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A STUDY OF THE MESSIANIC CONCEPTS IN
THE APOCRYPHA AND PSEUDEPIGRAPHA

A Thesis
Presented to
the Faculty of
Asbury Theological Seminary

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Theology

by
Wesley Edward Vanderhoof
June 1968

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CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM, DEFINITIONS, AND ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

To turn the pages of one's Bible from the last words of the prophet Malachi to the first words of Matthew's Gospel is to do more than pass from the Old Testament to the New. It is to span, by a simple stroke of the finger, a period of four centuries. That these four centuries were "silent years" may be true in so far as the Bible is concerned, but from an historical-literary point of view no designation could be farther from the truth. The period of time from the end of the Old Testament until the resumption of prophecy from the lips of John the Baptist was certainly not a period of silence. On the contrary, it was an era of intense literary activity. A portion of the literature produced during those several decades is preserved for us in the writings commonly known as apocryphal, a term which, in its broadest sense, includes also the Pseudepigrapha.

It is this literature which contributes greatly to any true understanding of the New Testament. For how is one to comprehend the thought of the Jews in the time of Christ unless he is first familiar with the background of that thought? There is a sense, then, in which the words of Booth are not only true, but also worthy of consideration:

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". . . The New Testament did not come directly out of the Old."¹ The geographical setting may, in both cases, be the same, but the social, political, cultural, intellectual, and religious settings are vastly different. By itself, the Old Testament does not completely explain the New. Nor can one explain the world into which Christ came as the product of Roman influence alone. Rather, the New Testament age is the result of the tides of history during those four hundred years or so which preceded it. These tides of history account for the obvious changes of thought between Malachi and Matthew. Why, for example, did not Jesus draw on the words of Malachi, chapter three, to explain his messianic mission to the world, as John the Baptist expected him to do?²

I. THE PROBLEM

Statement of the problem. "It is the Messianic hope, more than any other element of Jewish life," wrote Ascham, "which accounts for the preservation of Israel through centuries of social disorder and destructive calamities."³ Few will deny the validity of that statement. At the same

¹Henry Kendall Booth, The Bridge Between the Testaments (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1929), p. vii.

²See Luke 3:17 and 7:18-23.

³John Bayne Ascham, The Religion of Judah (New York: The Abingdon Press, 1920), p. 256.

time, however, the student of Scripture finds, or seems to³ find, varying concepts of the Messiah, which appear to have developed out of history. That is to say, the Jewish concept of the Messiah seems to have undergone changes from time to time in direct relation to the historical situations in which the Jews found themselves.

In order, then, for one to understand the Jewish messianism of the New Testament it is necessary that he first analyze the changes which took place in messianic thinking between the Testaments. Due to the fact that these changes are reflected in a vast amount of literature, this study concerns itself with only a portion of the writings of the intertestamental period, namely, the apocryphal works. What are the messianic concepts which were held by the Jews of this age as shown in the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha? Do they differ from the messianism of the Old Testament? If so, to what extent and why?

The purpose of the study. It is the purpose of this study to trace the messianism of the apocryphal literature in an effort to grasp the messianic concepts of the age, and, by so doing, to aid in the understanding of New Testament messianism. The thesis, depending as it did on the research of others, makes no claim to uniqueness. Rather, an attempt has been made to collect and summarize the various views of the scholars in an effort to bring these views to bear upon a

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specific subject within a definite historical period in relation to a particular type of literature. It needs to be noted that of all the doctrines held by the Jews throughout their history "none reflected so sensitively the changing moods and fortunes of the Jewish people" as the belief in the Messiah.⁴ It is the purpose of this thesis to study and summarize the messianism of a specific type of literature, to show it to be a natural product of its age.

The relationship of the study to previous investigation.

As has previously been noted, this subject is in no sense a unique one. Able scholars have, through the centuries, given attention to this doctrine, and, in some cases, have treated it within the same historical period. Joseph Klausner has given two chapters to the identical theme which this thesis presents.⁵ Cuthbert Lattey has traced the concept of messianism in a single apocryphal work.⁶ Numerous others have made significant contributions in this particular area. This study, then, is concerned with collecting related information from these various works and with

⁴Jacob B. Agus, The Evolution of Jewish Thought From Biblical Times to the Opening of the Modern Era (London: Abelard-Schuman, 1959), p. 28.

⁵Joseph Klausner, The Messianic Idea in Israel (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1955), pp. 248-386.

⁶Cuthbert Lattey, "The Messianic Expectation in 'The Assumption of Moses'," The Catholic Biblical Quarterly, IV (1942), 9-21.

interpreting that information. There was the obvious -
problem of deciding which arguments were the most valid, and
of rejecting some conclusions in favor of others.

The scope and limitations of the study. While the thesis title is intended to define the limits of the study, perhaps a brief word is necessary. The study is limited, for the most part, to the concepts regarding the person of the Messiah, and is not concerned with the many related doctrines of the messianic age, the judgment of the world, and other eschatological themes. However, it will be necessary to touch upon one or two of these doctrines because of their being linked with the doctrine of the personal Messiah. Further, while the center of focus is the apocryphal books, it is obvious that other sources will have to be consulted, especially in chapters two and three. For the purposes of this study, no attention is given to the New Testament Apocrypha.

II. DEFINITION OF IMPORTANT TERMS

Messianism. In this study the term 'messianism' is applied to any and all suggestions of a personal Messiah. The term is not synonymous, as Bonsirven takes it to be, with national consummation.⁷ From the writings themselves

⁷Joseph Bonsirven, Palestinian Judaism in the Time of Jesus Christ, trans. William Wolf (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1964), p. 174.

it is obvious that the Jew often conceived of messianic activity as the work of God Himself. The study is further complicated by the fact that there is a de-personalized messianic concept. In these situations it is impossible to limit the study to the personal references alone.

Messiah. The term "Messiah" is taken to mean an eschatological figure having several differing characteristics and titles. It is not limited to those instances where the word "Messiah," or its cognates "Christ" and "Anointed," appear in the text.

Apocryphal literature. The term apocryphal literature is given its broadest meaning, including also the Pseudepigrapha. When the word "Apocrypha" appears with the capital letter, it refers to that portion of the intertestamental literature which has traditionally been called by that name to distinguish it from the Pseudepigrapha.

Intertestamental period. The intertestamental period is regarded as that period of time from Malachi to the commencement of the preaching of John the Baptist. For the purpose of this study, the apocalyptic Book of Daniel and the apocalyptic portions of the Book of Ezekiel are considered to have been written prior to this period.

The sources. Apart from the material presented in the second and third chapters, the primary sources of information were the two volumes by R. H. Charles.⁸ Goodspeed's American translation⁹ was consulted frequently for noting any particular differences in expression.

The organization of the thesis. Chapter two deals with the development of messianism within the Old Testament, in an attempt to set the stage for the analysis of intertestamental messianism. Chapter three presents a brief historical sketch of the intertestamental period, a survey of the sources and characteristics of the literature, a short section on the universality of apocalyptic literature and messianic hope, and closes with a few comments on the attitude of the synagogue toward apocalyptic literature.

Chapters four and five form the body of the thesis. They give the essence of the messianic passages from the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha respectively, quoting the passages and analyzing the view of the Messiah as presented in those passages. Each chapter closes with a summary.

⁸R. H. Charles, The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1913), 2 volumes.

⁹Edgar J. Goodspeed, The Apocrypha: An American Translation (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1938).

The final chapter summarizes the entire thesis, presenting the changed messianic concept of the intertestamental period's apocryphal literature as the product of the historical struggles of the age.

The bibliography, while it is certainly not exhaustive, represents a large portion of the literature which is related to the history, the literature, and the doctrines of the period. Foreign titles were omitted due to the problem of translation, but whenever possible, the English translations of these works were cited.

Method of procedure. In approaching this study, both inductive and deductive methodology were used. At the beginning of the research there was a great deal of reading in the area of the history of the intertestamental period. Then attention was given to several volumes which sought to present studies on the messianic concept, either from the Old Testament, the New Testament, both Testaments, or historically. In addition it was necessary to read about the characteristics of apocalyptic literature because of the obvious relationship between this type of literature and the apocryphal works. Other related subjects, as they were seen to be important to the total project, were investigated. While a strictly inductive analysis was the goal, it was apparent that the conclusions of others would have to be considered. Commentators, exegetes, and other critics were

consulted when the need for their opinions became obvious. Primarily, however, the fourth and fifth chapters represent the results of direct analysis of the passages which, in the author's opinion, appear to be messianic.

CHAPTER II

THE DEVELOPMENT OF MESSIANISM IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

I. INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

That there is a relationship between Jewish history and messianic hope is obvious from a study of the literature of various eras of that history. The changing fortunes of the Jews throughout their national life certainly had an effect upon their messianism. Agus, speaking about this inter-relationship, reminds us that the concept of the Messiah

. . . was too complex and many-sided to be defined by any one rigid formula. Nor was it unaffected in any single period by the changing fortunes of the Jewish people. As the vital "hope of Israel," drawing to itself the resentment, wrath, and protest of the people against the miseries of their lot as well as their fondest pictures of a perfect world, the Messianic hope was like a glittering star in the heavens, scintillating with the richness of its lights, presenting vibrantly varying phases of its being to different people at different times. . . . Consistently and invariably, the dominant facet of the Messianic concept reflected the historical travail of the Jewish people, serving as the counterpoise to earthly events, the consolation for their wretchedness and the consummation of their hopes.¹

Ascham adds to this that "Jewish Messianism had little fixed content."² Cheyne, tracing the development of Jewish

¹Jacob B. Agus, The Evolution of Jewish Thought From Biblical Times to the Opening of the Modern Era (London: Abelard-Schuman, 1959), p. 112.

²John Bayne Ascham, The Religion of Judah (New York: The Abingdon Press, 1920), p. 256.

messianism, says that it was not until the eighth century - B.C. that the idea of the rise of a personal Davidic king became a constant element of messianic prophecy. Even though Jeremiah spoke of the righteous sprout of David's stem, as yet, Cheyne declares, we have no fixed doctrine of a personal Messiah.³ The main problem encountered in Cheyne's words centers around the expression "personal Messiah." Even as late as the time of Jeremiah, he maintains, there was no concept of a personal Messiah. This is not entirely true, however. Bittenweiser, for example, claims that "though the name is of later origin, the idea of a personal Messiah runs through the Old Testament. It is the natural outcome of the prophetic future hope."⁴ Certainly as early as the Proto-evangelium there are personal implications.

From the earliest of the prophecies regarding the Anointed One down to the close of the Old Testament there were many particular concepts added to, or derived from, this earliest revelation. The progress of this messianic revelation may be traced through the Old Testament with the help of works such as that of Huffman.⁵

³T. K. Cheyne, "Messiah," Encyclopaedia Biblica (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1902), III, col. 3060.

⁴Moses Bittenweiser, "Messiah," The Jewish Encyclopedia (New York: The Funk and Wagnalls Company, 1901), VIII, 506.

⁵Jasper A. Huffman, The Progressive Unfolding of the Messianic Hope (New York: George H. Doran Company, 1924), 186 pp.

Of immediate concern is the progress of the messianic hope from its beginning to the close of the Old Testament. This summary is necessary background before the messianism of the intertestamental period can be evaluated properly.

II. A SUMMARY OF THE MESSIANIC UNFOLDING

One needs to recall that the Jews who returned from the exile were quite different from those who had been carried to Babylon. There was not only a different type of religion, but there was a form of nationalism which perhaps spoke of the days of David, although hardly resembling them. The history of messianic thought shows that this was clearly the case. The consideration of this question, then, is paramount: Does the messianism of the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha represent a survival, a revival, or an adaptation of Old Testament messianism? This, indeed, is the basic question which this thesis attempts to answer.

Messianism had faded during the exile. Conditions seemed hopeless. There remained perhaps a feeble wish, but this can hardly be regarded as expectancy. With the changing fortunes of the Jews, however, as the result of the edict of Cyrus, messianic expectation again gripped the people of the nation. Men's minds were driven back to the utterances of the pre-exilic prophets. Reflecting upon these prophecies, the hopeful Jews viewed them in general terms, and thus sought to fill in the particular aspects of the messianism

presented by the earlier writers in terms which were re-
garded as vague. This development took the form of apoca-
lyptic.

But it is not entirely correct to say that apocalyptic had its birth in post-exilic times. Ezekiel and Daniel, prophets of the exile, clothed their messianic predictions in the language of apocalyptic. It may have been this intense optimism that kept the nation alive during those dark years of captivity. Bittenweiser sees in the messianism of the exilic period a situation similar to that which occurred in the fifth century of the Christian era. "As after the decline of the Holy Roman Empire the saga arose of the return of the emperor-hero Barbarossa," he says, "so, after the fall of the nation, the Jews of the exile dreamed of the coming of the second David, who would reestablish them as a glorious nation."⁶ Frost, on the other hand, holds that the messianic concept which came out of the exile was an attempt to produce a messianism by eschatologizing an already-established mythological account of a Savior.⁷

These attempted explanations can hardly be accepted as solutions. They fail to take into account the messianic hope

⁶Moses Bittenweiser, "Messiah," The Jewish Encyclopedia (New York: The Funk and Wagnalls Company, 1901), VIII, 506.

⁷S. B. Frost, "Eschatology and Myth," Vetus Testamentum II (1952), 80.

which existed in the ages preceding the captivity. To remove the eschatological messianism of the earlier prophets, as Berry has done,⁸ is also unsatisfactory. On the basis of his reconstruction of the prophecies, he is able to say that apart from II Samuel 7:12, 14-16 "there are no Messianic predictions till after the exile."⁹ Yet any chronological study of the unfolding of messianic prophecy forces the conclusion that there are messianic elements which are a part of the authentic messages of the great pre-exilic prophets.

Isaiah, in chapters 7-12, refers to an extraordinary king of the future. Amos (9:11) foretells the time when the shattered fortunes of Judah will be restored. Hosea (3:5) looks forward to the reunion of the two kingdoms under David's line. Isaiah includes in his prophecy the idea of a unique personal ruler who will bring special glory to David's house, with which Micah concurs (5:2ff). Ascham contends that Isaiah 13:9-22 is the beginning of the apocalyptic literature which, as a type of expression, figures so largely in later messianic predictions.¹⁰ Therefore, unless one radically alters the order of the prophecies, it must be admitted that

⁸George R. Berry, "Messianic Predictions," Journal of Biblical Literature, XLV (1926), 233-235.

⁹Ibid., p. 233.

¹⁰John Bayne Ascham, The Religion of Judah (New York: The Abingdon Press, 1920), p. 135.

there are both personal and apocalyptic hints long before the post-exilic age.

It must be recognized, then, that prophecy was the forerunner of apocalypticism, and that the latter sprang up naturally from the seed sown by the inspired prophets, even though, as Andrews has noted, there are some very obvious differences amidst the similarities.¹¹ That the prophets did not always expect deliverance within their own lifetimes is quite obvious. Apocalyptic, eschatological elements are not foreign to the prophetic ideal, and most of the elements which can be identified as eschatological and apocalyptic within the intertestamental literature have their foundation in the concepts of the earlier prophets.

At the same time one cannot deny that history did influence messianism. It particularized the concepts. It nationalized them, especially after the exile. In fact, historical movements introduced some rather bizarre elements into the prophetic stream.

From the beginning, the messianic idea in Israel had a strong nationalistic tinge,¹² and the "idea of the divine

¹¹H. T. Andrews, "Apocalyptic Literature," A Commentary on the Bible, Arthur S. Peake, ed. (London: Thomas Nelson & Sons, n. d.), 431.

¹²Israel Abrahams, Judaism (London: Archibald Constable & Co. Ltd., 1907), p. 90.

king fitted perfectly into the Messianic perspective."¹³ ¹⁶
The concept of the kingly-Messiah "was not in itself an eschatological idea, properly speaking."¹⁴ It had been introduced early into the stream of messianic expectation, apart from an eschatological context. It is not surprising that the period of the monarchy should produce such a hope. That David should be, not only the pattern, but the progenitor, was a natural progression of thought.

Later, Jewish doctrine apparently censored the personal references to the Messiah, or else interpreted them away, for Jewish thought in the early centuries of the Christian era stopped emphasizing the person of the Messiah and began rather to stress the restoration of the nation.¹⁵ Thus Bokser can say,

The messianic theme, as conceived in Judaism . . . is not personalized. Its emphasis falls on the substantive content of the hope, not on the human mediator who is to help in its victory. And the hope involves the dawn of a new epoch, leading to the universal acknowledgment of God's sovereignty, to the banishment of idolatry and falsehood from the human heart, and correspondingly, to the perfection of the world in the image of the ideals of the divine kingdom. But there is no sharp break with the realities of historical existence.¹⁶

¹³Joseph Bonsirven, Theology of the New Testament (London: Burns & Oates, 1963), p. 35.

¹⁴Ibid.

¹⁵Joseph Bonsirven, Palestinian Judaism in the Time of Jesus Christ (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1964), p. 172.

¹⁶Ben Zion Bokser, Judaism: Profile of a Faith (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1963), p. 125.

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A systematic study of the Old Testament messianic idea shows, however, that Bokser's observation is not entirely correct. It is true, according to the prophecies in Isaiah 2 and Micah 4, that the "reference to the climactic development of history involves no personal messiah," but that it rather envisions "a new age, a new epoch, in which man will have transcended the present evils, in which history will have changed from the conflicts and group hostilities . . . to a condition of universal harmony and peace, among individuals and nations."¹⁷ But to conclude from this prophecy that the doctrine of a personal Messiah came into being only as the result of a people's desire, is hardly justifiable.

Bokser says further, "It was natural that the belief in historic redemption eventually assume personalization and be extended to a corollary doctrine, that a great leader will arise to lead the world to this consummation."¹⁸ Such a view does not do justice to the biblical unfolding of the messianic theme. Certainly there are personal elements earlier.

After the time of Isaiah and Micah the throne of David obviously suffered a decline in power and prestige. With North Israel's fall the hopes of a reunited kingdom after the pattern of David's seemed impossible of realization. With this decline of influence there was a corresponding tendency

¹⁷Ibid., pp. 112, 113.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 115.

toward vagueness in reference to the ideal kingship. Zephaniah, Nahum, and Habakkuk make no reference to him at all. Jeremiah, and later Ezekiel, do keep the hope before the people, however, as an incentive to be expectant even in disaster, for God, they said, would certainly restore His people. In speaking of that restoration, both of these writers speak of a particular individual who will be the agent of deliverance.¹⁹

After Ezekiel, and during the remaining years of the exile, the hope of a prominent, preeminent king of David's house seems to disappear. The hope comes out strongly again, however, at the time of the restoration. Apparently the figure of Zerubbabel was regarded messianically, although the prophets seem to have spoken of a time and a person far in the future. It must be recognized that Zechariah and Haggai may not have understood the chronology of their prophecies, but being moved by the Spirit of God they preached what they heard from the Lord without real knowledge of the time of fulfillment. It may not be incorrect to assume, of course, that they perhaps did anticipate fulfillment of their words within their own lifetimes.

At this point in history a new feature was introduced, namely, the concept of the high-priest as the sign of the

¹⁹James Crichton, "Messiah," The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia (Chicago: The Howard-Severance Company, 1915), III, 2040.

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coming Branch (Zech. 3:8). In this connection it is noteworthy that even with the emphasis upon kingship, Zechariah spoke of the Messiah as coming, not on a splendid charger like a warrior king, in the Davidic image, but rather upon the foal of an ass, righteous and victorious, yet lowly and peaceful, strong by the power of God to help and save. Malachi does not mention the king concept. Many of the Psalms, however, point out the fact that the promise made to David was not forgotten by the Jews, and the language is that of certainty regarding the Messiah's fulfilling that promise in all its grandeur.

Also interesting is the contrast between the views of Jeremiah and Ezekiel regarding the messianic kingdom. There is general agreement on the expectation of the king, but the program or influence of the hoped-for king differs. Jeremiah speaks of the salvation of the heathen, while Ezekiel is less tolerant of them and seems to assign them, almost without restriction, to destruction. Later messianism, as it is reflected in the apocryphal literature, is more closely related to the latter view, as will be seen. Malachi agrees with Jeremiah regarding the universal influence of the Messiah.

Berry maintains that the messianic king concept was simply an addition which was regarded as a necessary detail in order to complete the picture of restoration linked with a material kingdom. He believes that the rationale for this

can be traced to the promise in II Samuel 7. By the time of the exile, and later, this concept had become, he believes, a part of a tradition which these prophets chose not to destroy, but rather to accept for the sake of their message. The personal kingly Messiah of Isaiah 11 he discounts because he regards the passage as "the latest Old Testament passage" which "thus reflects the late apocalyptic tendency."²⁰

One does well to agree with Cheyne, who maintains that by the time the final books of the Old Testament were written the historical kingship had gone by. The idea alone remained. But that does not suggest that the idea, or ideal, was removed from reality. Israel looked again for an anointed king who would not only succeed, but surpass, the imperfect kings of history. The true Jews were content to hold that for the time being the "true king" remained hidden with God.²¹

To the whole concept of the restoration and consummation of the kingdom the messianic king is central. Neither the prophet like unto Moses nor the priest of Aaron's line is regarded as the main character in the drama of national redemption. But it is quite clear that prophetic and priestly functions were to be the work of the king. The Messiah, then, was construed as both righteous and royal. Jeremiah, in

²⁰George Berry, "Messianic Predictions," Journal of Biblical Literature, XLV (1926), 236, 237.

²¹T. K. Cheyne, "Messiah," Encyclopaedia Biblica (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1902), III, col. 3058.

30:9-21, connects the regal and religious elements. Zechariah follows the same procedure (6:11ff). The same is the case in Psalm 110, according to the interpretation given in Hebrews 7. Kohler holds that the term "anointed one" originally applied to any of the kings of Israel, and that "it grew in meaning until it comprised the highest hopes of the nation."²² Thus, he maintains, instead of the doctrine of the Messiah taking on kingly elements, the messianic elements were read into the idea of kingship. With this view Abrahams is in essential agreement, calling attention to the fact that the term "Messiah," as a special title, is never applied in the Old Testament to the unique king of the future, except in Daniel 9:25, a difficult passage, to be sure, where the Hebrew is rendered "Messiah-Prince." For this reason he believes that when a name was sought for the king of salvation, or restoration, the term "Anointed One (Messiah)," which was used of the royal dignitary, was appropriated,²³ perhaps for lack of a more descriptive term. But these arguments are not entirely convincing.

Of all the characteristics attributed to the coming Messiah, two gained prominence in the years immediately

²²Kaufman Kohler, Jewish Theology Scientifically and Historically Considered (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1923), p. 378.

²³Israel Abrahams, Studies in Pharisaism and the Gospels (Cambridge: The University Press, 1917), p. 137.

following the return to the homeland. The aspect of the conquering hero-king gained favor alongside of the aspect of the supernatural, divinely-appointed, eschatological being. In the hopes of the Jews the two aspects were generally fused together. The image which resulted was that of a mystically favored, divinely chosen person, who would free Israel from its political chains and usher in an era of well-being for man such as the world had never known.²⁴ Basically this is the image which Daniel sought to present by his use of the expression "son of man."

Thus, as the messianic hope developed, two elements gained priority, both of prophetic origin: one national, the other religious and universal. Kohler says,

The latter [universalism] is the logical outcome of the monotheism of the great exilic seer, who based his stirring pictures of the glorious future of Israel upon the all-encompassing knowledge of God possessed by the Chosen People. The classic expression of this hope appears in Isaiah II, 1-4, and Micah IV, 1-14. . . . We note, indeed, that no reference to the Messiah or a king of the house of David appears either in this passage or any of the prophecies of Deutero-Isaiah. Justice and peace for all humanity are expected through the reign of God alone. The specific Messianic character of this prophecy took shape only in its association with the older national hope, voiced by the prophet Isaiah.²⁵

²⁴Jacob B. Agus, The Evolution of Jewish Thought From Biblical Times to the Opening of the Modern Era (London: Abelard-Schuman, 1959), p. 112.

²⁵Kohler, op. cit., p. 379.

Kohler, then, sees the universal reign of God as the primary thrust of Jewish messianic prophecy. Particularism or nationalism he sees as a later, corrupt interpretation on the basis of historical situation. While it must be admitted that this is generally true, this view does not do justice to the earlier prophecies which speak in nationalistic terms, nor does it accept the probability that the prophecies uttered by Isaiah belong to an early period, a period before the exile.

Much of modern scholarship, then, places the beginning of the concept of a personal Messiah in the period of the exile. The characteristic description of this personal Messiah, as he is viewed by these scholars, is that of the supermundane figure, chosen by God and given the prerogatives of royalty and the power of the ideal Jewish warrior. These concepts, according to many, are implied in the term "son of man" which, in its earliest form, did not carry this idea at all. Black, for example, holds that the name originally meant simply "man," but that it came to represent, to these apocalyptic dreamers, "God's righthand man" which he regards as merely a collective symbol for the nation of Israel cast into an apocalyptic setting. He points to Psalm 80 for evidence of this meaning. Accordingly, he interprets the vision of Daniel 7 after this manner.²⁶ It is this symbol,

²⁶Matthew Black, "Unsolved New Testament Problems: The 'Son of Man' in the Old Biblical Literature," The Expository Times, LX (October, 1948), 11-15.

he believes, which carried over into the apocryphal, apocalyptic literature of the intertestamental period. But, although the term "son of man" is not used in Isaiah, or any other of the pre-exilic prophets, it is clear that they thought of the Messiah in both personal and apocalyptic terms.

During the period of the restoration the dominant prophetic voices were those of Zechariah and Haggai. These two prophets, after the tenor of their age, were interested (so it is claimed) in the messianic kingdom. Ascham, for example, who is representative of a large body of biblical scholars, holds that Zechariah saw the rebuilding of the Temple as the first essential act in the drama of the rise again of Yahweh's rule in Palestine, because of the fact that the Temple was the visible manifestation of God's presence and favor. Continuing the argument, he points out that only two or three months before Zechariah's first vision the prophet Haggai had sought to encourage the Jews by asserting that a shaking up of the nations within the empire would be the clue that Yahweh was about to set up his messianic rule. When Darius succeeded in putting down the revolts within the empire, the Jews, who, by this time, "had come to expect catastrophic disturbances as the prelude to a new Jewish age," became very disheartened. Thus, it is pointed out, the prophet changed his message, stating that the shaking up of the nations had not been abandoned by God, but only temporarily delayed. Zechariah continued to hold this hope before the

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people, and he even went so far as to describe the nature of the reestablished kingdom as having a double rulership under Joshua and Zerubbabel, the former as priest and the latter as prince. But these fine hopes were doomed to disappointment, because the tumult of the nations failed to develop. Instead, Darius set his empire in better order, and the entire Persian world was ruled in peace. Zerubbabel did not wear a crown. The completed Temple did not manifest a special sense of God's presence. The golden age of righteousness and material splendor in Judah did not come to pass. Thus, Ascham continues, the Jews struggled with bewilderment and disappointment for the next fifty years. Yet, there must have been some hope remaining among at least a few optimistic zealots, for there appeared another prophetic voice, in the person of Malachi, to speak again of true religion and messianic desire. Here again, the theme was that of vengeance.²⁷

Is the view of Ascham entirely satisfactory? Is the messianism of Zechariah, Haggai, and Malachi to be limited to the age in which these prophets spoke? Can one find in these passages a picture of a Messiah who transcended the historical moment and who would fulfill by his appearance the greatest messianic hopes of the nation throughout its history?

²⁷John Bayne Ascham, The Religion of Judah (New York: The Abingdon Press, 1920), pp. 163-167.

Such a picture can be found. And yet, even to regard the messianism of these prophets as the natural expectation which the age produced is to suggest that Old Testament messianism underwent change in line with the situation in which the nation, and its prophets, found themselves. That the prophets could see beyond their present circumstances and view the Lord's Messiah is testimony to the impact which the basic core of the nation's messianism had upon them. In every age, Hebrew messianism was influenced by history, but never was that influence so great that it caused a negation or serious alteration of any messianic aspect which had been conceived during the early stages of the development of the doctrine.

When the words of these later prophets remained unfulfilled, when the events they had suggested as seemingly imminent failed to transpire, it was only natural, as Ascham has suggested, that

. . . the repeated failure of Messianic prophecy tended toward laxness of religion. A century has passed since a line of prophets had begun to preach that the dawning of the Messianic age was at hand. These hopes of a grand and Jewish state remained unfulfilled. Naturally, a spirit of skepticism pervaded priests and nobles, and consequently they drifted into a self-pessimism, which contented itself with getting out of life the best for themselves.²⁸

As the history of messianic prophecy is traced it is apparent that there developed quite early a conflict between

²⁸Ibid., p. 179.

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the popular conceptions of the Messiah and the messianism^{of} the inspired prophets. During the times of Amos, for example, there was a widespread hope that Yahweh would inaugurate the "day of the Lord" in which he would take up the cause of the Jews against their foes. Amos, however, pointed out that it was the nation itself which would come under punishment unless it repented. Early this "day of the Lord" had taken on the aspect of judgment upon the nation. Isaiah, too, preached the same theme, but made it clear that repentance would bring about the better day, the messianic age, during which the Davidic line would rule in righteousness and justice. Zephaniah also spoke in the same terms, although he noted that the "day of the Lord" was to be a day of judgment upon the entire world.

It is quite obvious from the arguments and from Scripture itself that even as early as the fourth century B.C. there was a difference of opinion among the Jews regarding the age to come and the person who was to inaugurate it.

From the time of the close of the Old Testament until the beginning of the New Testament, the evidence is complete for the existence of a messianic hope. During the four hundred so-called "silent years," messianic expectation was utmost in the minds of the Jews, whether of the Diaspora or the homeland. That this messianic hope had grown out of prophecy, and that it was intertwined with the history and life of the Jewish people, is obvious. At the same time, it

is doubly clear that the Old Testament messianic idea underwent great modification in the course of those four centuries. It is quite apparent that the views of the Messiah were altered in accordance with the historical situation. Evidence of these alterations is to be seen in the apocryphal literature.

CHAPTER III

THE INFLUENCE OF JEWISH INTERTESTAMENTAL HISTORY UPON THE LITERATURE

I. INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

That the historical vicissitudes of the Jewish nation influenced the theological literature of its people is apparent to any student of Scripture. Perhaps messianic speculation underwent alteration more frequently than some other of the doctrines. It is known that in every age, under varying circumstances, the Jews refused to end all hope of a Deliverer. The more adverse the circumstances were, the more expectant the people became. The intertestamental period was one of the most tragic eras of Jewish history. Does it follow that this particular age was also the most expectant about the coming of the Messiah? Baron and Blau answer affirmatively:

These tragic vicissitudes of the people and its religious struggle found memorable expression in literature. The literary creativity of the biblical age continued without interruption. . . . While no new prophets arose to take their place alongside of the ancient nebiim, a large number of anonymous writers added significant works. . . . Going far beyond Ezekiel, a new apocalyptic literature produced visions of great emotional intensity which, in their very ambiguity, stirred the imagination of many generations of men and gave rise to a kaleidoscopic

variety of theosophic and eschatological speculations.¹

These speculations were concerned with messianism as well. Exactly what this influence was, and in what ways it exerted itself, is the theme of this chapter, dealing with the history, the literature, and the messianism of the period.

II. HISTORICAL SKETCH OF THE INTERTESTAMENTAL PERIOD

Historically, the intertestamental period quite naturally divides itself into four segments: the Persian period, the Greek period, the age of independence, and the Roman period.

The Persian period.

From an historical-theological point of view, it was during the Captivity that the Israelites became the Jews. It is in Babylon, therefore, that Jewish history begins.

Cyrus, partly through skill, but more likely through intrigue, conquered Babylon in 538 B.C. The people of the empire regarded him as a deliverer, and under this guise, making use of a technique which contrasted sharply with the ruthlessness of the Babylonians, he granted permission to the Jews to return to Judah.

¹Salo Baron and Joseph Blau, Judaism: Postbiblical and Talmudic Period (New York: The Liberal Arts Press, 1954), pp. xviii, xix.

In spite of the favor shown by the Persian court, the Jews met with great difficulties. On the basis of the prophecies of Zechariah and Haggai one concludes that many Jews looked upon this time as the age of the Messiah, especially during those years which immediately followed the death of Cyrus. The Persian Empire shook with the rumblings of rebellion. Jewish messianic hopes flared. But Darius I put down the revolts and restored order throughout the empire. Messianic hope once again was thwarted. Concerning this period, the words of Bailey and Kent are so forceful:

Though the Jews returned from captivity with high hopes, they found themselves involved in a losing struggle with the wicked world. At first the voice of prophecy cheered and inspired them . . . but within a century that voice was stilled forever. Turning then for satisfaction to the performance of the written law, the religious genius of the nation became narrower in its sympathies and more intense in its narrowness. . . . The religion of the heart, responsive to the guidance of a living God, had stiffened into a religion of form.²

It was during this period that Ezra and Nehemiah carried out their legal and ethical reforms. Probably about 470 B.C. the work of Mordecai and Esther saved the Jews from extinction.

For the remaining two-thirds of a century the Persians were engaged in military strife, during which time messianic speculation among the Jews again came into prominence. In

²Albert Edward Bailey and Charles Foster Kent, History of the Hebrew Commonwealth (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1935), p. 294.

334 B.C. a young Macedonian general, seeking worlds to conquer, set his face toward the East. In the year that followed, the Persians fell to the forces of Alexander, and Palestine came under Western control.

The Greek period.

Commonly, the Greek period is dated 331 - 63 B.C. For the purposes of this study, however, the period of Jewish independence is treated separately, thus dating the Hellenistic Age from 331 B.C. to 168 B.C., subdivided into three segments: the Alexandrian era, the Ptolemaic period, and the Seleucid period.

The Alexandrian era. The years under Alexander were years of peace and prosperity for Judah, due to the smooth-running government which the conqueror had established. In addition, the Jews were given extensive privileges, and Hellenization was introduced with extreme caution. Elsewhere, however, the new culture, a blend of Grecian literature and philosophy with Persian splendor, took hold, and the Jews awoke to the fact that within less than a generation they had become surrounded by a new world.

Palestine under the Ptolemies. Alexander died in Babylon in 323, after having pushed his armies as far as India. Immediately his generals began to quarrel among themselves over the control of the territories. A series of long and

complicated wars ensued. The general Ptolemy seized Egypt, the most prosperous segment of the empire, while his opponent, Seleucus, gained Asia Minor and the East. Antiochus took control of Europe. Judah was coveted by both Ptolemy and Seleucus, with the land of Palestine finally falling into Ptolemy's hands.

Egypt offered the Jews many cultural advantages and much wealth. Scattered Jews, favorable toward this Egyptian regime, accepted the Greek tongue and dabbled in Hellenistic philosophy. Palestinian Jews, however, escaped the pagan culture for some time. In Egypt the Jews became conscious of the fact that they were losing the language and religion of their fathers, and so they began to teach their children the ancient Hebrew language, and, in addition, under government support, they translated their sacred Scriptures into Greek. This translation, known as the Septuagint, was begun about 280 B.C., taking about one hundred years to complete.

Following a brief period of struggle for Palestine, during which time the Syrians marched into Jerusalem, only to be driven out again by the Ptolemies, the Seleucids finally gained control of Judah in 198 B.C.

Palestine under the Seleucids. The Seleucids, accepted by the Jews as liberators, proved, instead, to be tyrants, viciously attacking the institutions of Jewry. The most ambitious of these Syrian rulers was Antiochus, surnamed

Epiphanes, "the visible god." Antiochus resolved to establish a loyal Hellenism in Palestine at any cost. Through the effort of this Seleucid king, vast numbers of Jews became lax regarding the ritualistic customs of the nation and general religious observance. Moral looseness was in evidence everywhere. In addition, Antiochus took upon himself the prerogative to appoint the high-priests in Jerusalem; took the holy Temple vessels as payment for the office from one of his appointees, Menelaus; ordered the cessation of Sabbath observance, circumcision, and festivals; erected a statue of Jupiter in the Temple; and decreed that pigs must be sacrificed upon the altar. He also declared Judaism to be illegal, forcing many loyal Jews to either flee for their lives or die as martyrs, since they were not prepared to fight in order to defend themselves. Many of these loyalists were actually betrayed by their own people who were favorable toward Hellenism.

Thus, in 168 B.C. the Jewish way of life and religion hung in the balance. Technically, Judea was to remain under Syrian control for some time to come, but, in another sense, the next hundred years were to be years of independence.

The age of independence.

With the emotions of the common Jews at fever pitch, it is no wonder that the cry for independence was soon heard in the land. At Modein this call was first uttered when an aged

priest, Mattathias, took matters into his own hands, slaying first a young Hellenistic Jew who volunteered to sacrifice a pig, and then turning upon the Syrian official with the Syrian's own sword. With his sons, Mattathias took to the hills and caves of the Judean countryside. There he welcomed a large number of patriots to his guerilla band. With this band he began to overrun the Syrians.

Gaining the independence. No longer did the Syrians hear a simple cry of outrage. Now it was a cry for independence which issued from Judea. Mattathias died before the conflict had hardly begun, but his son, Judas, nicknamed "the Maccabee," was able to inspire the guerillas to unbelievable victories against overwhelming odds, thus regaining Jerusalem for the Jews. But Judas witnessed a mass desertion from his army, not only because of his insistence that the pious middle-class Jews should control the new government, but also because many of the deserters believed that Syria was now ready to grant religious freedom. Through an agreement with Syria, a shaky independence had been won, even though Judas himself did not live to see it established. Could that independence be maintained and strengthened?

Maintaining the independence. This taste of success whetted the appetites of the pious Jews for still greater success. Jonathan, the brother of Judas, dreamed of another Davidic kingdom, and with both military strategy and shrewd

diplomacy he enlarged Jewish territory. Following his entering into an alliance with Rome, Judas was killed by a Syrian official, and was succeeded by his brother, Simon, who did much by way of reforming and revitalizing the law. In addition, he gave the Jews a measure of prosperity which they had not known since the days of David. Internal intrigue shortened his rule, and his third son, John Hyrcanus, succeeded to the throne. Hyrcanus was able to annex Samaria and lower Syria to Judea.

Civil war. With the Maccabean rulers also acting as high-priests it is no wonder that the masses of the people became disillusioned with the new independence. Aristobulus succeeded his father, Hyrcanus, after having disposed of the rest of his family. He died after a year and was followed on the throne by Alexander Jannaeus, who ruled as priest-king for twenty-seven years. Rebellion broke out in Jerusalem, however, and Alexander, to protect his throne, hired mercenaries who murdered fifty-thousand of Alexander's own people.³ On another occasion he crucified eight hundred Jews, and, before they died, he cut the throats of their wives and children before their eyes.⁴ When he died in 76 B.C. his

³Max Margolis and Alexander Marx, A History of the Jewish People (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1927), p. 155.

⁴Flavius Josephus, Antiquities of the Jews, trans. William Whiston, The Works of Flavius Josephus (Philadelphia: Henry T. Coates & Co., n. d.), p. 404.

kingdom was larger than that of Solomon.

During the rule of Alexander's wife, Salome Alexandra, and two sons, Hyrcanus and Aristobulus, a deep cleavage developed between the Pharisees and the Sadducees. The people of the nation took sides in the issue. Peace and plenty were external features, but underneath burned hate. Unity, national welfare, and morale were non-existent. Hyrcanus and Aristobulus took sides against each other for the right to rule, each being supported by one of the two religious sects, Hyrcanus by the Pharisees and his brother by the Sadducees.

Losing the independence. Into the struggle between the two brothers stepped Antipater, an Idumean, who, under Hyrcanus I, had been forced to become a Jew. He saw the opportunity to improve his own political position, and so he took sides with Hyrcanus, who had been forced out of power by his Sadducean brother. With an army of Nabateans, Antipater came against the Sadducees at Jerusalem, but he was surprised to find the Roman legions of Pompey camped on the nearby hillside. Antipater promptly retreated, while the Romans entered the city and sacked the Temple. According to Josephus, twelve thousand Jews died.⁵ Pompey annexed Judea to Rome, and Jewish independence came to an abrupt end.

⁵Josephus, op. cit., p. 414.

The Roman period.

Remembering the former days of Judea's glory, the Sadducees and Pharisees united in a Maccabean-type warfare against Rome. Promptly labeled as outlaws, these rebels were hunted down by Antipater, under Roman orders. Herod, Antipater's son, cleared Galilee of rebels by smoking the guerillas out of their caves.

Antipater and his son, Herod, were to support first one Roman leader and then another, doing whatever seemed to be in their own interests. Following the death of his father, Herod was able to convince the Roman senate that he was a loyal subject, and he was appointed king of the Jews, in 37 B.C. To this position he brought dynamic leadership, which, unfortunately, he nearly erased by his treatment of the people. He did, however, rebuild the Temple, erect or rebuild several cities, bring prosperity to the Jews, and gain for his nation a sense of acceptance among its neighbors. But his shrewdness and unscrupulous conduct made him the object of distrust, which he in turn reciprocated.

Less than two years before Herod's death, Jesus was born in Bethlehem, and, by the intervention of an angel, escaped the slaughter of the infants which Herod had ordered. Palestine was in Roman hands at the end of the intertestamental period.

Out of this period, as out of every period of conflict, came a great deal of literature. It is necessary first to look at this literature as a source of information. Then, attention must be given to the characteristics of that literature.

Available sources.

The thought of the intertestamental period has been preserved in its literature. The basic sources are the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha, the Dead Sea Scrolls, the Rabbinic writings, the histories of Josephus, and the writings of Philo Judaeus.

The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha. The term "Apocrypha" is used to describe a collection of fourteen works by anonymous authors, which, since the time of the Reformation, have been regarded by Protestants as non-canonical. The Apocrypha are generally divided into five types: 1) historical works -- I Esdras, I and II Maccabees; 2) didactic works -- The Wisdom of Solomon, Ecclesiasticus; 3) religious romances -- The Book of Tobit, The Book of Judith; 4) prophetic (apocalyptic) works -- The Book of Baruch, II Esdras; and 5) additions to the Old Testament -- The Additions to the Book of Esther, The Prayer of Manasseh, and The Three Additions to the Book of Daniel, namely (a) The Song of the Three Children,

(b) The Story of Susanna, and (c) Bel and the Dragon. -

The Pseudepigrapha are fourteen in number, although Charles lists seventeen.⁶ They deal with such subjects as primitive history (The Book of Jubilees); sacred legends (The Letter of Aristeas, The Books of Adam and Eve, The Martyrdom of Isaiah); apocalypses (I Enoch, II Enoch, The Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs, The Sibylline Oracles, The Assumption of Moses, II Baruch, III Baruch); psalms (The Psalms of Solomon); wisdom literature (IV Maccabees); and history (III Maccabees). These works are bound together by the element of false authorship. They are variously dated, and seem to cover a large portion of the intertestamental period, especially near the time of the birth of Christ, and some of them appear to have been written in Christian times.

Dead Sea Scrolls. Another important source of information about the intertestamental period and its beliefs is the Qumran find, known as the Dead Sea Scrolls, a collection of sectarian writings, representing, perhaps, the beliefs and practices of the Essenes. The number of scrolls and fragments is in the hundreds.

Rabbinic writings. The Rabbinic literature of these centuries is compiled, together with literature from the

⁶R. H. Charles, The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament in English (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1913), Vol. II (Pseudepigrapha).

early Christian era, in an encyclopedic work of conservative Jewish scholarship known as the Talmud. The word means "teaching" or "instruction." The Talmud is the product of many generations, collected gradually, probably begun in the period shortly after the return from Babylon. A collection of many literary types -- ethics, law, poetry, prayer, ritual, sermon, folk-lore, commentary, and theology -- it contains most of the teachings which constitute the "hedge about the Law." The Talmud is composed of Mishnah, Gemara (the commentary on the Mishnah), and Haggada (a varied hodge-podge of collected sayings and essays). It appeared in two editions. The Jerusalem Talmud, the shorter of the two, was completed about 400 A.D. The Babylonian Talmud was completed approximately one-hundred years later. A special collection, Pirke' Aboth, is also helpful. The Targums, too, are a source of information, since they represent the viewpoint of the translators. It is difficult to determine how much of this literature is intertestamental.

The works of Josephus. The primary Jewish historian of this age, although he lived after the time of Christ (37-100 A.D.), was Flavius Josephus. His main works are: Concerning the Jewish War, The Antiquities of the Jews, his autobiography, and Contra Apion.

Philo Judaeus. Philo was a Jewish philosopher who was greatly influenced by Hellenism. Born 20 B.C., he lived during the lifetime of Jesus, dying in 40 A.D. His major works include: Questions and Solutions, Legum Allegoriae (his allegoric commentary), and a large work on the patriarchs and the law.

Characteristics of the intertestamental literature.

Excluding the works of Philo and Josephus, the intertestamental literature itself may be divided into two types: apocryphal and rabbinic.

Characteristics of the apocryphal literature. As a type of literature, the apocryphal writings may be characterized under two headings: 1) the general features of this type of literature, and 2) the spirit of this literature.

General features. There are certain general features of the apocryphal literature: esoteric elements, anonymity, pseudonymity, developed eschatology, exclusiveness, and optimism in the midst of dejection.

Esoteric elements. Characteristic of a large portion of this literature, though not all of it, is the presence of esoteric elements. Symbolism is commonly used as a disguise. There is much written in figures, apparently to hide the teaching from outsiders. Ginzberg has written, "The apocalyptic writings by their fixed literary forms and their

obscurities were not meant for the people, but for the initiated ones."⁷ As an example, one may point to the sixth section of II Baruch where the writer symbolizes the victory of the Messiah over the Roman Empire in his vision of the cedar and the vine.⁸ The separation of the masses from this literature, because of the esoteric elements, is not as clear-cut as Ginzberg has indicated, however.

Anonymity. Another characteristic of this literature is its anonymity. No author, apart from Jesus ben Sirach, gives his own name to any of these writings.

Pseudonymity. Closely related to anonymity is pseudonymity. Apparently one of the requisites for canonicity, in Jewish thinking, was authorship by a person of religious significance. Since a widespread belief existed that prophecy had ceased with the words of Malachi, this further drove men to write in the name of an ancient worthy. This was especially true when these works were "prophetic." Also, the "missing" portions of the canonical books could not be overlooked. Thus the apocryphal literature includes Manasseh's prayer of repentance, the letter of Baruch to the

⁷Louis Ginzberg, "Some Observations on the Attitude of the Synagogue Towards the Apocalyptic-Eschatological Writings," Journal of Biblical Literature, XLI (1922), 136.

⁸II Baruch 36 - 40.

tribes in captivity, and the decrees of the Book of Esther.

Developed eschatology. Unlike much of the Old Testament with its uncertainty about the future, the apocryphal books have a developed eschatology. Such aspects as resurrection, eternal life, retribution, messianic hope, and the millennium are openly discussed and made to appear very definite and concrete.

Exclusiveness. The apocryphal books favor the Jews above the Gentile. The future belongs primarily to the Jew, or to those who become Jews. That is not to say that there are no universal elements in this literature. For the most part, though, deliverance and redemption belong to the Jews, or more particularly the pious Jews who do not succumb to the temptation to cast aside their distinctive features.

Optimism in the midst of dejection. The literature of the period, outside of rabbinic circles, is tinged with dejection. This would be a natural expression for people under similar circumstances of persecution and tyranny. But out of the depths of despair there is the clear evidence of hope. This hope is generally not to be fulfilled immediately, but more often the solution to the trouble is seen in the distant future. Thus, a great portion of this literature takes the form of apocalypse. It is quite true, as Waxman has

observed, that "though this kind of literature is usually - separated into two divisions, Apocryphal and Apocalyptic, there really is no fast line separating them."⁹

The spirit of this literature. The literature of the Apocrypha, Pseudepigrapha, and Dead Sea Scrolls has a spirit quite different from the spirit of the writings of the schools. It has three major emphases: yearning, zeal for Law, and personal religion - almost.

The spirit of yearning. Not only was optimism common to the literature of this age, but this optimism expressed itself in expectation. Confident of the fact that the Scriptures contained much of unfulfilled prophecy, the writers of this literature longed for the promised days. In order to express that longing, they spoke in terms of future fulfillment as proof that they had faith in the utterances of the prophets of old, in spite of the adverse conditions in which they found themselves.

The zeal for the Law. Although the apocryphal literature lacks extensive exposition of the Law, there is much to indicate an intense zeal for it. The Book of Tobit begins with a situation which shows the devotion of one man

⁹Meyer Waxman, A History of Jewish Literature (New York: Bloch Publishing Co., 1938), Vol. I, p. 2.

to the Law in spite of personal danger.¹⁰ The Book of Judith, The Story of Susanna, and The Song of the Three Children also reveal a deep devotion to the Law. This zeal is more common to the Apocrypha proper and the Dead Sea Scrolls than it is to the Pseudepigrapha, although there are certainly evidences in the latter.

Personal religion - almost. While the Old Testament is concerned, to a large degree, with national religion-- although, as Waxman points out, the individual occupied a more prominent place in the religious scheme of the time than is generally assumed by scholars¹¹ -- the apocryphal literature speaks to the individual about such things as rewards and punishments, future life, and resurrection with greater emphasis than is to be found in the prophets, Psalms, or the Book of Job. With the future life now on a personal level, one ought to see the emphasis on personal relationship to God apart from a national cultic sense. That this element is missing in much of this literature demonstrates its inconsistency.

Rabbinic writings. The unique features of the Rabbinic writings are, basically, extreme legal emphasis (casuistry), and "this-worldliness."

¹⁰The Book of Tobit 1:3--3:6.

¹¹Waxman, op. cit., p. 4.

Extreme legal emphasis. Primary to the rabbinic writings is the element of legal interpretation. Because this literature was mainly the collection and codification of oral tradition, and since this oral tradition dealt almost entirely with the interpretation of the ancient laws with the aim of making them fit the present situation, it comes as no surprise that the Talmud is filled with material of a legal, casuistic nature. Rabbinic literature is "the fence around the Law," the continuation of "a supplementary Law . . . given to Moses on Sinai which he in turn handed over to his follower, Joshua, and he again to his successors, and so on through the generations."¹²

This-worldliness. Rabbinic writings were also very free from speculations about the future. Perhaps as a reaction against the popular apocalypticism, the Pharisees and rabbis issued the edict that it was senseless, and thereby forbidden, to speculate about the Messiah, and eschatology in general. Kohler says, "The whole point of view of the . . . Apocalyptists is . . . other-worldly, whereas that of the Pharisees was rather this-worldly. . . ." ¹³ The distinction between the two types of literature is probably not as obvious as Kohler indicates, however.

¹²Ibid., pp. 49, 50.

¹³Kaufmann Kohler, "The Essenes and the Apocalyptic Literature," The Jewish Quarterly Review, XI (1920), 168.

IV. THE UNIVERSALITY OF APOCALYPTIC LITERATURE
AND MESSIANIC HOPE

Characteristic of a large portion of the Jewish apocryphal literature which this period produced is the element of apocalyptic speculation. Such speculation, however, was not limited to the Jews alone. C. C. McCown, for example, sees evidences of apocalypticism in the contemporary literature, as well as that which came from a slightly earlier period, that Egypt produced.¹⁴ Glasson sees the same element in Virgil's Fourth Eclogue.¹⁵ Apparently the entire Graeco-Roman world was producing apocalyptic literature. Glasson is convinced of "the remarkable fact that in the Graeco-Roman world there was great apocalyptic expectancy before the Christian era."¹⁶ Again he states, "In the second century B.C. and later, many were saying that the last age had nearly run its course and the great change was at hand."¹⁷

Fuller evidence is needed before an hypothesis along this line can be stated with certainty, but the information at hand seems to indicate that Jewish apocalyptic literature was a product of its time.

¹⁴C. C. McCown, "Hebrew and Egyptian Apocalyptic Literature," Harvard Theological Review, XVIII (1925), 357-411.

¹⁵T. Francis Glasson, Greek Influence in Jewish Eschatology (London: S. P. C. K., 1961), p. 76.

¹⁶Ibid.

¹⁷Ibid.

Often this apocalypticism was messianic. While the world was being readied for the "fullness of time," it was thinking about the advent of a Person whose name it did not know. This is the thesis of Jasper Huffman, who says,

While there can be traced a Messianic hope and a development of that hope within Israel . . . it must not be forgotten that the other peoples of the earth were experiencing the same desires, though they were unable to express them in the same terms. In Israel the desire became hope, while among the other peoples desire became more desire.¹⁸

Scripture itself bears this out. At the time of the birth of Christ magi came from Persia in pursuit of a star which they claimed was "his" star, on the basis of astronomical or astrological evidence. In addition, the prophets had spoken of the coming Messiah as "the desire of the nations."¹⁹ From earliest times the non-Jewish world had an interest in, and a desire for someone external to itself to come to its aid. Even the mythologies of the ancient Near East contain messianic hints. Zoroaster is reported to have declared that God could never be known in any real sense unless He would reveal Himself in human form.²⁰

¹⁸Jasper A. Huffman, The Messianic Hope in Both Testaments (Butler, Indiana: The Higley Press, 1939), p. 180.

¹⁹Haggai 2:7, for example.

²⁰Huffman, op. cit., p. 182.

The Graeco-Roman world approached the truth of God through the avenue of wisdom, only to realize that wisdom did not go far enough. The Greek world was characterized by longing, but had to be content with despair. The practice of emperor worship may well have been the result of "a mis-directed expectation of the incarnation of deity."²¹ Even more astonishing is the exclamation of Socrates, reported by Plato: "Oh that someone would arise, man or God, to show us God!"²² And Seneca asked, "Where shall he be found whom we have been seeking so many centuries?"²³

What is more, there was a growing demand for redemption.²⁴ The words of Angus may be cited:

The yearning for political and social rest and stability, for certainty and authority in philosophy and religion, was parallel to a universal demand for salvation--salvation from the confusion and isolation of the individual, for the almost universal sense of decay and degeneration, from the oppression of fatalism and astral worship, from the evils of dualism, the inherent evil of matter and the body, the hindrances that prevent the soul from returning to its 'dear fatherland,' the sense of estrangement from the Deity, from the darkness of death, and emphatically from the power of demons. The term Saviour was applied to several gods . . . and . . . was lent as a surname to other deities. Finally, as the partition

²¹Ibid., pp. 182, 183.

²²Ibid., p. 183.

²³Ibid.

²⁴S. Angus, The Environment of Early Christianity (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1915), pp. 134-136.

between divine and human was broken down, the term Saviour was applied to men. . . . The Athenians addressed Julius as their 'Saviour and Benefactor'; the Ephesians addressed him as 'God manifest, the common Saviour of human life.' In the Halicarnassus inscription Augustus is 'the Saviour of the whole human race.' These examples . . . reflect . . . the universal demand for someone to interfere when the times were out of joint, and restore security and bestow rest upon the world. Men were everywhere longing for a reign of peace. The salvation they sighed for was sometimes rather political and physical than moral and spiritual. But with the restoration of outward peace the demand for inner peace grew more imperious. Men wished to see a God incarnate.²⁵

And the ancients were apparently convinced that their expectation would not be in vain.

It has already been noted that Virgil was sensitive to this messianic expectancy. Interpreting Virgil's words, Angus says, "His Messianic Eclogue (Ecl. iv) prophesies the birth of a wonderful child destined to usher in a new and happy epoch."²⁶

Thus, it can be seen clearly that there was a type of limited universal apocalyptic and messianic hope among the Gentile nations prior to the time of Christ's advent. Certainly such hope existed in Judaism. The literature of the intertestamental period, especially outside of rabbinic circles, bears clear witness to this fact, as will be seen in chapters four and five.

²⁵Ibid., pp. 134, 135.

²⁶Ibid., p. 137.

V. THE ATTITUDE OF THE SYNAGOGUE
TOWARD APOCALYPTIC LITERATURE

There remains one subject to be considered in this context, namely, the attitude of the synagogue toward the apocryphal-apocalyptic literature. What influence did the apocalyptic literature exert? How popular was it among the people of Judea? Does apocalypticism, or the apocryphal literature in general, represent the thought of the people, or is it merely the written theology of a small group of Jews? This subject can be explored by noting the relationship between the rabbinic writings and this apocryphal-apocalyptic literature, and by calling attention to the attitude of the former to the latter.

Speaking of apocalyptic literature, Booth says, "Of all the literature of this period these books were the most popular and influential, for they were written for the common people."²⁷ Taking the opposite view is the Jewish scholar, Ginzberg, who states,

The true mirror of the religious life of the Jews we find . . . in the homely and simple sayings and the teachings of the Rabbis and not in the literary productions of the Apocalyptic writers who wrote primarily for a 'class' of men like themselves and not for the people.²⁸

²⁷Henry Kendall Booth, The Bridge Between the Testaments (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1929), p. 144.

²⁸Louis Ginzberg, "Some Observations on the Attitude of the Synagogue Towards the Apocalyptic-Eschatological Writings," Journal of Biblical Literature, XLI (1922), 136.

Whichever view one may prefer, the question of messianism is not answered satisfactorily. Both the rabbis and the apocalyptists had a concern for the Messiah. The Talmudic writings may be very cautious and restrained regarding messianic speculation,²⁹ while the writings of the apocalyptists are naturally more ardent and "hotheaded."³⁰ The point is, however, according to Agus, "Those expectations showed different forms and various degrees of intensity, depending on the background in which they arose."³¹ Davies says,

There are elements in Jesus which connect Him both with Apocalyptic and Pharisaism; and this leads us to naturally ask whether between Apocalyptic and Pharisaism there was such a cleavage as so many scholars have suggested.³²

Messianic doctrine may not have been codified or congealed into a rigid dogma, but it was doubtless a focal principle of normative Judaism.³³ So much was this true that messianic hope was incorporated into the standard prayerbook at an early stage of its development.³⁴

²⁹Jacob Agus, The Evolution of Jewish Thought From Biblical Times to the Opening of the Modern Era (London: Abelard-Schuman, 1959), p. 76.

³⁰Ben Zion Bokser, Judaism: Profile of a Faith (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1963), p. 173.

³¹Ibid.

³²W. D. Davies, "Unsolved New Testament Problems: The Jewish Background of the Teaching of Jesus: Apocalyptic and Pharisaism," The Expository Times, LIX (June, 1948), 234.

³³Agus, loc. cit.

³⁴Ibid.

Of the two types of writings concerning the Messiah, the apocalyptic seems to have been more popular than the rabbinic. Booth says that the apocalyptic writings express more correctly the deepest passions and hopes of the masses because they had the appeal that imaginative literature of this kind could not fail to have to a people who were weary of the formal writings of the lawgiving sages.³⁵ Andrews says the influence of the apocalyptic literature was "overwhelming."³⁶ Booth calls the influence "profound"³⁷ and "tremendous."³⁸

Into this discussion enters the problem of the apocalyptic elements within Pharisaic Judaism. The presence of these elements renders doubtful the conclusions of Ginzberg. Bittenweiser, a Jewish scholar, speaks of "the rabbinical apocalyptic literature" and shows its similarities with the apocalypses of the older period,³⁹ referring to the time prior to Christ. Schechter, too, accepts this point of view, admitting that there were messianic elements in the Rabbinic writings which

³⁵Henry Kendall Booth, The Bridge Between the Testaments (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1929), pp. 144, 145.

³⁶H. T. Andrews, "Apocalyptic Literature," A Commentary on the Bible, Arthur S. Peake, ed. (London: Thomas Nelson & Sons, n. d.), 434.

³⁷Booth, op. cit., p. 100.

³⁸Ibid., p. 144.

³⁹Moses Bittenweiser, "Messiah," The Jewish Encyclopedia (New York: The Funk and Wagnalls Company, 1901), VIII, 510.

were in basic agreement with these same elements in the apocalyptic literature, but with less emphasis, and with less of the mythological and chiliastic element.⁴⁰ So it appears that the cleavage which has been said to exist between popular and rabbinic Judaism at the point of apocalyptic messianism may not be as obvious as many have thought.

Rabbinic theology became disillusioned with apocalyptic-messianic hope more quickly than did popular Judaism. As a result the rabbis censored their later writings of all apocalyptic expressions and hope. Schechter has observed that this was the case with the Psalms of Solomon.⁴¹ One may conclude, with Edersheim, that no matter where one seeks in the literature of the age, messianism is obvious, because, ". . . The period of promise had run its course, and merged into that of expectancy."⁴² Thus messianism is to be found alike in the Hellenist Philo and the most bigoted rabbi.⁴³

⁴⁰Solomon Schechter, Aspects of Rabbinic Theology (New York: Schocken Books, 1961), p. 101, (reprinted from the 1909 edition).

⁴¹Ibid., p. 5.

⁴²Alfred Edersheim, Prophecy and History in Relation to the Messiah (New York: Anson D. F. Randolph & Company, n. d.), p. 321.

⁴³Ibid., p. 318.

CHAPTER IV

THE MESSIANIC CONCEPT IN THE APOCRYPHA

I. INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

It is necessary now to turn to a direct look at the apocryphal materials in which the popular intertestamental messianic concept is presented. It is the purpose of this chapter to present the results of an inductive study of the books of the Apocrypha. Since not all of the apocryphal literature is concerned with messianism, only those writings which suggest it have been noted.

A significant contribution to the problem of the messianic concept in the Apocrypha has been made by Klausner.¹ It will help us greatly if we give attention here to some of his thoughts. He writes, regarding the Apocrypha,

Only a few of them are actual historical compositions. . . or literary compositions bearing the name of the author . . . or are attributed to an ancient author. . . . This characteristic itself brings it about that there could not be much in them concerning the Messianic idea. In this they are like the Hagiographa. For, in contrast to the Prophets, the greater part of the Hagiographa contains nothing--or only very little--concerning the Messianic idea. . . . Even the Messianic idea occupies no great place in the Apocrypha. . . .

But . . . during the period of the Second Temple the Messianic idea was not completely forgotten.

¹Joseph Klausner, The Messianic Idea in Israel (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1955), pp. 246-386.

It was not enlarged and developed, nor was it embroidered with strong imaginative colors. Yet it was preserved and it endured, even though its scope was restricted, and the sages of Israel did not deal with it often or in an elaborate fashion, because the time was not ripe for doing so. . . . In a great part of the Apocryphal books, the main features of the Messianic idea are mentioned. But they are mentioned in an offhand manner, as an important yet well known matter, which needs no elaboration; they are mentioned in a general way and in broad outline, without discussion and without details. . . .

The Messianic idea was not a dominant idea . . . in Israel at that time, although it was not denied, but continued to live a hidden and secret life; and the personality of the Messiah did not occupy an essential place in this form of the idea.²

It is necessary now to determine whether or not Klausner's words are true by analyzing the messianism of the various books of the Apocrypha.

II. AN ANALYSIS OF THE MESSIANIC CONCEPT IN THE VARIOUS BOOKS

For the purposes of this study the following books are noted: I Esdras, II Esdras, Tobit, The Wisdom of Jesus ben Sirach, The Wisdom of Solomon, Baruch, I Maccabees, and II Maccabees.

The Messiah in First Esdras.

References to the Messiah in I Esdras are noticeably absent. The words of 5:5 are hardly to be regarded as messianic in spite of the mention of "the house of David, of the

²Ibid., pp. 248-250.

line of Phares, of the tribe of Judah." Jeshua, in this context, does not appear to be regarded in messianic terms. The reference is entirely historical, a listing of the names of those who went up to Jerusalem from Babylon. As a matter of fact, there seems to be only one messianic passage in the entire book, in so far as reference to a personal Messiah is concerned. That verse is 5:40: "And Nehemiah and the governor told them not to share in the consecrated things until a high priest should appear clothed in the Manifestation and the Truth." This passage speaks of the Messiah as a coming high-priest who would be recognized by the marks of God's revelation and truth which would be upon his garments. The reference is clearly to a person. The idea of a priest-Messiah, as it is described here, is not an innovation. It has its roots in prophecy, perhaps going back as far as the words of Moses in Deuteronomy 18:15, 18. Moses spoke, of course, in terms of a prophet-Messiah, but it appears that this prophet of whom he spoke was not viewed solely as law-giver and leader, but as priest also. Moses, then, combined in the Messiah both his own functions and those of his brother Aaron, the priest. Whether or not this was the intention of Moses one cannot be certain. The idea does occur, however, in other Old Testament passages, suggesting that there was a belief in a priestly Messiah. Psalm 110, for example, uses the word "priest" in connection with the Messiah.

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Zechariah speaks of the Messiah as a priest.³ The New Testament book of Hebrews refers to Melchizedek as a priest-king of whom the Messiah was a successor.

The Essenes were to carry this thought even further, speaking of the Messiah as a priest.⁴ The same idea is put forth by the author of The Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs,⁵ as shall be seen in a later section.

In the book of I Esdras, then, there is only one verse having reference to the Messiah in personal terms. That the verse is concerned solely with a Messiah can be argued, but the suggestion is that it is the personal Messiah to whom reference is made.

The Messiah in Second Esdras.

Unlike I Esdras, II Esdras is more expressive concerning the Messiah. There are a number of obvious references which show various features: 2:33-38, 42-47; 5:6, 7; 7:26-29; 12:31-34; 13:1-13a, 25-52.

The references examined. In order to deal with the several references to the Messiah in this book it is necessary to call attention to them individually.

³Zechariah 6:12, 13.

⁴Raymond E. Brown, "What Do the Scrolls Tell Us?" America, 106, (October 7, 1961), 11.

⁵Testament of Levi, 18.

a. 2:33-38. In this passage, the writer claims that he was sent from God to Israel with a command, which the people rejected. The word of the Lord is then directed to the "heathen." They are instructed to expect their "shepherd," who will come at the end of the world, which is now close at hand, to give everlasting rest. These "heathen" are told to prepare to receive the "rewards of the kingdom, for everlasting light will shine upon you forever." They are commanded further to "flee from the shadow of this world" and to "receive the enjoyment of your glory." As a witness to this promise, God calls his "Savior" and then challenges the "heathen" to "see the number of those who are marked with his seal."

This passage is both messianic and eschatological. There are several Old Testament eschatological elements here: the end of the world, the feast of the Lord, salvation to the Gentiles or heathen, and everlasting rest. But there is mixed with these elements a messianism that is personal. The Messiah is referred to as a "shepherd" who "will come at the end of the world" to dispense "the rewards of the kingdom." Furthermore, the Messiah is called "my Savior," a term which suggests, in this context, the universal deliverer. The fact that the word "Savior" is used here implies that the writer thought of the Messiah in personal terms while at the same time regarding him as an eschatological figure. Here, then,

is the element of universal deliverance carried out through a person selected by God for this particular purpose.

b. 2:42-47. This passage tells of Ezra's seeing a great throng which could not be counted, praising the Lord. In the midst of them he views "a youth of lofty stature" putting crowns upon the heads of all the rest, although he remains more exalted than all of them. Ezra inquires about the identity of the youth, to which question he receives the reply: "He is the Son of God, whom they confessed in the world."

There are some difficulties in connection with this verse due to the fact that it sounds so completely Christian. Yet, coming from the mind of a Jewish apocalyptist, the concept of the Messiah as "the Son of God" is not beyond possibility. The phrase "in the world," which comes at the end of the passage, suggests that this crowning of the saints is to be viewed in an eschatological context. The figure of the Messiah is that of an individual, the Son of God himself, handing out the rewards in the next world to those who have confessed him in the present world.

c. 5:6, 7. The messianism in this passage is not as obvious as it is in other references. The promise is that "one will reign for whom those who live on the earth do not hope . . . and one whom the many do not know will utter his

voice in the night, but all will hear his voice." The Messiah in this case is viewed as the future monarch over the created order, not yet known, and not even hoped for. Here is the element of sovereignty or kingship, not necessarily stemming from a revived, or even continuing Davidic dynasty, but coming in a new age. Here is to be found a blending of several elements: the Messiah as a unique person, the figure of kingship (coming, perhaps, out of the history of the nation and based upon an ideal David), and the element of universality of the messianic reign.

d. 7:26-29. A new element is introduced into the concept of the Messiah in this section. In an apocalyptic picture of a coming age, "signs" are promised, after the presentation of which "the city that appears as a bride will appear, and the land which is now hidden will be seen." One of the wonders to be seen is the revelation of "Christ" for four hundred years, after which "Christ will die, and all who draw human breath." Christ is referred to twice in these verses as "my Son." A unique feature of this passage is the fact that the Messiah shall die, suggesting that the Messiah is either completely human or else very much like man. Born as a "son" he must also die as a "son." Thus the picture is that of a temporary Messiah sent to accomplish a specific purpose, to inaugurate the new order, which will be re-created out of the old after his demise.⁶

⁶This is suggested in verse 30 of this passage.

e. 12:31-34. Here is a picture of a lion re-
proving the eagle for his unrighteousness. The lion is clearly
identified as "the Messiah whom the Most High hath kept unto
the end of the days, who shall spring from the seed of David."
His mission is to "reprove them for their ungodliness, rebuke
them for their unrighteousness, reproach them to their faces
with their treacheries." Then he shall judge and finally
destroy the evildoers. As for "my people who survive," them
"he shall deliver with mercy, even those who have been saved
throughout my borders, and he shall make them joyful until
the End come."

The Messiah in this section is certainly the fulfillment
of the Davidic ideal, but not in the human realm. Rather, he
is the special, divine figure who has been kept with the Most
High until the proper time, namely "the end of the days."
The mission of the Messiah is not nationalistic, but particu-
laristic. If one is to see in the "eagle" a reference to
Rome, and this is the obvious reference, then the work of the
Messiah is simply the salvation of the chosen people, not
the geographical nation, but the "elected" survivors.

f. 13:1-13a, 25-52. This apocalyptic passage is
extremely controversial. The initial portion records the
vision; the latter section gives the interpretation. In this
portion the writer describes the Messiah as "a Man coming up
from the heart of the sea." His countenance caused the world

to tremble; his voice made the earth melt. From "the four-winds of heaven" a great host gathered to make war against him, but without using a single weapon he defeated the evil multitude. He simply sent a stream of fire from his mouth. Coming down from the mountain where he had engaged the great army, he gathered "another multitude which was peaceable." This Man from the sea is identified as "he whom the Most High is keeping many ages and through whom he will deliver his creation." When the proper time comes, this "Son" shall be revealed. Men will leave their petty wars with each other and will gather at Mount Zion to make war against the "Son." After defeating these enemies the "Son" will summon a peaceable multitude, namely, the ten tribes.

Here again, as previously, the Messiah is identified as "my Son" by God. Primarily, the Messiah's work is that of gathering the scattered Jews by destroying those who hold them in bondage. Thus the picture is nationalistic, in characteristic fashion. The "supernaturalistic" character of the Messiah is to be seen in the fact that he has been with God "through many ages," or, possibly, from the beginning.

Summary of the messianic concept in II Esdras. Having noted the several references to the Messiah in II Esdras, it is now possible to summarize the messianism of this particular apocryphal work.

From these various references it is quite clear that the titles applied to the Messiah have their rootage in the Old

Testament: shepherd, Savior, Son of God, Christ, the Messiah from the seed of David, my Son, and the Lion (from the tribe of Judah). In addition, the activities of the Messiah, although they are frequently clothed in the language of apocalypse, are based upon Old Testament precedent.

It is interesting to note in the first reference (2:33-38) that the writer is addressing himself to the heathen. Since Israel has rejected the Lord's command, the heathen are given the privilege of hearing the messianic prophecy. Using language similar to that of Psalm 23 the writer sees the Messiah as a shepherd who is able to provide a peaceful rest. Furthermore, the Messiah is to be the dispenser of the rewards of the kingdom, and the source of everlasting light. He is also regarded as the head of a large company of saints who are marked with his seal for the purpose of identification.

It is strange to discover in this nationalistic literature a reference to the Gentiles receiving the benefits of the messianic kingdom. Furthermore, and equally surprising, there is the hint that the kingdom is more than purely political. Generally, as was noted in chapter three, this apocryphal literature is exclusive in its concept of the Messiah and the benefits of his kingdom. Here, however, is a hint that the kingdom of the Messiah is not simply nationalistic, but universal; not purely political, but spiritual as well.

In the second passage (2:42-47) the Messiah is the exalted Son of God who possesses an authority which is his by divine right.

The reference to the Messiah as throne-ruler (5:6,7) - seems to again suggest that the benefits of the Kingdom belong, at least partially, to the heathen. It is difficult, however, to determine from the passage exactly which type of kingdom is intended.

It is clearly revealed (7:26-29) that the Messiah belongs to the future time, after the unrighteous one has done his evil deeds. Here the Messiah is called "my Son the Christ," and it is said of him that he will do great wonders. While the stress upon his human-like character is certainly not inconsistent with Old Testament prophecies--it is true that the Messiah is often described in the Old Testament in terms of human characteristics and personality--that he can die is a strange admission for this kind of literature to make. Yet, the idea is not new here. There are hints, such as might be found in Isaiah's works, which could lead an apocalyptist to such a conclusion. Generally, however, the apocryphal literature attributes to the Messiah a glorious and quasi-eternal reign.⁷

In the next messianic reference (12:31-34) the Messiah is seen as a lion, who has been kept by God until the end of time and sent into the world through David's seed. His purpose is twofold in relation to the unrighteous: reproof

⁷Joseph Bonsirven, Palestinian Judaism in the Time of Jesus Christ, tr. William Wolf (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1964), p. 192.

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and destruction. As it regards the righteous, his work is deliverance. Viewed in this context, the Messiah is to be a prophet, and judge, and a Savior.

In the final reference (13:1-13a, 25-52) "the Man from the sea" is the one who establishes his rule over a world in which peace has been restored. Defended Zion becomes the center of his rule, and the Diaspora shall return to their land.

Primarily the passages in II Esdras speak of the Messiah as a national, political hero, who will restore the glory to Judah by gaining the victory over the heathen nations, establish the reign of peace and prosperity, and gather the dispersed Jews from the corners of the earth, reestablishing Zion as the center of the kingdom.

The Messiah in The Book of Tobit.

The Book of Tobit gives no large place to messianic doctrines. However, in Tobit's prayer of rejoicing (chapter 13) messianic activities and prerogatives belong to God. That is to say, the activities which are assigned to the Messiah in much of the intertestamental literature are here performed by God Himself, namely, the return to Zion, the rebuilding of Jerusalem as a center of rule, the ingathering of the exiled Jews from the remote parts of the world, and, in addition, the conversion of the Gentiles. The fact that these activities are performed, not by a single individual, divine and chosen

by God, but by God Himself, suggests that messianism, to the writer of The Book of Tobit, was not clearly dependent upon an anointed individual. The emphasis is upon the element of eschatology, rather than upon the element of individuality. Of course, in any technical sense, messianism is hardly possible without a Messiah. At the same time, however, the doctrine of messianism must take into account the fact that the Jews of the intertestamental period, following the example of some of the minor prophets, often regarded God as the Messiah. There was, therefore, a common belief that God would perform these eschatological events without any instrument. In this sense, then, it was possible for the apocalyptic Jew to believe in "messianism" without a Messiah. Such a phenomenon is not uncommon to the apocryphal literature. In fact, it is this change of meaning which the intertestamental literature reflects, by and large.

The Messiah in The Wisdom of Jesus ben Sirach.

Ecclesiasticus, like Tobit, has no reference to a personal Messiah chosen by God to perform apocalyptic, eschatological deliverance. Here, too, it is by direct action of God that the work assigned by the Old Testament to the Messiah is carried out. God is seen at work in the humiliation of the oppressing nations, the elevation of the Jews, the ingathering of the exiles, the glorification of Jerusalem, and the rewarding of the righteous. In 47:22 there is reference

to a root of David, but the subject is the nation rather than an individual from God.

An interesting feature of this work is the relationship between David and Aaron, who appear side by side. Here, then, is the blending of the priestly with the kingly motif. Against the background of an eschatological kingdom, there is the hint of a sort of quasi-personal anointed instrument of deliverance. However, this is certainly more implicit than explicit. It is clear, though, that Jesus ben Sirach viewed the eschatological, "messianic" kingdom as a kingdom administered after the order of a Hasmonaean rule in which priestly functions were performed by a king, or, perhaps more correctly, sovereignty belonged to the priest. The author of this particular work obviously sought to give the writing a "messianic" flavor by referring to the prophecy of Isaiah who "foresaw the future, and comforted those who mourned in Zion."⁸ It is to the messianic portions of the Isaianic prophecy that reference is made.

Apart from these few hints there is nothing of an anointed God-sent deliverer in this book. The emphasis is rather upon nationalistic hopes based upon the promises of God to the spiritual Fathers of the nation. The accomplishment of these hopes is to be the work of God Himself.

⁸Ecclesiasticus 48:24.

The Messiah in The Wisdom of Solomon.

This particular book is free from messianism, although one passage is interesting, and worthy of note. The author says, in 18:13b, "When the first-born were destroyed, they acknowledged that the people was God's son." The context of these words is the recounting of the deliverance of Israel from Egypt. From this reference there is clear indication that the concept of the nation as God's instrument of deliverance was incipient. It would hardly be a difficult step from the premise that "the people was God's son" to a second stage, the people as God's Anointed Son, a view which is held in most Jewish theological circles today.

The Messiah in Baruch.

Baruch, like Ecclesiasticus, views God Himself as the One who is to perform the eschatological deliverance for His people, restoring the land and gathering the exiles. Mention is made, in 4:22, of "your everlasting Savior," but it is difficult to discern from the context whether this "savior" is the Holy One Himself, or His representative. The former seems the more likely conclusion.

There is another reference (4:37-5:7) which reminds one of the prophecy of Isaiah 40. The emphasis is not on the person of the Messiah, however, but rather upon the gathering of the dispersed peoples at the command of the Holy One. Included in this section are the following words which appear

to be a deliberate attempt to interpret the Isaianic passage as national, rather than individual:

For God has ordained that every high mountain and
the everlasting hills shall be made low,
And the valleys filled up to make level ground,
So that Israel may go safely, to the glory of God.⁹

The value of this verse, along with others, is the light which it sheds on the "messianism" of this period. It can be seen that the emphasis is not upon the Messiah as an "Anointed One sent from God." The emphasis is strictly upon the deliverance of the people from their oppressors. It is not the instrument that is important, but the belief that the deliverance will be accomplished.

The Messiah in I Maccabees.

The messianism of I Maccabees is unique in relation to that found elsewhere in the Apocrypha. Emphasis, of course, is upon the Messiah as a descendent of David. In 2:57 the aged Mattathias declares, "David for being merciful inherited a royal throne forever." Through the entire work there are reminders of the fact that the Hasmonean dynasty is not regarded as the fulfillment of the Old Testament messianic prophecies. Rather, the Hasmonean ruler is only the temporary "Messiah." When Judas and his warriors captured the fortress on Mount Zion, they tore down the old altar which had

⁹The Book of Baruch 5:7.

been defiled, and then deliberated as to what should be done with the stones. Finally, ". . . they took down the altar, and deposited the stones in the temple mountain, in a suitable place, until a prophet should come and declare what should be done with them."¹⁰ It is obvious from this passage that the Hasmoneans did not consider themselves to be the promised Messiah. There was coming a great prophet who was God's chosen Messiah. In the meantime, the Hasmoneans did whatever work they could to advance God's work, much of that work being "messianic" in nature, or being the work which the Messiah was to do, namely, rebuilding the city of Jerusalem, enlarging the borders of Judah, making Judah a world power, and gathering the exiles. While it is true that the hero, Judas, is referred to as "the Savior of Israel,"¹¹ this, in the light of the total messianic message of the book, ought not to be interpreted messianically, except in a typical or emblematic sense. The import of the entire work is that every Hasmonean must be content to live under the shadow of the "true prophet."

When Jonathan took over the leadership of the Judean cause he met with immediate success, and in the struggle between the two Syrian pretenders, Alexander and Demetrius, Jonathan received a purple robe and a gold crown, which he promptly

¹⁰I Maccabees 4:46.

¹¹I Maccabees 9:21.

accepted and wore.¹² Thus Jonathan united in himself the dual functions of priest and king. With this act he was assuming a role which belonged to the Messiah, according to Psalm 110 and other passages.

Simon followed the pattern established by Jonathan, and actually accomplished a reign of peace and prosperity.¹³ And in this book Simon is referred to not only as a high-priest, but as "the prince of God's people."¹⁴ Furthermore, the Jews resolved that Simon should "be their leader and high-priest forever . . . and that he should be their general . . . and that he should take care of the sanctuary . . . and that all contracts in the country should be dated in his reign and that he should be clothed in purple and wear gold."¹⁵ But here again occurs the statement of the temporality of this arrangement. The word "forever" in verse 42 is qualified by the addition of the phrase "until a true prophet should appear."¹⁶ Since the Hasmonean house was not of the house of David, these successors to Judas Maccabaeus could not rule in Israel without limitation, and when a true prophet should

¹²I Maccabees 10:20, 21.

¹³I Maccabees 14:4-15.

¹⁴I Maccabees 14:27.

¹⁵I Maccabees 14:41-43.

¹⁶I Maccabees 14:41.

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arise from the house of David, the Hasmonean ruler would naturally give way to him. Clearly, then, the Hasmoneans were not regarded as Messiahs, in spite of the feats which they performed, except in a temporary sense.

III. CONCLUSION

Having analyzed the references to the Messiah in the Apocrypha, it is now possible to offer some conclusions. It is apparent, first of all, that the Apocrypha are not primarily concerned with the messianic idea. References are actually very few. Also, there seems to be a corresponding lack of despair. The writings, for the most part, belong to a prosperous period of Jewish history, during which time the people and the nation as a whole were not extremely concerned about the future. The Maccabean books reflect a time of victory and confidence.

However, it is evident that the messianic idea was not forgotten during this time. This portion of the intertestamental literature proves conclusively that the Jews were aware of the promises for the future. They believed that their God would not cast them aside, and they had a faith that He would preserve them as a nation, whether through an appointed Deliverer or by direct intervention of His own sovereign will and power. Both ideas can be seen, although more frequently the "Messiah" is God Himself. The lack of a single belief is obvious.

Missing in this literature are the elaborate messianic schemes which appear in the Pseudepigrapha, the strongly imaginative views which depend upon the supernatural element. Instead, there is the quiet, general, almost offhand, mentioning of the theme of national preservation and subsequent destruction of enemies and ingathering of the dispersed.

But at the same time the personality of the Messiah is not missing entirely. It is not a major factor, to be sure, but it is nonetheless present. In this respect, the Messiah is pictured as a coming high-priest (I Esdras 5:40), a coming shepherd to lead the people (II Esdras 2:34), a savior (II Esdras 2:36), the youth of lofty stature who is the Son of God (II Esdras 2:42-47), the Christ who is the Son of God (II Esdras 7:28-30), the lion of the seed of David (II Esdras 12:31-34), the Man from the sea and the mountain (II Esdras 13:1-13), the nation of the Jews (The Wisdom of Solomon 18:13), and, finally, the great, true prophet (I Maccabees 4:46).

With the exception of these few personal references, the Messiah is primarily a national figure. It appears that the person of the Messiah gave way in this literature to the times of the Messiah.¹⁷ The scholar Edersheim sees two

¹⁷ Alfred Edersheim, Prophecy and History in Relation to the Messiah (New York: Anson D. F. Randolph & Company, n. d.), pp. 316, 317.

possible reasons for this change in emphasis: either want of real faith in a personal Messiah, or else a desire to avoid anything which might issue in politically dangerous movements.¹⁸ While the personal element is present in small measure, it is hidden behind national prospects in the Apocrypha. Thus, in this literature, the messianic hope becomes instead a Jewish hope, and the Messianic kingdom supersedes the messianic king.

It seems, then, on the basis of the picture presented in this portion of the intertestamental literature, that there is a strange combination of personal and national elements, with the major emphasis being placed upon the national preservation, sometimes through a personal figure and sometimes through a direct act by God Himself.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 317.

CHAPTER V

THE MESSIANIC CONCEPT IN THE PSEUDEPIGRAPHA

I. INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

The messianism of the intertestamental period may be traced, not only through the Apocrypha, but through the Pseudepigrapha as well. For some reasons the latter source may be actually more revealing than the former, due to the fact that it represents a more popular type of literature. For other reasons, however, the Pseudepigrapha are a less reliable source. The problem comes at the point of dating these "false writings." There has been the tendency, in recent times, especially since the work of Charles,¹ to see evidence of Christian interpolations in much of this literature. If these apparent interpolations can be proved, the value of these works as a source of information regarding Jewish doctrines is greatly reduced. This would be especially true of the doctrine of the Messiah. The Pseudepigrapha themselves may have been composed in pre-Christian times by Jewish writers, it is admitted, but they are rendered invalid at the point of their messianism, because of the fact that Christian writers, following the death of Jesus, inserted Christian messianism at significant points.

¹R. H. Charles, The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1913).

In spite of these interpolations (if indeed they are interpolations) it seems advisable, in the light of the title of the thesis, to examine the evidence in its present form. That is to say, for the purposes of this study, the Pseudepigrapha are regarded as a valid source for the study of messianism. How much this literature contributes to one's knowledge of Jewish messianism before the Christian era is a problem which this thesis does not attempt to settle. Yet, because the concern of this study is the messianism of the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha, it is necessary to analyze the writings from the point of view of what they say, and not from the point of view as to whether or not they are entirely Jewish.

In the case of many of these so-called interpolations, in fact of most of them, there appears to be no absolutely convincing reason why the portion in question could not have come from the pen of a Jewish apocalyptist. That apocalyptic literature belonged to Judaism before it belonged to Christianity has already been shown in a previous chapter. The point is, therefore, that some of these supposed interpolations may be Jewish just as likely as they may be Christian. The evidence is, in many cases, one man's opinion.

This chapter, then, does not reduce the Pseudepigrapha by eliminating all the interpolated portions. The content in this case is the primary concern. The delicate problem as to

how much Jewish messianism may be based upon this material is a matter which needs further investigation.

II. AN ANALYSIS OF THE MESSIANIC CONCEPT IN THE VARIOUS BOOKS

It is necessary at this point to call attention to the messianic references which are to be found in these books. These references are frequent and numerous. The procedure followed in this chapter is to note, first of all, the passage, either by quoting it or summarizing it, and, second, to comment upon the implications of the passage. The chapter closes with a summary.

The Messiah in The Book of Jubilees.

The Book of Jubilees was written, according to Charles,² about 109 B. C. It represents an effort to record the history of the Hebrews from the standpoint of the Law. In this work the Law is supreme. Yet there is an apparent triumph of the element of prophecy, which, during the intertestamental period, was suppressed by absolute attention to the minutia of the Law. In Jubilees the element of prediction comes through.

In this predictive work there are some messianic references. The first of these is not crystal-clear. Reference

²R. H. Charles, The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1913), Vol. II, p. 1.

is made in 16:26 to Abraham's blessing his Creator, ". . . for he knew and perceived that from him would arise the plant of righteousness for the eternal generations, and from him a holy seed. . . ." It would seem from the context that the "plant of righteousness" refers to the nation. This is clearly the case in I Enoch where this same phrase is used.³ Thus while the phrase may seem to have a messianic implication, following the pattern of the several "branch" references in Isaiah, it has, in this literature, taken on a different sense. It cannot be determined, however, whether or not this represents a deliberate attempt to redefine the "branch" in national, depersonalized terms.

Chapter 23 has been called "messianic." Its proper impact, however, is eschatological. The chapter is concerned with the difficult times which must come before the reign of peace, followed by a picture of the restoration of the kingdom. Missing, however, is even a hint of a Messiah. The interest is upon the kingdom, purged and reestablished by God.

The only messianic reference which may be said to be entirely personal is 31:18, 19. Here, in Isaac's words to his grandsons, is mention of a prince from the sons of Judah. Judah, and this son, shall rule over the sons of Jacob and shall be their help and their salvation. Here, then, the Messiah is seen to come from Judah, to cause the Gentile

³I Enoch 10:16; 84:6; 93:2, 5, 10.

nations to fear, to help and to save Israel. It must be recognized that since this work is primarily a rewriting of history, the prophecy which is given here may have been regarded by the writer of Jubilees as already fulfilled in David. Eschatological salvation is most certainly present, but the personal Messiah is scarcely mentioned.

The Messiah in The Books of Adam and Eve.

This pseudepigraph, The Books of Adam and Eve, has apparently not exerted any great influence upon Jewish thought from the time of its appearance until the present. There are, however, some messianic allusions within it which demand attention. The first of these is to be found in section xxix, verses 6-10. Here are to be found the elements of the ingathering of the dispersed, the rebuilding of the house of God, the new resurgence of iniquity, the appearance of God on earth in visible form, the shining forth of righteousness, the salvation of the faithful, the punishment of the impious, and the period of obedience to the commandments. The reference to the rite of baptism in verses 9 and 10 has caused scholars to regard this portion, along with the major part of the work, as representing Christian doctrine. But that the Jews were familiar with this rite can be seen from the evidence that it was practiced at Qumran.

Basically, the passage is again eschatological. No personal Messiah is needed in this scheme. God Himself effects

the ultimate deliverance. There may be, however, a hint of the incarnation in the words: "God will dwell with men on earth in visible form." This phrase, especially, makes the passage suspect to most interpreters.⁴ That the phrase refers to a divinely-chosen Messiah is unlikely. To the Jew this could only point to a belief that their God would establish his kingdom quite literally on earth. On the other hand it could refer to a Messiah who was not merely a representative of God, but actually God Himself, the visible part of God. Again it is difficult to establish a Jewish messianism on this passage, although it could serve as a basis for a Christian messianism.

A second messianic reference is more obvious, and at the same time more problematic. In section xlii, verses 2-5, there appear these words:

When five thousand five hundred years have been fulfilled, then will come upon earth the most beloved king Christ, the Son of God, to revive the body of Adam and with him to revive the bodies of the dead. He Himself, the Son of God, when He comes will be baptized in the river of Jordan, and when He hath come out of the water of Jordan, then He will anoint from the oil of mercy all that believe in Him. And the oil of mercy shall be for generation to generation for those who are ready to be born again of water and the Holy Spirit to life eternal. Then the most beloved Son of God, Christ, descending on earth shall lead thy father Adam to Paradise to the tree of mercy.

⁴R. H. Charles, The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1913), vol. II, p. 140 (footnote).

The specific nature of these words can hardly be traced to any Old Testament passage. One would almost have to conclude, therefore, that these words are truly the work of a Christian author. Even the most visionary apocalyptist could hardly have perceived the future so precisely. Yet there is still enough generality in the words to permit Jewish pre-Christian authorship. The total passage is basically Jewish. The Messiah is conceived as a king, the Son of God, and the restorer of Paradise. The element of eternal life, though not particularly defined in the Old Testament, appears there as a hope. The greatest difficulty comes at the point of baptism, both that of Christ and that of believers in him. This is hardly to be regarded as belonging to Old Testament theology. The linking of baptism with water and baptism with the Holy Spirit strongly suggests Christian sentiment. It must be recalled, however, that the Qumran covenanters placed great emphasis upon baptism as an initiation rite. One cannot make a precise statement regarding this passage, but it would seem that the words could have come from the pen of an apocalyptic Jew whose sentiments regarding the Messiah were somewhat in accord with those of the inhabitants of Qumran.

At any rate, the Messiah is here described in personal terms. He is identified as the Son of God, characterized as a king, described as an inhabitant of earth, and declared to have a mission to revive the dead. He will be baptized and he will anoint others.

A third passage demands attention. In section xxvi, verse 4 the "protoevangelium" is quoted. It is no more obviously messianic in this passage than it is in its original context, but it would seem that if the Genesis passage is to be interpreted messianically then this verse must be similarly regarded.

The Messiah in The Book of Enoch.

"The Book of Enoch is for the history of theological development the most important pseudepigraph of the first two centuries B. C."⁵ As a representative literary work of this period, it serves as a reliable source for a study of messianism in the centuries immediately preceding the Christian era. It is fortunate, therefore, that there are a great number of passages which give attention to messianic doctrine. It is because of the number of Messianic passages that the work is important to this study.

The messianism of Enoch is to be found, for the most part, in chapters 37-71, a section called "The Similitudes (or Parables) of Enoch." Matthew Black points out that most scholars agree that these chapters form a separate work within the larger book, and he points to the fact that in these thirty-five chapters the writer employs an unusual name for

⁵R. H. Charles, The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1913), Vol. II, p. 163.

God, "the Lord of Spirits," and that the messianism of these chapters "is unique outside the gospels."⁶ For these reasons this particular "messianic" section of Enoch is generally regarded as belonging to the Christian era.

Here again, however, the evidence is not overwhelming. In spite of the opinions of scholars, it is quite conceivable that the concept of the Messiah presented in these "Similitudes" is that of apocalyptic or popular Judaism in the troublesome times immediately prior to the Christian age.

For purposes of research it seems wise to divide the work into the divisions which scholars have generally accepted. Therefore, this portion of the chapter has been subdivided into two sections: The Messiah in the Similitudes and The Messiah Outside of the Similitudes.

The Messiah in the Similitudes. The thirty-five chapters which make up the "Similitudes" are almost entirely messianic. For the purposes of study, however, seven distinct passages have been separated.

The first of these sections (38-40:5) comprises the first half of the first parable. The section begins with the picture of the judgment which is to come to the wicked. This judgment is for sin. The Righteous One appears before the

⁶Matthew Black, "The Eschatology of the Similitudes of Enoch," Journal of Theological Studies, III (new series), 1952, 1.

righteous elect, driving from the earth the sinners and the powerful oppressors. Enoch is then carried by a whirlwind to heaven where he sees the "Elect One of righteousness and faith" in whose days righteousness shall prevail and the elect shall multiply before Him forever. Surrounding the Lord of Spirits are four "presences," or archangels, and one of them is given to praising the Elect One.

Probably the most significant factor of this passage, as it relates to messianism, is the evidence of the belief in the Messiah as the special agent in the establishment of righteousness and the judgment of sin.

The second reference is a single verse, 41:9. Here is to be seen the Messiah as an appointed judge who cannot be hindered in his judging by either angels or spiritual powers.

A third passage (chapters 45-53) takes in the major portion of the second parable, concerning itself with "those who deny the name of the dwelling of the holy ones and the Lord of Spirits." The section begins with the casting aside of the apostates. At that time the Lord places His Elect One upon the throne of glory, and causes Him to dwell among His elect ones. Heaven and earth are transformed so that peace and blessing may come to the righteous. In chapter 46 the Lord is called "the Head of Days," and He is accompanied by the righteous "Son of Man." In this passage the Son of Man is the great Equalizer who raises the oppressed by treading

down the mighty. This relationship is more obvious in chapter 47 where the righteous pray for vengeance upon their enemies and rejoice in its coming. In chapter 48 the description of the Son of Man is enlarged. He is described as having been named before the stars of heaven, and His commission is three-fold: to be a staff to the righteous, to be a light to the Gentiles, to be a hope to the troubled in heart. Thus, while the Messiah is here cast in the image of man, He is upheld as the universal deliverer. In verse 10 of this chapter the Son of Man is called "His Anointed." Chapter 49 describes the power and wisdom of the Elect One, and chapter 50 speaks of the victory of the righteous and the repentance of the Gentiles. In chapter 51 is to be found an explicit suggestion of the resurrection and exaltation of the Elect One, and in chapter 52 there is a picture of the seven metal mountains, representing the kingdoms of the world, becoming powerless before the Elect One and ultimately coming under His dominion. Chapter 53 completes this section by giving a summary of the previous chapter, closing with the words, "And the righteous shall have rest from the oppression of sinners." (v.7).

In this section there is, to be sure, a hint of a universal Messiah. At the same time, however, it is plain that in the background is to be seen oppression against the nation of the Jews. Actually the concepts which are here set forth appear to be a blending of two primary strains: the

apocalyptic deliverer of Daniel and the universal deliverer of the latter chapters of Isaiah. This is the admission which Black makes when he writes, ". . . We have here the beginnings of a synthesis between the Daniel Son of Man and Messianic ideas inspired by prophetic Scripture."⁷ Primarily on the basis of this section Creed is led to conclude, "Both in Enoch and in 4 Esdras . . . the heavenly Man is an individual personality who himself intervenes to judge and to save."⁸

The fourth passage is exclusively national. In 56:5-57:3 there is pictured the last struggle of the heathen (Parthians and Medes) against Israel. In the struggle, however, the nations turn against each other in their confusion and shall destroy one another. This prepares the way for the return from the Dispersion. The Messiah is not mentioned specifically in this section, but because of its relationship to the second parable, it is to be considered as belonging to the work which the Messiah will perform.

Chapters 61-63 must also be considered. In this passage is to be found the judgment of the righteous by the Elect One, culminating in the universal ascription of praise to God. Contrasted with this judgment is that of kings and mighty men,

⁷Matthew Black, "Unsolved New Testament Problems: The 'Son of Man' in the Old Biblical Literature," The Expository Times, LX (October, 1948), 15.

⁸J. M. Creed, "The Heavenly Man," The Journal of Theological Studies, XXVI (1925), 131.

opening the way for the outpouring of blessing upon the righteous ones, the elect. These kings and mighty men are unable to find salvation in spite of their repentance.

The third parable closes with verses 26-29 of the 69th chapter. These four verses comprise the sixth specific Messianic portion of the "Similitudes." In this section the saved ones are seen blessing and glorifying God "because the name of that Son of Man had been revealed unto them." Then the Son of Man is given the "sum of judgment" and He causes "the sinners to pass away and be destroyed from off the face of the earth, and those who have led the world astray." These are bound with chains and are imprisoned in the place of destruction. Here the Son of Man has appeared, it is declared, "and all evil shall pass away before his face, and the word of that Son of Man shall go forth and be strong before the Lord of Spirits."

In 71:14-17 is to be found the final messianic passage in the "Similitudes." The passage resembles 46:3ff, in that it appears to be an answer to Enoch's question in the earlier passages regarding the identity of the One accompanying the Head of Days. Here the Son of Man is described as being born unto righteousness, and as commissioned to proclaim peace "in the name of the world to come . . . for ever and for ever and ever." Thus the Son of Man is identified as the righteous ruler of the everlasting kingdom of peace, and uprightness.

By way of summary of these passages it may be said that this portion of Enoch (chapters 37-71) holds to the notion of an everlasting messianic kingdom established upon a transformed earth. The Messiah is seen as the righteous, anointed, Son of Man who sits upon the throne as judge of men and ruler of this kingdom of eternal peace. For the most part the real meaning of the Messiah's coming is salvation. While it is clearly sin that makes the coming of the Messiah necessary, it cannot be determined precisely whether the sin here is universal sin or sin against the nation of Israel. If the former is the concept of sin which this author is suggesting, then these passages bear a direct relationship to the latter chapters of Isaiah, especially 60-66. If the sin here is sin against the nation of the Jews, then the messianism here is strictly national deliverance from oppression.

Is it possible to find in this concept of messianism a deliberate attempt to "preach" apocalyptic deliverance without fostering outright rebellion against Roman authority? Does this "universalism" represent a quietist variant of the messianic hope, which, because of the deep despair, cannot believe that arms and warfare have any effectiveness? Or is this, as Andrews holds, the climax of messianic prophecy?⁹

⁹H. T. Andrews, An Introduction to the Apocryphal Books of the Old and New Testament, rev. and ed. Charles F. Pfeiffer (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1964), p. 55.

One cannot be certain which view has the most evidence in its favor, but it appears that the "Similitudes" seek to foster national hopes by depicting deliverance in terms of universals. However, dogmatism at this point is to be avoided.

It must be recognized that there is much in this section which is consistent with the messianism of the New Testament. Here the term "Son of Man" is clearly a messianic title. One of the functions of the Messiah is to judge; the other is to save. Also are to be found the two doctrines of the Messiah's existence: his eternal pre-existence and his eternal post-existence.

The Messiah Outside of the Similitudes. In addition to the messianic portions of the "Similitudes" there are to be found other references which are messianic in nature. These are to be found in the latter chapters of Enoch.

The first reference is obscure. In 90:37, 38 the Messiah appears as "a white bull." The "bull" has no particular function, although he is the object of fear among all the beasts and birds. Because of the presence of this "bull," however, all the generations are transformed into white bulls. Then the Messiah becomes a "lamb." The interesting feature here is that the Messiah is not a supernatural figure sent down from God, but rather an individual who rises up from within the community to become the Messiah.

A second reference (92:3-5) calls the Messiah "the righteous one" who shall arise and walk in paths of righteousness and eternal light. As in the above reference (90:37, 38) the element of the supernatural is missing, and the Messiah appears as a human deliverer who sets out to perform his work when the wickedness of earth is dreadful and the times are troubled.

In 105:2 God speaks in these words, "For I and My Son will be united with them for ever in the paths of uprightness in their lives; and ye shall have peace: rejoice, ye children of uprightness." It is clear from this passage that the Messiah was viewed as having a unique relationship to God, but that he was a supernatural Son of God is not stressed. What is emphasized is the fact that God has united Himself with this apparently-human Messiah for the purpose of peace to His people, the upright. There is nothing to lead to a conclusion that the author of this portion spoke of the upright in spiritual terms. The context seems to indicate that the upright are the "pious" Jews.

Against these three references, or behind them, may be seen the Maccabean times, especially those of Judas. This was an age in which the Jews saw the partial fulfillment of much of their messianic hope. Thus the doctrine reflected here is cast in the image of Judas, who though a "Messiah," grew up from the community itself and experienced the power

of God upon his life. Judas, then, represents not so much a God-given Savior as a God-chosen Savior.

Summary of the Messianism of Enoch. In The Book of Enoch, then, the Messiah is portrayed as a divinely-appointed agent who is given the role of establishing a righteous kingdom and of judging sin. Heaven and earth are transformed into arenas of peace and righteousness. The Messiah, called "the Son of Man," is given to elevate the oppressed and to tread down the oppressors and the mighty. Against the background of this kind of nationalism is to be seen the hint of universalism--he will be a light to the Gentiles, a hope to the troubled heart. It seems apparent from this description that the writer was making a deliberate attempt to combine the universalism of Isaiah with the various elements of nationalistic deliverance. At any rate, the messianic kingdom is to be regarded as eternal. It is, in its earliest stages, temporary, for the Messiah begins by putting mankind and the world in order through both restoration and judgment. This accomplished, the temporary messianic reign comes to an end, and the period of eternal duration begins. The temporary aspect of the messianic kingdom is stressed outside of the "Similitudes." Here the Messiah arises from within the community itself and is not pre-existent with God. He is a human figure mightily blessed by God, but not supernatural, even though God refers to the Messiah as "my Son." Bailey points to evidence that the

Samaritans believed in a temporary Messiah (Ta'eb) who would appear within the nation at the time of restoration and would live for 1000 years, after which he would die to await the general resurrection.¹⁰ Thus it would seem that the "similitudes" or "parables" represent a more Jewish messianism while the rest of the messianic portions are perhaps representative of Samaritan thought.

The Messiah in The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs.

Though primarily an ethical treatise, The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, written at the close of the second century B.C., includes a great deal of doctrine. Among the doctrinal themes which the book pursues are several studies in messianic theology. An analysis of this messianism points up an interesting fact: the messianism of The Testaments is nearly unique among apocryphal writings. For the purposes of this study it is best to look at each testament separately.

The Messiah in The Testament of Reuben. The Testament of Reuben makes but one reference to the Messiah. In 6:7-12 Reuben speaks to his sons:

"For to Levi God gave the sovereignty and to Judah with him and to me also, and to Dan and Joseph, that we should be for rulers. Therefore I command you to hearken to Levi, because he shall know

¹⁰J. W. Bailey, "The Temporary Messianic Reign in the Literature of Early Judaism," Journal of Biblical Literature, LIII (1934), 179.

the law of the Lord, and shall give ordinances for judgment and shall sacrifice for all Israel until the consummation of the time, as the anointed High Priest, of whom the Lord spake. . . . For he shall bless Israel and Judah, because him hath the Lord chosen to be king over all the nation. . . . an eternal king."

In this passage is to be found a reference to the Messiah as a product of the tribe of Levi. Old Testament prophecy clearly pointed to the tribe of Judah as the lineage to which the Messiah would belong. In what seems to be a deliberate attempt to reconcile the prophetic word with the present situation, the writer of this book says that the Messiah will be a priest from the tribe of Levi, and that he shall be co-regent with one from the tribe of Judah.

Most likely one is to find the acceptance of the Hasmonians behind these writings. The author of this book apparently saw the Messiah in the descendants of Judas Maccabaeus, and the particular reference may well be to John Hyrcanus, who was designated by his people as both priest and king. Thus, while Hyrcanus is clearly from the tribe of Levi by virtue of his functioning as a king, he may be regarded as the true descendent of Judah, the kingly tribe.

The Messiah in The Testament of Simeon. This second section of The Testaments contains three references to the Messiah. The first of these references (5:4-6) speaks of the corruption of the sons of Simeon and their attempts to "harm" the sons of Levi. Levi, waging the war of the Lord, shall be victorious, and along with Judah shall prosper.

In 6:5-7 there is the announcement that the Lord God shall appear on earth to save men, taking upon Himself bodily form. The reference here is not clearly messianic, but is so by suggestion.

Immediately following the verses from chapter six appear three verses (the total of chapter seven) which speak again of the supremacy of Levi and Judah. It is stated that the salvation of God shall come from these two tribes, for "the Lord shall raise up from Levi . . . a High-Priest, and from Judah . . . a king (God and man)," who shall save all the race of Israel. Here again, as in The Testament of Reuben, the rulers of the messianic kingdom are priest and king.

The Messiah in The Testament of Levi. Among the twelve books of the patriarchs that of Levi is perhaps the most important regarding the concept of messianism, although there are only four references which have to do with the Messiah.

The first of these references is 2:10-12. Speaking to his sons Levi reminds them that they shall ascend to stand near the Lord to be His minister and to declare His mysteries unto men, especially concerning their redemption. The aspect of a dual rulership with Judah is again stressed, suggesting the uniting of the successors of Levi and Judah at the point of sovereignty over the people of God.

A second reference (5:1, 2) tells how the Lord spoke unto Levi, saying, "Levi, I have given thee the blessings of

the priesthood until I come and sojourn in the midst of Israel." The elements of messianism to be found in this passage are similar to those which appear in I Maccabees. The tribe of Levi is given special directive to perform the priestly functions of the community while at the same time acting as sovereign head of the state. And yet the sovereignty, as God's appointed representative, is only temporary, for God Himself will eventually come to reign in the midst of men. Again, one can clearly see in the background of these concepts the Maccabean times. The age of the Messiah appears to have come, and yet God Himself has not established His personal rule on earth. Thus, the agents of the establishment of the "reign of peace" must be regarded as temporary, until the true judge-king-redeemer shall appear.

An interesting theme is introduced in 14:1, 2, the third reference to which attention must be called. In this passage Levi warns his children that he has learned that at the end of the ages they will transgress against the Lord and become a scorn to all the Gentiles. "Our father Israel," he continues, "is pure from the transgressions of the chief priests who shall lay their hands upon the Saviour of the world." It is easy, of course, to regard verse 2 as a Christian interpolation, although such a conclusion is not entirely necessary. There were undoubtedly those among the Jews who regarded many of the actions of the Hasmonaeans as atrocities. Therefore, while in some sense they were viewed as "temporary" Messiahs,

yet in another sense, or to another group, these "Messiahs" were not entirely faultless. As a matter of fact, this writer apparently saw in them, especially at this stage in the latter days of their kingdom, an attitude which was so self-centered that it would not accept the real Messiah. It is difficult, however, to explain how such an anti-Maccabean "prophecy" could find its way into a piece of literature which is generally pro-Maccabean. To call the passage a Christian interpolation is indeed the easy explanation, although not necessarily the correct one.

The longest, most explicit passage is chapter 18. In this section Levi foretells the fall of the earthly priesthood. In place of the Levitical order shall come a "new priest" who is raised up by God, and to whom the Lord shall reveal His word. This new priest shall execute judgment upon the earth for a multitude of days. In heaven he shall be acknowledged as a king, and in the world he shall be exalted. He shall remove the darkness from the earth and shall institute a reign of peace. He will have no successors for ever, and in his priesthood the Gentiles shall be multiplied and enlightened. He shall put an end to sin, and shall open the gates of paradise, bringing holiness to the saints. While this passage is not entirely anti-Maccabean, it does recognize the temporary nature of the present priesthood, and in this respect it agrees with the previous reference.

There are a number of observations which may be made by way of summary. In the first place, it is clear that the author of The Testament of Levi looked for the appearance of a twofold Messiah, both kingly and priestly. The impact of the author's view is unique, however. The Messiah is not to be a king who under divine appointment will also assume the role of priest, but a priest who would become king by the anointing of the Lord. The former view represents the more traditional view of the prophets, who emphasized the Messiah's being in the line of David; the latter view was basically unique insofar as the Old Testament view is concerned.

At the same time, however, one must recognize a further fact. The Messiah of this particular writing is not clearly a single person. Beasley-Murray emphasizes the fact that both tribes are represented.¹¹ To the writer of this pseud-epigraph the prophetic view of the Messiah cannot easily be forgotten. At the same time, however, he is convinced that the Hasmonaeans are fulfilling the messianic prerogatives. It is obvious, then, that since he cannot bypass the tribe of Judah about which his predecessors the prophets have long spoken, he must add a second Messiah from the tribe of Levi in order to accommodate the ruling Hasmonaeans. He is not

¹¹G. R. Beasley-Murray, "The Two Messiahs in the New Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs," The Journal of Theological Studies, XLVIII (1947), 1-12.

entirely clear as to how this "second" Messiah fits into the scheme. In order to be most consistent with the biblical view the author would have pointed to a place in the lineage of this Messiah where a marriage united a representative of both of these tribes. This, however, is not done. And the result is not a Messiah who can trace his genealogy through both tribes, but rather two separate Messiahs, one from each of the two tribes: Judah representing the kingly Messiah, and Levi representing the priestly. Therefore, the salvation which God will introduce in the last days will be accomplished through two distinct persons, a High Priest and a King. This leads to the conclusion that the author had a two-fold view of salvation: it would be both an act which would redeem mankind (especially the Jews) and an act which would produce a settled kingdom of peace.

Because of the fact that in the author's mind the priestly Messiah was greater than the kingly Messiah -- this had to be so since the focal point of the Messiah's kingdom was the restored temple -- it is not surprising that the Messiah from the tribe of Levi is given the greater place. He is to be free from sin, meek in his righteousness (although warlike when necessary), a mediator for the Gentiles, a prophet of the Most High, the destroyer of wickedness, and the restorer of paradise.

The Messiah in The Testament of Judah. The words of Judah to his children provide much helpful information

concerning the messianism of the intertestamental period. -
 In 1:6 the first hint is presented. Here Judah repeats the blessing which his father Jacob gave to him: "Thou shalt be a king, prospering in all things." Of course these words in themselves are not particularly messianic, but taken in the context of the rest of the work they are especially important. This same idea is repeated in 17:6.

Most informative in regard to the view of the Messiah held by this author is 21:1-5:

"And now, my children, I command you, love Levi, that ye may abide, and exalt not yourselves against him, lest ye be utterly destroyed. For to me the Lord gave the kingdom, and to him the priesthood, and He set the kingdom beneath the priesthood. To me He gave the things upon the earth; to him the things in the heavens. As the heaven is higher than the earth, so is the priesthood of God higher than the earthly kingdom, unless it falls away through sin from the Lord and is dominated by the earthly kingdom. For the angel of the Lord said unto me: The Lord chose him rather than thee, to draw near to Him, and to eat of His table and to offer Him the first-fruits of the choice things of the sons of Israel; but thou shalt be king of Jacob."

In this passage the author of The Testaments clearly defines his messianism: it is to be accomplished through two agents, a king and a priest, the former being subordinate to the latter. In this respect The Testament of Judah agrees with that of Levi, and with the other testaments, for the most part. The priesthood represents spiritual redemption, which is superior to national redemption. And yet in 22:1-3 it is clear that national redemption is the basic concern. The

part that Judah is to play in the entire messianic scheme-is that of a guardian of the kingdom. The kingdom shall be "brought to an end" by "men of another race" until "the salvation of Israel shall come, until the appearing of the God of righteousness, that Jacob and all the Gentiles may rest in peace." This God of righteousness shall guard the might of the kingdom of Judah for ever that it shall not be destroyed.

Chapters 24 and 25 complete the picture. After the captivity, it is told, a "star of peace" from Jacob shall arise, from the seed of Judah, like the sun of righteousness, walking in meekness, without sin. This "star" shall be the mediator of the spirit of grace. In words which echo the thought of the great Old Testament prophet Isaiah, the writer says,

"This branch of God Most High, and this Fountain giving life to all. Then shall the sceptre of my kingdom shine forth; and from your root shall arise a stem; and from it shall grow a rod of righteousness to the Gentiles, to judge and to save all that call upon the Lord."

Chapter 25 begins with the resurrection of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in accordance with which the sons of Jacob shall be chiefs of the tribes of Israel. In the listing of the sons, Levi is placed first and Judah is second. This is consistent with the general attitude of this entire pseud-epigraph toward the tribe of Levi, and its apparent superiority over Judah.

The Messiah in The Testament of Zebulun. The Messiah is not so clearly identified in the words of Zebulun. The words of 9:7, 8 speak in general of the mercy of God toward the penitent children of Jacob. This mercy shall be evidenced by the appearance of "the Lord Himself, the light of righteousness," who shall redeem the sons of men from captivity, and who shall appear in a restored Jerusalem. The question of the tribe of the Messiah is not raised here. In some way God Himself is now seen to perform the works which in Levi and Judah the co-Messiahs performed.

The Messiah in The Testament of Dan. The Testament of Dan is in general agreement with the other Testaments at the point of its messianism. The passage which expresses that point of view is 5:7-13, where the apostasy of Dan's children is foretold. In their turning aside from the Lord, they will accompany the sons of Levi, and with the sons of Judah and Levi they will be led into captivity. From this captivity the Lord will lead them into His sanctuary in peace. Dan continues his prophecy: "And there shall arise unto you from the tribe of Judah and of Levi the salvation of the Lord; and he shall make war against Beliar. And execute an everlasting vengeance on our enemies; and the captivity shall he take from Beliar the souls of the saints, and turn disobedient hearts unto the Lord, and give to them that call upon him eternal peace." Also promised is the eternal existence of

the New Jerusalem in which the Lord shall live among men, and over which the Holy One of Israel shall reign.

Here, too, the Messiah is to come from both the tribe of Judah and the tribe of Levi, and the major thrust of this Messiah's activity is to be salvation. It is the enemies of the Jews who feel the vengeance of the Lord, while the Jews themselves are turned from their ways of disobedience. The consummation of messianic hope is seen in the establishment of the eternal kingdom of peace in Jerusalem, newly rebuilt and holy.

The Messiah in The Testament of Naphtali. Naphtali's testament expresses the writer's messianic belief in chapters 5, 6, 7, and 8. Chapter 4 expresses, as do others of the Testaments, that the situation which calls forth the Messiah, that is, the apostasy of Israel, has been foretold in the writing of Enoch. Chapter 4 closes with the thought that the Lord shall scatter his people upon the face of the earth, "until the compassion of the Lord shall come, a man working righteousness and working mercy unto all them that are afar off, and to them that are near."

Chapter five tells of the vision of Naphtali in his fortieth year. In the vision Isaac challenges his grandchildren to race for the sun and the moon. Levi is the first to lay hold of the sun, and Judah succeeds in gaining the moon. These two are then exalted.

Another vision is presented in chapter six in which the sons of Jacob embark upon a ship which is overcome by a storm. Judah and Levi share the same plank until the storm is ended. In the vision it is the prayer of Levi which saves the rest of the shipwrecked sons.

Chapter eight summarizes the meaning of these two visions. Naphtali directs his children to unite themselves to Levi and Judah, "for through them shall salvation arise unto Israel, and in them shall Jacob be blessed." It is declared further that through the tribes of Levi and Judah God shall appear on earth among men "to save the race of Israel, and to gather together the righteous from amongst the Gentiles. . . . And God shall be glorified among the Gentiles through you."

This portion of The Testaments is thus consistent with the others in its acceptance of the double-Messiah. Salvation comes through Levi and Judah jointly.

The Messiah in The Testament of Gad. For the most part, The Testament of Gad is a collection of wisdom, legal matters, and subsequent imperatives resulting from the lessons to be learned. The conclusion of this entire section of The Testaments is to be found in chapter eight. Verse 1 of this final chapter says, "Do ye also therefore tell these things to your children, that they honour Judah and Levi, for from them shall the Lord raise up salvation to Israel." The content of the verse has no real connection with the material which precedes

it, and yet it is quite clear that this verse has a structural relationship to the earlier chapters. The relationship of the verse to the rest of the book is not the important issue, however. Noteworthy is the recurrence of the doctrine of two Messiahs, or dual Messiahship. Judah is mentioned first in Gad whereas elsewhere Levi is more often the earlier named.

The Messiah in The Testament of Asher. A surprising feature of The Testament of Asher is the absence of the co-Messiahship of Levi and Judah. Chapter seven does reveal something of the view of Messiahship which the author of The Testaments was seeking to express. Asher reveals his foreknowledge of the apostasy of his children, and their subsequent deliverance into the hands of their enemies. In the dispersion, they shall be set at nought until "the most High shall visit the earth, coming Himself as man, with men eating and drinking. . . ." God, in the form and company of mankind, shall save Israel and all the Gentiles. It is impossible to say whether or not this chapter expresses a belief in the forthcoming incarnation. To conclude that there is at least a hint of such a doctrine would seem to be a logical response. Most likely, however, the words of this passage express, at best, a Jewish hope, without stating how such a desire could be accomplished, or even that it was possible.

The Messiah in The Testament of Joseph. The essential messianism of The Testament of Joseph is to be found in

chapter 19, the vision of Joseph. In the vision Joseph sees the dispersion of the nine tribes, followed shortly by the dispersion of the other three tribes. Then the twelve tribes are reunited. In the midst of the restored community there arise both a lamb and a lion. The beasts of the land rush upon the lamb, but he is victorious over them. Joseph then challenges his children to observe the commandments and honor Levi and Judah, "for from them shall arise the salvation of Israel." In other manuscripts¹² this verse is rendered as follows: ". . . For from them shall arise unto you the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world one who saveth all the Gentiles and Israel. For His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, which shall not pass away. . . ." There are elements in this alternate reading which suggest that it represents a later version, possibly showing Christian editing. This probably cannot be firmly established, however, although most authorities seem to favor such a view.

Again, the deliverance of Israel is to be accomplished by a Messiah who is symbolized by both the lion and the lamb, and who is the descendent of both Judah and Levi.

The Messiah in The Testament of Benjamin. The final words of the twelfth son, Benjamin, add some distinctive dimensions to the messianism of The Testaments. The first of

¹²cf. the 1st Slavonic recension, for example.

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these elements is to be found in 3:8, which reads, "In thee shall be fulfilled the prophecy of heaven, which says that the blameless one shall be defiled for lawless men, the sinless one shall die for ungodly men." The Messiah in this case is a spiritual deliverer, seemingly conceived in the Isaianic ideal. Himself sinless, he shall die for sinners. Lacking, however, is the element of voluntariness which pervades the account in Isaiah 53. In the more complete Slavonic recension this Messiah is clearly identified as "the Lamb of God, and Saviour of the world."

A second passage dealing with the presentation of messianism is 9:2-5, which is also more complete and specific in the Slavonic recension. In this passage the Messiah is described as "an only-begotten prophet," the salvation of the Most High. In the longer version it is stated that "He shall be lifted up upon a tree." The Gentiles, too, are said to benefit from the restoration of the Temple and the work of the Messiah.

The words of 10:7-10 need also to be noted. Verse 6 speaks of a day in which the Lord shall reveal His salvation to the Gentiles. And in this day the Gentiles will be used to judge the children of Israel, since the latter group did not believe on the King of Heaven "when He appeared as God in the flesh." Again there appears a hint of the incarnation, although it is perhaps suggested here that God has chosen to demonstrate Himself in a man, rather than to become a man as the New Testament holds.

A final reference is 11:2, which reads, "And there shall arise in the latter days one beloved of the Lord, of the tribe of Judah and Levi, a doer of His good pleasure in his mouth, with new knowledge enlightening the Gentiles." Here the Messiah is a personal, universal, beloved deliverer, springing from the tribes of Judah and Levi, again representing the combined interests of priest and king. This Messiah shall be in the synagogues of the Gentiles until the consummation of the age, and he shall be "among their rulers." Remaining forever a chosen one of God, he shall be "inscribed in the holy books, both his work and his word."

The Messiah in the appendices to the Testaments. At the close of The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs¹³ there appear two appendices: one a late Hebrew version of The Testament of Naphtali and the other a translation of Aramaic and Greek fragments of The Testament of Levi and The Book of Jubilees. The first is simply an enlargement of the vision portions of the original Testament, stressing again the togetherness of Judah and Levi, and their superiority over the other sons of Jacob, who, with the exception of Benjamin, are led into apostasy by Joseph. This appendix represents the work of a post-exilic Jew who is recounting history with a pro-Judah bias, while at the same time allowing for the rulership of the Hasmonaeans. The second appendix recounts Levi's receiving of the eternal priesthood, but it has no essential messianic elements.

¹³cf. Charles' edition, pp. 361-367.

A summary of the messianism in The Testaments. The author of these pseudepigraphal Testaments seems to have made a deliberate attempt to reconcile Old Testament messianic prophecy with his contemporary situation. The Hasmonaeans were then sitting upon the throne, whereas the prophets had spoken of the Messiah as a descendent of David, of the tribe of Judah. Thus the work, which supports the Hasmonaeans, ascribes to these successors of Judas Maccabaeus the right to sit upon the throne of the "messianic kingdom." The work does not represent an effort to alter prophecy, but it is rather an attempt to interpret prophecy in light of the present difficulties.

Apart from the actual situation, however, the conclusion to which the author comes was backed up by a process of change in regard to messianism. Ben Sirach had exalted the priesthood at the expense of the kings. The author of Jubilees continued the process, not to the extent of depreciating Judah, but simply to the extent of exalting the priestly line to a point of apparent equality with the kingly dynasty. After all, it was indeed the priests who were now the "kings." The Testaments seem to ascribe warlike qualities to Levi, however, at which point they differ exceedingly from the presentation of Levi in Jubilees. The military achievements of the Maccabees would be sufficient to explain the transition. Judah is indispensable, but less active. Levi, as priest, becomes the actual defender of Israel.

Because of the obvious acceptance of the Hasmonaeans as the "Messiah," it is not surprising that the personality of the Messiah is not described at length. Nor is it strange that the messianic age is pictured only incidentally. From the author's point of view, these were already a reality; he had no need to attempt to depict them.

Somewhat strange, however, is the "universalism" of this work. The Gentiles appear to receive blessings which are far beyond anything found elsewhere in this type of literature. This universalism is not what it appears to be, however. Most likely, the Maccabean triumphs led to a belief that the Gentiles would finally recognize the God of the Jews as they saw that He could not be overcome. In this sense, the nations of the world would pay homage to Him, and ultimate recognition to His people, to whose control they would eventually submit.

The Messiah in The Sibylline Oracles.

The sibyls were the quasi-prophetesses of the Gentile nations. From early times the Romans had oracles of the sibyls, and it is most likely that the Jews of Alexandria and/or Asia Minor composed numerous oracles following the pattern of these Roman sibyls.¹⁴ Fifteen books are mentioned in various ancient works, although only twelve of them remain.¹⁵

¹⁴Joseph Klausner, The Messianic Idea in Israel (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1955), p. 370.

¹⁵Ibid.

For the most part these works are Jewish, but, with the form being similar to that of the ancient Roman oracles, it is probable that these works represent a deliberate attempt to "prove" the antiquity of Jewish speculation concerning various doctrines.

Messianism in The Oracles is confined primarily to Books III and V, and to some extent, Book XI. The first of these, Book III, is believed to have been written at two different times: the first part, lines 1-92, around 27 B.C., and the second part, lines 93-829, around 140 B.C. In lines 46-62 of Book III the Messiah is a Holy Prince who shall come to wield a sceptre over the whole world. He shall be an immortal king. With inexorable wrath he shall visit the Romans. A second passage (286-294) promises that God shall send a king who shall judge each man with blood and fire. The author of this piece goes on to say that there is a royal tribe whose family shall never stumble, and who shall raise up a new shrine to God. This, too, is an accomplishment which belongs to the Messiah, or to the messianic family.

The final section of Book III (lines 652-829) provides a great deal of information about the messianic hope. In this section is to be found the prophecy of the nations' attack upon God's people because of their envy of the Jews. They shall encircle the city, but the mighty hand of God shall cause the infidels to perish. The natural order of the universe shall be disturbed at the presence of God. Following

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the destruction of the enemies, the sons of God shall live⁷ in peace around the temple with God as their protector. The nations of the world shall come to worship, and there shall be peace and plenty throughout the earth.

Most noteworthy about this final section is the concern for the messianic age without the evidence of concern for the Messiah as a unique individual. The ultimate consummation of all things is to be accomplished by God Himself. There is no appointed Messiah. There is no supernatural "Son" sent by God to earth. God performs the judgment and guarantees the subsequent peaceful kingdom by His own presence.

Book IV, as it relates to messianism, is concerned only with the signs of the Messiah's coming. Book V, however, in apocalyptic imagery, describes the Messiah. In lines 155-161 he is "a great star" who "shall destroy the whole land," even the sea, Babylon itself, and the land of Italy "on whose account many faithful saints of the Hebrews have perished, and the true people." Further description is given in lines 256-285 in which the Messiah is "a certain exalted man" from the sky "whose hands they nailed upon the fruitful tree, the noblest of the Hebrews, who shall one day cause the sun to stand still, when he cries with fair speech and pure lips." In the verses following, Judah is addressed as "thou blessed one, child of God, excellent in wealth, only longed-for blossom, pleasant light, august offshoot, longed-for branch." The prophecy is then uttered that the Greeks shall no longer

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run riot in the land, but they shall have a mind which conforms to Jewish law. It is apparently the coming of the exalted one which accomplishes this change in the political, spiritual structure of the world.

In a later passage (414-433) the Messiah is described as "a blessed man" come from the plains of heaven "with the sceptre in his hand which God has committed to his clasp." This Messiah has won dominion over all, and has restored to all the good the wealth which the former men took away. He has destroyed wicked cities and evil men, but has rebuilt Jerusalem more beautiful than before.

The Messiah in The Assumption of Moses.

The Assumption of Moses has one very interesting chapter which cannot be overlooked in a consideration of messianism. Chapter 9 speaks of one "Taxo" from the tribe of Levi. There have been efforts made to identify this Levite, but agreement has not come. It is significant, perhaps, that this "Taxo" is not the Messiah, but rather a pious, orthodox Jew who is instrumental in bringing the messianic age as a result of his own determination to preserve the faith. The messianic age is instituted by God Himself without the help of any anointed individual.

The Messiah in The Syriac Book of Baruch.

This book, probably written a short time after the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D., represents orthodox Jewry's

response to the messianism of Christianity. For that reason it is valuable as a source of Jewish messianism, although one has to admit that it represents a reaction, as well as a statement of authentic Jewish messianic thought. Messianism is the subject of three parts of the work.

In chapters 27-30 the authors present a picture of the twelve woes that are to come upon the earth, leading to a consideration of the Messiah and his kingdom. When all of the woes have come to pass, then the Messiah "shall begin to be revealed," along with Leviathan and Behemoth. Messiah shall destroy these two monsters and, in addition, shall bless the earth abundantly. The striking thought which is presented near the end of this section is that when the time is fulfilled, the Messiah shall return (to God?), and the ones who have died in hope are to return with him.

Chapters 36-40 record a messianic vision and its interpretation. The section may be summarized as follows: The present kingdom is to be destroyed because it destroyed Zion. The destroyer of this kingdom will also fall, as will the third kingdom. The fourth kingdom, more evil than any of the previous kingdoms will also fall. However, when the time for the fall of this proud kingdom has approached, the "principate of My Messiah" will be revealed. The Messiah shall judge the wicked ruler of this kingdom and shall put him to death. The kingdom of the Messiah shall stand forever, "until the world

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of corruption is at an end, and until the times aforesaid -
are fulfilled."

The apocalyptic vision of chapters 53, 56-74 is clearly messianic. The vision itself is recorded in chapter 53, a vision of a cloud pouring forth black and white waters in sequence. Baruch learns in the interpretation of the vision (56-74) that the black and white waters symbolize the world history from Adam to the advent of the Messiah. Chapter 67, which purports to be the interpretation of the black eleventh waters, describes the present calamity which is upon the Jews. The twelfth waters are bright, symbolizing the salvation of God's people, and the partial, temporary rebuilding of Zion.

Chapters 70-74 go on to describe the consummation which comes on the heels of the temporary salvation. Men shall war against each other, and the general order of the earth shall be upset. No one who is evil shall escape this judgment. After "these things" the Messiah shall come. His advent is symbolized by the bright lightning. It is noteworthy that not all nations of the world are to be destroyed, but only those which have persecuted Israel. Following the destruction of Judah's enemies, the kingdom of peace and joy shall be instituted. This kingdom represents the restoration of Paradise, accomplished by the Messiah.

The Messiah in The Psalms of Solomon.

The Psalms of Solomon is a collection of short literary pieces, eighteen in number, purporting to be the compositions of King Solomon. They are dated, as a general rule, about 45 B.C. There is evidence to support the view of Klausner¹⁶ and others that their author was a Pharisee who was hostile to the Hasmonean dynasty. Psalm 2 expresses the hope that God will judge both the wicked of the land and the enemies while showing mercy to His pious ones. Psalm 5 seems to express the inner conflicts of one who endeavors to be loyal to his nation and his God in the face of gross iniquity in the royal court, and the author ends the psalm with the words, "Blessed is the glory of the Lord, for He is our king." Psalm 7 expresses confidence of deliverance from the nations, faith in God's mercy. Psalm 8 seems to describe the entrance of Pompey into Jerusalem, concerning which event the author is not frustrated, for he recognizes it as God's will. He closes the psalm with a prayer for the recovery of the dispersed peoples. Psalm 9 recognizes the oppression as God's will, but on the basis of the covenant the author pleads for mercy and deliverance.

Out of the general attitude of confidence which is expressed in the first ten psalms the author turns, in Psalm 11,

¹⁶Joseph Klausner, The Messianic Idea in Israel (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1955), p. 317.

to more specific matters, and to the presentation of his particular messianic belief. The psalm resembles chapters 4 and 5 of the apocryphal Book of Baruch, and it shows a great deal of similarity to portions of the latter part of Isaiah's prophecy. It is full of expectation, calling the dispersed to return to Zion, for God has established it for ever and ever. Psalms 13 and 14 advance the belief that there is in Judah a righteous class who are God's favored people, in contrast to those who have made themselves haughty and who have committed gross sins. It is the pious group which shall inherit "life in gladness." This theme is continued in the next two psalms.

Even more messianic is Psalm 17 which both denounces the ruling Hasmonean dynasty and praises God, the true King. The author points out that God chose David to be king over Israel and swore that his seed should not fail to rule over the kingdom. The fact is, however, that sinners rose up and thrust themselves upon the people, taking what was not promised to them, setting aside the throne of David. But God, says the writer, used an alien to remove these usurpers. In verse 23 the petition is voiced: "Behold, O Lord, and raise up unto them their king, the son of David . . . that he may reign over Israel Thy servant." Then follows a description of the work which this Davidic-Messiah-King is expected to perform: the shattering of unrighteous rulers, the purging of Jerusalem from its enemies, the reproofing of sinners, the destruction of

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the godless nations, the gathering together of the righteous people, the judging of the tribes, the cleansing away of unrighteousness, the subjecting of the nations under his yoke, the exaltation of Jerusalem. This righteous king shall be taught of God, and in the reign of this anointed one there shall be no unrighteousness. This Messiah-King shall trust in God, who indeed is king over all. He shall have a spirit of understanding, and of strength, and of righteousness. Then, in a hope which surpasses the present, he declares, "The Lord Himself is our king for ever and ever."

In this particular psalm, then, is to be seen a belief in a God-appointed, God-sent instrument who shall perform, as God's representative, the establishment of God's perfect will for Judah. God, of course, is the recognized power behind the whole process of purging and deliverance, although He chooses to accomplish this redemption through another "king." The final psalm continues this theme, again referring to the Lord's anointed as the agent of chastening and deliverance.

Here, in these Psalms, is an exalted and noble messianism. The Messiah is holy, and yet at the same time is able to maintain a balance between mercy and wrath. To be sure there is depicted a political and national redemption, but greater stress seems to be upon the spiritual redemption of the pious ones. Material prosperity is subordinate to spiritual gain. The Messiah is both judge and instructor, teaching to his people that which he learns from God. Truly this is to be

accomplished by the Messiah, but not by the Messiah alone, for the Messiah is, after all, a mere human being, his outstanding qualities notwithstanding. Thus the Messiah, a flesh and blood king of the house of David, is nothing more than the mediator. It is God who is the real king of His people.

III. CONCLUSION

To summarize the teachings of the Pseudepigrapha is indeed a most difficult task. The material itself covers a large segment of time and diverse political and spiritual viewpoints. In spite of this variety, the Pseudepigrapha remain important to intertestamental studies since they show what the Jews, in all of their various sects, were thinking just prior to the time of Christ or immediately following his life and death. The fact is clear, though, that one cannot say that any one of the messianic views presented in this material is representative of Judaism as such. One can only hold that there were differing views regarding the Messiah.

Generally speaking, the Messiah of the Pseudepigrapha is a man of war, the one chosen by or sent from God to fight Israel's final battle. The Assumption of Moses and the Psalms of Solomon run counter to this popular conception, however. Furthermore, most of these works are nationalistic in their messianism, although there are obvious departures from this narrowness. Another obvious contrast may be seen in relation to the nature of the Messiah, a contrast between a supernatural

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individual released into the present order by God and a -
purely human individual raised up from the existing order and
blessed by God. There is also the contrasting description of
the real "people of God." For the most part these are held
to be the Jews, and yet II Baruch points out that the one who
will share in the future glory of Israel are "those who be-
lieve." Further disagreement is to be found in reference to
the length of the age of the Messiah. Generally eternal, the
messianic age is sometimes viewed as temporary.

The Pseudepigrapha, then, are a blending of patriotism
and religion, both in abnormal forms. As Edersheim has said,
speaking of this apocalyptic literature, "It lays . . . one
hand on the Old Testament hope, while the other it gropes
after the fulfillment in that dim future, of which it seeks
to pierce the gloom."¹⁷ That the writers of these apocalyptic
Pseudepigrapha were themselves uncertain of the means of ful-
fillment of those Old Testament prophecies is the apparent
truth which their writings convey to us.

¹⁷Alfred Edersheim, Prophecy and History in Relation to
the Messiah (New York: Anson D. F. Randolph & Company, n. d.),
p. 342.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSIONS

On the basis of evidence which has been considered in the foregoing chapters it is now possible to offer some conclusions. To be sure, these conclusions must be regarded as partial and incomplete by virtue of the subject matter with which they deal. However, some concluding observations may certainly be made. The writer offers two basic, self-evident conclusions and five specific illustrations of these conclusions.

I. BASIC CONCLUSIONS

In the first place, the messianism of intertestamental Judaism as represented in the apocryphal literature is radically different from the messianism of the Old Testament prophets. Second, the messianism of the apocryphal intertestamental literature is the natural product of the times. Attention needs to be called to each of these points.

Apocryphal Jewish messianism--a radical change from Old Testament prophetic messianism. The first and obvious conclusion to which one comes after reading the apocryphal literature of the intertestamental period is that it represents a radical change in attitude from that displayed by the great prophets of the Old Testament. This is true in numerous areas, to be

sure, but perhaps the greatest difference is to be seen in relation to messianic hope. Certainly the literature of the centuries between the Testaments was influenced by the utterances of the prophets. It could not have been otherwise. The Jew in every age held the prophet in high regard. It is not surprising, then, that the writers of the intertestamental literature should look to the prophets for their inspiration and pattern. This factor calls even greater attention to the differences in the two types of literature.

The child, in many cases, hardly resembles the parent. In the choice of their great themes they are alike; in the presentation of the particular content of those themes they differ significantly. Speaking specifically of the changes in the doctrine of messianism, Edersheim notes the following:

As regards its form of presentation, it had become external and almost ossified. The figurative language of the Prophets had been perverted into a gross literalism, which gave its colouring to the picture of the Messiah and of His kingdom and reign. As regards the substance of the prophetic hope . . . there was not any enlargement, nor spiritual development, of the Old and preliminary dispensation, nor yet any reference to the new law to be written in the heart, and to the new spiritual blessings in forgiveness and righteousness. In short, we perceive not any outlook on a new state and condition of things: only an apotheosis of the old. The grand universalism, when all mankind would become children of the Heavenly Father, is lost behind a mere triumph of Judaism, thus giving place to an exclusive and narrow nationalism. Lastly, the moral elements regarding sin, repentance, spiritual preparation, and universal mercy--in

short, the distinctively Christian and . . .
eternal elements, are wanting.¹

The real messianic hope, in spite of the many titles and functions ascribed to the Messiah by the prophets, involved the reestablishment of the throne of David. This was the most popular concept among the people, both prior to and during the intertestamental years. The Messiah was to be the Second David. The fall of Judaea in 587/6 B.C. cast this concept into the realm of the unlikely. In subsequent years, however, especially during those of the Restoration, messianic hope burned again in every Jewish breast, although the throne of David lost its centrality in the minds of the struggling people. At least it was not central in the same respect as it had been in the proclamations of the inspired prophets. Furthermore, the prophets had viewed the Second David in a spiritual sense. With the throne gone and the need for "actual" leadership quite apparent, it is not surprising that the people should, as the result of their frustration, transfer the advent of the Messiah more and more into the future, and that they should accompany that advent with miracle and mystery. Messianic hope turned to messianic speculation. Spiritual certainty degenerated into figurative abstractions.

¹Alfred Edersheim, Prophecy and History in Relation to the Messiah (New York: Anson D. F. Randolph & Company, n.d.), pp. 350, 351.

Where is the real figure of the spiritual deliverance? In the intertestamental literature he is presented in fanciful vision as the champion of the people against the evil nations round about. The general, sometimes vague, terms of the prophets became the foundation for the particularization of these anonymous writers of the four centuries before the Christian era. In this sense, then, apocryphal apocalypticism arose out of prophecy. The former was an attempt to bring out the details which were lacking in the latter, as well as a deliberate effort to account for the seeming failure of the prophetic message. The old biblical ideas lived on, to be sure, in the minds of many, but these hopes were never again to be expressed in the universal, concrete terms of the great Hebrew prophets until Jesus sought to call the nation back to the true concept of the Messiah.

Apocryphal Jewish messianism--a product of its times.

The second conclusion to which one comes concerning the messianism of the anonymous intertestamental writers is that their doctrine was a product of the times. It has been noted previously in connection with the third chapter that apocalyptic expression and messianic hope were not confined to Judaea. The tenor of the times well accounts for the universality of this phenomenon.

The period of history from the fall of Jerusalem to the advent of Jesus the Christ provides ample rationale for this

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kind of literary style in relation to messianic hope. The Captivity made the candle of hope grow very dim. The edict of Cyrus and the moderate successes of the Jews fanned the nearly-extinguished flame, and men were bold enough to hope again for the fulfilment of the great messianic prophecies. Zerubbabel was regarded, apparently by many, as the one whom Yahweh had chosen. The times seemed to confirm their speculation--the nations were "stirred up" by revolt, even as the prophets had foretold. Though the Messiah seemed so near, yet he remained out of sight. The conquest by Alexander of the Persians brought the little land of Palestine under the heavy hand of the Greeks, and the subsequent oppression of the Jews by the Seleucids cast the people into despair. Messianic hope was stirred again, however, by the successes of the Maccabees. Not only was political independence complete but there was an enlargement of the borders. This appeared to many to be the "golden age." The writers reflect the change in attitude. The abstract future of the anonymous prophets of despair becomes the "here-and-now" of those who viewed the Hasmonaeans as the nation's deliverers.² This, too, was short-lived, however, for the Maccabees and their successors lacked the character which the people had optimistically anticipated. The writings from the latter stages of the Hasmonaeon dynasty

²But notice the interpretation of the messianic passages of I Maccabees in chapter IV.

show disillusionment with, and contempt for, these successors of Judas Maccabaeus. Once again, the hope of a Messiah becomes abstract, otherworldly, almost unlikely. The messianic deliverer is presented as a dream rather than as a hope. The subjugation of the land by the Romans stunned the Jews. At the same time, it brought the words of the prophets back to mind. Had there ever been a time when the Messiah was more needed? His advent seemed less probable than it had ever been; the messianic wish was stronger than ever. Herein lies the essential difference: that which the prophets had proclaimed as the hope of Israel and of the world had now become little more than a wish, divorced from real spiritual significance. The writers of the Psalms of Solomon appear to have been looking away from the shame of the Hasmonaeen kingdom to another, different kind of kingdom with a different kind of king who would provide the deliverance which the Hasmonaeans had failed to achieve.³ The hope was there, but it lacked objective force. Rather, one gets the impression that with the deepening oppression by the enemies of the Jews these anonymous writers of most of this apocryphal literature were actually saying, "This is what the Messiah would have to be like if He were to come, but we have long since given up our hope of actually witnessing any messianic advent such as that of which our prophets

³Edwyn Bevan, Jerusalem Under the High-Priests (London: Edward Arnold & Co., 1904), p. 144.

spoke." Thus the actual victory of the Messiah became an imaginative victory, a description of what ought to be or what could be, rather than what would be. Four centuries of struggle could hardly produce any other attitude among a people who had strayed from the essential spiritual meaning of the Messiah's advent.

II. SPECIFIC ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE BASIC CONCLUSIONS

Having called attention to the self-evident conclusions, it is necessary now to note specific areas in which the above conclusions may be applied. Five specific illustrations are offered in support of the basic conclusions.

An unfixed doctrine. Characteristic of prophetic messianism is the element of progression. The Messiah of the prophets can be presented in terms which complement one another and are not contradictory in any sense. Such cannot be said of the Messiah of the apocryphal writers. Their messianic doctrine was unfixed. There was no central principle to which all description must conform.

To account for this lack of uniformity, one needs only call attention to the fact that in the Jewish thought of this particular time messianism was far less important than either Torah or the idea of election. The stress, then, fell upon conformity insofar as these two doctrines were concerned. The nation and the Law were, and must remain, paramount.

In relation to messianism, then, these centuries before the advent of Christ were centuries of transition and gestation. The fixed messianism of the prophets passed through the minds of various groups within Judaism (it was during this period that most of the sects within Judaism developed) and the result was a potpourri of messianic speculation, each sect having its own particular emphasis. The ideas were varied and changeable. There was, to be sure, a common point of departure, namely, the restoration of the nation. As shall be noted in the fifth illustration, national restoration came to take the place of spiritual deliverance, that theme which the prophets had emphasized so strongly. How this restoration should be accomplished was the question to which the various groups brought their messianic doctrine. Some stressed that historical rhythms would finally be brought to completion. Others thought that the restoration would be accomplished within history but that it would require supernatural intervention. Others (most specifically the apocalyptists) pointed to a realm beyond history in which the battle would be won, although they often spoke in the language of history.

Not only was there difference of opinion as to when the restoration would be accomplished, but there were at the same time antithetical concepts of the Messiah Himself. To some (Enoch, Baruch, and 4 Esdras) the Messiah was a passive member of the messianic kingdom. To others (Sibylline Oracles,

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Psalms of Solomon, Baruch, and 4 Esdras) He was an active warrior who would slay the enemies with His hand. In other cases (Psalms of Solomon, 4 Esdras) the Messiah is a supernatural figure who slays the enemies by the word of His mouth. Again, He may be presented as eternal ruler and judge. As can be seen there are differing concepts even within a single work.

What of the kingdom which the Messiah would establish? Here again there were numerous possibilities. To some the messianic kingdom was to be of eternal duration on earth. Others held that it would be eternally established in the heavens. Still others said that this kingdom would be temporary since earth itself is temporary. Elsewhere there was to be no messianic kingdom as such.

One can readily see that there was no fixed messianic doctrine concerning the particulars. Lattey remarks, "In general it must be remembered that Jewish ideas about the Messiah were very fluid."⁴ This diversification certainly helps explain the failure of the Jew to recognize in Jesus of Nazareth the true Messiah of His people. The very fact that the Jew had tried to speculate about the Messiah was cause for his failure to find the Anointed One. Speculation had not

⁴Cuthbert Lattey, "The Messianic Expectation in 'The Assumption of Moses'," The Catholic Biblical Quarterly, IV (1942), 18.

been characteristic of the Hebrew. His answers to theological questions had come through recollection of historical event. The writer of Ecclesiastes; for example, after having tried to reason his way through difficult questions, concluded that man could not discern the ways of God. Thus, it may be held, the Hebrew viewed philosophy as a near-useless avenue to truth. The Jew, however, perhaps as the result of his contact with the Persians and the Greeks, tried to find his answers, even to the question of the nature of the Messiah and his kingdom, in speculation. In so doing he left the door open to numerous possibilities, until, in reality, he could not determine exactly which of the alternate choices was the best. A contemporary testimony to the validity of this observation is to be found in the words of a poem penned by an anonymous Jew, copied from a bulletin board in the Temple Beth El, Battle Creek, Michigan, May 1, 1961 by the Rev. Wm. J. Terman, pastor of the Free Methodist Church of Battle Creek:

"The door is shut.
Another year and Elijah has not come.
How long are we expected to wait for him?
All right, one can admit that there was a slight stirring
on the brackish surface of the wine,--evident,
although slight.
And perhaps there was a certain metaphysical shadow
against the wall as the candles flickered from the
breeze.
But this is tomorrow.
We cannot stand by the open door much longer.
Although we would give anything to have him come, we
cannot expect to wait.
But this is tomorrow.
Another year has come,
And he has not come again.
And we wouldn't know what to do if he did come."

Could it not be that the failure to unify the concept of the Messiah during these years between the Testaments contributed to this kind of uncertainty about the identification of the Anointed One and of the work which he was to accomplish?

Syncretism. Much of the problem regarding the failure to unify the messianism during the intertestamental period can be traced to the influence of foreign nations upon Jewish literature. One marvels at the lack of syncretism in the canonical writings. Surely these nations affected the religion of Israel, especially during the kingdom period. Messianism, however, remained, for the most part, untouched by the modes of expression of the neighbors.

The vicissitudes of the Jews during the years following the destruction of Jerusalem, along with their more intimate contact with the world at large as a result of the Dispersion, brought to their messianism a kind of expression which was unnatural to them. Previously their concern had been the fact of the Messiah. They had not shown much concern about the questions of how, when, and where. Now in contact with the vast mythological literature of the East, the Jew discovered that even as his neighbors had spoken of unknown beginnings in symbolic language, so he could speak of an uncertain future. The dominant influence of the prophets no doubt protected or preserved the true messianism from the temptation to clothe the doctrine in highly figurative language. Ezekiel and Daniel,

however, show that Babylonian modes of expression did have some impact upon the manner of presenting the doctrine of hope. It would seem, though, that the influence of Babylon was not that of changing the messianic concept so much as it was of increasing the hope. Perhaps it was here that the seed was sown.

The Persian influence was no doubt stronger. Black, for one, theorizes that during the centuries immediately following Ezra and Nehemiah "Judaism as a religion acquired . . . new and, to a large extent, foreign elements, which eventually came to be grafted on to the stock of the traditional religion."⁵ Ascham, too, believes that Persian influence was great, especially upon the apocryphal literature. He declares,

In the first and second centuries before the Christian era a well-developed eschatology that almost completely paralleled the Persian doctrine appeared in the Palestinian apocryphal literature. The conclusion is inevitable that Persian ideas of the last things met a sympathetic response in the harassed Judaeian community, and that the more pious were stimulated by these foreign notions to develop their primitive eschatology into a likeness of Persian doctrine and unite it with their Messianic hopes.⁶

That Persian influence extended to Jewish messianism can hardly be doubted. Cantley, for example, calls attention to

⁵Matthew Black, "The Development of Judaism in the Greek and Roman Periods," Peake's Commentary on the Bible, Matthew Black, ed. (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons Ltd., 1962), 142.

⁶John Bayne Ascham, The Religion of Judah (New York: The Abingdon Press, 1920), p. 216.

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several views which see the origins of Jewish messianism in the religion of Persia.⁷ One needs, however, to give due consideration to the words of George Ladd, who takes exception with the general view, and comes nearer to the actual truth of the matter. He admits that popular Jewish literature of the period between the Testaments represents "a considerable development over prophetic religion," but he demonstrates that resort to Persian influence alone is not necessary to account for the main development in Jewish messianic expression, since its basic elements belong to, and are an integral part of, Old Testament prophetic religion.⁸ His emphasis is upon the all-important fact that Jewish messianism, in its apocalyptic form of expression, surrendered one extremely important point: it let go of the conviction that God was Lord of the present as well as the future.⁹ The Old Testament prophets were apocalyptic in their eschatology in general and their messianism in particular, but they maintained an historical emphasis. The Jewish writers of the intertestamental period lost the consciousness of God's judging and redeeming hand in the present historical context. The contemporary scene had no connection

⁷M. J. Cantley, "Messianism," New Catholic Encyclopedia (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1967), 9, 714-715.

⁸George E. Ladd, "The Origin of Apocalyptic in Biblical Religion," The Evangelical Quarterly, XXX, 3 (July-September, 1958), 140.

⁹Ibid., pp. 145, 146.

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with redemptive, messianic activity. Persian influence alone cannot account for the presence of apocalyptic elements in Jewish messianism. It may well account, however, for the non-prophetic directions of this type of expression.

During this period the Jews were in contact with Egypt. Here, too, scholars have found evidences of apocalyptic hope. Some of this literature may have had an effect upon Jewish messianic hopes, as McCown has tried to demonstrate,¹⁰ although Cantley has pointed out that there is no evidence that the Egyptians ever expected an eschatological saviour which would compare with the Messiah of the apocryphal literature.¹¹

Greek thought, too, had its effect upon the Jewish religious mind. History bears this out. Whether the Jew lived in Palestine or elsewhere his life was constantly open to alien influence in new and subtle forms. It is hardly beyond possibility that the Hellenistic mystery religions exerted influence upon the intertestamental writers. The element of symbolical language, understood only by the initiated, would have strong appeal for a people who sensed that they were living amidst shattered messianic hope. Furthermore, as has been noted previously, the Greek affinity for speculation about the future tantalized the dejected, oppressed Jewish penmen,

¹⁰C. C. McCown, "Hebrew and Egyptian Apocalyptic Literature," Harvard Theological Review, XVIII (1925), 357-411.

¹¹Cantley, op. cit., p. 714.

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driving them up the blind alley of pure speculation based on intense desire without sufficient faith in the sovereignty of God over history. Thus Jewish messianism departed from the universality of the prophets and focused instead on the vengeance of God on behalf of His people, not as the working out of the historical process through which faith had clung to hope, but rather as the interruption of history by a cataclysmic event. Salvation, then, became suprahistorical.

Apocalypticism. Little remains to be said concerning apocalypticism as a substitute for genuine expectation. Although apocalyptic had its beginnings in inspired prophecy, it departed, as has been shown, from the classic universalism of the prophets, submerging its frustrated message in allegory, combining patriotism and religion in abnormal forms and achieving abnormal results.

One needs to be careful lest he regard apocalypticism as totally disastrous in its effect upon Scripture. Charles has shown that the contribution of apocalyptic literature is significant.¹² The New Testament makes frequent use of both apocryphon and pseudepigraph. Yet, there are obvious limitations in much of this literature.

¹²R. H. Charles, Religious Development Between the Old and the New Testaments (New York: Henry Holt and Company, n.d.), pp. 12-46.

Essentially, as Rowley has pointed out,¹³ apocalyptic¹³⁷ literature represents the adaptation of the ideas and aspirations of earlier days to a new situation. Its intent was indeed noble. So much of the intertestamental literature, however, imitated apocalypticism, copying the methodology or style for its own sake, rather than simply adapting the prophetic message. The prophets, too, were apocalyptists. Their predictions of the future were, however, not directed to their own age specifically, whereas the apocalyptists of the centuries between the Testaments were writing to their own age. To the prophet, hope was both immediate and ultimate; to the apocalyptist it was to be seen only in the future. The prophet had predicted a future that should arise out of the present, while the apocalyptist spoke of a future that should break in upon the present. A further difference is to be found in the perspective: the prophet spoke from the standpoint of the present, whereas the apocalyptist put in the guise of prophecy events that had happened in the past.

Two other qualities of apocalyptic literature must be noted. First there is the element of pseudonymity. The prophet had not hesitated to identify himself with his words. He staked his life (and Yahweh's) upon God's ability to bring His word to pass. Jeremiah bemoaned the fact that Yahweh

¹³H. H. Rowley, The Relevance of Apocalyptic (New York: Association Press, 1964), p. 13.

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seemed to be making a fool of him by not bringing to pass the words which he had spoken, although he could not resist the "divine urge" to speak. The apocalyptist, however, did not prophesy openly. He clothed his prophecy not only in esoteric language, but under a false name as well.

Second, apocalyptic seems to have been an effort to systematize prophecy, perhaps as the Mishnah was an effort to systematize Torah. Thus much of the apocalyptic literature was deliberately biblically-oriented but not totally subject to the messianic message of the prophets.

Institutionalism. Another characteristic of the apocryphal literature is institutionalism, or the tendency toward the "messianic institution" and away from the Messiah. This phase of the discussion has been anticipated earlier, but fuller comment needs to be made at this point.

Here, too, prophecy paved the way for this development. The great prophets could hardly speak of the Messiah without giving attention to "the times of the Messiah." The popular intertestamental literature, however, turned its attention on the latter, to the near-exclusion of the former. The emphasis is non-personal, as Bonsirven notes: "The messianic views in Jewish doctrine . . . do not emphasize the person of the Messiah but the restoration of the Jewish nation."¹⁴ This made

¹⁴Joseph Bonsirven, Palestinian Judaism in the Time of Jesus Christ (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1964), p. 172.

it possible for the Jew to think in terms of "messianic consummation" without once making mention of a Messiah as the agent of that consummation. An example of this is to be seen in the apocryphal Book of Tobit, in which the "messianic activities" belong to God Himself and do not depend on the presence of an "anointed one." Stress, in most of this literature, was upon the messianic event, rather than upon the Messiah's identity. Since his identity was uncertain it becomes relatively unimportant to the overall doctrine of the deliverance. Thus Klausner, in his remarks which conclude his study of the messianic idea in the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha, notes the following as the "complete messianic chain:" the signs of the Messiah, the birth pangs of the Messiah, the coming of Elijah, the trumpet of Messiah, the ingathering of the exiles, the reception of proselytes, the war with Gog and Magog, the Days of the Messiah, the renovation of the world, the Day of Judgement, the resurrection of the dead, the World to Come.¹⁵ The Messiah has become institutionalized. The "hope" has moved from the advent of a personal anointed being to the completion of the pattern.

To return to an earlier thought, one finds the roots of this development in the Old Testament. The Messiah does not

¹⁵Joseph Klausner, The Messianic Idea in Israel from Its Beginning to the Completion of the Mishnah (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1955), p. 385.

appear in the books of Joel, Amos, Zephaniah, Nahum, or Habakkuk. In Daniel he is described as "the Son of Man," if this is a messianic term in this context. The anointed agent of redemption is, however, implicitly present. The apocryphal writers did not consider the Messiah to be an organic factor of the kingdom. He could be present or not; it made little difference. Generally speaking, the figure of a personal Messiah is absent from Jewish literature after the time of Ezra--perhaps because of the failure of Zerubbabel to meet their expectations--until the time of the Hasmonaeans. The personal Messiah reappears in the Maccabean writings and in the portion of Enoch which seems to have been written during the years of Maccabean success, the "Similitudes."

Redemption from suffering rather than redemption from sin. Jewish messianism underwent perhaps its most critical change during the intertestamental period at the point of the purpose of the Messiah's coming. Heavy emphasis seems to have fallen upon the idea of national restoration, while the Old Testament prophecy that declared the Messiah to be the deliverer from sin seems to have held less place in the minds of the people.

One can easily explain this phenomenon in the light of the times in which the apocryphal literature was authored. Following the fall of Jerusalem, around which city the children of Israel had imagined God's eternal protection, the Jewish

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mind would naturally dream of restoration. Emphasis upon the Torah, and the subsequent development of oral tradition, produced in Judaism a sense of spiritual adequacy. For the most part it was difficult for the nation to account for its plight. The post-exilic prophets notwithstanding, the Jews for the most part did not regard their condition as the punishment of God upon their sins. Thus the apocalypticist was able to conclude that God was not at work in the present. Sin was viewed, not, as Isaiah had described it, as rebellion against God, but rather as rebellion against Judaism. Sinners were the Jews' enemies and those who were not loyal to the institutions of Jewry. Redemption was viewed as the "second election," precipitated by God's destroying the existing order and completed in His calling out the "faithful elect" to be the recipients of the messianic blessings in the utopia of the new world. The words "salvation" and "consolation" appear to take the place of redemption.

Thus one can easily account for the emphasis upon nationalism or "messianism." Since it was political deliverance that was sought for, it was the "messianic institution" that was stressed. Bartlet makes the telling observation that the kind of salvation which the Messiah was expected to bring varied according to the views of the kind of righteousness that was needed, whether personal or national.¹⁶ The New

¹⁶J. Vernon Bartlet, "The Religious Background of the New Testament Writings," A Commentary on the Bible, Arthur S. Peake, editor (London: Thomas Nelson & Sons, n.d.), p. 637.

Testament announcement called for a return to the kind of redemption which God had all along envisioned: "Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins."

Booth calls attention to the fact that varying messianic ideas sprang up in Judah, due to differing circumstances and viewpoints, but he notes that common to all of them in the intertestamental times was the element of hope of salvation for the Jew from his oppressors. The questions about the reason for his suffering made the spiritual picture of Isaiah 53 a forgotten one. "So far as we may judge, those beautiful Old Testament prophecies in which even the most critical scholarship agrees that we find a real prediction of Jesus . . . had little or no influence on the pre-Christian Hebrew mind."¹⁷ Speaking of the popular hopes of the Messiah, Booth summarizes, saying, "The Jew of that period did not long for deliverance from sin but from suffering."¹⁸ This mingling of religious fervor and patriotic passion characterized the messianism of the world into which the Messiah came.

¹⁷Henry Kendall Booth, The Bridge Between the Testaments (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1929), p. 196.

¹⁸Ibid.

III. EPILOGUE

According to Edersheim, ". . . Christianity in its origins appealed to an existing state of expectancy. . . ." ¹⁹ The problem, however, as it has been noted above, is that these messianic expectations had lost their definiteness in a more vague and general sense of anticipation which had assumed the coloring of the times. Putting beside these views the teachings of Jesus, it becomes clear that the average Pharisee could not recognize in Jesus of Nazareth the Messiah of his fervent dreams. Judgment upon the Gentiles and irreligious Jews was lacking. Jesus' coming was accompanied by no convulsive natural phenomena. The Roman oppression was not lifted. The marks of material splendor were not present. Obviously, to both the masses and the educated Pharisees, apocalyptic messianism had become the prevalent form of the messianic hope. The fulfillment of Israel's religion in Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah whom God actually sent was far other than had been anticipated in any of the circles of Jewish piety, whether official Pharisaism or the more popular forms of the faith.

The breaking away of the Christian religion from Judaism was, no doubt, a tremendous crisis for the Jews. From our

¹⁹ Alfred Edersheim, Prophecy and History in Relation to the Messiah (New York: Anson D. F. Randolph & Company, n.d.), p. 5.

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perspective, we are not able to realize the intense pain of the needful process. But the fulfilling of the Law depended upon the step. One of the crucial issues, in fact the primary point of difference, was messianism. The Jewish messianic concepts at the time of Christ forced Jesus of Nazareth to abandon the rigid structures of the faith of his fathers in order to take up the role of servant.

As a result of the apocalyptic speculation of the previous ages, the people of Jesus' day cherished a belief in the almost-immediate advent of the Messiah. It comes as no surprise, then, that John the Baptist was received by the masses. The general impatience of the Jewish people led them to accept nearly anyone as Messiah who promised them a deliverance from Rome. The Messiah was the principal subject of discussion among most of the people (although opinions varied) and the utopian age was the wish of nearly every man, woman, and child, in Palestine and elsewhere.

Probably the Zealots were the greatest activists in this regard. They expected the Messiah to appear with a sword in his hand, ready to lead the people against Rome, even as the apocryphal literature had foretold. Most of the people, however, seemed to believe the redemption would come in the form of a cosmic cataclysm, out of which would emerge a new world, headed by the Anointed One. It is interesting to note, though, that the Messiah of Philo--and he represents more liberal Jewry--was a strange amalgam of the leader, saint, prophet, priest,

and pacifist, rather than a conquering hero.²⁰

Messianic expectation had existed among the Jews for centuries, but the age of Jesus was an age in which the prophecies had lost their definiteness. Christianity appealed to this existing state of expectancy, although not in its present form. Jesus traced the pattern of his messianism back to the prophets, and bypassed the highly imaginary visions of the apocalyptists. Yet, he spoke of himself as the son of man, a phrase filled with meaning to the people of his day. A personal, divinely-appointed Messiah was acceptable to the masses of the people, as well as to the professional religionists, but the kind of fulfillment which God actually sent in the form of the personal, human Jesus of Nazareth, was far different from that which the apocryphal, apocalyptic literature had pictured. Schechter has pointed out that the kingdom of God had come to be associated with the new Israel as a national, political entity,²¹ hardly that of which the New Testament speaks.

Jesus' intention was not to declare a new faith, nor to destroy the Law. Rather, he stressed the prophetic core of existing Judaism. By his strict adherence to the messianism of the prophets Jesus failed to satisfy the nationalism of

²⁰Ibid., p. 6.

²¹Solomon Schechter, Aspects of Rabbinic Theology (New York: Schocken Books, 1961), p. 101.

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the ruling Jews, and, in spite of his early success, of the masses who desired that he should be the kind of Messiah which the apocalyptic literature had described. Thus the kingdom which Jesus taught was not acceptable to the Jews. In the program of Jesus there were lacking the salient features of both apocalyptic and Pharisaic messianism. His judgment was upon individuals. His activity was that of the servant. His message was self-denial and cross-bearing. His promises were spiritual. In the words of Ascham: "Jesus minimized the material setting of the kingdom, emphasized its progressive development, and passionately preached that it was a kingdom of the soul."²² The Pharisees demands for a "sign" to substantiate Jesus' Son-of-Man claims were not satisfied. According to Bowman, "Those with the Enochic teaching of the son of man in their minds would find it as difficult to recognize in Jesus of Nazareth the heavenly son of man, as others to see in him the King Messiah."²³

The words of Edersheim provide a fitting climax:

We think of His world-mission and of the regeneration of man, and of His teaching to all mankind, whether Jew or Gentiles. We remember that, of the many hopes which He kindled, of the many expectations of which he brought the realisation, He a Jew and the Jewish Messiah, was only silent on one, but this the only one which occupied His contemporaries--the glorification of Israel, and its exaltation. His kingdom

²²John Bayne Ascham, The Religion of Judah (New York: The Abingdon Press, 1920), p. 265.

²³John Bowman, "The Background of the Term 'Son of Man'," The Expository Times, LIX (August, 1948), 288.

was to be within the soul: of righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. Surely, this Christ, Whom the Gospels present to us--so Jewish, and yet so utterly un-Jewish--this King of Israel and Desire of all nations, was in very truth the fulfilment and the completion of the Old Testament promise--the Sent-of-God--not merely Jeshua, the Carpenter's Son of Nazareth in Galilee, nor yet the outcome of the Messianic thoughts and expectancy of His time and of its conceptions. And as we realise the essential difference between this Christ of all humanity, Who meets the inmost wishes and the deepest craving of our hearts--and that of the Jewish ideal, we feel that both He and His teaching must have been of God.²⁴

²⁴Alfred Edersheim, Prophecy and History in Relation to the Messiah (New York: Anson D. F. Randolph & Company, n.d.), pp. 351, 352.

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