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THE MISSIONARY MESSAGE OF THE
OLD TESTAMENT

THE MISSIONARY MESSAGE
OF THE
OLD TESTAMENT

BY
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TO MY WIFE

WHOSE PATIENCE AND HELP
NEVER FAIL
AND WHOSE COURAGE
HAS NEVER FALTERED
IN ALL OUR ADVENTURES
THIS STUDY IS DEDICATED
IN LOVE AND GRATITUDE

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PREFACE TO SECOND IMPRESSION

IT is gratifying to find that there is still a demand for this little book, and that my talks to a group of young people at a Summer School have been found useful by a wider circle. Several of the subjects on which I have touched here have been expanded in other publications which I have issued in the intervening years, where the discussion is accompanied by references to the abundant literature which others have written. In my Schweich Lectures, published under the title *From Joseph to Joshua*, I have offered my justification of the view of Israel's early history which is presented in the first chapter, and in *Moses and the Decalogue* I have defended the Mosaic origin of the Ten Commandments and examined their relation to the Ritual Decalogue of Exodus xxxiv, to which also I refer in the first lecture. In *The Biblical Doctrine of Election* I have considerably expanded that part of the present lectures which treats of Israel's election, and in the two chapters which give their title to a collection of essays published under the title of *The Servant of the Lord* I have treated of the critical and interpretative problems of the Servant Songs of the book of Isaiah, while in *The Unity of the Bible* I have indicated the central importance I find in these songs for the understanding of the Bible as a whole.

The text of these lectures is printed unchanged. This is possible because it is not supplied with references to the work of other scholars, but only to the Biblical text. Had I fitted my text with the footnotes which can be found in the other works mentioned in the preceding paragraph I should have desired to bring them up to date by adding references to more recent writers. The simplicity of treatment adopted here makes that unnecessary.

In sending it forth afresh I repeat the earnest hope that it may lead some readers to feel the constraint to be lifted

into the mission of Israel which has devolved upon the Church, and in a profound sense to let the burden of the world be laid upon their hearts, so that they may share in a real sense in the agony of the Servant of the Lord, which is not alone the agony of Christ but also ours in Him.

H. H. ROWLEY.

Manchester University.

April, 1955.

THE MISSIONARY MESSAGE

OF THE

OLD TESTAMENT

CHAPTER I

THE FOUNDATIONS OF THE MESSAGE

IN four short lectures it is impossible to deal exhaustively with the missionary message of the Old Testament, and all I can hope to do is to examine a few of the more notable passages in which that message finds expression. Yet it is wrong to isolate these passages from the rest of the Old Testament, for the ideas they contain have their seeds in the ideas which others before them had expressed. There is a fundamental unity in the Old Testament, and indeed in the whole Bible, and no part can be adequately studied save in the setting of the whole.

We might, indeed, go farther and say that nothing in the universe is fully comprehended when we have tried to see what it is in itself. We need also to understand that out of which it has come, and that unto which it has led. Really to know anything, we need to know everything. Tennyson expressed this in his oft-quoted lines :

Flower in the crannied wall,
I pluck you out of the crannies ;
I hold you here, root and all, in my hand,
Little flower—but *if* I could understand
What you are, root and all, and all in all,
I should know what God and man is.

Only omniscience can know anything. For all reality, and all history, and all human thought, are bound together in a single whole. Yet provided we remember that humbling thought, some partial knowledge may be granted to us.

For the full understanding of the Bible a vast equipment is necessary. To understand the Hebrew and Aramaic and Greek of the Bible, the knowledge of many more languages is required ; and to this must be added the careful and patient study of many ancient versions of the Bible in yet other languages, the study of archæology and ancient history and comparative religion, and a training in scientific method. And more important than any of these, there is needed spiritual experience and spiritual penetration ; for the deepest meaning of the Bible can only be unfolded to those who bring spirit as well as mind to its study. Happily, though this perfect understanding is beyond the reach of any living man, a measure of understanding may be given to each one of us in the measure of our equipment. And though I would not for one moment speak slightly of the importance of the linguistic and scientific sides of Biblical study, I would say with emphasis that spiritual penetration is the greatest quality which the Bible student needs. It will not give him the answers to the linguistic and scientific questions, but it will enable him to draw from the Bible enrichment for his spirit.

Whatever the measure of our equipment, we are wise if we study this Book with diligence, reading not alone what has been written about it, but reading the Bible itself. And we should always read it as a whole, whose parts belong intimately together. This does not mean that we should fail to discriminate between the parts, or find no diversity within its compass, but rather that we should strive to see how each part brought its contribution to the process that culminated in Christ, yet was transcended as the process went on, to see, too, how the culmination can only be appreciated when it is

seen as the culmination of the long process that went before it.

For any study of Old Testament thought it is well to begin with Moses, who is the real founder of Old Testament religion. In the Bible there are two traditions, one of which says that God was not known to the Israelites by the name Jehovah prior to the time of Moses, and the other of which says that He was known by that name from the beginnings of time. The one places the divine election of Israel in the time of Abraham, while the other represents it as announced to Moses in the wilderness. The contradiction between these statements is resolved when we realize that the Israelite tribes did not all come into Palestine together, but in separate waves. The whole question of the Exodus and Settlement of Palestine is perhaps the most complex of all the historical problems that surround the Old Testament, and scholars are not agreed as to its solution. To enter into its technicalities here would be out of place, and I can only give a summary of my own view as the key to the interpretation of the work of Moses, which I shall offer.

In the first half of the fourteenth century B.C. Judah and other southern tribes entered Palestine from the south, while in the same age other kindred tribes entered from the north. The Central Highlands were not occupied by Israel in that age, however. For it was in the latter part of the thirteenth century B.C. that Moses led out of Egypt the group that subsequently crossed the Jordan and settled in this area. We are told in the Bible that there was for long a Canaanite belt separating the Israelites of the Central Highlands from those of the north, and another separating them from Judah in the south. We know that it was in the age of Deborah that the central group of tribes combined with the northern, and in the time of Saul and David that the central and southern groups combined against the Philistines. And then in the reigns of David and Solomon all the tribes were for a short time in a single federation.

It is probable that during this time their varying traditions were brought together. Few scholars believe that either of the two ancient collections of traditions that have come down to us is so old in its present form as the time of David and Solomon, but it may well have been in that age that the foundations of these collections were laid. One of the two collections has the stamp of a southern outlook upon it, and probably represents in some measure the experience of the southern tribes, while the other has the stamp of the experience and outlook of the central tribes, though both are collections of the traditions of all the tribes.

This means that not all the tribes were ever in Egypt, and it is only the fusing of their traditions that gives the impression that they were. Yet they were all kindred tribes, and the group that went into Egypt probably broke off from the group that entered Palestine from the south soon after the time of that entry. Joseph was first carried down into Egypt, and was later joined by some elements that failed to get a hold on the land. Simeon and Levi appear to have got as far north as Shechem, and then through some act of treachery lost it again, and were forced to fall back. It is likely that some Levite elements were scattered throughout the land, while others went down into Egypt, and Moses was a descendant of one of these latter. It will be noticed that on this view the length of the sojourn in Egypt of those who went thither was not more than a century and a half. This seems very much less than the four hundred and thirty years of Ex. xii, 40, but it has other Biblical evidence on its side. In particular it is to be observed that the Bible says that the mother of Moses was the sister of one of those who went down into Egypt.¹

For more than half a century it has been a common view amongst scholars that Jehovah was worshipped by the Kenites before He was worshipped by the Israelites,

¹ Cp. Gen. xlv. 11, Ex. vi. 18, 20.

and this view, taken in conjunction with that which I have already outlined will fully explain the two traditions found in the Old Testament. For the worship of Jehovah was introduced to the two groups of Israelite tribes in different ways. There were Kenites with the group that entered the land from the south with Judah, and the Kenite religion may have spread by gradual penetration through the whole of the group. These Israelite tribes would therefore have no memory of a dramatic moment when their worship of Jehovah began, since there was none, and since they had taken it over from men who had worshipped Him from time immemorial, they ascribed that worship to the beginnings of time. The other group, however, that came out of Egypt, were led out by Moses in the name of Jehovah, and then pledged themselves to Him in a solemn act of dedication in the wilderness. Hence they dated the beginnings of the worship of Jehovah in Israel at a definite time.

There is reason to believe that Moses had some Kenite blood in him. His mother probably had a Kenite name. This could easily be understood in view of what I have said. For when Levites and Kenites pressed into Canaan together, there may well have been some intermarriage that brought Kenite names into Levite families, and when some of these Levites then went down into Egypt to join Joseph, who had gone thither before them, such names would be found in Egypt. If this is correct, it would explain why Moses fled to a Kenite when he had to leave Egypt. For Jethro may well have been a relation on his mother's side. Just as Jacob fled from his brother to his mother's kindred and married a relation on his mother's side, so may Moses have done.

Much of this cannot be said to be more than probable, but it offers a reasonable explanation of many Old Testament problems, which are recognised by all scholars and accounted for by no other view so largely as by this.

And in the light of it we can appreciate the greatness of Moses and of the work he did. For he laid the foundations of all Israelite religion, and to him we owe a debt that cannot be estimated.

In Egypt he saw one of his fellows being maltreated by an Egyptian, and his indignation flamed forth and he slew the Egyptian and was forced to flee to the wilderness. There he must have continued to brood on the wrongs the Israelites in Egypt suffered. And in his call in the wilderness there came to him the astonishing message that the Kenite God, Jehovah, was adopting the slaves in Egypt and was consecrating to His own service Moses' sympathy for the sufferers, and sending Moses in His name to lead them forth from their bondage. In that act the character of Jehovah stood revealed, and the seeds of the ethical religion which reached its flower in the great eighth and seventh century prophets appear. For while the first response of Moses to the sufferings of the Israelites only led to his flight, his indignation at injustice and oppression was as real as that of Amos. And God was here adopting the indignation, and declaring in effect that it was a reflection of His own wrath at injustice and compassion for the oppressed. Moreover, God was revealing Himself as a saving God and an electing God. We are rather afraid of the doctrine of election nowadays, though it belongs to both the Old and the New Testaments. God was choosing Israel in her weakness that He might save her. It was because she was weak and helpless that He could use her to reveal Himself. For had she been great and powerful she would have needed no salvation from Egypt that she could not achieve for herself. But she was to be saved by no act that she could attribute to herself, but by one in which God's saving power would stand revealed.

It is to be observed that Israel's election was not due to her worth. So far as we know she was not notably better than other peoples at that time. Yet there was

nothing arbitrary about God's choice. For she was in deep need; and therefore she was serviceable to Him. For the purpose of her election was just that she might serve God. Of course her election brought her privilege and honour, but it was not primarily for that that she was chosen, but that God might through her fulfil His purpose. And His first purpose was that He might reveal His own character. Too often Israel proudly boasted of the privilege of her election and forgot its purpose, and the prophets had to remind her that the rejection of the purpose of the election involved the abandonment of the election. For there was fuller purpose than the revelation of God which was implicit in that initial act of salvation. There was a purpose which could be achieved only through Israel's willing service. But it was only gradually that that appeared. And as it did appear, the prophets assured her that if she failed to give that willing service, she renounced her election.

We may also observe that Moses was the first missionary of whom we have any knowledge. Jehovah sent him to the Israelites in Egypt not alone to save them and to lead them out, but to bring them to worship Him. He was adopting them to be His people, and He needed Moses to be His messenger to them. We are told that hitherto they had worshipped El Shaddai, and did not know Jehovah as their God. But Moses claimed them for Jehovah by saying that He was really the same as the God of their fathers. This is what is called syncretism, and it is common in the history of religion. Sometimes it lifts a lower religion to the level of a higher; sometimes it brings a higher down to the level of a lower. Paul came to the people of Athens, and claimed for God the worship offered to the Unknown God, saying: "Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, Him declare I unto you."¹ And when missionaries went to China

¹ Acts xvii. 23.

they identified God with the Shang Ti of Chinese religion, so that in the Bibles most widely used in China to-day Shang Ti stands everywhere instead of God, and Jehovah is declared to be Shang Ti. But Moses, Paul, and Christian missionaries came to bring a new and richer content to the old worship, and to lift it to a higher level. The exact opposite took place when the children of Israel reached Canaan, and identified Jehovah with Baal. For they brought the higher religion that Moses had given them down to the level of the religion of Canaan.

That Moses brought some of the Israelite tribes out of Egypt is allowed by everyone, and too often his work is thought of merely as the political achievement of leading them out and welding them together with a national consciousness that centred in the Kenite worship of Jehovah. This seems to me very inadequate. For he did not merely get them to adopt the Kenite religion. Though Jehovah was the Kenite God before Moses became His missionary to Israel, the Jehovah worship that Moses established was very different from that of the Kenites. It meant more to Israel than it had ever meant to the Kenites because of the very way it came to them, and the amazing experience of deliverance which they had. Moreover, the Jehovah worship which Moses established was higher in character than that of the Kenites. For it was mediated to Israel through the prophetic personality of Moses, who gave it a new quality.

His mission was fulfilled first of all in the great act of deliverance. Pharaoh was compelled by no human hand and by no strength of the Israelites to let them go, and when he repented and pursued them he was involved in a disaster of which the Israelites were but the spectators and not the agents. The wind blew the waters back and uncovered a wide stretch of sand across which the Israelites hastened; and when the Egyptians with their heavy chariots tried to follow, they sank into the soft

sand, and the wind turned and swept the waters back upon them and overwhelmed them. The deliverance is attributed to the convenient action of wind and wave. But that does not eliminate God from it, or turn it into a natural coincidence from which all miracle is removed. Such a view is very shallow and inadequate. For while the timely action of wind and wave might be supposed to be no more than a coincidence, it could not possibly explain the confidence of Moses beforehand that deliverance would be achieved. For remember that he had gone into Egypt and promised the people deliverance in the name of Jehovah. The winds and waves did not merely respond to the need of Israel, therefore, but to the word of Moses. And Moses spoke that word as a prophet. That is to say, he profoundly believed that it was not his own word, but God's. Moreover, while the deliverance was wrought by no human hand, it was wrought for men who had faith in the prophetic word of Moses, and who launched themselves in faith on the course to which he called them. Faith was necessary to their deliverance, yet it was not by their faith that they were delivered, but by the forces of Nature that were moved by the hand of God.

Nor did the mission of Moses end there. Rather did it begin there. For he led the people to the sacred mountain and there they pledged themselves in a solemn covenant to the God who had delivered them. That covenant was not a sordid bargain, or a legal contract. It was the pledge of undeviating loyalty to God made in gratitude by those whom He had delivered. And implicit in the making of that pledge was the conception of religion as man's response to the achieved salvation of God. That was something the Kenites had never known, and therefore at the heart of the Jehovah worship of these people whom Moses led was something new and unique. They chose the God Who had first chosen them, and found the divine initiative at the root of their religion.

To that religion Moses gave an ethical character in advance of that of the Kenites. It is probable that the Kenites had a Decalogue, but a much more primitive one than the familiar one of Exodus xx. It was concerned with ritual, rather than with ethical, duties. And when the southern tribes took over the worship of Jehovah by gradual penetration, they took over that primitive Decalogue, and modified it slightly to adapt it to the needs of a settled community. It is that primitive Decalogue, adapted to suit a settled community, that we find in Exodus xxxiv, though in its present form there are thirteen, instead of an original ten, words. But Moses was not content with such a Decalogue, and to the tribes he led he gave a new and higher Decalogue, which we have in an expanded form in Exodus xx and Deuteronomy v. It is frequently said that this Decalogue must be much later than the time of Moses, and that it reflects the teaching of the great eighth century prophets. I cannot see why. For, as I have said, Moses showed as ethical an indignation against oppression before he fled from Egypt as Amos did centuries later. But at first it was merely ethics, instead of ethics rooted and grounded in religion, ethics born of the vision of God and arising from the will of God. But in his call his indignation and sympathy were lifted into the service of God, and related to the character and will of God. And then Moses established the Covenant of Sinai on gratitude, which is an essentially ethical emotion. Why should it then be surprising that he gave an ethical character to the demands of this religion? He was not merely introducing Israel to the God of the Kenites. He was a great prophetic person, through whom this God was doing a new thing in the world, and a new quality was given to the religion he established in Israel.

That ethical religion reached greater heights in the prophets of the eighth and seventh centuries may be agreed. But that there was an ethical strain in Israelite religion before their day is patent to the reader of the

Bible. Nathan's rebuke of David, and Elijah's of Ahab, cannot be pronounced unethical. There is no reason to suppose that ethical religion began with Nathan, but there is ample reason to credit the ascription of the familiar Decalogue to Moses, and to find there the beginnings of ethical religion in the first establishment of the religion of Jehovah amongst the tribes Moses led. And if the primitive Decalogue of Exodus xxxiv represents the quality of the Jehovah worship that was practised amongst the tribes that derived it from the Kenites apart from Moses, and the Decalogue of Exodus xx represents the quality of that which was established by Moses, we have a sufficient explanation of the difference between them.

There are some modern scholars who maintain that Moses attained full monotheism, but most deny this. In support of the view that he reached monotheism, it is sometimes pointed out that he would still not be the first monotheist of whom we have knowledge. In the age in which I have placed the going down into Egypt and the career of Joseph, there was a Pharaoh of Egypt who is famous for his religious reform. This was the Pharaoh Amenhotep IV, who forbade all worship in Egypt except the worship of the sun god of Heliopolis. This god was worshipped under the name of Aton, and his symbol was the disk of the sun with rays stretching downwards, each ending with a hand. The Pharaoh changed his name to Ikhnaton, confiscated all the revenues of the rich Theban priesthood of Amen, and moved his capital from Thebes to a new city which he built, and which he called Akhetaton. Hitherto the priests of Amen had provided most of the chief officers of state, and hence this is just the time when the king would look for other talent to help administer the kingdom. While there is no reference to Joseph in the Egyptian records, there is evidence that the Pharaoh employed Semites in the state service. It is also significant to note that the Bible says the Pharaoh

gave Joseph the daughter of the priest of On, or Heliopolis, to wife. In no age would it be quite so great an honour to marry this priest's daughter as in the time of Ikhnaton.

That Ikhnaton was a monotheist is probable, though the fact that in the famous Hymn to Aton, which has been found at Tel el Amarna, the modern name of the ruined site of Akhetaton, Aton is addressed as "Thou sole God, whose powers no other possesseth" does not prove it. For similar phrases are found elsewhere without implying monotheism. That Ikhnaton desired to substitute the worship of a single god for the multiplicity of gods hitherto worshipped in Egypt is certain, and equally so that his idea of God was lofty and pure. Extravagant claims are sometimes made for him, and it is even suggested that in him religion reached a higher level than anywhere in the world before the time of our Lord. Such claims I am not disposed to endorse. His religious interest does not seem to have gone beyond the borders of his kingdom, or to have attained anything like the same fullness and richness that marked the Old Testament prophets. But that he was in all probability a monotheist may be allowed.

Yet it is improbable that Moses was in any way influenced by Ikhnaton, or thought of monotheism as a theological principle. He was only concerned with the group of tribes which he led out of Egypt, and he did for them something far higher and more significant than proclaim an abstract idea of the unity of God. He sought to establish the worship of Jehovah as the only worship practised by these tribes and to give to that worship an emotional and ethical quality of unique worth. Yet in his work there was an incipient monotheism, and he planted the seed that germinated and later produced the full flower of the monotheism at which we shall later look.

The first word of the Decalogue is "Thou shalt have

none other gods before me."¹ This is not a denial of the reality of any other gods beside Jehovah, but a declaration that no other god is a legitimate object of Israel's worship. He demands the exclusive worship of the people He has adopted. In the old primitive Decalogue to which I have already referred, the Decalogue employed by the group that Moses did not lead, we have this same word. For there we read: "Thou shalt worship no other god";² and the comment is added: "for Jehovah, Whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God." This demand for exclusive worship therefore appears to belong to Jehovah worship from before the time of Moses, and it does not involve monotheism. It does not question the legitimacy of the worship of other gods by other peoples, but simply demands that Jehovah should be the sole God of those who worshipped Him. And not seldom it is supposed that this is as far as the work of Moses carries us. Actually it carries us a long step beyond that on the road to monotheism.

For whether Moses regarded other gods as real or not, he certainly regarded them as negligible. Jehovah adopted Israel, and absorbed into His worship whatever religion they had hitherto practised, and manifested His power in Egypt. It was not merely that He was able to exercise His power upon the people He had chosen for Himself, or to protect them from their enemies. He was able to exercise His power over the Egyptians and over their land. All Nature lay in the hollow of His hand, and His was the only power that counted. His mighty acts are not presented as a trial of strength between Jehovah and the Egyptian gods. They do not figure in the story, save as subject to His judgement. The Egyptian magicians figure in the story, trying to match their skill against that of Moses

¹ Ex. xx. 3, Deut. v. 7.

² Ex. xxxiv. 14.

and Aaron, but the gods are an irrelevance, and Jehovah does as He pleases in the land of Egypt. This is more than the demand that though other gods may be real, Israel must not worship them. It is rather the declaration that though other gods may be real they are unimportant.

Great theological ideas were therefore implicit in the work of Moses, and gradually, in the centuries that followed, those ideas were more clearly unfolded, and their corollaries were seen. But it was by no steady and continuous course of upward development. When the Israelites came into the land of promise, their religion soon suffered serious declension. For there was a new syncretism, but this time one that brought the religion Moses had given them down to the level of the Canaanite Baalism. They found the Canaanites worshipping gods that were believed to command the fertility of field, flock and family, and the Israelites adopted their customs in the belief that only so could they enjoy that fertility. Jehovah was the God of the Israelite people, but the Baals were deemed the gods of the soil. And gradually they came to identify the Baals with Jehovah, so that while they followed the old rites and worshipped in the old shrines, they professed to be really worshipping Jehovah. There was always an undercurrent of recognition that Baalism and Jehovah worship were really two different things, yet commonly it was forgotten, and the religion that was in all essentials Canaanite Baalism was substituted for the religion Moses had given to Israel. Of the character of the Canaanite Baalism it is unnecessary here to treat at length. Drunkenness and immorality were part of the very forms of its worship. But what concerns us here is that in so far as Jehovah was thought of as distinct from the Baals, they were recognised as real gods. And the gods of the surrounding peoples, Chemosh the god of Moab and Milcom the god of Ammon, were believed to be real and legitimate gods for their own people. Whatever incipient monotheism Moses may

have given to Israel was lost, and when David was forced to flee abroad he complained that this was tantamount to being driven to worship other gods.¹ Jehovah's presence and power were thought of as limited to His people, and, in due course, their soil. Hence, when Naaman desired to serve Jehovah, he had to carry away some of the Israelite soil on which to erect an altar.²

In the time of Elijah another long step towards monotheism was taken, however. In his time the queen was fostering the worship of the Baal of Tyre. This was not the local Canaanite Baal, but an alien god, who had no connexion with either Israel or her soil, and Elijah staged a great contest on Mount Carmel to expel him from Israel. His worship was threatening the recognition of Jehovah as the God of Israel. And Elijah desired to re-establish that recognition. He was not concerned to eliminate the worship of this Baal, whose name was Melkart, from Tyre, but only from Israel. But in order to establish beyond a peradventure that Jehovah was the God for Israel, he made it clear that the God Who had brought up Israel out of Egypt was more powerful in Israel than any other god. This was still far from monotheism. There was no suggestion that Tyre ought not to worship Melkart. But it demonstrated anew that Jehovah alone counted, and that so far as Israel was concerned Melkart was negligible. Elijah's message was not that Israel should not worship Melkart because Melkart was not her god, but that she should not worship him because he was not worth worshipping. Elijah therefore revived incipient monotheism.

With the eighth century prophets this was carried forward yet further. Jehovah is now thought of as the monarch among the gods. He is in sole

¹ 1 Sam. xxvi. 19.

² 2 Kings v. 17.

control of the whole universe, and all history is under His dominion.

For lo, He that formed the mountains and created
the wind,
He that declareth unto man what is His thought,
Who maketh the dawn and the darkness,
And treadeth upon the high places of the earth ;
Jehovah is His name.¹

The migrations of all nations are controlled by Him, no less than the journeying of Israel out of Egypt. Assyria is raised up by Him to carry out His purposes, and not, as she imagines, her own. All peoples are answerable unto Him for their acts, and His judgements are upon them. All this implies the uniqueness of Jehovah's godhead. There is no categorical denial of the existence of other gods, but there is the clear implication that there can be no other such God as He. He is not merely one of many gods, or even merely *primus inter pares*, but set in His uniqueness far above them all, Creator and King.

All of this led on to something yet richer in the great prophet of the Exile, as we shall see later, and involved consequences which only gradually became apparent. And in all our recognition of those high consequences we should not forget the part that Moses and those others had had in preparing for them.

So far, however, I have ignored some familiar words in Genesis. There we read that Jehovah said to Abraham: "In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed."² And the same thought is expressed in several passages.³ What shall we say of these passages, and how is their message to be related to what we have

¹ Amos iv. 13.

² Gen. xii. 3.

³ Gen. xviii. 18, xxviii. 14 ; Gen. xxii. 18, xxvi. 4.

already said? I have already referred to the double tradition in the Old Testament. The one form represents the revelation of the divine name as first made to Moses and unknown to the patriarchs, while the other represents it as already made to the patriarchs. In the same way the one represents the divine election of Israel as made in the time of Moses, while the other represents it as dating back to the time of the patriarchs. The group of tribes that was not with Moses at Sinai, and that had probably begun to worship Jehovah before his time, pushed the revelation of the divine name back farther. And rightly so, since for them and their fathers it was earlier. And similarly they could not represent their election as dating from Moses, since Moses was not their leader. Hence they represented their election as dating from a time before the division of the tribes, and the going down of the one part into Egypt and the pressing of the other part northwards into Palestine. Nor was this without reason. For they were just as sure that Jehovah had chosen them to be His people, though they were not with Moses, as they were that those whom He led out of Egypt had been chosen by Him. Though they had come by a different way, they had come into the stream of a common life with the tribes of the Central Highlands, and they were sure that Jehovah had led them. They, too, had a place in His purpose. And they expressed their faith in this way. Nor was it a groundless faith. For He Who chose the tribes that were in Egypt to be His people, because they were serviceable for His purpose, chose also Judah and guided her into His worship, because she, too, was serviceable to Him. Instead of asking how far the conflicting accounts we have can be read as literal history, or which of them is to be credited, we should rather seek the faith these accounts enshrine, and we shall perceive that they are both true. We should not let the form of the message turn us from its essential meaning, or blind us to its inner truth.

In some of these passages in Genesis the Hebrew has, not "shall be blessed," but "shall bless themselves." Thus in Genesis xxii, 18 it has "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth bless themselves."¹ In Genesis xii, 3 and two other passages, it uses a verbal form found only in these three places, which can mean either "shall be blessed" or "shall bless themselves." It is the view of many scholars, therefore, that all the passages should be translated alike, and that the only meaning which is legitimate for them all is "shall bless themselves." The verses then mean no more than that the seed of Abraham shall be so blessed by God that all men will wish for a like blessing, and will invoke it upon themselves. They do not mean that Abraham and his seed will bring blessing upon all men. Indeed, in the very same verse where we read: "In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed," or "bless themselves," we read "Him that curseth thee will I curse." So far from involving all men in blessing, therefore, he is to be associated with a curse to some.

On this view the promise cannot be treated as a direct prediction of the work of Christ. But it is never enough to ask what Old Testament promises meant to those who first uttered or wrote them down. Our Lord did not merely fulfil Old Testament prophecy in the sense that He did what the Old Testament writers had anticipated that He would do. He gathered Old Testament words into Himself, but by His fulfilment revealed a depth of meaning that none could have guessed without His fulfilment. He ever modified even as He fulfilled. We should never read back into the mind of the Old Testament writer what his words have come to mean for us, who look upon them in the light of Christ. Yet we should never rest satisfied with what they meant to the writer, but should see them also in the richer setting of Christ. And here the Old Testament writer was thinking

¹ Similarly, Gen. xxvi. 4.

of the honour and privilege of God's elect people, whose happiness should inspire the envy of men, so that the highest blessing they could invoke upon themselves would be a like happiness, whereas election brings honour and privilege linked with the responsibility of service, and Israel's election was for the service of the whole world, rather than for honour from all men. Her honour and privilege was in being chosen by God for this great service. That this great service was rendered supremely in the person of Our Lord is an undeniable fact of history. In Him was supremely mediated a blessing that is available for all men. Yet others too might have a share in the service.

While, therefore, it is improbable that Moses attained full monotheism, or that either he or any other Israelite of anything like such an age perceived the full implications of election, it is insufficient for us to rest satisfied with this negative position. We should ever view the Old Testament dynamically and not statically, and find in its ideas an impelling power which drove men forward to something richer and fuller. When we distinguish between the germ and the fruit let us not forget that it is from the germ that the fruit developed. And for the missionary message of the Old Testament it is desirable to start back here at the roots of Old Testament religion, with the man who was the first missionary known to history. For Moses was a giant amongst men, and the relevance of his work and of the ideas which lay at its root to the religion of men is far from exhausted. In him were the foundations laid, and not least the foundations of the missionary message of Israel, and the missionary activity of the Christian Church.

CHAPTER II

VISIONS OF THE GOAL

IN the previous lecture we saw that the way in which Jehovah worship came to the Israelites in Egypt carried far-reaching implications. Moses was a missionary to these people, though he does not seem to have had any idea that Jehovah wanted missionaries to go to other peoples as well. Such an idea did not arise for many centuries. But when the God of the Kenites took another people under His wing, this implied that He could equally take yet others. And long before any thought of Israel as charged with a mission to carry the religion of Jehovah to the nations arose, there grew up the thought that others might come to Him. But usually there was an element of nationalism in the thought. Others could only worship Israel's God if in some way they identified themselves with Israel, or came to worship Him in token of the honour and admiration they accorded Israel. Naaman could only worship Him by carrying away some Israelite soil. For He was Israel's God, and though He might be for others, He was nevertheless the national God.

Exaltation and humility of spirit are always hard to combine, and all who are filled with a high exaltation at the thought that God has called them to inestimable privilege, are tempted to let pride and self-esteem take the place of the humble wonder that should fill their heart. Yet provided that spirit of humble wonder is retained, there is nothing improper in the exaltation. For men only dishonour God when they undervalue the privilege and honour which in His mercy He has conferred upon them. When Paul gave utterance to the

thought : " We are the children of God : and if children, then heirs ; heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ,"¹ it was not in boastful assertiveness, but with a trembling of heart at the unspeakable privilege which is ours. To recognise the amazing goodness of God is fitting, so it be recognised with humility. And in the recognition, too, there must be loyalty. For they also dishonour God, as the prophets continually declared, who forget that privilege and responsibility belong as intimately together as the obverse and reverse sides of a coin.

The responsibility on which the prophets for long insisted was the responsibility to obey Jehovah's commands, to serve Him with undeviating faithfulness, and to reflect His character in all their life. Since God was a God of justice, Who hated all oppression and wrong, then justice should mark every side of Israel's life ; since moral iniquity had no place in the Being of God, then its presence in Israel could only be an offence to Him. And so the prophets called the nation to perfect obedience to God, not alone in ritual acts, but in the spirit that infused those acts and that revealed itself in common life as the reflection of God's spirit. And they profoundly believed that if only the whole nation would respond to their call, great consequences would ensue. The life of Israel would be incomparably glorious and happy ; the hand of God would protect her from all her foes and peace and prosperity would be her portion ; and other nations would be so moved by the sight of her happiness that they would come to her to learn its secret and would find it in her religion, which they would adopt for themselves.

This teaching does not reach the high-water mark of the Old Testament message. It paints the goal of obedience too largely in terms of pleasant ease, and thinks of the desire to share that ease as an adequate motive to bring the nations to Jehovah. There is an element of

¹ Rom. viii. 17 f.

selfishness at the heart of its whole conception. Yet it was not wholly bad, and it had its part to play in the growth to something higher. For it is true that a land whose people all gave their loyalty to God and embodied His will in all their life would be a goodly land to dwell in, and to persuade men to strive to make their land such a land is not wholly unworthy. For it is far better that men should obey God from a poor motive than that they should not obey Him at all. At the same time, to love God for what He is in Himself, and to obey Him for the inner joy of His obedience, is higher than to seek Him for the rewards He brings in outer conditions. While, therefore, we have to wait for other voices to call to greater heights, we may yet find some nobility of thought in the passages we shall examine.

Many of the passages at which we shall look are generally believed to be later than we might suppose from the places where they are found. It is not my purpose, however, to discuss technical questions of date and authorship, but rather to look at the ideas which are expressed in the passages. We may begin with the great prayer which is attributed to Solomon at the dedication of the Temple, where we find a section which says :

Moreover, as for the alien, who is not of Thy people Israel, but who comes from a far off land for Thy name's sake—for they shall hear of Thy great name and of Thy mighty hand and Thine outstretched arm—and who shall come unto this house and pray, do Thou hear him in heaven, the place where Thou dwellest, and perform all that the alien asks of Thee, that all the nations of the world may know Thy name, to fear Thee as do Thy people Israel, and to know that this house which I have built is called by Thy name.¹

¹ 1 Kings viii. 41 ff

With this may be compared the familiar passage from which our Lord quoted when He cleansed the Temple :

And the aliens that are joined to Jehovah,
To serve Him and to love His name,
To become unto Him as servants,
Every keeper of the Sabbath unprofaned,
And they that cling to My covenant,
I will bring them to My holy mountain,
And make them glad in My house of prayer.
Their burnt-offerings and their sacrifices
Shall be for acceptance upon My altar ;
For My house a house of prayer
Shall be called for all the peoples.¹

There is a passage in the book of Jeremiah where a similar idea is expressed :

At that time shall Jerusalem be called
The throne of Jehovah,
And all peoples shall be gathered thereto,
For Jehovah's name ;
And no more shall they walk
After the stubbornness of their evil heart.²

In the Psalms the same thought is common. Two passages may suffice to illustrate it :

All the nations which Thou hast made
Shall come and worship before Thee,
And magnify Thy name, O Lord.
For great art Thou, and a worker of wonders,
Thou alone art God.³

¹ Isa. lvi. 6 f.

² Jer. iii. 17.

³ Psa. lxxxvi. 9 f.

The nations shall fear Thy name, O Jehovah,
 And all the kings of the earth Thy glory ;
 For Jehovah hath builded Zion,
 And His glory hath appeared in her midst.
 For He hath answered the prayer of the destitute,
 And hath not despised their cry. . . .
 That men may declare in Zion Jehovah's name,
 And His praise throughout Jerusalem,
 When the peoples are gathered together,
 And the kingdoms to serve Jehovah.¹

In all of these passages we find the thought of Jerusalem as the great religious centre of the world. It is not alone believed that the nations will come to share Israel's faith and worship Israel's God, but Israel herself shall be in the centre of the picture, and the Temple shall be looked to by all men as the religious headquarters of the world. The point of view is not that of Israel looking out on all the world, and moved with compassion for men, so that she reaches out to guide the world to God. There is nothing actively missionary yet, but there is a sense of the infinite worth of the treasure entrusted to Israel in her faith, and the profound conviction that her God embraces all men in His love, and wills that they shall share her treasure. He is ready to hear their prayers, to receive their sacrifices, to communicate the knowledge of Himself to them, and to have them bring Him a reverence which accords with that which Israel brings. He desires to deliver them from the stubbornness of their evil heart, and to make them glad with a gladness that is born of obedience to His will. For it is clearly implied that the service of God will bring consequences, blessed consequences, for the nations.

Sometimes the emphasis is rather on the authority of God in the affairs of men. He is conceived of as a monarch, whose mighty power shall be felt in all the

¹ Psa. cii. 15 ff., 21 f. (Heb. 16 ff., 22 f.).

earth, before Whom men shall prostrate themselves in dread rather than in adoring and enriching fellowship. Such an emphasis is found in these passages :

All the ends of the earth
Shall remember and turn to Jehovah,
And all the families of the nations
Shall prostrate themselves before Thee ;
For Jehovah's is the kingdom,
And He rules among the nations.¹

May God have mercy on us and bless us,
Shed the light of His face upon us !
That Thy way may be known in the earth,
Thy salvation among all the nations,
Let the peoples praise Thee, O God,
Let all the peoples praise Thee !
Let the nations be glad and sing !
For Thou shalt judge the world in righteousness ;
Thou shalt judge the peoples with equity,
And shalt lead the nations upon earth.
Let the peoples praise Thee, O God,
Let all the peoples praise Thee !
The earth shall indeed yield her increase,
God, our God, shall bless us.
God shall bless us,
And the ends of the earth
Shall all fear Him.²

Envoys shall come out of Egypt,
Ethiopia shoot her hand out to God.
Sing unto God,
Ye kingdoms of the earth,
Hymn ye the Lord.³

¹ Psa. xxii. 27 f. (Heb. 28 f.).

² Psa. lxxvii.

³ Psa. lxxviii. 31 f. (Heb. 32 f.).

God ruleth over the nations,
 He sitteth on His holy throne ;
 The nobles of the people are gathered
 With the people of the God of Abraham ;
 For the shields of the earth are God's,
 Very exalted is He.¹

The thought here does not seem to be of turning to God in spiritual worship, but the falling of men before Him as before an oriental ruler. Men are conquered by His power, and He is monarch of all the earth. The Gentiles are not pictured as sharing the privileges of Israel, but as subject to Israel's God. Sometimes it is God's vicegerent, Israel's king, who is thought of as ruling, and even humiliating, the nations.

He shall rule from sea to sea,
 And from the River to the ends of the earth ;
 His foes shall bow before Him,
 And His enemies shall lick the dust.
 The kings of Tarshish and of the isles
 Shall send an offering ;
 The kings of Sheba and of Seba
 Shall bring near their gift ;
 And all kings shall worship Him,
 All nations shall be His slaves.²

The psalm from which this passage is taken is commonly treated as messianic, and held to give expression to the hope which found its fulfilment in Our Lord. Yet how He modified the hope in His fulfilment ! For none of us would speak of Him as making His enemies lick the dust. He ever modified the hopes which He gathered up into Himself. Yet let us not forget the part played

¹ Psa. xlvii. 8 f. (Heb. 9 f.).

² Psa. lxxii. 8 ff.

by those who expressed the hopes. They were voicing ideas which were dressed in garments that were earthly and imperfect, but the garments could be shed and the ideas find new and better ones. Here in this passage the element of national pride, and the thought of the humiliation of Israel's foes is not the only thing to note. For it is because the king is God's viceroy that he is thought of as subduing the nations, and the will of God is believed to lie behind his conduct. The writer imperfectly apprehended the will of God, but he rightly believed that the ideal king would do the will of God, and he rightly perceived that in the Golden Age all men must be bound in the unity of a common obedience to the will of God. And we may see how another Old Testament writer took that idea and dressed it in more becoming garments. For the beginning of the passage just quoted stands in another place, where it is associated not with proud might but with humble gentleness, and where the thought is of the universal boon of peace rather than of men licking the dust. And it is in its garment of gentleness that the New Testament finds the idea realised in our Lord.

Rejoice greatly, daughter of Zion,
Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem ;
Behold, thy king comes to thee,
Righteous and triumphant is He,
Humble, and riding on an ass,
On the young foal of a she-ass.
And I will cut off from Ephraim his chariots,
And from Jerusalem her horses ;
And the bows of battle shall be cut off,
And peace to the nations shall He speak ;
And His dominion shall be from sea to sea,
And from the River to the ends of the earth.¹

¹ Zech. ix. 9 f.

In none of these passages is Israel thought of as active among the nations in spreading the name and the praise of God. There are, however, a number of passages where we read of this, and especially in the Psalms. But here they are not missionaries, seeking to win the nations to the faith of Jehovah, but rather men who are so moved with gratitude to God for all His goodness to them that they can think of no worthier way of acknowledging His goodness than to tell all men about it. Some of them had been delivered from sickness, or from some misfortune arising from the hostility of men, and they wished to tell all men how great things the Lord had done for them. But this was born of their sense of what they owed to God, rather than of any compassion for the Gentiles.

I will praise Thee among the nations, O Jehovah,
 And Thy name will I hymn,
 O giver of great mercies to Thy king,
 And shower of covenanted mercies to Thine
 Anointed.¹

A net for my feet have they spread,
 My soul is bowed down ;
 A pit have they dug before me,
 Into its midst have they fallen.
 Steadfast is my heart, O God,
 Steadfast is my heart ;
 I will sing and make melody.
 Awaken, my glory,
 Awaken, harp and lyre ;
 I will arouse the morning.
 I will praise Thee among the peoples, O Lord,
 I will sing of Thee among the nations.²

¹ Psa. xviii. 49 f. (Heb. 50 f.).

² Psa. lvii. 6 ff. (Heb. 7 ff.).

Sometimes the peoples are thought of as taking up the song, and joining in praising and magnifying God's name, but rather as the acknowledgment of His greatness and glory, and of the wonderful works He has wrought in the earth, and especially on behalf of His people, than as the sharers of His faith and fellowship.

Praise Jehovah, all ye nations ;
Glorify Him, all ye peoples.
For He hath shown great mercy toward us,
And everlasting is the faithfulness of Jehovah.¹

Sing to Jehovah a song that is new,
Sing to Jehovah, all the earth ;
Sing to Jehovah, bless His name,
Announce His salvation from day to day.
Tell among the nations of His glory,
Among all peoples of His wondrous works.
For great is Jehovah and greatly to be praised,
To be feared is He above all the gods. . . .
Give to Jehovah, ye families of the peoples,
Give to Jehovah glory and strength ;
Give to Jehovah the due glory of His name,
Bring an offering, and come to His courts.²

The offering which the nations bring is even thought of as the Jewish people, who are brought back to their land in recognition of the greatness of their God. Just as two of the disciples of Our Lord asked that when He came into His kingdom they might have seats of honour beside Him, so there were Jews in earlier days who believed that when God came into His own, the Jews would share in His honour.

¹ Psa. cxvii.

² Psa. xcvi. 1ff., 7 f.

I am coming to gather
 All the nations and tongues,
 And they shall come and behold My glory.
 And I will set a sign among them,
 And will send forth fugitives from them,
 Unto nations and islands afar,
 That have not heard of My fame,
 And My glory have not seen.
 And they shall declare My glory among the
 nations,
 And all your brethren shall they bring,
 As an offering from all the nations,
 Unto Jerusalem My holy hill,
 As the children of Israel bring their offering
 In a pure vessel to the house of Jehovah.¹

If there are elements in many of these passages which fall short of the greatest heights, we need not be surprised over-much. We should not forget that of ourselves we should have reached no higher, and many in the modern world have not yet reached so high. Few of us can claim that all the springs of our thought and action are pure, and a measure of selfishness and egotism enters into a great many acts which God in His mercy deigns to take into His service. All of these writers were giving currency to ideas which God could use. They were helping men to think in universal terms, and familiarizing them with the conception of a world united in submission to the will of God, praising His name, repairing to His house, and rejoicing in the peace that He should give to the world that accepted His governance. They were sure that in the will of God man's deepest well-being was to be found, and they were equally sure that men would not stumble on His will of themselves. They believed that Israel was elect of God and that He had revealed Himself to her, but that the revelation was

¹ Isa. lxvi. 18 ff.

ultimately for all men, and that through Israel alone it could be mediated to them. Behind their election lay a great world purpose of God, and the true glory of Israel lay in the fulfilment of that purpose. If they thought of that glory in terms of the honour they would receive from men, we need not blame them unduly. For it is hard to rise to the thought of a glory which lies in the inner joy of being lifted into the purpose of God, a glory which is freed of all pride and self-esteem, and instead is charged with humble wonder that God should use such instruments, and with holy zeal to be used yet more in His great service.

In most of the passages we have so far noted Israel is presented as the passive instrument in God's hands for the fulfilment of His purpose, but nevertheless as His instrument. By His gracious dealings with her, and by His mighty acts of deliverance, He would make Himself known to the world, and get Him honour from the nations. But His dealings with Israel laid obligations on her. For, as all the prophets declared, His past mercies laid upon Israel the constraint of love, and called for loyalty, and without loyalty she renounced her covenant and repudiated her Deliverer. Without loyalty she declared that she did not value His grace and deliverance, and wanted no more of them. None of the poets and prophets whose words we have considered would have rejected this message, and so the implicit demand of all their words was for utter loyalty to God. Only by such loyalty could Israel make possible God's continued revelation of His character in His dealings with her, and so through her declare Himself to the nations. If, then, in these passages we miss any call for active missionary work, there is yet an implied call for that profound loyalty and devotion of spirit, without which no active work can have any meaning. Whoso would do great exploits for God must first love Him in his heart, and yield the inner citadel of his being to the spirit of God.

There are some passages at which we must still look, which penetrate more deeply, and which think of the nations as not merely prostrating themselves before the God of Israel, but sharing the faith of Israel, and entering into her religious inheritance. There is first a familiar oracle which is attributed to Isaiah and also to Micah. The fact that it is attributed to two different prophets shows that no sure tradition of authorship was preserved, and many scholars date it much later than either, in the age when full monotheism had been achieved.

It shall be in the fullness of time,
 That the mountain of Jehovah's house shall become
 Established as the chief of the mountains,
 And exalted more than all other hills.
 And thither shall all nations stream,
 And many peoples shall journey, and shall say :
 Come, let us ascend the mountain of Jehovah,
 To the house of the God of Jacob ;
 That He may teach us of His ways,
 And that we may walk in His paths ;
 For from Zion instruction proceedeth,
 And the word of Jehovah from Jerusalem.
 And He will judge between the nations,
 And be daysman for many peoples ;
 And they will beat their swords into ploughshares,
 And their spears into pruning-hooks.
 Nation shall not lift sword against nation,
 And warfare shall they no more learn ;
 But they shall dwell each under his own vine,
 And under his fig-tree, with none to affray.¹

There is still no idea of any missionary purpose of Israel, but there is the clear recognition that Israel's faith is not for herself alone, but for all men. There is also the recognition that the full fruits of Israel's faith

¹ Isa. ii. 2 ff., Mic. iv. 1 ff.

can only be hers when all men share that faith, and therefore share its fruits. Enduring peace is not something that one nation can achieve for itself, and it will not be achieved by any until all nations submit themselves to the will of Jehovah, and base their life on a religious acceptance of His way. The verse about beating swords into ploughshares is widely familiar, and has become on the lips of many an empty cliché. A world that repeatedly finds itself involved in a warfare it hates uses it to voice its dreams. But the same world does not worry much about going up to the house of the Lord, and does not realize that its dream is idle until it is interested in the conditions of its fulfilment. And those conditions are religious. The prophet held out no hope of peace save to a world whose people were united in their worship of Jehovah, and in their humble submission to the direction of this God. He was not foolish enough to build his Utopia on thin air; he built it on religion. And it is certain that until the world is knit together in a unity that is deeply based on religion, it will know no abiding unity. So long as it hates warfare but not the things that make for war, it will continue to have war. And amongst the things that make for war is the unwillingness to let God be the daysman between the nations, and to seek in humble sincerity the direction of His lips.

The author of this oracle believed apparently that the peoples would spontaneously come to God as a river flows to the sea. Yet while he here expresses no more than this, it may well be that he really penetrated further. When our Lord taught us to pray "Thy kingdom come," He did not mean us to rest content with a pious wish, any more than when He taught us to pray for our daily bread He intended us to sit in idleness and wait for it to come of itself. And it may be that the unknown prophet who uttered this ancient oracle, while he said nothing of any activity of Israel to bring about the great day of which he spoke, realized that activity was called for.

And certainly we should not cherish his hopes, whether of the religious unity of the world, or of its consequences in the political field, unless we are actively concerned in the task of leading the nations to God. Yet neither, on the other hand, should we imagine that the world will be won and the Golden Age brought in by our efforts. Our service can only be fruitful when it becomes the organ of the divine service for men, when through us God is reaching out to men to claim them for Himself, and to instruct them in His ways.

There is another great word which is found duplicated in the Old Testament. It stands in the book of Isaiah,¹ and also in the book of Habakkuk.² It reads :

The earth shall be filled with the knowledge of
Jehovah
As the waters cover the sea.

Here again there is a vision of a world religiously one, worshipping Jehovah with a worship that rests on knowledge of Him and understanding of His will. In Isaiah this verse is attached to one of the great messianic passages, though it is commonly believed that it is of separate origin. Whether so or not, it was probably placed here because it was felt to be appropriate to this setting.

A shoot shall go forth from the stock of Jesse,
And a sprout from his roots shall bear fruit.
The spirit of Jehovah shall rest upon Him,
The spirit of wisdom and understanding,
The spirit of counsel and might,
The spirit of the knowledge and fear of Jehovah.
He will not judge by the sight of His eyes,
Nor decide by the hearing of His ears ;

¹ Isa. xi. 9.

² Hab. ii. 14.

But with justice shall He judge the lowly,
And with equity decide for the poor of the land.
He will smite the oppressor with the rod of his mouth,
And with the breath of His lips slay the wicked.
Righteousness shall be the girdle of His loins,
And the cirlet of His waist be faithfulness.
And the wolf shall lodge with the lamb,
And the leopard lie down with the kid ;
The calf and the young lion shall graze together,
And a little child shall lead them.
The cow and the bear shall be friends,
Together shall their young lie down ;
And the lion shall eat straw like the ox.
The infant shall play on the hole of the asp,
And the child stretch his hand to the viper's den.
They shall do no harm or cause any hurt
In all My holy mountain ;
For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of
Jehovah
As the waters cover the sea.¹

Whether it was the compiler of the book of Isaiah, or the spokesman of the oracle, that brought all this together, the connexion was wisely made. For in the wholeness of its picture we again see a world united and at peace, with the spirit of concord spreading even to the lower creation, and all resting on a universal faith. It is not unity for its own sake that is heralded, but a unity whose inner quality makes it supremely desirable. True justice is to prevail everywhere, and a justice that rests not on human wisdom but on the knowledge and fear of Jehovah. And that knowledge and fear will not inspire the administration alone, but will be shared by all men everywhere.

One other passage of similar character claims our attention here. It is found in the book of Zephaniah.

¹ Isa. xi. 1 ff.

Then will I grant unto the peoples
 Lips that are cleansed,
 To call on the name of Jehovah,
 To serve Him with one consent.
 From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia
 My suppliants, widely scattered,
 Shall bring me an offering.¹

The last line but one is difficult and doubtful, and some scholars prefer to substitute a conjectural reading, which would give :

From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia
 To the farthest places of the north
 They shall bring me an offering.

In either case the passage envisages the incorporation of Gentiles in the faith of Israel, and looks for the day when that faith shall be known and shared far and wide. The lips of the peoples are to be pure to speak the name of Jehovah, since none that are of unclean lips can come before Him, and they shall be purified by the act of God performed with the willing consent of men.

These prophetic writers realized that the Golden Age of man's dreams must have a foundation, if it is not to be merely a castle in the air, and it must stand squarely on its foundations. And there is no other foundation than the will of God, which can only be revealed to men who freely open their hearts to receive His revelation. The Hebrew prophets continually denounced a religion that was formal and nominal, and it is quite certain that in such passages as these we have examined they were not thinking of a universal profession of the faith of Israel, but of a universal acceptance in the heart of the direction of the spirit of God. It was true, profound, spiritual religion of which they were thinking, such

¹ Zeph. iii. 9 f.

religion as Jeremiah called for in his greatest and most penetrating words :

Behold, the days are coming, saith Jehovah, when I will make with the house of Israel a new covenant . . . This shall be the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith Jehovah : I will put My law in their inward part, and on their heart will I write it, and I will be their God and they shall be My people. And they shall teach no more every man his friend and each his brother, saying, Know Jehovah, for they shall all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, saith Jehovah, for I will pardon their iniquity and their sin will I remember no more.¹

It was this sort of religion that these prophets thought of as universalised, and though they did not address themselves to the task of proclaiming it to the nations, they were sure that it was for the world, and that the world could find no release from its ills until it shared it. Their certainty we may share, but to make it more than an intellectual affirmation. For we may prove the reality of our faith in consecration to the task which is its corollary, and in linking our lives in some way to what we believe to be the great purpose of God. It claims us not alone because it is worth doing, but because it is the will of God. For all who cherish the hope of the day when His will shall be universally done should at least yield their lives to His will. And all who believe that in God's will lies man's peace, and that it is His will that all men should know and do His will, must yield themselves to it, to become the instruments of its purpose.

¹ Jer. xxxi. 31, 33 f.

CHAPTER III

THE MISSION AND ITS METHOD

WE now turn to the great prophet who is known as Deutero-Isaiah, and with him the whole of the present lecture will be concerned. It is probable that most of the passages we examined in the previous lecture were later than his time, but in thought he goes far beyond them. Of Deutero-Isaiah we know nothing whatever, save his thought and what we can glean of his times from his writings. He is called Deutero-Isaiah for convenience, because his writings were attached to the book of Isaiah, of which they form chapters xl-lv. But he himself has vanished from the page of history, though he is clearly one of the greatest personalities of Old Testament story. His writings reflect the period of the Exile, and it is therefore concluded that he lived in that period; and since he addressed the exiles, it is concluded that he lived amongst them in Babylonia.

In his time the Babylonian empire that had swallowed up the little kingdom of Judah, and carried many of its people into captivity, had passed its prime. Its present ruler was Nabonidus, who was more interested in archæology than in administering the kingdom, and who left the control of affairs for a large part of his reign in the hands of his son Belshazzar, while he lived in Tema, in Arabia. Meanwhile Cyrus was swiftly rising to power. He began as the prince of Anshan, a small state of Persia. Then he became king of Persia, apparently by succession, as he was connected with the Persian throne. Soon he conquered and annexed the Median kingdom, and quite early in the reign of Nabonidus he conquered and annexed the Lydian kingdom of Cræsus. He now had an empire

that stretched from the Bosphorus almost to the borders of India, and it must have been clear to every eye that a clash with the Babylonian empire could not be long delayed.

It was at this time that Deutero-Isaiah cheered his fellow exiles with a message of deliverance. The pre-exilic prophets had declared that Jehovah raised up Assyria and Babylonia to be the instrument of His visitation of Israel; now Deutero-Isaiah declared that Cyrus was raised up by Jehovah to be the deliverer of Israel, and to enable the Jews to return to their own land. The clash between Persia and Babylonia could be foreseen by all, but this was not a message based on such foresight. The prophet believed that God's purpose for the Jews in their exile was now achieved, and that God had a new purpose for them. He could therefore make Cyrus His servant to open the door to the fulfilment of that purpose.

That the exile had been immensely fruitful to the Jews spiritually cannot be denied, and after the exile there was a stronger strain of exclusive loyalty to Jehovah than had appeared before. In Babylonia they had kept themselves aloof from the religion of those around them. They had also shed the Canaanite Baalism that had so long been a snare to them. They were no longer tempted to follow the customs that had been supposed to ensure the fertility of the Palestinian soil, since they no longer lived on it. It was Jehovah, their own God, Whom they desired to serve, and to keep alive their religion as the focus of their individuality as a people, and as the spring of their life. Without the Temple ritual and the sacrificial cultus, they had explored the religion of fellowship. It is probable that they had also created the synagogue, though of this there can be no certainty. And the synagogue was the centre of a purely spiritual worship.

The work of Deutero-Isaiah is linked in many ways with that of Moses. Moses had led the Israelites out of Egypt, and this prophet heralded their return to Palestine

from a second foreign bondage. He continually had the old Exodus in mind. But this time no Moses would be needed to compel the oppressor to release God's people. The kingdom was to fall into the hands of Cyrus, who would prove the willing servant of Jehovah, quite other than the Pharaoh of old. But just as the power of God had been revealed in Nature at the Exodus, so it should be again. Then, winds and waves had served His purpose; the sea had dried up to let His people cross, and manna had fallen from heaven to feed them. Now, springs of water should break forth in the desert, and pasture for their flocks should greet them on their way. Nature should reflect God's purpose, and behave appropriately to the fortunes of the Jews. All of this, of course, is highly poetic, and is not to be taken *au pied de la lettre* as representing the prophet's expectation. In the language of superb poetry he was encouraging men, and expressing his certainty of the coming deliverance. That certainty rested on the immediacy of his knowledge of God, and was born of the touch of God's spirit on his in the depths of his personality.

This becomes clear when we look at the great creative ideas with which he was charged, for they were such as could not be found in the pages of history, or in the study of the situation of his day. And first amongst these ideas is full and explicit monotheism. We have already said that the seeds of monotheism lay in the work of Moses, and Elijah and the great prophets of the eighth and seventh centuries had progressed in the direction of clearer perception of the truth of monotheism. But with Deutero-Isaiah it is quite explicit.¹ The reality of other gods, and not merely their power, is denied.

¹ In 1 Kings viii. 60, full monotheism is attributed to Solomon, and in 2 Kings xix. 15 to Hezekiah, but we cannot know how far these expressions belonged to the sources of the books of Kings, or how far to the compiler. Since the last event referred to in 2 Kings happened in 561 B.C., the books of Kings cannot have reached their present form until the age of Deutero-Isaiah.

Before Me no god was formed,
And after Me none shall be ;
I, I am Jehovah,
And there is no saviour else.¹

Thus saith the king of Israel,
And his redeemer Jehovah of hosts :
I am the first and I am the last,
And beside Me there is no god.²

Familiar is his ridicule of idols, and his scorn for the idol maker. Bitingly he describes how he takes part of a tree and fashions an idol from it, while with the rest of the tree he kindles a fire to warm himself thereat. Or again he observes how men make an idol, which is powerless to move itself, but has to be carried about, and scornfully concludes that it is yet more powerless to answer the cry of men. In Jeremiah x we have a similar passage, which is probably to be dated from this time, in which the lifeless idols are declared to be a delusion. The same scorn for idols is expressed in the Psalter :

Their idols are silver and gold,
The work of human hands.
Mouths have they, but they speak not ;
Eyes, yet cannot see ;
They have ears, but have no hearing ;
Noses, but have no smell ;
With their hands they feel not ;
With feet they cannot walk ;
Nor murmur in their throat.
Like them are they that make them,
And all who trust in them.³

¹ Isa. xliii. 10 f.

² Isa. xliv. 6.

³ Psal. cxv. 4 ff.

It is often said in answer to the critic of idol-worship that no one really worships an idol. The idol is but the symbol of the deity worshipped, or is thought of as housing the spirit he adores. But this is to miss the whole point of the polemic of Deutero-Isaiah and these others. What they are saying is that there is no reality corresponding to these symbols, since Jehovah is God alone. There is no spirit inhabiting the idol. It is merely a piece of wood or metal. It is not supposed that the worshipper is consciously worshipping the idol. He vainly imagines he is worshipping a god. But the god is non-existent, and his idol therefore mocks him. This is clearly formulated and speculative monotheism.

Nor is it surprising that the corollaries of monotheism were perceived and set forth by Deutero-Isaiah. For if God is One, and there is no other, then He must be the God of all men. We have seen that other writers perceived this, though mostly later than this writer. But none so directly related it to the principle of monotheism as he.

Who announced this of old,
 Declared it long since ?
 Was it not I, Jehovah ?
 Beside me there is no god else ;
 A righteous and saving God,
 There is none save Me.
 Turn unto Me and be saved,
 All the ends of the earth !
 For I am God, and none other ;
 By myself have I sworn.
 There has gone forth from My mouth in righteous-
 ness
 A word that shall return not :
 To Me every knee shall bow,
 By Me all tongues swear.¹

¹ Isa. xlv. 21 ff.

Here the truth that Israel's God is not hers alone is set forth with the utmost emphasis as the inevitable corollary of monotheism.

Yet Deutero-Isaiah does not abandon the belief in Israel's election. Indeed he lays peculiar emphasis on it in a whole series of passages, and his message here again picks up that of Moses. He perceives that the sole God of all men does not leave men to find Him of themselves, but that as He sent Moses to call Israel unto Himself, so He sends Israel to call the world to Himself. Her election had a fuller purpose than had yet been seen. It was election for a mission.

I, Jehovah, in righteousness have called thee,
Have taken thine hand ;
I have formed thee and made thee a covenant of
humanity,
A light of the Gentiles ;
To open eyes that are blind,
To bring forth the prisoner from the dungeon,
From the prison those who dwell in the darkness.
I am Jehovah, that is My name,
And My glory I give to no other,
Nor My praise to idols.¹

Here it is clearly declared that the fundamental purpose of Israel's election was that she should mediate the revelation of God to men. God is not content to leave the peoples to the worship of the gods that are no gods, but designs that Israel in active worship shall share the faith which is her glory with all men.

The mission with which Israel is charged reaches its greatest heights in the passages known as the Servant Songs. It is disputed whether these are by the author of the rest of the chapters, and whether the Servant is to be interpreted collectively or individually. Outside

¹ Isa. xlii. 6 ff.

these Songs Israel is called God's Servant, and there are many who find that meaning here too. Of those who interpret of an individual, some think of a figure of past or contemporary history, and some of a figure still future in the prophet's day. A vast literature has been written on these questions, and I can only indicate the solutions that seem to me most probable.

To interpret of a figure of past or contemporary history, whether Moses, or Jeremiah, or Jehoiachin, or Zerubbabel, or the prophet himself, or any of the other candidates that have been put forward for the honour, seems to me quite unsatisfactory. Scarcely less so is it to interpret the Songs of Israel, and no simple and clear cut solution will do. In the author's thought there was much fluidity, as so often in Old Testament thought—and more often in our own than we suppose. The Hebrew commonly personified the nation, and frequently used the second person singular when addressing it.

When Israel was a lad, then I loved him,
And from Egypt I called My son.¹

But now, thus saith Jehovah,
Who created thee, O Jacob,
And formed thee, O Israel:
Fear not, for I have redeemed thee,
I have called thee by name; thou art Mine.
When thou passest through waters, I will be with
thee,
And through rivers, they shall not overwhelm
thee;
When thou walkest in the fire, thou shalt not be
scorched,
And the flame shall not burn thee up.²

¹ Hosea xi. 1.

² Isa. xliii. 1 f.

But thought can pass swiftly from the personified group to an individual who represents the group. There has been much discussion as to whether the "I" of the Psalms means the nation or the individual psalmist, and Dr. Wheeler Robinson has argued—convincingly, in my view—that it is neither, but both. The psalmist sometimes thinks of the group of which he is but a member, and then passes to himself and his own experience, which is but typical or representative of that of the group. We are all familiar with the fluidity in our own thought of the Church. One moment it means the totality of the redeemed, the Church militant and the Church triumphant; at another it means the totality of the Christian society on earth, the Church catholic; at another it means the organised community of a particular denomination, as when we speak of the Anglican Church; at another it means a particular local fellowship: Yet at another moment it may mean me as an individual. I may be in a society where for those around me I stand for the Church, and where my conduct will influence men's view of the Church. The missionary who goes, a lone pioneer, into some new field, is in a yet fuller sense the Church. He is its sole representative and ambassador there, and in him the Church universal is active.

To return to the figure of the Servant, I think we have here something of the same fluidity. The Servant is Israel, the whole community called to be a missionary community; the Servant is also the individual Jew who is called to make that mission his own, that through him it might be fulfilled; the Servant is also, and especially, One Who should supremely in Himself embody that mission, and who should carry it to a point no other should reach. That is to say, in so far as the Servant is an individual, He is not an individual of past history, but One who lay in the future in the prophet's day. This is getting back towards the traditional messianic interpretation of the Servant. Yet not wholly. It

recognises the collective interpretation beside this, and this beside the collective, and neither interpretation is to be imposed upon the whole. In so far as a messianic interpretation is given to the Servant, the Songs are not to be thought of as a specific prediction of the life and work of our Lord, but as the enunciation of a great and creative idea which He clothed with reality. That idea was not alone of the mission to lead all men to the God of Israel, but of the means whereby the mission should be achieved.

It should be added that we should avoid the confusion which the word "messianic" is apt to introduce. In the Old Testament there are passages which speak of the coming Davidic king, who should establish a world rule of righteousness and peace. To this conception the term Messiah, or Christ, became attached, and in the days of our Lord men were expecting the coming of this Messiah. The Suffering Servant was a completely separate conception, and before the days of our Lord, no one would have thought of bringing them together. After Peter's confession of our Lord as the Christ, or Messiah, He immediately began to talk of Himself in terms of the Suffering Servant, and Peter could not understand what He meant. There is another Old Testament conception which is familiar to us, the Son of Man. That was at first a symbol for the coming kingdom of God on earth, a kingdom which was conceived in terms of universal righteousness, but without any Davidic Messiah. When the term Son of Man was individualised, it stood for a superhuman figure who should be God's vicegerent for the ordering of the kingdom. That no one in the time of our Lord identified the Son of Man and the Davidic Messiah is clear from the fact that whereas our Lord often spoke of Himself as the Son of Man, He charged His disciples not to suggest to anyone that He was the Messiah, or Christ. All of these three conceptions came together in our Lord, and there is no doubt that all, and especially the conception

of the Suffering Servant, greatly influenced Him in His thought of His mission. He fulfilled them all in that He clothed them with reality, yet their confluence in Him brought mutual modification to them, and we must beware of reading back into the thought of the Old Testament writers an identity in these three conceptions, which certainly did not exist for them.

In the first of the Servant Songs we read :

Behold, My Servant whom I uphold,
My chosen, in whom My soul delighteth !
I have set My spirit upon him,
Judgement to the nations shall he bring forth.
He shall not cry out, nor raise his voice,
Neither make his utterance noised abroad ;
A reed that is bruised he shall not break,
And a wick that burns dim he shall not quench.
In faithfulness shall he bring forth judgement ;
He shall not burn dim, or be bruised,
Till judgement he set in the earth ;
And for his instruction the isles shall wait.¹

In so far as the Servant is Israel, there is an emphasis on her election here and elsewhere in the Songs that is unsurpassed in the Old Testament. For, as we have seen, the election of Israel is in no sense inconsistent with the thought of Jehovah as the God of all men. For the purpose of the election is the service of God in the service of men, and the making known to all men of the character and will of God. The privilege and honour of Israel is great indeed, but it is the privilege and honour of service. We may observe the gentleness of the method of the Servant. With quiet patience that nothing can destroy, he will carry through his mission, and mediate judgement to all the earth. It is probable that the meaning

Isa. xlii. 1 ff.

here is not that he will sit in judgement on the nations, but that he will bring the nations to share true religion, which will then rightly order all their life. Round many words a complex of ideas gathers, and any wooden rendering by a single word in another language is dangerous, since it gives the impression that the area of meaning of the word chosen is identical with that of the word translated.

The gentleness of the Servant is to be contrasted with some of the pictures at which we looked earlier, in which the nations are represented as licking the dust before Israel and her king, whose might reduces them to subjection. Here the method of the Servant lies in winsomeness rather than in material power. It should not be forgotten, however, that as the prelude to the mission of the Servant Deutero-Isaiah looked forward to the sweeping away of Babylon and her might. He knows no tenderness towards her, and in chapter xlvii he promises her disaster and desolation in the fullest measure. Yet he does not suppose that these things are to be the instruments to lead men to God. At the most they can humble men's spirit, so that they can hear and receive the word of God when it is spoken to them. But they need the Servant to interpret their experience, and in gentleness to call them to God. Nor should we forget that our Lord spoke words of sternest import concerning the disasters that the Jews of His day were laying up for themselves, and the gentle compassion of His heart and the universalism of His message did not blind Him to the inexorable nemesis of folly.

The second Song yet more emphasises the election of the Servant, and the unspeakable privilege that is to be found in his service.

Hearken, O ye isles, unto me,
 And give ear, O ye peoples from afar ;
 Jehovah from the womb did call me,
 From the birth made mention of my name.

He made my mouth as a sharpened sword ;
In the shadow of His hand did He hide me :
And He made me a polished arrow ;
In His own quiver did He store me.
And He said to me : My Servant art thou,
Israel, in whom I will get Me glory.
And I was honoured in the eyes of Jehovah,
And my God became my strength.
And I said : In vain have I toiled,
For nought have I spent my strength.
Surely my cause is with Jehovah,
And my reward is with my God.
And now Jehovah hath spoken,
Who formed me from the womb for His Ser-
vant,
To bring back Jacob to Himself,
And that Israel unto Him should be gathered :
It is too light for thee to be my Servant,
To raise up the tribes of Jacob,
And to bring back the preserved of Israel ;
I will make thee the light of the nations,
That My salvation may reach,
Unto earth's far end.¹

The mission is based on the election, and if such a conception of election had been retained in all our theological discussions it might have aroused less controversy. Too often we think of election solely in terms of privilege and honour, and of the elect as chosen to be saved and given an eternity of bliss. And many revolt against what seems the arbitrariness and unfairness of it. This is wholly to misunderstand election. Election is for service, and God chooses them that are serviceable. And His service may involve suffering and shame. Yet is honour and privilege to be found in the suffering and the shame, since it is the way of His service.

¹ Isa. xlix. 1-6.

It is no true doctrine of election which is parodied in the lines :

We are a very select few,
 But you're amongst the damned ;
 There's room enough in hell for you,
 We won't have heaven crammed.

The elect prove their election, not by preening themselves on their superiority, or counting on their rewards in selfish pride, but in forgetting themselves in the service of men, and in being so lifted into the glorious purpose of God that they become the channels whereby He reaches out to men.

In this Song the Servant is called Israel in one place, and thought of as having a mission to Israel in another. Some writers, chiefly those who reject the collective interpretation of the Servant, alter the verse that identifies the Servant with Israel, while others make this verse regulative for the interpretation of all the Songs. Both seem to me to be wrong. There is no sufficient reason to change the verse, and still less to make it regulative for all the Songs. The fact that in a single Song the Servant can be both identified with Israel and differentiated from Israel is strong evidence for that fluidity in the thought which I have noted. The Servant is Israel, with a mission to the world ; the Servant is also the spiritual Israel within Israel, with a mission to the rest of Israel as well as to the world ; and, as we shall see, the Servant is also an individual in whom the mission reaches its climax, and whose work becomes the inspiration of the mission and the power wherein it can be achieved.

If the author of the Servant Songs had gone no farther than these two Songs had carried him, he would have reached a notable height, which was rarely reached by other Old Testament writers. Yet in the remaining Songs he soars yet higher. For with the third we

begin to see the means whereby the mission is accomplished.

The Lord Jehovah hath given me
The tongue of the taught,
That I may know to sustain the weary
With a word of refreshment.
In the morning He awakens mine ear
To hear as the taught,
And I have not disobeyed,
Or turned Him my back.
To the scourgers my back have I given,
To the pluckers my cheeks ;
My face I have not hid
From shame and spitting.
But the Lord Jehovah is my helper ;
Therefore I feel no shame ;
I set my face as a flint,
For I knew I'd not be shamed.
He that gives me the verdict is nigh ;
Who will go to law with me ?
Let us stand up together ;
Who is my adversary ?
Let him draw nigh to me.
Lo ! the Lord Jehovah is my helper ;
Who shall convict me ?
Lo ! they all shall wax old as a garment,
The moth shall consume them.¹

Here it becomes clear that the mission is not effected through honour and prestige, but through insult and suffering. The Servant is not one who inspires the envy of men, but one who is maltreated. Yet he is sure that he will triumph even over the shame and the suffering, and that despite it all he will fulfil his God-given mission with God-given help. There is no word here of the

¹ Isa. l 4 ff.

range of the mission as being to all the world, because that has been sufficiently indicated. The thought here is centred on suffering and shame as the organ of service.

This thought is yet more developed in the fourth and greatest of the Songs.

Lo ! My Servant shall prosper and be exalted,
 And be raised exceeding high.
 As many were appalled at his fate,
 (And princes shuddered at his doom),¹
 So shall the nations be amazed at his lot,
 And kings be struck with silence.
 For they shall see what had not been told them,
 And understand what they never had heard.
 Who would have believed what we have heard ?
 To whom hath Jehovah's arm been revealed ?
 As a sapling he grew up before us,
 Or a root from an arid soil.
 He had no figure to attract us,
 No majesty or beauty that we should desire him ;
 Marred beyond human semblance was his appearance,
 And his figure was scarcely a man's.
 He was despised and forsaken of men,
 A man of pains, and accustomed to suffering ;
 As one from whom men avert their gaze,
 He was despised, and we esteemed him not.
 But it was our sufferings that he endured,
 And our pains the ones that he bore ;
 Yet we did esteem him smitten,
 Stricken of God and afflicted ;
 But he was pierced through our sins,
 By our evil deeds was he crushed ;
 The correction for our welfare fell upon him,
 And by his stripes there was healing for us.

¹ The bracketed words represent a conjecture as to the sort of line which is irrecoverably lost here.

We all have wandered like sheep,
Have turned every man to his way ;
And Jehovah hath laid upon him
The iniquity that we all have done.
Though ill-treated, yet meek was he,
And uttered no sound of complaint ;
As a sheep he is led off to slaughter,
Or a ewe before her shearers is dumb.
By oppression and without justice was he taken,
And who gave a thought to his fate ?
From the land of the living was he snatched,
And smitten for the sin of the nations.
And they gave him burial with the wicked,
And with them that did evil at his death ;
Although he had done no violence,
And there was no deceit in his mouth.
But Jehovah was pleased to crush him with disease ;
Truly he gave himself an offering for sin ;
He shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days,
The will of Jehovah through him shall prosper.
After his travail of soul light shall he see,
And the knowledge of Jehovah shall suffice him ;
Many shall my Servant acquit,
For the guilt of their sins did he bear.
Wherefore I will give many for his portion,
And the strong for his spoil,
Since he laid bare his soul unto death,
And was numbered with sinners ;
But 'twas he bore the sins of many,
And for transgressors prayed.¹

In this Song we have the great creative idea of a suffering which is redemptive. It redeems not the sufferer, but those who inflict it on him ; and it redeems not only by its own virtue, merely because it is suffering, but because of the spirit in which it is endured. The

¹ Isa. lii. 13 ff., liii. 1 ff.

Servant fulfils his mission to the world by suffering at the world's hands, and by yielding his life without struggle or complaint to be a sacrifice for those who slay him.

It is quite improbable that the picture was in any sense derived from the contemplation of Israel's sufferings in the exile. The author was well aware of those sufferings, and describes them in terms reminiscent of the third Song :

And I will put it into the hand of thy tormentors,
Who say to thy soul :
Bow down, that we may pass over !
And thou hast made thy back as the ground,
And as the street for the passers by.¹

But the pre-exilic prophets had declared that Israel's sufferings were self-entailed by her disloyalty to God, and it is improbable that Deutero-Isaiah disputed this view. Indeed, the opening verses of his prophecies recognise that Israel has suffered for her sins. They bring a message of hope and comfort because that suffering is now ended, and her sin pardoned.

Comfort ye, comfort ye My people,
Saith your God ;
Speak tenderly unto Jerusalem,
And proclaim ye to her
That her time of hard service is over,
Forgiven is her sin ;
For she hath received from Jehovah's hand
Double for all her sins.²

Clearly the historical sufferings of Israel in the exile can have nothing to do with the sufferings of the Servant.

¹ Isa. li. 23.

² Isa. xl. 1 f.

For he was not suffering for his sins, and his own pardon was not the goal of his chastisement. For "he had done no violence" but "was pierced through our sins," and "bare the sins of many." History knows of no historical sufferings of Israel that could sustain this great idea, and I can find no escape from the conclusion that in this fourth Song, the prophet's primary thought is of a future individual who shall uniquely fulfil Israel's mission in unique sufferings, borne in unique love.

This is much more than the corollary of monotheism, and I think the author owed something to the teaching of Hosea. Through the pain of his own heart Hosea had learned something of the pain of God's heart at Israel's sin. For it is the nature of love to suffer, and to go on loving even when it suffers. And if God is the God of all men, then His love is not confined to Israel, and in all man's sin He suffers. But the people of God are called to reflect His character. This is the constant call of the prophets. Whatever we see God to be, that should we become, through the possession of our hearts by His spirit. Israel then was called to be the extension of the divine personality, to enter into the divine love and suffering.

Yet if Deutero-Isaiah was thus borne on the inner dynamic of his own full and explicit monotheism, linked with the message of Hosea, it was probably not by rational processes that he was so carried. For he was a prophet rather than a philosopher or theologian, and he was susceptible to the influence of God's spirit on his spirit, lifting him to express the things he perceived in a way that transcended any mere logical deduction from already apprehended truth. For, as I have said, there was fluidity in his thought, and if in some measure the Servant stood for Israel, it yet more stood for some individual who should carry the mission to its supreme point. And especially is this so of the fourth Song, where he seems to be thinking less of a personification

than of a Person. Nor should we forget that it was in a Person that his great idea was clothed with reality. In that Person the love of God was shared, and the divine yearning over men was manifested. And that He saved by suffering has been the faith and the experience of the Church. Yet it was not by the physical agony of the crucifixion that He saved. For many besides Jesus of Nazareth have been crucified, without achieving any service of men. Nor was it merely because He suffered innocently. For again many have been the victims of miserable injustice without arousing in men more than the sense of tragedy and disgust. It was because His crucifixion was the consequence of His love, and because its deepest agony was not the physical agony of the pain He suffered, but the agony of the love that loved even when it was rejected, and that knew an infinite pity for those who inflicted a deeper injury on themselves by their rejection of Him than any they inflicted on Him. It was because in His crucifixion He entered perfectly into the love and the suffering of God that He so gloriously fulfilled the prophecy of the Servant.

Only lightly have we touched the great ideas of Deutero-Isaiah, yet enough to see how he took strands of thought that had their beginning in the work of Moses, and carried them forward on the road that led to Christ. For greatly was Our Lord influenced by his writings, and Himself declared that He was the fulfilment of the hope of the Servant. Nowhere in the Old Testament do we find the world vision more clearly expressed; nowhere do we find so clear a call to active missionary effort; and nowhere do we find the basis of that activity in passivity, in a suffering which by its spirit becomes the most potent and active of all forces.

CHAPTER IV

THE HEIRS OF THE MISSION

OF the exuberant hopes of Deutero-Isaiah there was little early fulfilment. Cyrus conquered the Babylonian empire, and soon gave permission to the Jews to return to their land. But few took advantage of that permission. These returned to Palestine, and after a few years rebuilt the Temple. But there was no strong and spiritually aggressive community in Palestine, but a small and dispirited company, that did not find it easy to maintain itself. And the strength of Judaism continued to be in Babylonia. Yet even there the spirit of Deutero-Isaiah was not in evidence. There were few who shared his thought of Israel as charged with a message to all men, and his perception of the unity and the love of God as the dynamic of activity, or his sense of the wonder of the treasure entrusted to Israel, and the burden of her responsibility. And in the following century Nehemiah and Ezra felt that the pressing problem was to preserve the faith of the community from complete extinction. It was threatened in many ways, and these leaders believed that only by withdrawing the community into itself, and by cutting itself off as completely as possible from all contact with alien influences, could its faith be maintained. Instead of the aggressive spiritual influence in Israel for which Deutero-Isaiah had looked, they saw aggressive cultural and spiritual influences all around them, powerful and hard to resist. And Judaism became exclusive instead of aggressive, a little garden walled around instead of a great missionary force.

To condemn is easier than to understand, and I prefer to try to understand. And I recognise the great debt we owe to that very particularistic spirit for the preservation of the faith of Judaism. Had not the exiles in Babylonia practised that spirit they would have been lost to history, and Deutero-Isaiah might never have heard of the faith he was so eager to propagate. And had not others practised it now, Judaism might have been overwhelmed. We may deplore that the message of Deutero-Isaiah was not fully taken up for so long, but our appreciation of this prophet, who was so far in advance of his time, is only increased. Yet at the same time, we should be fair to Judaism in its most particularistic moods, and realise that it did not wholly forget the message that had been given it.

It preserved for us those great prophecies in which the mission and message were enshrined. Let us not forget that they belonged to the Bible of Judaism, and therefore to the Bible of Our Lord, and if they influenced Him in His thought of His mission, it was because Judaism had preserved them for Him. Moreover, there were many who cherished the thought of a world united in the faith of Jehovah, even though they knew no kindling of heart to embark on the enterprise of winning it. For we have looked at many of their hopes of that day, and have said that not a few of them are not earlier than Deutero-Isaiah. And ere we slight the men who cherished the vision without addressing themselves to the task let us not forget that Isaac Watts died nearly half a century before the opening of the modern missionary era, when neither his Church nor ours conducted any overseas evangelism amongst the heathen. Yet he wrote the great missionary hymn, which we continually sing :

Jesus shall reign where'er the sun
Doth his successive journeys run.

If he could so sing without calling to a campaign of world evangelism, long centuries after the Church had known the impulse of such evangelism, we need not wonder that in the Persian and Greek periods men who lived in the tiny Jewish state in subjection to great empires, culturally and economically far in advance of them, did not feel the time was yet ripe for such a campaign.

There was one man, however, who did enter into the thought of Deutero-Isaiah. This was the author of the book of Jonah. This book is quite unlike the other books of what the Jews called the Latter Prophets. The other prophetic books consist of oracles, mostly short, interspersed with biographical or autobiographical passages. But the book of Jonah delivers its prophetic message in the form of a story. In this it is rather like the first half of the book of Daniel, which we place among the prophets, but which the Jews placed in the third and miscellaneous collection of their Canon.

The story of the book of Jonah is of a man who was sent to preach to Nineveh, and who tried to escape his mission. But he could not escape, any more than Jeremiah could escape from his vocation. Though he sometimes vowed he would prophesy no more, Jeremiah felt a burning fire in his bones and an inner constraint that could not be resisted, a constraint which he recognized to be of God, Who was too powerful for him. And in the same way, though Jonah sought to flee from God and his mission, the hand of God pursued him, and finally constrained him to go to Nineveh. There he preached the message of judgement with such effect that the whole city was brought to repentance and put on sackcloth. And by their repentance the judgement was averted. And the prophet was filled with surly annoyance, and felt that he had been let down. And the book ends with his admission to the heart of God, with all its compassion even for Nineveh, and its yearning over the men of that great and evil city.

Too often men argue about whether the details of the story are credible, instead of receiving its great and gracious message. It is not history, but prophecy, and therefore its message is the vital thing. When Nathan went to David with the parable of the poor man's ewe lamb, it did not matter whether the story was a true one or not. At first David believed it was, until he found that he had condemned himself, when he perceived its meaning. In the same way the prophet who went to rebuke Ahab for sparing the king of Damascus invented a story about himself as the medium of his message, and once the message was perceived the question whether the story was a true one was no longer relevant. We do not ask whether our Lord's parable of the rich man and Lazarus is a true one before we receive its teaching. And when we realize that the book of Jonah is charged with a prophetic message, the question of the historicity of its form is an irrelevance.

I think the author is describing in the form of his story his own spiritual experience. He was most reluctant to believe that God's love embraced alien peoples, and even oppressors like the Assyrians, and he strove hard to resist it, and when it was borne in on him regarded it as a disgusting idea, until he was lifted into the divine heart, and shared the glory of its compassion. We should perhaps remember that in that heart he found no woolly and shallow sentimentalism. He did not find that God was indifferent to good and evil, and wished men to be told that it did not matter about their sins, since His forgiveness was infinite. It was a message of judgement that was taken to Nineveh, as the prophets had constantly come to Israel with a message of judgement. For sinners, so long as they cling to their sin, there can be only judgement. For judgement is the expression of the love of God no less than of His justice. A God Who was indifferent to good and ill would be neither just nor loving. And so long as men cling to their sin, God cannot forgive. This is not because He is

not forgiving, but because of the nature of forgiveness. For God's forgiveness is not release from the external consequences of sin, but the cleansing of the inner spirit and the restoration to His fellowship. But He cannot cleanse from sin those who cling to their sin, and He cannot give His fellowship to those who will have none of it. All His yearning over men, and His deep desire to give His spirit unto men, is thwarted by the evil heart of men until in penitence they open their hearts to Him. That is why there is pain in the heart of God, as Hosea so richly perceived. That is why the Servant of Jehovah must be the Suffering Servant, entering into His sorrow that he may be the instrument of His service.

The author of the book of Jonah believed that God was the God of all men, and the faith of Israel to be shared by all. He reached out beyond the bounds of particularism. He also went beyond those who merely dreamed of the day when all should worship God. For he realized that if men were to be won to repentance and to be brought into the faith of Jehovah, there must be messengers of His grace. For the messenger of judgement may be the messenger of grace. This prophet therefore kept alive some element of the message of Deutero-Isaiah, though the latter was incomparably fuller and richer in its content.

Nor must we forget that while Judaism never in practice entered on a great missionary campaign to win the world, it was always ready to welcome individuals who came to share its faith. In the Old Testament there are many references to the resident alien, who was regarded as within the sphere of God's care, and eligible to share the privileges and the responsibilities of the faith of Israel. Judaism adopted the word which stood for these resident aliens to stand for proselytes, though the proselyte is something more. The proselyte had to identify himself with the Israelite people, if he would share their religion, but it was for the sake of the religion

that he so identified himself. The resident alien lived in Israel, and so shared in the religious life and practice of Israel, much as Israel entered into the religious life and practice of the Canaanites when they came into the land.

The classic example of the proselyte, in the fuller sense of the word, is Ruth. Before she left her own land of Moab to come into Israel, she committed herself without reserve both to Israel and to her religion.

Entreat me not to forsake thee,
To return from following thee ;
For whither thou goest will I go,
And where thou lodgest lodge I ;
Thy people shall be my people,
And thy God my God ;
Where thou diest will I die,
And there will I be buried.
Jehovah do so to me, and more beside,
If aught but death part me from thee.¹

Even earlier than the book of Ruth, which probably comes from the fifth century B.C., we have the thought of proselytes, coming to join Israel for the sake of her religion.

Many Gentiles shall be joined
To Jehovah in that great day ;
And they shall be unto Him for a people,
And dwell in thy midst ;
And thou shalt know that Jehovah of hosts
Hath sent me to thee.²

¹ Ruth i. 16 f.

² Zech. ii. 11 (Heb. 15).

Thus saith Jehovah of hosts :
It shall yet be that peoples shall come,
And citizens of many cities,
And the citizens of one shall go to another,
Saying : Let us go up forthwith
To seek the favour of Jehovah,
And to inquire for Jehovah of hosts ,
I myself am going.
And many peoples shall come,
And mighty nations,
To seek Jehovah of hosts in Jerusalem,
And to entreat Jehovah's favour.
Thus saith Jehovah of hosts :
In those days it shall come to pass
That ten men shall lay hold,
Even from all the tongues of the Gentiles,
Shall lay hold of the cloak of a Jew,
Saying : We will come with you,
For we have heard that God is with you.¹

And when Jews were scattered throughout the world in the Diaspora, many were won to share their faith. The New Testament declares that the scribes and Pharisees were prepared to "compass sea and land to make one proselyte."² Some Jewish writers have denied that this is correct, and have claimed that Judaism never sought to make proselytes, but that all who embraced Judaism came of their own initiative. That some were attracted by the discipline of the life of the Jews to inquire into its source, and to go on to share their faith, may well be true, but it is probable that there were some who actively sought to make converts. Yet it is hard to suppose that more than a minority were actively missionary. The great Hillel said : " Be of the disciples

¹ Zech. viii. 20 ff.

² Matt. xxiii. 15.

of Aaron, loving peace and pursuing peace, loving mankind and bringing them near to the Law."¹ By some interpreters it is disputed that the concluding phrase has any reference to the active winning of converts, but a very ancient Jewish interpretation says that it means "overpowering men and gathering them under the wings of the Shekinah."² This gives it an unmistakably active missionary meaning, and it is improbable that proselytes would have been so numerous as we know from both New Testament and other sources they were without active effort. The evidence of the Acts of the Apostles that proselytes were found in many of the places visited by Paul is clear. It may be added that the Talmud records that Rabbi Eleazar said: "The Holy One, blessed be He, dispersed Israel among the nations only in order that proselytes should be added unto them."³ Such an observation bears its own testimony of the welcome that proselytes received in some quarters, and should correct our extreme ideas of Jewish exclusiveness.

Perhaps the extreme of broadmindedness found in the Old Testament is found in Malachi. This prophet lived in the fifth century B.C., before the work of Nehemiah and Ezra. His oracles give evidence of a religious laxity and deadness that enables us to realize the need for the work of those two great reformers. Men brought their sacrifices to God, but anything was good enough for Him, and in all their worship was an implicit contempt for God that turned it into an offence. And Malachi declared that God found more pleasure in heathen sacrifices than in these.

O that one among you would close the doors,
That ye kindle not Mine altar fire in vain ;

¹ Aboth i. 12.

² Aboth de R. Nathan xii. middle.

³ T. B. Pesachim 87 b.

I have no pleasure in you,
Jehovah of hosts hath said ;
And an offering at your hand I will not accept.
For from the rising of the sun to its setting,
My name is great among the Gentiles.
And in every place incense is offered
To My name, and a pure oblation ;
For great is My name among the Gentiles,
Jehovah of hosts hath said.¹

In pre-exilic days sacrifices were splendid and abundant, but the men who offered them lived lives that were an offence to God, and knew nothing of the spirit of justice and mercy that is of the essence of God's heart. And so the prophets had said that all their sacrifices were worse than useless, and positively hateful to God. And now men professed a loyalty of heart that their sacrifices belied, and the prophets called for worthier sacrifices as the evidence of a truer loyalty. And here Malachi gives bold expression to an invariable prophetic principle. It is the spirit that gives meaning to the act of worship, and the spirit that reveals itself in the act to the eye of God. The outer profession is meaningless to Him, for He penetrates far beneath it. And Malachi claims for Jehovah worship that is not offered to His name, but that is sincere and validated by a pure heart. The quality of the worship is of more importance than the name of the God to Whom it is ostensibly offered, and the quality of the worship derives from the heart, which equally expresses itself in all life.

We are familiar with something of the same kind in a word of our Lord's. "Not every one that saith to Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven ; but he that doeth the will of My Father which is in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name ? And in Thy name have

¹ Mal. i. 10 f.

cast out demons? And in Thy name have done many marvels? And then will I declare unto them, I never knew you; depart from Me, you evil-doers."¹ And the parable of the dividing of the sheep from the goats brings the contrary indication that He will accept as offered unto Himself gracious acts of service performed by those who knew not that they were serving Him.

From Jewish sources we find the same idea, showing that the word of Malachi was not unheeded. "There are righteous men among the Gentiles, who shall have a portion in the world to come."² This does not mean proselytes, but men who are accepted by God because they have lived up to the light they had, and because in a heathen society they have shown that fundamental quality of character which the prophets meant by righteousness.

It may be objected that this is the doctrine of salvation by works, whether in the form found in Malachi, or that of the New Testament or the rabbinical source cited. It may also be objected that such a doctrine would hamstring all missionary activity, since it renders it unnecessary. It is sometimes said, indeed, that Judaism rests essentially on a doctrine of works, and its salvation is one a man achieves for himself by his obedience to the demands of the Law.

Against this it should be remembered that the fundamental experience on which all Jewish religion was built was the experience of the Exodus, and that was in no sense salvation by works. It was, as we have already said, salvation of God's elect by the power of God, but it required a real faith before it could be effected. Israel had to have faith in God's prophet, faith to follow him, and faith to believe that the God Who had sent him could fulfil the promise given through him.

¹ Matt. vii. 21 ff.

² Tosephta Sanhedrin xiii. 2.

Let it be remembered too that when a prophet declared God's demands in classic form, more than works was involved.

With what shall I come before Jehovah,
Or bow before God Most High ?
Shall I approach Him with burnt-offerings,
With calves of yesteryear ?
Will He delight in thousands of rams,
Or in myriads of rivers of oil ?

Shall I give my firstborn for my offence,
The fruit of my body for the sin of my soul ?
He hath told thee, O man, what is good ;
And what is Jehovah's demand.
Except to do justice, love mercy,
And humbly walk with thy God ?¹

It is the humble walk with God that both brings the revelation of justice and mercy, since these are the qualities of His heart, and also brings power to fulfil their demand. And when Deutero-Isaiah thought of the means whereby the faith of Israel should spread to all the world, it was no doctrine of salvation by works that he preached. It was salvation by vicarious suffering, salvation that by the power of the spirit in which the suffering was borne should lift men to be carried on the wings of that spirit unto God, that the death of the sufferer might become the sacrifice that cleansed them from sin.

This is anything but a doctrine of salvation by works. But the Old Testament and the New everywhere teach a doctrine of salvation unto works. Religion must express itself in life. And what Malachi and these other passages say is that an imperfect faith that is the true spring of life is better than a hollow profession of a richer faith,

¹ Mic. vi. 6 ff.

which proves itself to be no faith because it does not become the spring of life. This is not to sap the missionary motive at its root. It is not to say that there is no need for missionary activity, since men can find salvation without it. It is rather to emphasise how great are the claims to fuller light of those who have responded to the light they have had. And they who have that fuller light should not withhold it, but spread it, that it might bring a fuller response from these responsive hearts, to the greater glory of God, and might enlighten yet others who sit in darkness.

Enough has been said to demonstrate that the Old Testament is a missionary book. Yet it is undeniable that Judaism is not essentially and notably a missionary religion. That it knew some missionary impetus, and some proselytising zeal, may be allowed without contradicting this. Yet there never has been the slightest likelihood of its becoming a world religion, in the sense in which Christianity has been a world religion from the first century of its existence.

Deutero-Isaiah believed that Israel was called to be a missionary people. Yet we must not forget the relation of the Servant to its missionary purpose. Nor must we forget that if in some sense Israel was the Servant, it was in an individual that the function of the Servant was to be fully realised, and the death of that Servant was to be the spring of hope for the nations. The mission could not, therefore, be fully undertaken until that Servant had appeared to realise the prophet's hope, and break the hearts of men in humble recognition that he suffered vicariously for them, and that his death was the organ of their sacrifice unto God. I have already said that I am persuaded that the prophet thought of the mission of this individual Servant as lying in the future. Yet he could not know how far off it lay, and he may well have thought that it would be realised soon. It was by the moving of the spirit of God in his heart that he conceived this great idea, and he was sure it would be embodied in

some divinely chosen Servant. But the perspective of the future is as hard to fathom as the perspective of the evening sky. For who could tell by looking at the sky the relative distances of the stars? To the eye they appear to be painted side by side on the inside of a vast dome, instead of set in limitless space. And when the prophet got beyond the range of the events that were to arise directly out of the events and policies of his day, he projected his visions on the background of a future whose depth he had no means of gauging. And until that Servant appeared the mission was bound to halt for lack of its greatest foundation.

It was the belief of our Lord that He was the fulfilment of this hope, and it was the tragedy of Judaism that it failed to recognise Him, Who was beyond all question the greatest of her sons, and the one who has most powerfully and beneficially influenced the course of history. And though by a Gentile court He was condemned to death, it was in response to the wish of Jewish people and their religious leaders. And history has proved that it was not only in our Lord's own mind that He fulfilled the thought of Deutero-Isaiah. A missionary community sprang into being, fired with the zeal to spread its faith through all the world. It had no very obvious advantages with which to start. Its leaders were mostly simple, humble men from an obscure part of a little subject state. It had no great economic resources on which to draw, and no men of high prestige to launch it. And the centre of its message was the death of its Founder. And, wonder of wonders! the message proved potent, and in the experience of an ever-growing circle of men and women, new hope was born of His death. This is a fact, explain it how you will. In their experience that death proved indeed to be a sacrifice that mediated to them the consciousness of forgiveness and cleansing of soul. He was crucified as an imposter, but history proves undeniably that He was not that. For the death which He steadfastly faced, believing it to be the

death of the Servant, effected precisely what the Servant's death was to achieve, and vindicated His faith.

The Church believed it was the heir of Judaism. That Christianity is a different religion from Judaism would be agreed by both Jews and Christians, and I have no desire to minimise the difference. Yet neither would I minimise what the Church owes to Judaism. For all the roots of our faith lie in Judaism, and the mission which the Church took up was the world mission of Judaism. From that mission Judaism turned in rejecting the Servant. Yet let us not forget that all Jews did not reject Him. It was by Jews that the Christian Church was founded, and all the early preaching of the message of the Cross was done by Jews. It was Jews who brought the Bible of Judaism and of our Lord to be the Bible of the Church, to its infinite enrichment. For the Church was the heir of Judaism, heir to its promises and heir to its tasks.

We have seen that the corollary of election was always perceived to be service. Its honour and its responsibility were linked together, and the refusal of the responsibility meant the rejection of the honour. And when Judaism refused the responsibility of entering upon the world mission to which the Servant called it, the world mission to which its own prophetic voices had called it, the world mission of which it had preserved and cherished the dreams, it rejected the honour it might have had. Yet though the prophets often warned of the inner meaning of the refusal of the responsibilities which election brought, they were always sure that Israel would not all fail God. There would be a faithful Remnant which would continue to inherit the promises, and in its loyal service would justify the election of God. All through the Old Testament, permeating its messages of judgement, and illuminating its darkest moments, lives the thought of this Remnant.

And the Remnant carried the stock of Israel, and the promises and responsibilities of Israel, forward in the

founding of the Church. And just because it carried the world mission, which had been perceived to be the goal of Israel's election, forward with it, it became a world Church, mediating the blessings of Israel's heritage to men of all races, and lifting them into the election of Israel. It did precisely what the Bible of Judaism had declared it would do.

Two things must still be said, though many could be added did time permit. The first is that Judaism's rejection of its mission should not blind us for one moment to its greatness, or to its vast significance in the story of man. We who are heirs of its good things, heirs of its ideas and its experience, should have no stones to throw at it. Our Lord had only tenderness and yearning for it, even in the hour of His rejection. And when we enter into His spirit we feel the infinite pity of it, that this people so gloriously blessed, missed the greater glory it might have known. It was not ready for the fulfilment of the dreams it had cherished, and it regarded with horror, as traitors to its faith, those who were ready. It had our Lord crucified; it scattered His followers; it harried them in the places whither they had gone; it hated with an intense hatred the greatest of its sons who went over to the Crucified, persecuted him whithersoever he went, and finally brought calamity upon him. Yet this was not because Judaism was evil through and through. For Christianity was a growth out of Judaism, not a revolt against it, and if Judaism had been essentially evil it would not have had so much to pass over to the daughter faith. The fault of Judaism lay in its being static, in refusing to follow the leading of God's spirit beyond the point, the high and exalted point, it had already reached. It had yearned for an advance it was unwilling to make. It was unprepared for the further unfolding of the things that were implicit in its faith, and for the world purpose of its election which its own seers had proclaimed. Yet the place where it stood, beyond which it was unwilling

to go, was no mean and ignoble place. For Judaism is a noble and exalted faith, which calls for our understanding and sympathy. The clash that accompanied the rise of Christianity should neither for ever blind Judaism to the vindication of the Church, or to the recognition that in the Church Judaism has influenced the world as she could never else have done ; nor should it blind us to the loftiness of the Jewish faith, or to the noble spirit that animates it.

That spirit reached its height in Pharisaism. To us Pharisaism stands too often for unmitigated hypocrisy and religious formalism. Yet the essence of Pharisaism was loyalty. Our Lord said to His disciples : " If ye love Me, keep My commandments."¹ And all the punctiliousness with which the Pharisees kept the commandments of the Jewish Law was born of an intense love for God, and passion to serve Him. " Be not like servants who serve their lord to gain a reward," said one of them ; " but be like servants who serve without thought of reward : and let the fear of God be upon you."² And another said : " Be swift to obey the lightest command, and swift to flee from transgression ; for command leads to command, and transgression to transgression ; for the reward of obedience to one command of God is another, and the fruit of a transgression is yet another."³ We think of the Pharisees as haughty and proud. Yet amongst their treasured sayings of their leaders we find : " Let thy house be a meeting place for the wise, and with the dust of their feet bedust thyself ; and drink in their words with eagerness."⁴ It is not to be supposed that all Pharisees attained an equal level, and not to be denied that in the conflict with Jesus Pharisaic conservatism showed its worst side.

¹ Jn. xiv. 15.

² Aboth i. 3.

³ Aboth iv. 2.

⁴ Aboth i. 4.

But all Pharisees are not to be judged by those He faced, and their intense love for the Word of God, and intense desire to obey His will, not to be denied because they were blind to His living Word in Christ, and deaf to the living accents of His voice.

The other thing that remains to be said is that our privilege in being elect in Christ to become the heirs of Judaism and its promises should not blind us to the greatness of our responsibility and of our task. With us as with Israel, privilege and responsibility go hand in hand, and the refusal of the one entails the forfeiture of the other. To recognize that the Church is the heir of the world task of Judaism is to recognize that we must have some share in that task. Merely to sing hymns about the coming universal reign of Christ is no more sufficient than the reading of the old prophecies and psalms sufficed for Judaism. Nor can the giving of our money alone suffice, on whatever scale we give it. There must be in a real sense the giving of ourselves, whether it be to actual missionary service or not—and by missionary service I mean aggressive work for the kingdom, whether at home or abroad. The claim of our election is for an agonizing of spirit, whereby alone we can truly fulfil our responsibility.

In Deutero-Isaiah's thought of the Servant I have said there was fluidity. While the Servant was in some measure Israel, it was in fuller measure an individual who should carry its mission to the supreme height of service in suffering. And we rightly think of the fulfilment in Christ. Yet there may rightly be a measure of fluidity in *our* thought, and we may perceive that if the supreme fulfilment of the vision was in Christ, there may be a degree of fulfilment in His people. For the Church cannot truly fulfil the mission entrusted to it, unless it enters in a very profound sense into the suffering of the Servant. Paul said, in words that never fail to move my heart with wonder and abasement: "We are the children of God; and if children, then heirs; heirs

of God, and joint-heirs with Christ ; if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together."¹ Or again he expresses his yearning " that I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death."² He was doubtless thinking in part of his persecutions, but I think his thought was really deeper than that. For elsewhere he says : " I have been crucified with Christ ; nevertheless I live : and yet not I, but Christ liveth in me."³ Here he is clearly thinking of an inner identification of spirit with our Lord. For the real suffering of Christ was not the suffering in the flesh, but the suffering in His spirit in the supreme hour of His rejection by the world He so wondrously loved. And we are called to enter into that spirit. For if we are elect unto salvation, it is not alone to receive salvation, but to become the instruments of salvation.

If, then, the Church is called to carry to the world the message of the fulfilment of the prophecy of the Servant in the Cross of Christ, it is also called to enter into the experience of the Cross, and to share in some measure in the fulfilment of the prophecy. We do not merely proclaim the love of God in Christ objectively ; we enter into that love, and know its eager yearning of spirit, and feel the pangs of God's rejected love. Unless we feel that sympathy, in the proper sense of the word—that suffering with Christ and with God—we cannot enter into the world mission which the Church inherited from Judaism ; but if we do, we are transported into that mission in no half-hearted and formal way. It becomes a part of our very life, laying upon us its imperious constraint, and filling our heart with an eager passion that fails not.

¹ Rom. viii. 16 ff.

² Phil. iii. 10.

³ Gal. ii. 20.

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