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## THE SOURCE OF ISRAEL'S ESCHATOLOGY\*

The topic selected for this lecture has been chosen largely because the history of recent criticism on this subject can perhaps best illustrate for us, within the limits of a single hour, the principles and methods of the dominant school of critics—the Wellhausen school—and the new forces that are now at work to discredit them. Though the limitations imposed by the time at our disposal prevent attention to details, the choice of a narrower theme would stand in the way of our obtaining that general impression which can only be gotten from a rather broad outlook.

It was undoubtedly a one-sided view of the Old Testament writers, especially of the prophets, that saw in them merely or mainly predictors of future events, and in their writings little of worth save what could be interpreted as at least a foreshadowing of greater things to come. But the over-emphasis on this phase of their function has been at least counterbalanced by the insistence of scholars, since Gesenius a century ago, upon the mission of prophet and poet, historian and sage, to their own contemporaries—particularly upon the prophet's function as a preacher of righteousness to his age. At first critics tended simply to slight the predictive side of the prophets' message. Largely as it bulks in their books, it was regarded as the product of an enthusiasm of little value while they lived—in fact, an obstacle to their usefulness—and of no value to us to-day in our effort to envisage the man in his historical environment. But the Wellhausen school, with characteristic thoroughness, included this eschatology of the prophets in its programme of reconstruction, just as it included their ethics, their theology or their politics. Still, even to this school the eschatological message is not the central and organizing fact in determining the significance of the prophets: it lies on the periphery and must rather be judged in its nature

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\* Lecture delivered before the Princeton Seminary Summer School, May 31, 1913.

and extent through a process of deduction from what is conceived to be more central.

That central fact of Hebrew prophecy, in the view of Wellhausen and his followers, is of course this: that the prophets of the 8th century B.C.—notably Amos, the earliest of them—were innovators in preaching an “ethical monotheism”. Taking Jehovah, this little tribal god of the Israelitish people, they made of Him such a deity as that in principle no other god could exist alongside of Him, and a deity who not only was ethically perfect Himself, but also demanded moral conduct of His worshipers. The deduction from this central feature of prophecy with respect to eschatology was made as follows: Jehovah alone is Israel’s God; Jehovah is holy and Israel must put away sin or be punished for it; Israel’s sin is great and demands an unheard-of punishment; Jehovah will come in wrath and sweep away utterly the sinful nation.

Beyond the limits of Israel this coming of Jehovah will indeed smite this nation and that and the other with disaster, yet obviously the view of a prophet like Amos is limited to his little Syrian world, the immediate environment of Israel—Damascus, Philistia, Phœnicia, Edom, Ammon, Moab. Even in Isaiah (the genuine 8th century Isaiah) it is only Assyria, Jehovah’s particular foe, that He will devour with His fire and brimstone. The prophet singled out by critics of this school as the first to preach a world-wide conflagration at Jehovah’s coming is Zephaniah, at the end of the 7th century.

With Ezekiel, a few years later, we already enter, according to this scheme, upon the new, apocalyptic stage of eschatology, which is to mark its course thereafter. That stage is characterized, not by the immediate and necessary deduction of the prophet’s eschatology from his own historical environment, but by a theoretical and bookish system, derived from growing notions of canonical authority, plus a detached and fantastic imagination that delights to paint the future in colors as lurid as the writer’s present is gray

and dull. As the earlier stage may be described as the psychological stage, so this latter may be called the literary stage of eschatology. It culminates in the literary phantasies of the apocalypses, from Daniel to Enoch, Esdras and Revelation.

But what now of the reverse side of the shield? we ask. There is, pervasively, an eschatology of weal as well as an eschatology of woe. Are not all the prophets, early as well as late, continually breaking forth into rhapsodies upon the contemplation of "the latter days", when Israel shall be saved, and all the prosperity, peace, joy and glory of paradise shall be enjoyed once more by Jehovah's people? Is it not Amos himself who tells us of the days "when the plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that soweth seed; and the mountains shall drop sweet wine, and all the hills shall melt"?

No, comes the reply; no, for it is psychologically inconceivable that a prophet with a message to his contemporaries such as Amos bore, should have so stultified himself and so nullified his own preaching, as to paint for hardened, mocking sinners whose judgment was impending, this rosy picture of peace and plenty through the favor of the very deity whom their conduct outraged and summoned to judgment. No! Every such element must go—away with it! Not only that ninth chapter of Amos, but every passage where Amos or Hosea or Micah is made to depict a future of bliss for Israel, must be an interpolation.

When, however, we reach Isaiah, we reach the genius who first devised a theory by which judgment could be tempered with mercy. In his new doctrine of "the remnant", Isaiah succeeded in conserving, as vigorously as his predecessors, the penal phase of Jehovah's appearing, yet added to it His gracious preservation of a limited portion of Israel, the "remnant" that "returns" unto Jehovah and forms the nucleus of the new Israel of a better day.

But again we discover, on closer examination, that "the bed is shorter than that a man can stretch himself on it".

This concession to Isaiah's genius proves insufficient for him to rescue by it all those glorious Messianic passages, which in the present constitution of his book look like the culmination of his eschatology. There is indeed no perfect unanimity among critics of this school in accepting or rejecting those verses in chapters vii, ix, and xi, where Messiah's salvation is celebrated in words that can never lose their power. Yet any divergence as to their genuineness is due simply to varying judgment upon the question, Can this passage, can that passage be deduced, on psychological principles, from Isaiah's premises, or can it not be? For those who answer the question in the negative there remains, of course, only the alternative of relegating the passage to a later writer, who lived after the exile had given to prophecy a new starting-point, viz., the comfort required by a nation already stricken to the uttermost by Jehovah's judgments. With this total reversal of the historical situation by the exile there could and did emerge that final efflorescence of Messianic prophecy, which constitutes one important side of Judaism, and which transmitted its theories to the apocalyptic literature and through this to the Christian Church.

This whole scheme has now, just as the last details of its application have been worked out by Nowack, Stade, Smend, Volz and others, received a blow that threatens to be a death-stroke. It comes from an unexpected quarter. Though there had not been wanting, since the first elaboration of the Wellhausen hypothesis, writers on the history of Israel's religion who opposed it strenuously, such as König, Robertson and Sellin, their arguments were discounted in advance because their angle of approach was held to be "apologetic" and therefore unworthy of serious consideration. In deference to their unanswerable logic it had indeed to be admitted, for example, that Amos was not an absolute innovator, that he had some predecessors who foreshadowed his doctrines, much as "the Reformers before the Reformation" foreshadowed the views of Luther, Zwingli and Calvin. But no serious impression was made on the lines

defended by the adherents of the hypothesis in general, and in particular upon the explanation of Israel's eschatology before the exile through psychological deduction from "ethical monotheism".

Whence then has the blow come to which I refer? I may answer in these well-chosen words of Professor Sellin: "It turned out that the help in this time of need came from a quarter from which we could scarcely have expected it: from Egypt, from Babylon, from the entire ancient orient. The old literatures there discovered and unlocked opened up entirely new perspectives, completely did away with the old points of view, gave us glimpses of an intellectual life, in which that of Palestine also shared even as early as the second millennium [B.C.], by which, too, that of Israel must be estimated, without which it can never be rightly understood. And this new surge has made a breach in the walls of that edifice apparently so firmly constructed, so that it is only a question of time now when in its place a new structure will arise."<sup>1</sup>

Though many scholars have contributed a part in this new movement, we are now concerned particularly with those who have applied the results of archaeology to the eschatology of Israel. Here I shall mention three names, as significant of what appear to be three stages in the process of application and rectification.

First, Professor Hermann Gunkel, in a series of books commencing with his *Creation and Chaos*, 1895,<sup>2</sup> has done the pioneer work, in showing how irreconcilable are the conceptions of the end of the world, paradise, "the old serpent", and other myths that Israel shared with the surrounding nations, with that scheme of eschatology which the current literature on the religion of Israel has been elaborating and defending.

Next to Gunkel stands Professor Hugo Gressmann, whose

<sup>1</sup> *ATliche Proph.*, p. 110.

<sup>2</sup> *Schöpfung und Chaos in Urzeit und Endzeit*. Von Hermann Gunkel. Göttingen, 1895.

work, 1905, on *The Source of the Eschatology of Israel and the Jews*<sup>3</sup> was an exceedingly clever working-out of Gunkel's principles, applying them to the Old Testament with a clearness of logic that left the adherents of the older school of criticism without a leg to stand on. In the eight years that have elapsed since this work appeared it has found no one to answer it: at best a few voices have been lifted in criticism of this or that feature of Gressmann's positive construction. But if I mistake not, its lasting influence will rest in its negative attitude toward the older view, over against which it establishes, once and for all, the irrefutable thesis that the earliest writing prophets of Israel did not create Israel's eschatology, but adapted and used an eschatology that was prevalent in their nation from ages agone.

But around this central thesis of Gressmann there lie, in his book, several other theses, which are indeed in his own view as essential as this one to a correct history of eschatology among the Hebrews, but which in fact are not capable of demonstration, or are even demonstrably false. It is the honor of Professor Ernst Sellin to have discerned between the wheat and the chaff, pointed out in an engaging and convincing style the permanent worth of the former, and separated most of the latter which threatened to discredit the whole. Only last year, 1912, appeared Sellin's study entitled *The Age, Nature and Source of Old Testament Eschatology*.<sup>4</sup> His method is simple. He divides the material into the eschatology of woe, the eschatology of weal, and the eschatology of a Saviour. In each division he first states Gressmann's view over against that of the scholars he was opposing, passes on next to buttress Gressmann's arguments with further considerations establishing the high

<sup>3</sup>*Der Ursprung der israelitisch-jüdischen Eschatologie.* Von Hugo Gressmann. Göttingen, 1905. (Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur d. A. u. N. T. Band I, 6.)

<sup>4</sup>*Der alttestamentliche Prophetismus. Drei Studien.* Von Ernst Sellin. Leipzig, 1912. The second of these three "studies" is the one referred to in the text, entitled *Alter, Wesen und Ursprung der alttestamentlichen Eschatologie.*

antiquity of these eschatological ideas in Israel, then exhibits the inadequacy of Gressmann's interpretation of the nature of those ideas—their essential character even in the popular Hebrew mind,—and ends by tracing their origin, not like Gressmann to ancient extra-Israelitish nature-myths, but to the unique experience of revelation and redemption given to the Hebrew nation at Mt. Sinai upon its deliverance from Egypt. If in the sequel we have any fault to find with Professor Sellin's book, it must be understood that in general it deserves only the warmest praise, and that wherein it errs it errs in not going far enough in the direction in which it does go.

In the remainder of the time allotted to me I shall endeavor to give succinctly a notion of the contents and origin of that body of expectations in Israel, which we group commonly under the title "eschatology", the doctrine of the last things. We shall adopt Sellin's convenient division of material.

### I. The Eschatology of Woe.

When we collect and compare the various utterances of Old Testament writers upon a time of disaster that impends, we discover, first of all, that they may be roughly grouped according to the nature of the phenomena used to describe that time. These phenomena belong either (1) to the sphere of nature, or (2) to the sphere of history. I need not quote the familiar passages in psalm and prophecy that paint for us the impending earthquakes, storms, floods, fires, evil beasts, droughts or pestilences that threaten to annihilate puny and helpless man. And again the threats of coming woe through an invading army—the sword of man—are so pervasive as to require no special illustration. In the face of this obvious division into natural and historical disasters we are compelled to seek the unifying thought that underlies them all.

The school of Wellhausen finds this unity, as we have seen, by interpreting the historical disasters literally and the



natural disasters figuratively. Roughly speaking, the view is this: the prophets, stirred by Israel's need of penal retribution, discern in the political situation of their day—the advance of the Assyrian army, later of the Babylonians—Jehovah's method of punishment. He summons these resistless human forces to accomplish His purpose of final judgment upon His sinful people. No catastrophe of nature that came within the horizon of the prophets' experience was too terrible, none indeed was sufficiently cataclysmic, to serve as a figurative drapery or setting for that scene of Israel's doom.

Gressmann, on the other hand, discovers the underlying unity by taking the natural disasters literally and the historical disasters figuratively. Again, we are speaking only roughly. For it is time now to observe that Gressmann distinguishes three phases of Israel's eschatology: the mythical phase, the popular phase, and the prophetic phase. In general these may be said to be not merely logical phases, but also chronological stages. The cornerstone of Gressmann's edifice is this dictum: nature-myths never arise in historical times. In other words they arise only in primitive, mythopœic times, and all that we find in the literary period are the more or less mutilated ruins of the ancient myth-structures. In Israel long, long before the writing prophets the mythical stage had passed, and that floating eschatological material which the prophets found abroad among their contemporaries and made use of in their messages belonged to the second or popular phase of eschatology. It is of this phase that the remark above made is approximately true: the popular idea of evil to come was essentially the idea of a natural cataclysm, of some indeterminate sort, but universal, unescapable and final. The prophets then gave to this conception abroad in their day a new turn, by discerning in the Assyrian or the Babylonian, as the case might be, the actual means of introducing "the day of wrath, that awful day", and by lending the whole idea that highly ethicized significance which it exhibits in their writings.

Finally, Sellin has shown that the true unity of conception underlying this kaleidoscopic variety in depicting the future of woe, is to be found in something higher than either of the two groups of judgments and back of them both, in the conception, namely, of the sovereignty of Jehovah.

When sympathetically read, these Old Testament writers, from the earliest poetical fragments to the last of the prophets and psalmists, are seen to have deepest down in their minds the thought of their God as Israel's King. As King, He has all the functions of a king. He it is who fights their battles, both to annihilate their foes and to save themselves; and He it is who judges them according to the laws He has enacted for His realm. This is the ancient oriental idea of the king. In Israel we find this sovereignty of Jehovah—under a variety of titles and figures of speech—in literature that by all schools of criticism is accepted as among the earliest monuments of Israel's self-expression. Thus in Jacob's blessing He is the "Shepherd" of Israel. The Red Sea song closes with "Jehovah shall reign as King forever and ever". The Balaam-oracles sing of "Jehovah his God" as "with Israel", and "the shout of a King among them". The blessing of Moses reminded the tribes who recited it that "there was a King in Jeshurun", and that they were "a people saved by Jehovah, the Shield of thy help and the Sword of thy excellency". And the song of Deborah distributes, among the tribes, blessing or cursing according to whether they came or "came not to the help of Jehovah, to the help of Jehovah against the mighty".

Now the true significance of all the lurid details in those canvases of the prophets lies in this, according to Sellin: they are attempts to depict, now by one means, now by another, in the only language available to them, the language of their day and of their hearers, *Jehovah's vindication of His sovereignty in His "day"*. To call that "day of the LORD", so conspicuous in the prophets from Amos to Malachi, simply a "judgment-day", would hardly be doing full justice to the prophets' conception of it. To be sure, there are some

remarkable pictures of that day drawn on the general pattern of a judicial scene, such for example as Isaiah i, Psalm 1, Hosea iv, Micah vi. But Gressmann is right in pointing out that the only judicial scene in Old Testament eschatology where the machinery of the court-room is consistently depicted is that in Daniel vii, where thrones are placed, the books are opened, and sentence is pronounced and executed. The true explanation is doubtless this, that no single figure is adequate in itself alone to convey the writer's conception of Jehovah's majesty, power, wrath and grace. It is His absolute supremacy "in that day" that overpowers the mind, renders all speech vain, and attains fitting expression only by the heaping up, or alternate selection, of all the various traits by which the divine Sovereign manifests Himself to His human subjects. Now it is a tempest from Him who "maketh winds His messengers, flames of fire His ministers" (Ps. civ), that breaks upon the head of His enemies, with the lightnings which mythopœic fancy regarded as the arrows or spear of the deity, and that sweeps them away with the flood that reproduces the deluge of ancient story. Now it is a parching wind from the desert, that ruins vegetation, dries up the bodily frame, produces wasting fever and pestilence, consumes the precious supply of water hoarded through the dry season, fans fires in the dessicated stubble, and sends the wild beasts forth in frenzy to tear or carries the armies of locusts to devour. Again it is the subterranean fires, that burst forth in sulphur or naphtha, to annihilate as with a flaming flood city and field, the whole face of the cultivated land, as when Jehovah of old "overthrew Sodom and Gomorrhah". Or else He who ruleth alike "in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth" summons the hosts of Assyria or Babylon—but too well known!—or the storied squadrons of "the northerner" (Joel ii. 20), that mysterious "scourge of God", whose imaginary terrors seemed more fearful than the cruelties of any familiar foe. In any case it is *Jehovah's* army, *His* mighty arm, *His* glit-

tering sword, that merely executes for Him the sovereign decrees of His just wrath.<sup>5</sup>

In all this we recognize the fundamental correctness of Sellin's position, which is essentially this: (1) Israel at the time of Amos, and long before that 8th century, possessed the conception of a "coming" of Jehovah in the terrors of His royal wrath. (2) Israel expressed that conception in all the variety of coloring that nature about them, their stories of the past, especially of Sinai, and their contemporary political perils suggested, and in language which, because powerfully suffused with the poetic feeling that always accompanies a highly kindled imagination, was saturated with images and allusions that have their roots, partly indeed in ancient myth (like the poetic imagery of every nation), but for the most part in the memorable events that accompanied the birth of the nation—Sodom and Gomorrhah, the plagues of Egypt, the destruction of Pharaoh's host, and the marvelous phenomena witnessed at Sinai. (3) Amos and the other writing prophets "gave ethical depth and point to this eschatology"; but the contrast between their view and that of those to whom they spoke is not the contrast of ethical and "mythical". "However primitive and naïve for the

<sup>5</sup>The reader familiar with the older writers on Messianic prophecy and eschatology will recognize in this insistence by Gunkel and Gressmann upon the universalistic, cosmical character of the "day of Jehovah" a return to that older view, over against the national, particularistic view of it maintained by critics of the psychological school. If Israel's prophets took over from the popular treasury of myth what the people in turn had obtained from a common international inheritance, it is clear that the movement was a narrowing, not a broadening movement. This is of the utmost importance in the interpretation, for example, of a prophet like Amos. If the movement of his thought is, as it appears to be, from the general to the particular, then his view of Israel's relation to the future of woe is just what we should expect it to be. It is not necessary to agree with Gressmann as to the actual source of the elements of prophetic eschatology, into which he goes in great detail (earthquake, storm, volcano, fire, thunder and lightning, war, pestilence, etc.), in order to accept with thankfulness his clear demonstration that all these elements point to the cosmical rather than the national, the universal rather than the particularistic, as the prius implied thereby.

most part the ethical qualities of the popular eschatology may have been,"—I quote Sellin—"it is impossible to deny it all ethical tone, for it was already acquainted with the thought of judgment. . . . And besides, the opposite of mythological is not ethical, but—historico-religious. And the popular eschatology of Israel ceased to be mythological the moment that all those mythical terrors were taken up out of their isolation, and combined into a complex of phenomena, ordained and directed by God, which were to accompany that great day of history when He Himself should come to set up His kingdom in all the earth; but this is as much as to say, from the moment that there existed an eschatology embodied in Israel's religion. . . . The origin of the entire eschatology of the Old Testament rests in the act of revelation at Sinai, whereby was implanted deep in the heart of the nation the seed of hope for a future similar appearance of Jehovah, for the purpose of assuming His unlimited sovereignty of the world."<sup>6</sup>

## II. The Eschatology of Weal.

We have seen that according to the prevailing view of the present day the idea that mediates between the woe and the weal of the "day of Jehovah" is the idea of "the remnant", first conceived by Isaiah, and emphasized by the national experience of exile and partial restoration.

Gressmann is quite dissatisfied with this hypothesis. He attacks it from several different angles. For one thing, the notion of a remnant is misinterpreted by criticism, if it is supposed that it can mediate between a world-catastrophe and a restored paradise beyond. For, "the thought of a remnant", says Gressmann, "belongs essentially to the eschatology of woe. For one speaks naturally of a remnant or of the escaped only after some fearful catastrophe, that has annihilated everything *except a remnant*. . . . Those two or three berries left when the olives are gathered (Is. xxiv), the ten men left in the besieged city (Amos v), the 'two legs and part of an ear' of the lamb recovered by the shep-

<sup>6</sup> Sellin, *op. cit.*, pp. 147 f.

herd from the lion's mouth (Amos iii) contain the idea of the remnant and use it to illustrate the greatness of the disaster. This is comprehensible. But in the eschatology of weal the remnant is only comprehensible as a 'technical term'. Are all the delightful and splendid things that are said of that time of weal to belong originally to a *remnant*? This would be like pouring two or three drops of oil upon the raging waves of ocean. The two facts do not harmonize. A remnant and an eschatology of weal are mutually exclusive."<sup>7</sup>

Gressmann proceeds to show how the prophets developed the idea of the remnant, so as to make of it a new people of Jehovah, who should enjoy the benefits of His reign. His remarks suffice at least to sustain his thesis that this idea of the remnant was evidently not the invention of the prophets, but one adopted by them from the prevalent conceptions of the people. He further proves the impossibility of Isaiah's having originated the idea, from Isaiah's having named his son *Shear-jashub*, "A-remnant-shall-return", without any explanation: "whoever heard it must have known at once what it meant." And this is confirmed by the very plain fact that Isaiah's predecessors had already used "remnant" as a "technical term"; so Amos, for example, in his fifth chapter, "the remnant of Joseph".

After this negative critique of the Wellhausen construction, Gressmann voices his own conviction that in the popular eschatology upon which the prophets thus drew, there was, properly speaking, no mediation between the two sides of the eschatological outlook. Weal and woe were both essential and primitive parts of the ancient myths that Israel inherited from prehistoric times, and, whatever mediation may have existed in that primitive conception—such a mediation, for example, as a universal resurrection after the world-catastrophe was overpast,—that link was forgotten by Israel, at any rate it was missing, and the two phases, the

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<sup>7</sup> Gressmann, *op. cit.*, p. 233.

dread and the hope of "that day" lived on side by side, undisturbed by any demands of logic or system.

When now we turn to Sellin, we find, as before, complete recognition, in the first place, of Gressmann's great service in exhibiting the weakness of the "psychological view" that he combats; in the second place, valuable contributions to Gressmann's arguments establishing the high antiquity of the notion in Israel of an eschatological salvation and bliss; but also, in the third place, a much needed criticism of the whole argument about the "remnant" and the mediation between destruction and salvation in the "day of the Lord". Let us examine this critique, and gather up its results.

For one thing, there existed in the language of ancient Israel a series of expressions, analogous to "remnant", that present the same phenomena of "technical terms", the edge of which has been dulled by long familiarity and use. Such is the phrase "to turn the captivity" (שוב שבות), which we find used, for instance, even of Job's restoration to health and prosperity, where there is no thought of a captivity, but only of a sudden, complete and lasting change of fortune.<sup>8</sup> Such, too, are "hiding-place", "covert", and the like, as in Is. xxvi, where we read, "Come, my people, enter into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee (a touch reminiscent of the deluge-narrative, 'and Jehovah shut him in'<sup>9</sup>); hide thyself for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast."

Again that idea of a resurrection of Jehovah's people is by no means uncommon or only late. In Hosea vi. 1-3 we apparently possess a passage that represents what was, not the prophetic, but the popular idea in the 8th century as to the manner in which Israel could participate in the joys that lay beyond Jehovah's judgments: "Jehovah hath torn, and He will heal us; He hath smitten, and He will bind us up. After two days He will revive us: on the third day He will raise us up, and we shall live before Him."

<sup>8</sup> Job xlii. 10.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. also Gilgamesh Epic, 11th tablet, col. ii, line 34.

But after all, the prevailing notion among the contemporaries of the prophets was clearly this, that while the future woe was for the other nations, the future bliss was for Israel. It is against this view that Amos thunders out his famous paradox (iii. 2): "You only have I known among all the families of the earth: therefore I will visit upon you all your iniquities." Unethical as the idea was in its practical effect, it was nevertheless based upon a very ancient and respectable theory of the moral superiority of Israel to the nations (*cf.*, *e.g.*, Tamar's "no such thing ought to be done in Israel" in 2 Sam. xiii. 12), though mixed with a perverted, heathenish conception of the covenant-relationship between Jehovah and Israel. But as the counterpart to the doctrine of Jehovah's use of the nations as a scourge for Israel's sins, there lived on in Israel from the pre-prophetic into the prophetic period the doctrine of Jehovah's use of Israel as a scourge for the nations. For example, in Mic. iv. 13 we read: "Arise and thresh, O daughter of Zion; for I will make thy horn iron, and I will make thy hoofs brass, and thou shalt beat in pieces many peoples."

Whoever, then, were to become the participants in this ultimate salvation and bliss, ancient Israel had no difficulty in discovering some such objects, coinciding now with a limited fragment of the nation, howsoever selected, now with all the nation, and now with an indefinite multitude who should, by attaching themselves to Israel through conquest or voluntary submission, become incorporated into the people whom Jehovah saves in His great "day".

Moreover, it is impossible to deny all ethical quality to this discrimination that Jehovah exercises on "that day", even in the popular estimation. It is true that the colors of paradise are used to paint the picture of this eschatology of weal, but it is the paradise of Israel's type, not the mere mythological paradise of the nations. That is to say, just as the paradise of the protoplasts was an ethical paradise, even in the oldest tradition into which divisive criticism distributes Genesis, so also the eschatological "paradise re-



gained" is to be characterized by ethical perfectness as well as by natural charm. After the sketch of that "age of gold" when "the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid", and all the rest of that familiar idyllic picture in Isaiah xi, the prophet concludes thus: that "all the earth shall be full of the knowledge of Jehovah as the waters cover the sea"; and he gives this as his reason for predicting that "there shall be none to do evil or be corrupt in all my holy mountain".

The fundamental fault of Gressmann, here as before, lies in his failure to grasp the sovereign presence of Jehovah Himself as the central feature of that time of weal to which Israel looked forward. All of that transformation of nature, that covenanting with the beasts of the field, that slaying of leviathan, that limitless bounty of field and herd, of tree and stream, which combine to give at best but an inadequate expression to Israel's expectations of a "paradise regained",—all this has as the vital, pulsating heart of the system, the restored communion of man with God. He shall dwell among them, and Israel shall dwell safely. He shall teach them His *torah*, and judge righteously among them. He shall offer Himself in a new covenant of love to His people,—such is the burden of Hosea's love-song of Jehovah: "I will betroth thee unto Me forever; yea, I will betroth thee unto Me in righteousness, and in justice, and in lovingkindness, and in mercies. I will even betroth thee unto Me in faithfulness; and thou shalt know Jehovah" (Hos. ii). Such, too, is the climax of Zephaniah's song of salvation: "Jehovah thy God is in the midst of thee, a mighty one who will save; He will rejoice over thee with joy; He will be silent [so the margin] in His love; He will joy over thee with singing" (Zeph. iii).

It is the especial desert of Sellin to have shown in this connection, not only that this thought is the central, organizing thought in the eschatology of weal, but also that it is as old as Israel's literature, where the conception of Jehovah as the Saviour and Deliverer is associated, on the one hand,

with His universal kingship, and, on the other hand, with all the separate details of the eschatological hope.

### III. The Eschatology of a Saviour.

This brings us very suitably to our final subject, the origin of the Messianic idea in Israel.

The idea of a Messiah, if limited strictly to the expectation of a future king, and explained solely on the "psychological" principles of the Wellhausian evolution-scheme, cannot have arisen before there was a king in Israel, that is, before David; nor even, apparently, before prophetism and kingship had reached their final breach with each other, that is to say, before Isaiah fell out with King Ahaz; nor even, to be quite accurate and logical, as Volz at last has shown, before the exile, with its complete overthrow of the Davidic dynasty. This progressive banishment of the Messianic expectation from the præxilic literature of Israel is an excellent illustration of what our German cousins call *Systemzwang*,—the compulsory force of a theory, that drives on and on to a thorough-going readaptation of facts and materials to its remorseless logic.

For there are facts. And what are the facts? Not simply this, that the Davidic house is already typical, for psalmist and prophet, of the Coming King promised of that line, centuries before the exile; but also this, that such a personage, without the title "King" indeed, yet with all the attributes of sovereignty, is presupposed long before there was any king in Israel save the divine King. To say nothing, therefore, of the Messianic psalms (ii, xxi, xlv, lxxii, cx), which are simply inconceivable in the time of the Maccabees and can only belong to the old monarchical period, we have the "Shiloh" passage in Jacob's blessing, and the "scepter out of Israel" celebrated by Balaam's oracle, the context of both of which lends them not only a very early date of origin, but also a clearly eschatological setting. And among the various explanations of the "Immanuel"-child of Isaiah vii and Micah v, the most natural—to say the least—is that which sees in the allusive manner of both prophets,

especially in referring to "the virgin" or "her who travaileth", evidence that these prophets did not invent the features of this wonderful child, but took them over, as they took over the other features of their eschatology, from the accepted ideas of their day. It was in the use they made of these ideas that their individual contribution and advance lay.

What then shall we make of a figure such as this, alongside of that figure of the expected Jehovah, whose sovereignty was found by us to be the central fact in all Israel's expectations? What room is there for a Messianic King alongside of that divine King?

The marvel only grows when we discover divine attributes, divine titles, divine activities, associated with the Messiah-figure Himself? For illustration of what I mean I may cite Micah's words, "His goings forth are from of old, even from everlasting", Isaiah's ascriptions, "Mighty God, Everlasting Father", Zechariah's prediction, "His dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth". Preëxistence, essential deity, universal rule. Yet, on the other hand, we cannot take refuge in the view that this is only Jehovah Himself under another guise. For Jehovah's relation to this person is clearly depicted as that of the One who will "raise Him up", or "set Him on His throne", or "bring Him forth", or supply the "strength" and majesty" in which He shall rule, or the "spirit" by which He shall judge.

Israel's divine King, and yet not Jehovah! *This*, in a nation of monotheists, and most uncompromisingly from the lips of Israel's most uncompromising monotheists! What does it mean? And why do the two expectations persist from age to age side by side: "He comes," that is, Jehovah cometh; "He comes," that is, Messiah cometh?

The only explanation of this riddle lies in a *wholly un-psychological origin* for this figure of Messiah. In this we can agree with Gunkel and Gressmann over against the prevalent criticism of the day. Where we cannot agree with them is in their positive statement of its origin,

namely, that this figure was derived from mythical material that wandered into Israel in early days without having any organic connection with Israel's religion.

The entire field of ancient oriental literature has been searched most diligently to discover traces of a coming Saviour-King among the nations. More has been read into the lavish praises and self-gratulations of Babylonian, Assyrian, Persian and Egyptian rulers than even the wildest flights of egotism or flattery could conceive. But we may safely assert, in the words of Professor Sellin (who uses spaced type to emphasize them), that "the ancient orient does not know the eschatological king". At most we may perhaps discern in the "court style" of these foreign scribes a certain analogy with what may have been the "court style" at the court of David and Solomon, of Jeroboam and Hezekiah, and may therefore have contributed elements of form to the language in which this eschatological king is celebrated. This is hypothesis, but it is not in itself improbable. Yet this deals only with form, not with substance. The substance of this Messianic doctrine, we must hold with Sellin, runs its roots back into "a tradition older than the revelation at Sinai, which was then, it is true, united most intimately with the fundamental eschatological thought (*i.e.*, that Jehovah shall be king 'in that day') that sprang up therefrom, and in the main became subordinate thereto, yet which also maintained persistently a certain independence".<sup>10</sup>

From this point, however, we must part company, in a measure, even with Professor Sellin. We do not feel, with him, that "in the moment that we begin to pursue this pre-Mosaic tradition, we are treading on the soil of hypothesis". We believe that the patriarchal period, as depicted for us in the book of Genesis, is firm historical ground. In passing from the principles of Wellhausen to those of Gressmann, Baentsch and others, criticism is just discovering that the elephant that bears up the world must have a tor-

<sup>10</sup> Sellin, *op. cit.*, p. 175.

toise on which to stand. How long must it be before criticism awakes to the stupendous discovery that the tortoise, too, has probably something on which to stand? Just as back of Amos stands Moses, so also back of Moses stand Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, with whose God Jehovah at Sinai took pains to identify Himself; and to this family of Semites, immigrants to Canaan from the Mesopotamian lands, God had given a promise, world-wide in its outlook, gracious in its terms, unconditional in its pledge, that in their seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed. And back of Abraham, again, we believe that the same tradition of a purpose of salvation was associated with the line of Shem, in whose tents Jehovah should dwell, and that it finds its beginnings at the gate of "paradise lost", where "the seed of the woman" is to "bruise" the serpent's "head". In this chain of tradition we see, starting with the weal once possessed but forfeited, and renewed at each of those crises when Jehovah made fresh covenant with men of His choice, how the covenanted blessing of the future, the essence of the eschatological hope—or "comfort", as Lamech, the father of Noah, first calls it—how this covenanted blessing of the future attaches itself to a human "seed", until at length it is designated as of the "seed of David according to the flesh", and from that woman of "Bethlehem Ephratha", who "travaileth" in birth of Him "whose goings forth are from of old, from everlasting."

*Princeton.*

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