishment of the rule of Yahweh.²⁰

Reverence and obedience to the law grew during the exile. The leaders of the people thought that if the law was kept the people would become a holy people, Yahweh's people. Prior to this the prophets had declared that the essence of religion was not one of externals, of sacrifice, or temple ritual. The essential of worship was obedience and righteousness. There was a future for a people clean of heart and righteous. This encouraged the observance of the law²¹ (Ezekiel 40-48). This trend continued after the restoration until the time of Christ.

²⁰Bright, The Kingdom of God, pp. 127-132.

²¹Ibid., p. 133.

Deutero-Isaiah taught that there was one Yahweh who was in absolute control of history. Yahweh was to bring history to the end for which He had created the world, had called Abraham, and had led Israel from the land of Egypt, namely the establishment of His people. He felt that the struggle with primeval chaos begun at creation was once more to be resumed. Deuter-Isaiah believed that the coming victory of Yahweh was right at the door. The Kingdom of Yahweh was to be established, and soon, in his opinion.²²

The restoration finally occurred in 538 B.C. Hope flourished in the Jewish breasts that the establishment of the Kingdom had come. Disillusionment set in quickly. Nevertheless, the earthly hope of the Kingdom never died out, and the earthly hope was what Christ encountered in the Pharisees.²³ The world had to wait for the final revelation. It did not come until the Lord Jesus Himself came and gave the answer.

B. Reign of God

F. W. Manson maintains that the concept of Yahweh's sovereign reign must govern the concept of the Kingdom of

²²Bright, The Kingdom of God, pp. 139-144.

²³Ibid., p. 135.

God.²⁴ This concept of Yahweh's reign was based in general on the Oriental viewpoint that a kingdom did not consist of an organized people or a community, but rather of a reign or government. Hence, the Kingdom of God was defined as a reign or government of God that was still resisted by the powers of sin and chaos. Full effectiveness was to blossom forth in the future. This abstract meaning, namely the rule of Yahweh, was the usual cue in the Old Testament.²⁵ Otto Piper quotes Dalman as saying in The Words of Jesus that in antiquity an Oriental kingdom was not a body politic in our sense, a people or land under some form of constitution, but merely a sovereignty which embraced a particular territory. According to Dalman the Old Testament taught that the Kingdom of Yahweh consisted of the royal power of Yahweh, namely, the exercise of that in history.²⁶ Perhaps one exception to this abstract definition is found in Exodus 19:6 where the Israelites were referred to as a kingdom of priests. It appears that here the meaning was concrete. However, by and large, Yahweh's Kingdom was always His reign, His rule, and seldom

²⁴Floyd V. Wilson, "The Kingdom: Present And Future," The Journal of Bible And Religion, VII (May, 1939), 60-61.

²⁵Gunkel, op. cit., p. 14.

²⁶Otto A. Piper, "The Mystery of the Kingdom of God," Interpretation, I (April, 1947), 137.

His domain.²⁷ Balzan says,

No doubt can be entertained that both in the Old Testament and in Jewish literature Kingdom, when applied to God means always the kingly rule, never the kingdom, as if it were meant to suggest the territory governed by Him.²⁸

The concept of the Kingdom did not imply static perfection but demanded a loyalty to Yehweh to follow His guidance. Yehweh attempted to make men loyal to Him. This attempt was continued by all the prophets of Yehweh. There was a demand to be loyal to Yehweh and to His rule.²⁹

The rule of Yehweh also denoted judgment. His rule did not necessarily always denote a Utopian hope but often denoted the opposite. Yehweh often judged and rejected. Eventually His rule designated both aspects of judgment and blessing.³⁰ Note the tie up with the Day of Yehweh.

The ancient seers of Israel pointed forward to a Kingdom of righteousness and peace, in which men would willingly submit to the rule of Yehweh. Yehweh was to enrich man with His blessings.³¹ This became the major

²⁷ Vos, *op. cit.*, p. 26.

²⁸ George E. Ladd, Crucial Questions About The Kingdom of God (Grand Rapids: W. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1953), p. 79.

²⁹ Edward J. Young, The Messianic Prophecies of Daniel (Grand Rapids: W. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1954), pp. 182-184.

³⁰ John H. Watson, "The Church and The Kingdom," The Evangelical Quarterly, XXII (April, 1950), 96.

³¹ Berkhof, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

emphasis of Yahweh's rule.

The reign of Yahweh can be summed up as accomplishing five things. The reign of Yahweh was to be established in human hearts to give peace. The reign of Yahweh controlled human affairs and history. The reign of Yahweh was effective in forming an obedient people. The reign of Yahweh constituted a new order of things in all spheres. The reign of Yahweh enriched the subjects of the Kingdom with inestimable privileges and eternal blessings of a spiritual and earthly nature.³²

C. Covenant and Formation of a People

One of the main promises in the Old Testament was given to Abraham, the patriarch. The promise consisted in the proclamation that a Kingdom was to be founded. Yahweh revealed to Abraham that in him all the nations of the earth were to be blessed (Genesis 12:1-3). It is held by W. J. Beecher that this is the earliest account of the promise of the Kingdom in the Old Testament.³³ God picked Abraham at a point in history to be the father of a nation and a people. Here we have the concrete beginning of the

³²Ibid., p. 16.

³³Beecher, *op. cit.*, p. 197.

formation of the Kingdom.³⁴ An everlasting people was founded through Abraham and his descendants. This one promise of the Kingdom of God and the formation of a people was eternally operative and irrevocable in Hebrew thought.³⁵ The affirmation of Genesis is that Abraham and his posterity were God's people, not for their own sake, but for the sake of the nations.³⁶ This promise of God to found a people through whom He could carry out His purpose is basic to the Old Testament.³⁷

Yahweh used the covenant to form a people. In ancient history a covenant was a bond of peace formed by two Semitic tribes. Each respected the possessions of the other. The two tribes intermarried and traded. To insure the pret of mutual alliance a covenant was concluded. An ancient ritual came into being, and each group partook of a common sacrificial meal. At the eating each tribe became participants in a common life and a living bond of union was formed between the two tribes. The tribes were brothers and not enemies. All of this was accomplished through the

³⁴Martin Buber, The Prophetic Faith, translated by Carlyle Witton Davies (New York: The MacMillan Company, c.1949), p. 35.

³⁵Deecher, op. cit., p. 185.

³⁶Ibid., p. 216.

³⁷Revere F. Weidner, Biblical Theology of the Old Testament, based on Gehler (F. H. Revell, 1886), p. 29.

ancient covenant.³⁸

Yahweh established a covenant relationship with Israel. The national covenant was first established with Moses at Mount Sinai. Through the covenant the Hebrew people became the property and inheritance of Yahweh. The concept of Yahweh as King and as Master required the people to be separate from all other peoples, for the Hebrew people belonged in a special sense to Yahweh.³⁹

The covenant pictures Yahweh as King, and Israel as His people; Yahweh as Father, and Israel as His son; Yahweh as a Husband, and Israel as His wife; Yahweh as Lord and Israel as His servant.⁴⁰ This gives a fairly good indication of the relationship between the nation and Yahweh. It was never a covenant of mutual equality but always one in which the people were subservient to Yahweh. In short, Yahweh chose Israel because He willed to choose them out of grace. Yahweh chose Israel out of His own, free, unfettered and sovereign will and for no other apparent reason.⁴¹ In no way did Israel merit Yahweh's choice or

³⁸ Adams, *op. cit.*, p. 95.

³⁹ G. Piepenbring, Theology of the Old Testament, translated from the French by H. C. Mitchell (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell & Co., c.1893), p. 31.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 33.

⁴¹ Norman H. Smith, The Distinctive Ideas of the Old Testament (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1946), p. 137.

His covenant.

One of the main requirements of the covenant was that the Old Testament saints had to be righteous. This consisted in having a true heart and an upright attitude towards the covenant and an honest endeavor to walk according to its principles.⁴²

The covenant was made with the nation as a whole and not primarily with individuals. The individuals shared the benefit of the covenant as members of the nation. The people regarded the nation as a unity that was subject to Yahweh through the covenant.⁴³

In practical circumstances the covenant established a brotherhood among the people of the nation. All were equally under the covenant and under Yahweh. All were equally responsible, and all were to share equally in the Kingdom. Thus, the covenant fostered the growth of fellowship and communion and loyalty to one another among the Israelites.⁴⁴

It was believed, according to R. Weisner, that those of the covenant people who had fallen asleep would be delivered and restored to the Kingdom of God. How was not

⁴²A. B. Davidson, The Theology of the Old Testament, edited by S. Selmond (New York; Charles Scribner's Sons, 1904), p. 275.

⁴³Ibid., p. 241

⁴⁴Bright, The Pharisees were Protestants, p. 177.

clearly known, for the hope of a resurrection appears to have been very vague in early Israelite history. Nevertheless, some hope of a restoration of the covenant people was evident at an early date.⁴⁵ What this hope of resurrection consisted of is impossible to determine exactly.

Eventually Israel received the conviction and the desire to bring all men into the fold of Yahweh.⁴⁶ Israel believed that only the covenant people could introduce the heathen to Yahweh's Kingdom.⁴⁷ As a result missionary activity was spurred by the feeling that only the covenant people could actually do the necessary missionary work.⁴⁸

Yahweh determined to accomplish the purposes of the covenant through the remnant. God determined that the covenant between Him and Israel should never be ultimately and finally broken. The covenant was to survive, but it was to survive only with the smallest remnant.⁴⁹ Many of the prophets differentiated between the nation of Israel and the spiritual kernel of the nation often called the remnant. Only the truly righteous in Israel constituted

⁴⁵Weidner, *op. cit.*, p. 189.

⁴⁶Naab, *op. cit.*, p. 189.

⁴⁷Weidner, *op. cit.*, p. 189.

⁴⁸Deocher, *op. cit.*, p. 243.

⁴⁹Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 153.

the true Israel⁵⁰ (Isaiah 10:20-22, Micah 2:12, Zephaniah 2:7, 3:13, Joel 2:32, Zechariah 8:6). As a result it was taught, especially by Isaiah, that Yahweh would not preserve the state, but that Yahweh would work His purpose through the remnant which He would save and elect.⁵¹ Isaiah formulated the concept of an "ecclesia invisibilis." This "ecclesia" consisted of a small community united by the fellowship of faith, bound together by faith in the divine work, and disassociated from all national forms and maintained without the exercise of ritual services.⁵²

Isaiah prophesied that the nation would be purged by fire. A chosen people was to emerge. This purged people would make up the remnant. He felt that in the nation there was a good seed that Yahweh could rule once it was separated from the chaff of the nation⁵³ (Isaiah 4:2-4, 10:20-22). Isaiah thought that only the remnant who had been humiliated and who had been purged from sin, and who had learned to obey Yahweh could enter the Kingdom of God.⁵⁴

The germ of the new Israel, the true Israel, the spiritual Israel lies in the prophecies of Isaiah. He

⁵⁰Berkhof, op. cit., p. 170.

⁵¹Bright, The Kingdom of God, p. 87.

⁵²C. A. Alington, The Kingdom of God (London: The Centenary Press, 1940), p. 116.

⁵³Bright, The Kingdom of God, p. 89.

⁵⁴Ibid., p. 93

said that there were a faithful few and a sinful majority. Yahweh ruled in mercy only over the true Israel.⁵⁵ Isaiah believed that from this remnant there would come a future Prince who would establish the Kingdom of God.⁵⁶ Thus the hope crystallized and slowly began to take shape. Actually, Isaiah engendered a mighty faith. The future Prince was not to come from a proud nation but from a beaten, afflicted nation. This idea also caused trouble, for some began to think that Jerusalem could never be destroyed, and Judah expected every earthly king to be the Messiah as a result of a misconception of Isaiah's words.⁵⁷ This error had to be corrected. Amos was one of the chief prophets who preached to the people and tried to reactivate the covenant. Amos insisted on an intimate relationship between Yahweh and the people. The people were partners in the covenant, but Amos told the people that they had failed and that the covenant relationship had ended.⁵⁸ Most critics feel that Isaiah followed Amos with his conception of the remnant, and that the message of Amos was used in retrospect to combat the mistaken belief as to what the remnant consisted of in the thought of the Hebrew

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 94.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 85-86.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 93.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 63.

nation. It was hoped that the remnant would come from Judah, but the hope of a remnant was projected by the prophets into the future at the fruition of the ideal Kingdom which Yahweh would produce.⁵⁹

Eventually, the concept of the new covenant arose. Jeremiah and Ezekiel maintained that whatever covenant had existed between Yahweh and the people as a nation was broken and finished.⁶⁰ A new covenant was needed. Hosea had already laid the foundation for a new covenant between Yahweh and the people. Hosea had said that although Israel was like Sumer, an unfaithful wife, and had broken the marriage vow, there would be a new betrothal between the people and Yahweh. This concept provided further ground for the hope of a new covenant.⁶¹ It was Jeremiah who took this hope and stated that Yahweh would make a new covenant with Israel and Judah. (Jeremiah 31:31-34). This new covenant appeared to be far superior to the old covenant in that it actually created a new people faithful to Yahweh. The notion of the elect people became far more individualized than before. The new covenant demanded that the individual hear and obey Yahweh's will and law which was written in

⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 91.

⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 117.

⁶¹ Ibid., pp. 73-76.

his heart.⁶² It seems that Ezekiel also knew that the old covenant was to be replaced by a new covenant. Here we find a spiritualization of the future Kingdom. Some of the later prophets appeared to know that the Old Testament forms would be transferred to a new dispensation, and that the spiritual import of the Old Testament forms would abide and become paramount (Jeremiah 31:33, Ezekiel 44:9). It is true that the prophets spoke of the coming glory of the people of Yahweh in the language of their times. However, it cannot be denied that the prophets were conscious of predicting a new dispensation, with a new covenant and a more spiritual worship.⁶³ The new covenant was thus prominent in fostering the ideal of a spiritual future Kingdom of God.

The concept of righteousness was very important in the Old Testament. According to the Old Testament the unrighteous could not enter Yahweh's Kingdom. The prophets primarily maintained that Israel had to be a moral nation and had to care for justice and righteousness or Yahweh would punish the nation. At first this stress on morality and righteousness was of a civic and national and social nature.⁶⁴ Some of the prophets, notably Jeremiah, insisted

⁶²Ibid., pp. 124-127.

⁶³Berkhof, op. cit., p. 163.

⁶⁴Duhn, op. cit., p. 31.

that repentance and righteousness of the heart on the part of the individual were needed to enter Yahweh's Kingdom.⁶⁵ To belong to the Kingdom came to mean that an individual had to purge his heart and mind. Apostasy had to be abandoned. Righteousness of heart was demanded as a prerequisite to enter the Kingdom of God and to be one of Yahweh's people.⁶⁶ As a result two lines of thought developed in the Hebrew mind. One insisted on repentance of the heart as necessary to enter God's Kingdom. The other, as advocated by Ezekiel, worked for the triumph of the Kingdom through the impartation of righteousness through the law and the theocracy.⁶⁷ Actually, righteousness in the Old Testament was usually regarded as a practical thing. Most of the people emphasized external conduct more than the inward condition of the heart. However, neither emphasis excluded the other, for the external adherence at least demanded some type of a righteous inner condition.⁶⁸

Perhaps the most complete picture of righteousness can best be drawn from the Book of Deuteronomy. In this book a definite program was laid down for the citizens of

⁶⁵Ibid., p. 46.

⁶⁶Bright, The Prophets Were Protestants, p. 176.

⁶⁷Dunn, op. cit., p. 49.

⁶⁸Davidson, op. cit., p. 276.

God's Kingdom. It was a real and practical attempt to show what citizenship in God's Kingdom meant. It was a real attempt to establish by law a society befitting the citizens of the Kingdom of God. The requirements for entrance into God's Kingdom consisted in love to God and to the neighbor, namely a love born of gratitude. God had loved and chosen Israel, and the nation was to return this love. The mercy of Yahweh was confirmed in the covenant, and the holiness or consecration of the people was to show itself in love to Yahweh and to mankind (Deuteronomy 6:4-9). The love to Yahweh was to consist of an all absorbing sense of personal devotion to Yahweh. The social injunctions in Deuteronomy showed a spirit of forbearance, equity, and forethought for man and his welfare and his neighbor. In essence the greatness of the Book of Deuteronomy shows that the requirement for citizenship in Yahweh's Kingdom consisted in the fact that the faith of Israel had to produce works. There was an insistence on personal responsibility for the Israelite to live his faith.⁶⁹

⁶⁹Alington, *op. cit.*, pp. 119-122.

CHAPTER IV

KINGSHIP

A. Influence of the Ancient Near East upon the Israelite Concept of King

There was embedded deep in the consciousness of the people of the Near East the idea of a divine kingship, the idea of a divine rule mediated by earthly kings, upon which the present and the future well-being of mankind depended.¹ It is to be noted that in the early stages of man's organized life in communities, as he learned to rule and to be ruled, this concept of a divine king was basic to his thinking. The central figure was that of a priest-king, a divine king, a king upon whom the well-being of the community depended. People knew that the control of their environment and the satisfaction of their material needs rested upon the activities of the priest-king.² Thus, "sacral kingship" played an important part in all the ancient Near Eastern civilizations. The king was superhuman or a god, and possessed divine qualities. The king was a representative of gods to men and of men

¹ H. H. Seeke, The Kingdom of God in the Experience of Jesus (London: Gerald Duckworth & Co. Ltd., 1949), p. 11.

² Ibid., p. 157.

to the gods. The blessings of the gods flowed through the king to the people. In this way the king served to keep the universe and society in harmony and peace, in the opinion of the ancient Near Eastern nations.³

The Hebrew nation was influenced to a great degree by the Egyptian nation and by the Mesopotamian or Babylonian nation in their concept of a king. In Mesopotamia the king was not regarded as a god. The king was a man. The king had great gifts but was still only a man among men. The king possessed strength and wisdom and qualities far superior to those of other men. In fact, the gods chose the king and even granted divine attributes to the king, but in Mesopotamia the king never became a god. The election of a king implied that he had a definite vocation and task. The gods sent the king to act in their stead and to do their will. In Mesopotamia the king was regarded primarily as the agent who did the will of his god, but the king was empowered to do the god's will by the election and gifts of the god whom he represented.⁵ However, in Egypt the Pharaoh was actually thought to be divine, to be a god. The Pharaoh was thought of as a son of Ra. As a result the Pharaoh was an absolute

³S. Mowinkel, *Is That Coneth*, translated by G. W. Anderson (New York: Abingdon Press, 1951), p. 56.

⁴*Ibid.*, pp. 32-35.

⁵*Ibid.*, pp. 37-38.

master and ruler. The Pharaoh maintained law and order and distributed material blessings to his subjects. Even after death the Egyptians felt that the dead Pharaoh remained as a source of power for the Egyptian people. The Pharaoh was god and had simply returned to Re, but the Pharaoh, even after death, still sent blessings to his people.⁶

The annual New Year's Festival was of great importance to these early nations. The king was the chief figure in these festivals. This annual festival was regarded as an actual re-creation of the world, a deliverance from the powers of chaos which had caused the death of nature and of the god or goddess of fertility. It was felt that this New Year's Festival restored nature and the god or goddess of fertility to life.⁷ This restoration to life was accomplished by the ritual which the king underwent. The king pretended to go through the humiliation and death of a god. This was to represent the humiliation of the god. This was followed by a symbolic resurrection and by a symbolic combat and victory over the forces of chaos and death. There was a sacred marriage ritual with a fertility goddess, and in this way the world was renewed, and blessings were secured for another year according to the primitives of

⁶Ibid., pp. 29-31.

⁷Ibid., p. 40.

the ancient Near East.⁸ In this way the king served as a royal priest to serve his god. He, in the ritual, typologically suffered humiliation and experienced the god's defeat by the powers of chaos. Some people even had the custom of carrying the "dead" king in a procession and searching for the god to liberate the king and the people. At a given signal the god was "found" and the king "rose" from the dead. This signified liberation. A wild celebration of joy followed.⁹ Finally, the king was also to represent his people vicariously in this New Year's Festival. The king was expected to expiate and to atone for the sins of the people. In the festival the king had to submit to the rites of atonement for the sins of his people so that the blessings of the god would be obtained.¹⁰

In the main the Israelite nation gained its concept of the monarchy and the kingdom from Canaan. This nation had direct contact with Israel, and Israel could not but be influenced by Canaan's court, king, and way of ruling.¹¹ One need but contrast the wild tribesman of Israel and the cultured civilization of Canaan in order to realize that the influence of Canaan soon prevailed at least to a limited extent. It must be stated that Israel did not take

⁸Ibid., p. 24.

⁹Ibid., pp. 41-42.

¹⁰Ibid., pp. 38-39.

¹¹Ibid., p. 21.

over the pagan rituals and principles of government without discrimination or adaptation. This was certainly done by Israel. Yahweh guided Israel, and the Hebrew nation strained out the pagan abuses of the New Year's Festivals and of Canaan's customs to a great extent. Israel purified whatever the nation took over and used the purified rites to progress according to the plan of Yahweh.

These facts lead one to assert that there is a great deal of truth in the belief that the Israelites of the Old Testament were greatly influenced by the surrounding Oriental influences in their concept of a king who would establish His Kingdom.

B. Growth of the Concept of Kingship in Israel

In the pre-monarchical period early Israel was familiar with the office of a tribal chieftain rather than that of a king. This office of a tribal chieftain formed the root basis of the kingship in Israel.¹² Slowly, the concept of tribal leaders gave way to that of the "Judge" who led his people in times of emergency. One of the main functions of the tribal chieftain was that he had to be able to judge in righteousness. It is no exaggeration to say that the tribal chieftains were actually the forerunners of the

¹²Walding Brodson, "Fellowship with God According to Jesus," The Augustana Quarterly, XVII (1938), 159-160.

kings in Israel. Every tribal chieftain or judge was thought to have received the "charisma" or the grace gift of Yahweh which enabled him to lead his people. Even the first kings of Israel were also possessors of the charisma.¹³ One basic historical fact must be kept in mind. It is this: The divine King led the assembly of men in Israel by means of the one who was favored and called by Him. This chosen earthly one, whether king or judge or chief, was the bearer of the charismatic power which came from Yahweh. This power was not based, as with the Oriental kings, upon the myth of a divine birth or adoption, but upon the unmythical secret of personal election and vocation by Yahweh. The gift of the charisma was not hereditary but was given by Yahweh to His elect one.¹⁴ Therefore, it seems probable that the Israelites expected their kings to at least have and retain some of the qualities of the charisma. This desire gave rise to a charismatic versus dynastic controversy in Israel when it appeared that the earthly kings no longer retained the charismatic gift in the same degree as did King David and King Saul. Note the clash between Solomon and Abijah in the struggle for the throne. Eventually the hereditary side gained the

¹³Kowinkel, *op. cit.*, pp. 57-59.

¹⁴Martin Buber, *The Prophetic Faith*, translated by Carlyle Lilton Davies (New York: The Macmillan Company, C. 1949), p. 58.

upper hand and the charismatic principle declined steadily.

Thus, it appears that in the Old Testament the exercise of legislative and judicial authority were united in Israel's kings from the very beginning. To "judge" and to "reign" were made synonymous in Israel.¹⁵ The tribal chieftain who judged among his people was closely linked to the concept of a king who reigned by the will of Yahweh.

Nevertheless, there were extreme tensions in Israel on account of the traditions of tribal chieftainship and those of the kingship in Israel. In fact, two diametrically opposed traditions sprang up that continued in Israel until the time of the exile. One tradition favored a continued and increased centralization of power in the king. The other tradition favored decentralization because of the democratic impulse of desert tribalism.¹⁶ According to S. Nowinkel this nomadic tradition which cherished individual freedom modified the concept of kingship in Israel and always served as a check upon the kings of Israel. In fact, most of the prophets seemed to favor the nomadic tradition and taught that the king was to do the will of Yahweh. The nomadic tradition helped to insure that the earthly king in Israel never came to be regarded as a

¹⁵Corhardus Vos, The Teaching of Jesus Concerning the Kingdom of God (New York: American Tract Society, c.1905), p. 104.

¹⁶Otto J. Baob, The Theology of the Old Testament (New York: Abingdon Cokesbury Press, 1931), p. 160.

god and that his only task was to do the will of Yahweh.¹⁷

The Old Testament view as to what constituted kingship can be summed up as follows: At first a king was thought to be simply a powerful personality who performed acts of deliverance. The individual who performed these acts of deliverance did so because of the power which Yahweh gave to him.¹⁸

In time the nation began to regard the earthly kings as a center of power. In fact the king had to be righteous so that the nation would be blessed in all spheres. If the king was evil the nation suffered. Thus, a sense of "corporate personality" was fostered.¹⁹ In Israelite thought the soul of society was embodied in the king. Since Israel through the covenant had become conscious of a special vocation to perform for Yahweh the earthly king became a visible bearer of the religious and moral ideals of Israel.²⁰

Fortunately, Israel saw beyond the earthly kings to the one God whom the earthly king represented. Note the typology and the parallels of the Royal and Messianic Psalms in Old Testament thought. These seem to indicate that Israel realized that the king ruled as Yahweh's visible

¹⁷Hovindkel, op. cit., pp. 60-61.

¹⁸Vos, op. cit., p. 16.

¹⁹Hubrey R. Johnson, Sacral Kingship in Ancient Israel (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1955), pp. 2-11.

²⁰Hovindkel, op. cit., p. 70.

vice-regent.²¹ As the office of the king became more awe-inspiring due to increased wealth and power, the nation began to look to the king as being the representative of Yahweh. The people actually began to shout in the coronation rituals that Yahweh had become King. These words were spoken of the human earthly king. This shows how idealized the office of the king had become in Israel.²² As a result a spiritual conception grew concerning the Kingdom of God. The duties of the king typify this growth. The king was not only expected to perform public duties, but he was expected to perform religious duties and to be an example of piety and devotion to Yahweh.²³

In spite of this idealizing tendency, Israel never made the earthly king equal to Yahweh. The Israelite conception of the king was closer to the Mesopotamian concept than to the Egyptian. In the Old Testament there is found no trace of cult worship offered to the king. The king was chosen in Israel from the people. The king was subordinate to and dependent on Yahweh.²⁴ In Israelite thought the Davidic king was closely related to Yahweh. The king was regarded as an adopted son. However, the

²¹J. W. Gibbs, The Church and the State (n.p., n.d.), p. 10.

²²Seab, op. cit., pp. 161-162.

²³Ibid., p. 169.

²⁴Nowinkel, op. cit., p. 76.

king was still by nature a man, and he remained a man.²⁵ According to R. Johnson the king was dependent on Yahweh for power and for His spirit. Yahweh sent His spirit to the king. The king came to be called the Messiah of Yahweh and the Angel of Yahweh, but the king, in Israel, was never equated with Yahweh.²⁶

The prophets watched the kings and frequently condemned the monarchy, at least it appeared so. In the case of Saul the prophetic condemnation marked the presence of an active insistence upon the requirement of unhesitating and even irrational obedience to Yahweh on the part of every king.²⁷ As a rule the prophets usually condemned the abuses of the kings of Israel but not the institution of the monarchy. Because of the sins and rebellions of the kings the monarchy often appeared to be a failure in the eyes of the prophets. At least the kings were often castigated as failures by the prophets. This is why the prophets looked beyond the political disasters of their times to the realization of the kingship of Yahweh in the future. The prophets proclaimed the end of the corrupt monarchy and maintained that Yahweh intended to establish His own pattern of kingship under the ideal king when He

²⁵Johnson, *op. cit.*, p. 27.

²⁶*Ibid.*, pp. 13-15.

²⁷Barb, *op. cit.*, p. 166.

would raise up for Israel.²⁸

In summary Israel's viewpoint concerning the king came to be as follows: The king was the leader of the public cult of the nation. The blessings of Yahweh flowed to the people through the king. The king was expected to be loyal to the laws of Yahweh. The king was more than an ordinary man because Yahweh anointed him with His spirit. The king prayed, interceded, and offered up sacrifice as a representative of the people and received power and blessings from Yahweh. The covenant was concentrated in the king and through the king the promises of Yahweh were realized.²⁹

C. Picture of Kingship in the Royal Psalms

The Royal Psalms give one of the best descriptions of Israel's concept of kingship in ancient days. Many of these Psalms are interpreted by the Church as being Messianic and rightly so. Nevertheless, many critics and scholars have gone to great lengths to point out that originally these psalms referred to Israel's earthly kings and that these kings were to found the Kingdom of God. These two viewpoints do not contradict one another, but serve only to emphasize both the contemporary situation of

²⁸Hooker, *op. cit.*, p. 159.

²⁹Nowinkel, *op. cit.*, p. 39.

the author of the Psalms and the legitimate interpretation of the Church.

The king in Israel was the "Anointed One" of Yahweh. The title "Anointed" was a common royal title in Israel and referred at first to Israel's royal earthly king (1 Samuel 2:35, 12:5, 16:4, Psalm 2:2).³⁰

Psalm 2:7 tells us that the king was the son of Yahweh. The question is whether the king was actually the son of Yahweh or whether Yahweh adopted the king as His son. Most modern critics stress the adoption theory. The king was adopted by Yahweh and gifts were showered by Yahweh upon the king. The main gift was that Yahweh, through the adoption, sent His spirit to the king. The spirit of Yahweh was the source of the superior gifts and powers of the earthly king of Israel.³¹ The spirit was sent because Yahweh had adopted the king as His son.

Psalm 8:4-6, if its common royal interpretation is correct, calls the king the son of man and ascribes to the king power and glory and dominion just short of the power and glory and dominion of Yahweh.

In Psalm 21 the king is represented as one who brought the gifts of Yahweh to His people. These gifts which the king gave to the people of his Kingdom consisted mainly of

³⁰Helmer Ringgren, The Messiah in the Old Testament (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1956), p. 12.

³¹Koehler, op. cit., p. 79.

long life, victory over the enemies, and glory and honor among the nations of the world.

Psalm 72 pictures the king as a defender of the poor and a bringer of peace and righteousness. This psalm shows that in the eyes of the common people of Israel the king was the one who brought fertility and blessing upon the country. At least this is the view of Helmer Ringgren.³²

Psalm 110 points out that the king was a priest among his people. The king was a sort of mediator between Yahweh and the people. The author of the psalm calls the king a priest after the order of Melchizedek which implies, according to Helmer Ringgren, that the king was, down to the time of the exile, thought to be the legitimate heir of the Jerusalemite priest-kings.³³

In 2 Samuel 14:17 the king is called the "Messenger of Yahweh." This concept of the king seems to set the stage for the description of the king in Psalm 45. In the Psalm the king comes close to being called a god and the concept of the king proceeded no farther in that direction than this in Israel, according to Helmer Ringgren.³⁴

One of the main features of kingship in the Royal Psalms is that the king was righteous. He was a righteous

³²Ringgren, *op. cit.*, p. 16.

³³*Ibid.*, p. 15.

³⁴*Ibid.*, p. 16.

king who brought peace and good fortune to his people and who saved his people from their enemies. The king had to be righteous or the people of his nation faced ruin and defeat. Only the righteous king brought peace. Only the righteous king brought wholeness and health and good fortune in all spheres of life. Only the righteous king brought דִּשְׁוֹן, according to the Royal Psalms.³⁵

Some of the Enthronement Psalms point to the fact that either Yahweh or His appointed representative, the earthly king, was enthroned as the king of the world. S. Kowinkel asserts that the enthronement ritual, of which the Enthronement Psalms were a part, consisted of a procession in which the earthly king or Yahweh, represented by His ark, was carried to the temple in triumph.³⁶ This was to signify the victory and the rule of Yahweh and His king over the powers of chaos and of the cosmic sea.³⁷ During the enthronement ritual a special royal robe was put about the shoulders of the king. This was very significant, for the robe was to show that the earthly king had power to send rain and to control the powers of nature and chaos.³⁸ The Day of Enthronement in Israel came to be

³⁵Kowinkel, op. cit., pp. 68-69.

³⁶Ibid., p. 26.

³⁷Johnson, op. cit., pp. 68-69.

³⁸Ringgren, op. cit., p. 13.

a day of joy and celebration, for it was on this day that Yahweh laid claim to complete power and victory in the world. This claim was to be carried to fruition by the king who had received divine wisdom and power.³⁹

Helmer Ringgren summarizes the picture of the king in the Royal Psalms as follows. The king was the Anointed of Yahweh. Yahweh chose the king and proclaimed him as His son. Yahweh commanded the king to reign in righteousness. The king was to bear the gifts of fertility, rain, and justice for his people. The king was to defeat the enemies of his people and the powers of darkness and chaos. It was believed that some day the king would have a world wide domain and that his throne would endure forever. This was the picture of the earthly king of Israel as portrayed in the Royal Psalms.⁴⁰ It seems safe to assert that at least some of the qualities that were ascribed to the coming Messiah of the future find their root in the Israelite concept of their earthly king.

³⁹Nevinckel, op. cit., pp. 63-65.

⁴⁰Ringgren, op. cit., p. 20.

CHAPTER V

GROWTH OF THE MESSIANIC CONCEPT

A. Transition from King to Messiah

The relationship of the Messianic hope to the concept of kingship in the Old Testament is of prime importance. The idea of divine kingship is in the background and is the necessary condition of the belief of the coming Messiah. It is the soil from which the Messianic hope has grown.¹ Helmer Ringgren undoubtedly with some exaggeration states that every single feature of the Messiah can be traced back to the ancient ideas of divine kingship in the Near East.² This transition, however, did not occur suddenly. There was a gradual, natural transition through the years. Helmer Ringgren says, "The transition from king to Messiah (in the traditional sense of the word) has taken place gradually and can hardly be dated."³ Most critics share this opinion.

B. Origins of the Messianic Hope

Conservative scholars feel that the origin of the

¹Helmer Ringgren, The Messiah in the Old Testament (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1956), p. 21.

²Ibid., p. 32.

³Ibid., p. 24.

Messianic hope stemmed from faith in a promised Messiah as pronounced by Yahweh in Genesis 3:15. Paul Heinisch maintains that the Messianic hope was God inspired and God originated. He grants that local Oriental customs may have influenced the development of the Messianic hope, but he insists that the Messianic hope did not originate nor evolve primarily because of Oriental influences in Israel.⁴ Paul Heinisch also maintains that the hope of a Messiah existed centuries before there was an earthly king in Israel.⁵

Another belief is that Yahweh rooted the hope of a Messiah in the ancient Oriental ideas of a divine king. Helmer Ringgren defended this belief with the following words:

If we take history as being guided by God there is nothing wrong in saying that God used the ideas of the Orientals in developing the concept of a king and kingship which slowly evolved into Messianic expectations in Israel.⁶

Some scholars say that the origin of Israelite Messianism is found in the fact that the earthly rulers failed to carry out the earthly expectations of the people. Eventually, these expectations were transferred to an ideal

⁴Paul Heinisch, Theology of the Old Testament, translated by William Heidt (Collegeville, The Liturgical Press, St. John's Abbey, c.1950), pp. 325-332.

⁵Ibid., p. 327.

⁶Ringgren, op. cit., p. 24.

ruler of the future.⁷

Others believe that the hope for a Messiah originated because the earthly king did not fulfill the ideal picture painted in the Royal Psalms. The hope for an ideal ruler mushroomed into the Messianic ideal and expectation due to the longing of Israel for such a Royal King.⁸

Another possible origin is that the meaning of the Messianic figure was derived from the beginning from the national and political aspect of the future hope of the founding of God's Kingdom. It was not until later in history that the Messiah stood in a central position and came to be regarded as the other-worldly Saviour and mediator of a new world order.⁹

An appealing proposition is that the Messianic hope grew out of the belief that Yahweh ruled. Since Yahweh had ruled through the judges and kings who were His vice-regents the Jews held that in the future the Messiah would be the one who would fulfill perfectly the demands and functions of the vice-regency for Yahweh and thus establish His rule.¹⁰

⁷Ibid., p. 23.

⁸Ibid., p. 21.

⁹S. Mowinkel, *He That Cometh*, translated by G. W. Anderson (New York: Abingdon Press, 1951), p. 160.

¹⁰Martin Buber, *The Prophetic Faith*, translated by Carlyle Witten Davies (New York: The MacMillan Company, c. 1949), p. 153.

Some scholars assert that the origin and the content of the Messianic figure were derived from the kingly ideal of ancient Israel as is seen by the place and duties and functions of the king in the public ritual of national festivals.¹¹

Finally, there is the rather dubious contention that the Messianic hope originated from the Babylonian New Year's Day festival. Paul Heinisch disagrees violently and says that there is no proof that such a celebration was ever held in Israel.¹²

Perhaps the sanest position to take, historically speaking without denying that the Messianic hope originated with God through His Messianic promises, is that the form of the hope for a Messiah and a Kingdom may have been partially influenced by all of the foregoing reasons. Some influenced the Messianic hope to a greater degree, but all contributed to the shaping of the Messianic hope.

C. Prophetic View of the Messiah and the Kingdom

The prophets made the establishment of the Kingdom of God dependent on the coming of the Messiah. The two were interwoven in prophetic thinking. The coming of the Messiah meant the founding of the Kingdom, and the coming of the

¹¹Kowinkel, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

¹²Heinisch, *op. cit.*, p. 328.

Kingdom implied the appearance of the Messiah.¹³ In short, it was thought that Yahweh would send His personal agent, His Messiah, to found His Kingdom.¹⁴ Nevertheless, the prophets held that Yahweh was acting behind the scenes. It was felt that Yahweh was going to act through His agent, and this was the important thing. It was Yahweh who was going to act. Thus, in essence, the Kingdom was to be established by divine intervention, by Yahweh Himself, even though Yahweh was going to work through an agent. In the thought of some the Messiah was simply to be an administrator for Yahweh like the earthly king of Israel. In reality, then, the Kingdom was to center in Yahweh and not in the Messiah.¹⁵ It was actually Yahweh who was to intervene and establish His Kingdom. Whether Yahweh used a Messiah or not was beside the point, for the Kingdom was the work of Yahweh no matter what means were used by Him.¹⁶

At the first it would seem that the Messiah was not clearly considered as being divine in the Old Testament, until Yahweh Himself gave further clarification through further Revelation. At first the Messiah was simply the

¹³L. Berthoff, The Kingdom of God (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, c.1951), p. 151.

¹⁴Otto J. Baab, The Theology of the Old Testament (New York: Abingden Cokesbury Press, 1931), p. 195.

¹⁵Nowinkel, op. cit., p. 171.

¹⁶J. W. Roginson, The Religious Ideas of the Old Testament (London: Gerald Duckworth & Co. Ltd., 1913), p. 198.

instrument of Yahveh and nothing else. Note the similarity to the concept of kingship here. Many critics go so far as to contend that even passages like Isaiah 7:14 and 9:6 do not refer to the divinity of the Messiah but simply to the gifts that Yahveh gave to an outstanding leader. Others deny that these two passages are even Messianic in any sense.¹⁷ Naturally, one cannot accept the extreme interpretation of these critics but it seems plausible to believe that Israel in the main believed that it was Yahveh and not the Messiah who was the actual Saviour of the people.¹⁸

The prophets often sketched the Messiah as a king who would rule in the name of Yahveh and who was equipped with all the gifts of the spirit of Yahveh.¹⁹ The prophets did not think that one and the same king would govern the Messianic Kingdom. A line of succession was presupposed by the prophets. The Davidic dynasty was to rule in the Messianic Kingdom.²⁰

¹⁷C. Piepenbring, *Theology of the Old Testament*, translated from the French by H. G. Mitchell (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell & Co., c.1893), p. 223.

¹⁸Note the two-fold definition of Messianism. Usually the Messianic hope centered in the elect one, the adopted son, the agent of Yahveh who would establish His Kingdom. Sometimes the term became eschatologically orientated and was applied directly to Yahveh Himself.

¹⁹Heinisch, *op. cit.*, p. 42.

²⁰Piepenbring, *op. cit.*, p. 221.

Some scholars try to pin the message of the prophets concerning the Messianic hope onto the foreign influences of the Near Eastern nations. According to Paul Heinisch this is unreasonable because the prophets stressed the helplessness of the foreign gods and nations and proclaimed judgment upon the Gentile nations. He contends that the Messianic hope did not originate with the prophets. The hope was there. The prophets simply developed and furthered the hope which was already extant in Israel on account of God's activity.²¹ S. Nowinckel is of a slightly different opinion. He believes that the so called pre-exilic Messianic prophecies do not refer directly to the Messianic figure. In his opinion, genuine Messianic passages date only after the fall of the monarchy.²² John Adams, on the other hand, regards such prophets as Isaiah and Micah as the great preachers of a personal Messiah.²³ Perhaps the best solution is that in Israel there was always a hope of a Messiah. In time the prophets took this hope and fashioned it and gave it definitive form. It is impossible to speak dogmatically on the subject and to say that there was or that there was not the well defined hope of a Messiah which believers of the New Testament age often read back into the

²¹Heinisch, *op. cit.*, p. 327.

²²Nowinckel, *op. cit.*, p. 20.

²³John Adams, Israel's Ideal (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1909), p. 139.

Old Testament. Students of this question must let the Old Testament stand on its own feet and speak for itself. The question is open.

D. Development of the Concept of the Post-Exilic Messiah

The formal title of the Messiah originated in post-exilic Judaism as the designation of an eschatological figure. The Messiah, in Jewish thought, belonged to the last times when the Kingdom would be founded.²⁴

Post-exilic Judaism also understood the term "Messiah" in accordance with the Old Testament ideas of the king as the adopted son of Yahweh. This indicated not a sonship from all eternity, but rather a divine election for an intimate relationship with Yahweh.²⁵ Often the Messiah was regarded as only a man from among men. Note how often the Jews regarded historical figures as being Messiahs. Some critics have gone so far as to assert that even prophets like Haggai and Zechariah proclaimed that a human man like Zerubbabel was the King of the Restoration. This tendency to make human reformers and patriots into Messiahs continued right down until the time of Christ.²⁶

From the fifth century B.C., the figure of the Messiah seems to have finally assumed one of central importance in

²⁴Ibid., op. cit., p. 3.

²⁵Ibid., p. 294.

²⁶Ibid., pp. 284-286.

the Judean mind. Along with this concept of the Messiah came that of the Kingdom of God. The two were linked closely and were made inseparable in the Judean mind. The Messiah was to come, and he would establish the Kingdom.²⁷

Judaism frequently subordinated the Messiah to Yahweh who would in the last times establish His own Kingdom. This apparent conflict was resolved in Judaism by stating that the Messiah would establish an Interim Kingdom. The Messiah would rule in this Kingdom. It was felt that this Kingdom of the Messiah was to precede the establishment of the Kingdom of Yahweh. Actually, a compromise was effected in Jewish thought to account for the establishment of a Messianic Kingdom which was not equivalent to that of Yahweh. It was believed that the rule of the Messiah would end and would be replaced by a more glorious type of rule, namely the direct rule of Yahweh.²⁸

It must be mentioned that during this time from the fifth century before Christ to the birth of the Lord various types of human Messiahs kept arising. Some were classified as war Messiahs,²⁹ others as hidden Messiahs.³⁰ Usually, these so-called Messiahs had political ambitions

²⁷ Ringgren, *op. cit.*, p. 242.

²⁸ Nowinski, *op. cit.*, pp. 326-327.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 291.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 304-308.

and led revolts against the governing power.³¹

³¹Note the Apocalypses and the Qumran Dead Sea Scrolls. The Apocalypses pointed to various earthly leaders as being Messiahs. This was the expectation of the nation. The nation awaited a political deliverer. The evidence of the Dead Sea Scrolls bears out the hypotheses that there were various earthly Messiahs active in the political sphere. It is too early to evaluate accurately how much light the Qumran Scrolls can shed upon the growth of the Messianic concept and hope in Israel.

CHAPTER VI

ESCHATOLOGICAL ELEMENTS

A. Day of Yahweh

Israel's faith had taught her to expect great things of the future. Yahweh was to fulfill His purpose through history and establish His rule over His people in glory. The Day of Yahweh was coming, and on that Day Yahweh would make His Kingdom a reality. Israel did not doubt that she was Yahweh's people, and so the future was faced with confidence, and the Day of Yahweh was looked for by the people.¹

Many of the prophets conceived of the Day of Yahweh as being close at hand. The prophets thought that the Day was to usher in the Messianic age as the starting prelude to the ultimate establishment of the Kingdom of Yahweh. The Old Testament expectation was essentially one of intervention by Yahweh when His miraculous power would be revealed as He established His Kingdom.² The Day was to usher in the end of human history, the end of the world order. For many the Day of Yahweh came to mean the ideal

¹John Bright, The Kingdom of God (New York: Abingdon Press, c.1953), p. 60.

²H. W. Robinson, The Religious Ideas of the Old Testament (London: Gerald Duckworth & Co. Ltd., 1913), p. 192.

future for Israel and for the world. Yahweh was to come with fire and sword to destroy the powers of chaos and darkness to usher in the new era.³ This is why the nation hoped for the Day of Yahweh. Amos, however, shattered this false hope. Amos told Israel not to hope for the Day, for Israel herself was an enemy of Yahweh on account of her sin. Yahweh would come on the Day, but He was to come to cast off and to punish His disobedient people, according to Amos.⁴ To a certain degree Hosea, Micah, Isaiah, and Jeremiah all predicted the end,⁵ but it was Amos who had announced the irrevocable doom that was to be associated with the Day of Yahweh.

Two sides came to be emphasized in connection with the Day of Yahweh. The Day was to be a Day of salvation for the people of Yahweh and a Day of judgment for the foes of Yahweh.⁶ In the early hope the idea of a Day blessing predominated. However, it was not too long before the theme of judgment gained the upper hand. This theme of

³W. H. Bennett, The Religion of the Post Exilic Prophets, edited by James Hastings (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1907), pp. 337-341.

⁴Bright, op. cit., p. 65.

⁵Szerhard Dubs, The Everlasting Kingdom of God, translated by Dr. Archibald Luff of Bradford (London: Swan & Charles Black, 1911), p. 25

⁶A. B. Davidson, The Theology of the Old Testament, edited by S. Salmond (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1904), p. 377.

judgment gained the upper hand. This theme of judgment, emphasized by Amos, lasted right down until the time of Christ.⁷

The two-fold aspect of the Day received varied support through the ages, but the theme of judgment eventually prevailed. The eschatology of later Judaism showed that the Kingdom of God was not to come until the greatest of all catastrophes occurred. The Day of Yahweh, the Day of Judgment, was painted in gruesome, demonic colors and adjectives. The Jews thought that the whole universe was to suffer -- earth, sun, moon, and stars. Note the concept of the "dolorosa Messias" which held that the universe was to give birth to the Messiah as a woman gave birth to a child through labor and pain. This type of picture was usually painted by the Apocalypticists.⁸ The apocalypticists said that in the coming soon there was to be a battle. Yahweh was to overthrow Satan's dominion and to destroy the evil angels. All sinners were to be extirpated. After this Yahweh was to end all suffering for His People and establish His Kingdom and assume His Kingly rule.⁹ More and more the end was thought of as a judgment in the forensic

⁷William Judson Beecher, The Prophets and the Promise (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company Publishers, c.1905), pp. 306-308.

⁸Dubn, op. cit., pp. 59-60.

⁹S. Kowinkel, He That Cometh, translated by G. W. Anderson (New York: Abingdon Press, 1951), p. 264.

sense of a judicial process in which Yahweh was to judge all. Both the living and the dead were to appear for the judgment.¹⁰ Many Jews thought that a Messianic Kingdom was to be set up on earth for one thousand years. This Kingdom was to be followed by destruction. Even the Messiah was to die. It was only after this final outburst that Yahweh was to assume final and complete control. This final catastrophe was to be followed by a new creation, a new heaven, a new earth, resurrection, and bliss.¹¹ This was to be the essence, in the opinion of the Jews, of the Kingdom of God.

This belief of the Jewish nation concerning the Day of Yahweh and the establishment of His Kingdom had become very distorted. In some respects the viewpoints of late Judaism resemble those of the modern millennialists. This distorted view of the Day and the Kingdom by the masses of Judaism led to many false expectations and hopes.

B. The Servant

After the exile under the Babylonians began, disillusionment set in among the people. The prophecies of the Kingdom and the Messiah had not come to pass. This failure of the materialization of the Messianic hope gave rise to a

¹⁰Ibid., p. 273.

¹¹Ibid., p. 277.

transitional stage from a Messiah to a Servant.¹² During the greater part of the exile the concept of the Servant of Yahweh remained unformulated. However, in 538 B.C. the exile ended in a burst of eager expectation of a new thing beyond which lay victory and the Kingdom of God. Deutero-Isaiah transfigured the hope of the establishment of a Kingdom and laid before Israel the challenge of a great new mission. According to John Bright, Israel was to be the Servant of Yahweh and by missionary labor was to establish the rule of Yahweh to the ends of the earth.¹³ Deutero-Isaiah set forth the testing and victory of the people of Yahweh in terms of the Servant, the Suffering Servant. This concept appears to be totally unique in the history of Israel. Before this a Suffering Servant was unknown.¹⁴ Up to this point the Messianic concept had left unresolved the antithesis of a sinful people and a holy Yahweh. It was felt that the people had to be purified. This, too, contributed to the idea of a Suffering Servant who would purify Israel. Note the difference between the Suffering Servant and the Royal Messiah in their tasks for Yahweh.¹⁵ The Servant in the popular mind was to accomplish

¹²Ibid., p. 244.

¹³Bright, *op. cit.*, p. 156.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 146.

¹⁵Davidson, *op. cit.*, p. 373.

that which the Messiah was unable to do. In itself the concept of the Servant was not incompatible with that of a Royal Messiah.¹⁶ In fact, both of these emphases continued in Judaism down until the time of Christ when both were incorporated in Him.

Helmer Ringgren states that the basis for the concept of the Suffering Servant can be traced back to the Babylonian New Year's Day Festival in which the pagan high priest of Marduk, in a ritual, pulled the ears of the king and smote his cheeks. The king had to do symbolic penance and suffering for the people at the festival in this ritual. This suffering of the king was regarded as vicarious for the people, and in this way the sins of the people were atoned for by the pagan king.¹⁷

Some of the Psalms, notably, 22, 116, 18, 69, and 86 treat of a Servant. Each contributes to the understanding of the Servant. The main problem is that it is difficult to determine who the Servant is in the Psalms, as it cannot be proved that the king is meant as the Servant. The question is whether these Psalms refer directly to a Servant in the future. The issue is in doubt.¹⁸

¹⁶Novinski, op. cit., p. 256.

¹⁷Helmer Ringgren, The Messiah in the Old Testament (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1956), pp. 46-52.

¹⁸Ibid., pp. 60-64.

Isaiah 42:1-7 treats of the Servant. Helmer Ringgren says that the only idea that is entirely new here is the quiet and gentle behaviour of the Servant. Otherwise the features belonging to the kingship theology are present. The Servant as the earthly king, is elect, is the guardian of the right, is a giver of the law.¹⁹

Isaiah 49:1-9 treats of the Servant. In this section the special character of the Servant is more clearly visible. The Servant has received a divine message to proclaim. He will fail in his mission or at least apparently fail in his mission. He is despised and reviled but will be restored again.²⁰

Isaiah 50:4-11 treats of the Servant. In this section the aspect of suffering stands out. However, the Servant endures his suffering and trust, in God.²¹

Isaiah 53 deals with the Suffering Servant and his work. His suffering and passion are discussed.

These sections deal with the Servant and are interpreted in various manners by the critics and scholars. Listed are some of the interpretations as to whom the Servant was in history. Various answers were postulated. G. Fiepenbring asserts that the Servant was either the

¹⁹Ibid., p. 41.

²⁰Ibid., p. 43.

²¹Ibid., p. 45.

concrete nation of Israel or the ideal remnant or the institution of propheticism.²² Helmer Ringgren was more specific and felt that the Servant could have been Jeremiah, Hezekiah, the earthly king of Israel, or even the future-Messiah seen in a new light.²³ These various interpretations are found in the works of many critics, and it appears that the critics are guessing and actually don't know to whom the Suffering Servant referred to in history. The following seems to be the best compromise that the scholars could devise, namely, that the Servant poems tell us that the Servant was a person who had a task to perform in the future for Yahweh. The Servant was not collective Israel but an individual. Many critics do not even think that the Servant was in any sense directly Messianic. Typical is Helmer Ringgren who feels that the Servant was probably an individual prophet who was a missionary preacher of the true religion.²⁴ It appears possible that other than Christ could have been in the background historically and have been meant by the prophet.

The task of the Servant was to do the will of Yahweh. The Servant was actually the slave of Yahweh, the property

²²G. Piepenbring, *Theology of the Old Testament*, translated from the French by H. C. Mitchell (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell & Co., c.1893), p. 226.

²³Ringgren, *op. cit.*, p. 50.

²⁴Nowinkel, *op. cit.*, pp. 217-219.

of Yahweh, and entirely subject to the will of Yahweh.²⁵ Yahweh chose His personal agent, the Servant, to do a special work and to restore Israel from a national and religious viewpoint.²⁶ The mission of the Servant was to serve as a mediator between Israel and Yahweh in establishing a new and everlasting covenant, for the old covenant had been broken.²⁷ His task was not primarily political but spiritual. Actually, in the Servant we find no trace of the political element which was always present in the Messiah of the Old Testament.²⁸ The Servant was guiltless, but He was to suffer for others. This vicarious suffering was necessary to accomplish the task of the Servant²⁹ which was to prepare the way for the establishment of the Kingdom of God through out the whole world.³⁰ The victory of the Kingdom was to be procured not by force or spectacular power, but by the sacrificial labor of Yahweh's Servant. Yahweh proposed to win His Kingdom through the work of the Servant.³¹ History has taught us of man's resistance to

²⁵*Ibid.*, pp. 73-74.

²⁶Otto J. Baab, The Theology of the Old Testament (New York: Abingden Cokesbury Press, 1931) p. 195.

²⁷Piepenbring, *op. cit.*, p. 228.

²⁸Howinkel, *op. cit.*, pp. 229-230.

²⁹*Ibid.*, p. 209.

³⁰Bennett, *op. cit.*, p. 341.

³¹Bright, *op. cit.*, pp. 149-150.

Yahweh's Kingdom, a resistance so bitter that it cost the blood of the Servant. Due to this resistance the figure of the Servant came to be that of an ideal figure of the future, a coming Redeemer in the Old Testament.³²

G. Son of Man

The Restoration Movement felt that it was the purged remnant of Deutero-Isaiah, and that Zerubbabel was the prince of the line of David. It was believed that the time was come to set up the Kingdom, but this age did not dawn, for the power of Persia did not decline immediately. Disillusionment and disappointment gripped the returning exiles, and morale was at an all time low. Haggai and Zechariah gave encouragement to the people to build and remain. Ezra and Nehemiah did not want Judah to be assimilated by the pagan nations and put an emphasis on the observance of strict laws to preserve the Jewish state. Exclusiveness, particularism, prejudice against foreigners, and failure to carry out missionary activity were the results of such a policy.³³ A holy commonwealth was founded in post-exilic Judah, and the law was supreme. The leaders taught that the establishment of the Kingdom depended on whether the people kept the law or not. An exaltation of

³²Ibid., p. 150.

³³Ibid., pp. 159-166.

the law followed. The law sought to create Yahweh's people, and emphasis was put upon creating a righteous and obedient people.³⁴ It was in this type of society that two streams of thought developed within Judaism. One expected an earthly Davidic king who would arise from the midst of his people. The other awaited a heavenly, pre-existent, supernatural being from heaven. This being came to be known as the Son of Man.³⁵

Apocalyptic literature, on a whole, maintained that the whole world was a scene for the enactment of a cosmic drama that involved all nations and spotlighted on nation, Israel. The Apocalypses tried to offer the final answer to the question of history's outcome. The deadly cycle of sin, judgment, calamity, redemption, and more sin was to be broken by Yahweh who was bringing in His Kingdom and superseding the kingdoms of this world.³⁶ The Apocalypse declared that the present events both foreshadowed and reflected the cosmic struggle between Yahweh and evil that was reaching its pitch. The Kingdom was to come soon. There was a longing for Yahweh to step into the world to chastise His foes and to set up His Kingdom. Thus, the very core of Apocalyptic hope goes right back to the idea of the Day of

³⁴Ibid., pp. 170-177.

³⁵George E. Ladd, "The Kingdom of God in Esch.," Bibliotheca Sacra, GK (January, 1953), 41-42.

³⁶ibid., pp. 179-180.

Yahweh. The old popular theology crept back. The warnings of Ahas and the defeats were lost upon the people. The people yearned for Yahweh's judgment on His foes and for the establishment of His Kingdom over His people. Apocalyptic literature fostered this hope.³⁷ By 200 B.C. two views of the Kingdom were current. Apocalyptic created the general background of expectation that a new age was imminent. Yahweh was to cause the new age. The Messiah was to occupy the central place in the new order. The other trend of thought emphasized the Torah which marked the nation as the people of Yahweh. Israel was destined to be the ultimate Kingdom in the world through the law.³⁸

The message of the Book of Daniel was that Israel should hold fast to the law and to Yahweh. The Kingdom of God towered over puny men. Yahweh was now planning to intervene and to destroy the evil powers of this earth and to set up His Kingdom among His faithful.³⁹ The book dealt with the last things, the effective terminus toward which history moved.⁴⁰ Daniel emphasized the power of Yahweh's Kingdom in the passage of the stone that broke

³⁷Bright, *op. cit.*, pp. 164-165.

³⁸S. E. Hoekke, The Kingdom of God in the Experience of Jesus (London: Gerald Duckworth & Co. Ltd., 1949), pp. 14-15.

³⁹Bright, *op. cit.*, p. 163.

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 163.

the world kingdoms⁴¹ (Daniel 2:45). Yahweh was a powerful King, and the Kingdom was to be established by divine intervention. The world struggle was one of spiritual purport, but Yahweh would conquer evil and establish His Kingdom.⁴²

Daniel 7:9-12 introduces us to the Son of Man and to the Ancient of Days. This concept of a Son of Man had been evolving and the author of the Book of Daniel gave utterance to this ideal. Some feel that the Son of Man symbolized the people of Israel which was to receive dominion from Yahweh and was to conquer the world kingdoms. It was claimed that the Son of Man did not refer to any personal Messiah or to any individual.⁴³ A far better explanation, in view of Judaic hope at the time of Christ, is that the title of Son of Man came to be regarded in later Judaism as equivalent to the Son of the Most High God.⁴⁴ At any rate the ultimate task of the Son of Man was to glorify Yahweh.⁴⁵ Reference is also found to the fact that the heavenly community dwelt already with the Son of Man before

⁴¹Geerhardus Vos, The Teaching of Jesus Concerning the Kingdom of God (New York: American Tract Society, c.1903), p. 90.

⁴²Bright, op. cit., p. 169.

⁴³Mowinkel, op. cit., p. 350.

⁴⁴Ibid., p. 369.

⁴⁵Ibid., p. 416.

his coming. This community consisted of the elect who were already in "heaven."⁴⁶ It is a tenable hypothesis that the main Jewish ideas concerning resurrection, paradise, and heaven were closely allied to the concept of the Son of Man which received its greatest impetus and definition in the later stages of Judaism about two hundred years before Christ.⁴⁷

The Jews experienced persecution under Antiochus Epiphanes of Syria about 180 B.C. and war with Antiochus Sidetes in 130 B.C.. These trials fostered the hope of the establishment of the Kingdom of God. The hope flared brightest under war and domination.⁴⁸ Under the Roman rule the spiritual emphasis of the hope for the Kingdom deteriorated almost completely. The Jews expected political and national restoration and deliverance. The Messiah who had the supernatural qualities of the Son of Man was to found the ideal theocratic state in which the Jews were to be the rulers.⁴⁹ This concept of the Kingdom was what Christ found among the Pharisees of Judah. The people, on a whole, had rejected the spiritual and vital import of the Kingdom of Yehovah. Christ, the Son of Man, the

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 406

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 400-410.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, op. cit., pp. 57-58.

⁴⁹ L. Berkhof, *The Kingdom of God* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, c.1951), p. 96.

APPENDIX A

Millennialism

John F. Walvoord quotes Peters, who wrote The Theocratic Kingdom, as advancing the view that the prophets should be literally understood and that they predict a literal restoration of the Davidic Kingdom. The coming Kingdom is to be a theocracy in which the Messiah, the Son of David, is to rule.¹ George E. Ladd asserts that even the Kingdom in the Old Testament was an earthly kingdom. He points to the fact that the Kingdom of Israel was an earthly theocracy in which Yahweh ruled and maintains that this is to be the case in the future Kingdom of God.² In short, millennialists contend that the Old Testament looked forward to the manifestation of God's Kingdom primarily in terms of its eschatological consummation. The Kingdom was usually seen established on the earth, but sometimes this vision went beyond the earth into the age that was to come. It is thought by the Millennialists that the two stages of the future Kingdom are not clearly differentiated in the Old Testament.³

¹John F. Walvoord, "The Kingdom Promises to David," Bibliotheca Sacra, CX, 102.

²George E. Ladd, Crucial Questions About the Kingdom of God (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, c. 1952), p. 50.

³Ibid., p. 162.

Millennialists feel that it is incredible to maintain that the assertions of the prophets were spiritual in content. Millennialists insist on a literal interpretation of the Kingdom prophecies.⁴

It is not the intention of this thesis to discuss the Millennialistic viewpoint or to refute it. Suffice it to say that innumerable difficulties arise due to the viewpoint of the Millennialists. The author of this thesis, while acquainted with the millennialistic interpretations of the Kingdom does not intend to enter into a discussion on this question. As a rule the viewpoint of the Millennialists was ignored.

⁴David Foster Estes, "Christ's First Proclamation of the Kingdom," The Review and Expositor, XVI (January, 1919), 38.

APPENDIX B

Epilogue

Some of the opinions of the modern critics are certainly novel and different. The author of this thesis is of the opinion that if the critical presuppositions of the modern scholars are correct at least some of their insights, analyses, and conclusions may be accepted as a good illustration of God's marvelous control of history and need not be contradictory to the Christian faith.

It is admitted that this thesis does not deal extensively in the theological field. It is recognized that the theological aspects of the Old Testament are of primary importance to the Christian Church. This is certainly a very valid and necessary area for research.

One fact that cannot be forgotten is that God works through history. An historical approach to Scripture must not be negative or destructive and must not impair or negate God's power. On the contrary a Christian historical approach to Scripture must strive to enhance and to emphasize the miraculous acts of God in history. This historical approach certainly ties up with the ancient concept of the primitive Israelites that Yahweh ruled. God ruled then and acted in history and revealed His will. God rules today and still acts in history and reveals His will to men both in His written word of Scripture and in His mighty acts.

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