

NOTES AND STUDIES

THE MESSIAH BEN JOSEPH.

THERE is found in Jewish writings of the third century A. D. a curious form of the Messianic Hope which led to the expectation of two Messiahs, a Messiah ben Joseph as well as the Messiah ben David. Nowhere are the full details of the expectation given, but from scattered references it would seem that the Messiah ben Joseph would gather a great army from the reunited tribes and set up his kingdom in Palestine with Jerusalem as its capital. Then the hosts of the heathen nations would come to make war against the Holy City, as Ezekiel and some of his successors had predicted, and slay the Messiah ben Joseph with many of his followers. Thereafter the Messiah ben David would appear, raise the Messiah ben Joseph and his faithful followers from the dead, and establish the final kingdom which should last for ever.¹

This strange and fantastic Messianic expectation contains many elements, and Christian scholars are wont to dismiss it as a mere concession of Jewish rabbis to Christian teaching concerning the fulfilment of such prophecies as Isaiah liii and Zechariah ix 9 ff by Jesus of Nazareth. But the Jewish rabbis spoke of this expectation as *an ancient tradition*; and upon the strength of this evidence E. G. King made a study of the theme in his translation of the *Yalkut on Zechariah, Appendix A*. He gave reasons for supposing that the expectation of a suffering Messiah was current in Judaism at least as early as the first century A. D., though it has been remarked that his argument 'does not really prove more than that the doctrine of the Messiah ben Joseph found points of attachment in older thought'.

Not to traverse the ground explored by King, I propose to follow another line of study suggested by an examination of *Genesis xlix* and the *Testament of Benjamin* (Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs), whereby, it seems, there can be traced the tradition of a Messiah ben Joseph from a period much earlier than that to which its origin is usually ascribed. Moreover, the death of this Messiah in the late Jewish version of the tradition will appear to be an important factor in the Messianic Hope as a whole, since possibly it influenced the composition of the Songs of the Suffering Servant and the similar prediction of a suffering Messiah in Zechariah xii.

¹ See article 'Messiah' in *H.D.B.* and *Enc. Bib.*

I.

Genesis xlix. In the so-called 'Blessing of Jacob' we have a poem which purports to give Jacob's last words to his twelve sons. He describes the character of each son, and then predicts the characteristics and future career of each tribe. The descriptions of the sons, however, make us think of the tribes personified rather than of the patriarchs whose stories are told in the earlier chapters of Genesis; for the qualities which they evince betoken a period later than the patriarchal age. Thus Benjamin is described as a ravening wolf—a character which he certainly does not bear in the earlier part of the book of Genesis; and similarly, Joseph is pictured as a warrior surrounded by foes whom he eventually conquers by his warlike might, though no hint of this is given in the Joseph-story. Accordingly Driver¹ suggests that the poem as a whole was composed during the period of the Judges or during the early monarchy, though he allows that it may incorporate earlier material, and may have been interpolated here and there by later hands.

Two passages in this poem call for, and have received from scholars, special attention because of the Messianic allusions which they contain. These passages occur in (a) the blessing given to Judah, and (b) the blessing given to Joseph. No general agreement has been reached in regard to the interpretation that ought to be placed upon them, but there is a consensus of opinion in favour of regarding them as in some sense of Messianic import. We need not here discuss the various explanations which have been offered, since they can be found in any modern commentary.

(a) In the blessing upon Judah, verse 10 is thus rendered in R.V.:—

The sceptre shall not depart from Judah,
 Nor the ruler's staff² from between his feet, ² *marg. lawgiver.*
 Until Shiloh come;
 And unto him shall the obedience of the peoples be.

The allusion to the 'sceptre' as being in the tribe of Judah would appear to indicate the period of composition of the first two lines as that of the early Davidic monarchy. Difficulty comes with the third and fourth lines, which appear to postulate another than a member of

¹ *Genesis* pp. 380, 381.

² Driver discounts the marginal reading 'lawgiver'. If, however, the Servant Songs were suggested, as we suppose, by the Messiah ben Joseph tradition, this reading may have had much to do with the Servant's office of *Torah-lehrer* as unfolded in the first three Songs.

the tribe of Judah in the kingship since Judah's sovereignty is to last until this one, whoever he may be, appears, when it will pass to him.

The Hebrew of the third line may be translated in two ways : (a) 'until Shiloh come' ; or (b) 'until he (one) come to Shiloh'. The former rendering is not found in any version before 1534, but the English versions make use of it. It is unsatisfactory for several reasons. The Septuagint paraphrase, which we shall discuss later, makes no mention of Shiloh ; the term Shiloh is not a personal name in any Hebrew or Jewish writing until a fanciful passage in the Talmud makes it a title of the Messiah ; elsewhere it is always the name of a city in Ephraim. On these grounds the rendering 'until he (one) come to Shiloh' approves itself as grammatically unexceptionable, while it makes good sense, without altering the text in any way.

I take it then, that the Hebrew text means that the sovereignty will remain in the tribe of Judah until 'one' comes to the Ephraimite city of Shiloh : he shall there take over the rulership from Judah, and 'the obedience of the peoples', i. e. of the twelve tribes, and possibly of the Gentiles also, shall be given to him.

(b) The second passage is found in verses 23-25, and belongs to the blessing given by Jacob to Joseph. It is thus translated in R. V. :—

The archers have sorely grieved him,
And shot at him, and persecuted him :
But his bow abode in strength,
And the arms of his hands were made strong
By the hands of the Mighty One of Jacob,
(From thence is the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel)
Even by the God of thy father, who shall help thee.

Joseph is here pictured as a warrior, a character which he does not bear in the story of his rise to power in Egypt. The tribe of Ephraim would seem to be indicated, and the Mighty One of Jacob strengthens this tribe for its warlike exploits. The verse in brackets might well be omitted : the passage would gain in clearness thereby. We regard it therefore as an interpolation into the original text, and note that it contains a Messianic allusion, as is agreed by the commentators. But what is the antecedent of the words 'from thence' ? There is but little point in making this antecedent 'the Mighty One of Jacob', since the passage would then mean that God will send 'the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel', i. e. the Messiah. If the phrase be an interpolation as we suggest, it would be better to regard the whole of the preceding passage as the antecedent, and to make it mean that the Messiah will spring from the persecuted tribe of Ephraim, i. e. from

Joseph, who is here the object of Jacob's blessing. *We regard the verse therefore as a prediction of the Messiah ben Joseph.*

This theory, moreover, agrees exactly with the explanation already given to verse 10 ; for naturally enough the Messiah ben Joseph would take up his rulership, not at Jerusalem in the Southern Kingdom, but at Shiloh in Ephraim. He is the 'one' who will 'come to Shiloh'.

II.

It is necessary here to think of the history of the city of Shiloh as recorded in the Old Testament. It was probably an ancient Canaanitish sanctuary before Israel's entrance into Palestine, since at the end of the conquest the united tribes met there in order that Joshua might make the final partition of the land.¹ It thus became the first central sanctuary of the whole nation, and so apparently it remained throughout the period of the Judges² and the early years of the monarchy, until David's capture of Jerusalem, and the subsequent building of the Temple there by Solomon.

Before Jeremiah's day, however, Shiloh had been destroyed,³ but by whom is not ascertained, though probably by the Philistines ; but it was never entirely abandoned by its inhabitants. There would seem to have been some difference of opinion between the North and South as to the precedence in sanctity between Shiloh and Jerusalem, if we may judge from Psalm lxxviii, 58-61, 67, 68. No doubt the Northern Israelite clung to the ancient tradition which made Shiloh the first sanctuary of the nation : and in days when the armies of Babylon had made Jerusalem a desolation, and laid its Temple in ruins, while Shiloh yet kept its people, there must have been some among them who hoped that it was Yahweh's purpose to restore the ancient glories of the shrine, and to set up once more His tabernacle there.

If then the writer of the prediction that 'one' should come to Shiloh inserted this prophecy into the blessing upon Judah, we should judge that he lived and wrote at the time of the Exile, and that he was a writer of northern blood who favoured the expectation of a Messiah ben Joseph. He had seen the downfall of the Davidic monarchy, and had witnessed the uprooting of Jewry from the Southern Kingdom. He recalled the unity of Israel, and the obedience of the tribes to Joshua while Shiloh was the centre of national life. Why then, he may well have thought, should not the apparent abrogation of the Davidic covenant and the downfall of the Judæan capital signify the rising again of Shiloh under the Messiah of expectation, and the renewal of tribal unity in the new obedience to him ?

¹ Joshua xviii : xxi.

² Judges xxi 19 : 1 Sam. i.

³ Jer. vii 12, 14 : xxvi 6, 9.

The date of the two interpolations into the blessings upon Judah and Joseph—interpolations which are mutually explanatory—can hardly be earlier than the Exile, since some time must have elapsed since Messianic prediction began to develop under the great prophets. These teachers had unquestionably associated the Messiah with the throne of David in Jerusalem; but here is one who departs from the Davidic expectation altogether, and chooses Shiloh instead of Jerusalem for his Messiah's holy city.

I have suggested that this man was a northern Israelite: the fullness and the high enthusiasm of the blessing upon Joseph appear to warrant this suggestion, for the terms in which he is addressed in the passage following the interpolation set him far above Judah. Moreover, the blessing given to the tribes by Moses in Deut. xxxiii is recognized as the work of a northern writer; so that both kingdoms had their representative poems. It may be added that he had some warrant in expressing his conviction that the Messiah should be of Josephite stock in the promises made by the prophet Ahijah to Jeroboam,¹ which strongly resemble those made to David.

III.

On the supposition that the Messiah indicated in the Blessing of Jacob is the Messiah ben Joseph, we ought to consider (i) the story of Joseph, and (ii) the blessing given to him by Jacob, as containing possible suggestions for the work of the patriarch's greatest descendant. In the story he is gentle, refined, peaceable, wise, and righteous, and wins his way to overlordship through imprisonment and endurance of undeserved suffering. In the blessing he is a warrior contending against many foes, and wins his way to victory through his warlike qualities which are bestowed upon him by Yahweh. It was inevitable therefore that those who held to the hope of a Messiah ben Joseph should attribute to him one or other of these characteristics. By some he would be regarded as a ruler attaining to sovereignty only after endurance of undeserved woe; by others as a great warrior victorious at last over his own and Israel's enemies. It was left to the late Jewish rabbis apparently to combine both ideas in their presentation of the theme, for in the post-Christian form of the hope the Messiah ben Joseph is both warrior and sufferer.

Let us assume that the thought of Joseph as the gentle sufferer of undeserved pain was likely to make the stronger appeal to most people at the Exile—a not unwarranted assumption since the problem of undeserved suffering was greatly in mind during and after this period,

¹ 1 Kings xi 38.

as is shown by the large space it occupies in Jewish literature, exilic and post-exilic in date. We can then account for and explain a remarkable passage which is found in the *Testament of Benjamin*, a work of the latter part of the second, or the beginning of the first century B. C., the last of the *Testaments of the XII Patriarchs*.

It should be remarked that the *Testaments* were suggested by, and modelled upon, the Blessing of Jacob in Genesis xlix, for they purport to give, as the Blessing does, the last words spoken by each of the twelve patriarchs to his sons. We need not dwell longer upon the contents of the work than to notice that it teaches the hope of a Messiah from the house of Levi (and Judah—by a later interpolator), that it was originally a collection of Jewish sermons upon the vices and virtues of the patriarchs, and that manifold interpolations and additions prove it to have been a popular work among both Jews and Christians.

The *Testament of Benjamin* contains one passage which arrests attention:—

‘In thee shall be fulfilled the prophecy of heaven which says that the blameless one shall be defiled for lawless men, the sinless one shall die for ungodly men.’

Benjamin is telling his sons the story of Joseph’s sufferings, and praises him greatly for his righteousness, bidding them follow Joseph’s example in forgiving wrongs done to them. Benjamin states that Joseph supplicated his father Jacob to grant forgiveness to the eleven brethren, that Jacob did so at Joseph’s intercession, and then added the words quoted above.

Now there are but two predictions in the Old Testament which can be described as ‘the prophecy of heaven which says that the blameless one shall be defiled for lawless men, the sinless one shall die for ungodly men’. The first of these is the four Songs of the Suffering Servant, and the second Zechariah xii 9 ff. Consequently this Jewish writing associates a descendant of Joseph with one, or both, of these passages, exactly as did the writings of the third-century Jewish rabbis. There is nothing in the quotation from *T. Benjamin*, however, to show that the writer looked upon this suffering and dying sinless Josephite as the Messiah: on the contrary, the *Testaments* as a whole teach the expectation of a Messiah ben Levi as we have seen. But that the quotation was eagerly seized upon by Christians as a Messianic prediction is unquestionable, since several MSS show Christian interpolations.¹

But if the writer of *T. Benjamin* did not teach that his Josephite should

¹ See Charles *Apoc. ana Pseudepigr.* ii p. 356.

be the Messiah, how did he come to make him 'sinless'? I would suggest that he did so because there was a tradition already existing in some circles that the Songs and the Zechariah prophecy indicated an individual, that this individual was to be the Messiah ben Joseph, and that the writer of the *Testament* modified this tradition slightly: because of his belief in a Messiah ben Levi, he could not accept the hope of a Messiah ben Joseph, but he accepted as much of it as he could, viz. that the Suffering Servant should be a 'sinless' Josephite who should die on Israel's behalf.

Upon this theory therefore the Servant Songs and the Zechariah prophecy were interpreted in some pre-Christian Jewish circles, of the Suffering Messiah ben Joseph, i. e. they were given an individual and personal Messianic significance. Does this mean that the author of the Servant Songs held the hope of a Messiah ben Joseph, and that his work was the expression of this hope? There exists the possibility that it was so, but no more than the possibility—the evidence is inconclusive: but if he held this hope, then the interpolations in Genesis xlix and the Servant Songs came from men of similar sympathies, probably too of like tribal descent. Possibly the Northern contribution to the Old Testament has not been valued at its proper worth.

I have suggested that the interpolations in Genesis xlix were exilic in date. In the welter of ideas which followed upon the exile, such a northern contribution to the Messianic expectation was not improbable. This would make the Servant Songs still later in date: I am inclined to place them soon after Malachi.¹ The writer of *T. Benjamin*, while conceding that these Songs foretold the coming of a sinless sufferer from Joseph, refused the Messiahship to him, but by this very refusal he appears to bear witness to the Messianic interpretation of the Songs in some circles.

IV.

It is interesting to recall in this connexion the saying of Caiaphas, as reported by the fourth Evangelist, when addressing the Sanhedrim preparatory to the trial of Jesus: 'Ye know nothing at all, nor do ye take account that it is expedient that one man die for the people that the whole nation perish not'. The high priest was evidently alluding to a piece of knowledge which the Council should have had in mind, but of which they were ignorant—some tradition or writing: his words would be an adequate summary of the passage in *T. Benjamin*, or of the tradition underlying it, or to which it gave rise.

¹ The arguments for this theory are too long to be set out in full here: they involve Malachi's belief concerning the need of a pure priesthood to offer pure offerings, and his hope of a missionary prophet, an Elijah, to stir the nation.

It would appear, therefore, that Caiaphas knew something of that teaching which the Servant Songs and *T. Benjamin* gave, viz. that a Sufferer must come to die for 'the preserved of Israel'. We have seen that this doctrine probably centred in the expected Messiah ben Joseph on account of the undeserved sufferings of the patriarch Joseph, whose sufferings and glory his descendant would ideally repeat in his own experience: but seemingly there were very few who accepted this form of the Messianic Hope. If the writer of the Songs was one of the few, his acceptance gave us 'the prophecy of heaven'; but he nowhere indicates such acceptance. He may have been influenced by the idea of suffering in this form of the Hope, but he was content to follow the example of the greatest among his predecessors who refrained from speaking of the tribe in which the Messianic Angel of their expectation would be born: one of them indeed definitely expressed his ignorance when he said, 'The zeal of Yahweh of hosts shall perform this'.¹ We are reminded of a saying of the Jews of a later day, 'When the Messiah cometh no one knoweth whence he is.'²

Yet all the Messianic prophets believed that the Angel of Yahweh would be veritably, though mysteriously, born in a real incarnation, and possess a real humanity: but how this would be they knew not. Some—the lesser among them—sought to know his tribal descent, and spoke of his coming now from Judah, again from Joseph, and yet again from Levi: but to the greatest prophets the manner of his assumption of humanity was a mystery; the overwhelmingly important thing for people to realize was, in their estimation, that he would be Deity made manifest to save Israel.

The Septuagint paraphrase of Psalm xl 6-7 reads, 'Sacrifice and meat-offering Thou wouldest not, *but a body didst Thou prepare for me*', in evident allusion to the fact that, at the time when the Septuagint translators wrote, the human origin of the Messiah to come was looked upon as a matter unknown to the prophets, and therefore to their readers. Similarly Jesus made little of his Davidic descent when He questioned the Pharisees, 'What think ye of the Messiah: whose son is He?' On their replying, 'The son of David', He immediately asked, 'Why then doth David in spirit call him Lord? If David calleth him Lord, how is he his son?'³ The Pharisees looked for a Messiah of Davidic descent: this indeed was to them a necessary condition of Messiahship: but to Jesus the Messianic condition lay not in this at all, but in the fact that the Messiah was 'Lord'. It would seem as if He brushed aside the idea of the Davidic origin of the Messiah on the human side as being of very slight significance beside the fact that he was to be God in self-manifestation. The

¹ Isa. ix 7.

² John vii 27.

³ Matt. xxii 41-45, and parallels.

refusal to dwell upon the origin of the humanity of the Messiah is exactly the same as that which we find in the Songs of the Suffering Servant which stress his Deity under the title 'the Arm of Yahweh' in the fourth Song, though this Song speaks of his humanity as having 'no form, nor comeliness, nor beauty that we should desire him'. The author makes no mention of his descent from Joseph or any other tribe: he was concerned for the fact that his Messiah would be the Angel of Yahweh. Nevertheless it seems that the expectation of the Messiah ben Joseph, and particularly the idea of suffering already associated with this Messiah, strongly influenced the conception of the Servant in the first three Songs; for the Servant here is a copy, but a transcendental copy, of Joseph the righteous sufferer who saved both his brethren and the Egyptians from death when, through suffering, he had attained great glory.

The same is true of the companion picture of the Suffering Servant drawn in Zech. xii 9 ff. As the interpretation of this prophecy has been much disputed, we must consider it in greater detail, especially as it was quoted as a prediction of the passion of Jesus by the writer of the Fourth Gospel, and was claimed by the Jewish rabbis of the third century A. D. as a prediction of the Suffering Messiah ben Joseph.

'It shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplication; and they shall look unto him whom they have pierced: and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one in bitterness for his first-born. In that day shall there be a great mourning in Jerusalem, as the mourning of Hadad-Rimmon in the valley of Megiddon.'

The prophet then enumerates the mourners—the house of David, the house of Nathan, the house of Levi, the Shimeites, and every family in the city, men and women apart. These 'houses' are noteworthy, for they symbolize the royal family (David), the prophets (Nathan), the priesthood (Levi), and the Temple singers (Shimei),¹ i. e. all the officials of the nation's government and religion. The Text suggests that they, as well as the whole people, are responsible for the death of the one who has been pierced, that his murder has been a great outrage, and that the national penitence will come from the pouring out by Yahweh of the Spirit of grace and supplication which will bring them to ask pardon for their sin.

But even so, the lamentation which goes up from the guilty nation would be excessive if the pierced one were a mere man, even though he were a king evilly done to death, for it is as the lament for

¹ 1 Chron. vi 29-39.

a dead god—'as the mourning of Hadad-Rimmon in the valley of Megiddon'.

That the editors of the Hebrew text recognized that the pierced one bore the characteristics of Deity is made clear by their reading, 'They shall look unto Me (Yahweh) Whom they have pierced', which the Septuagint rightly corrects to 'him'. But if the slain one be the Messianic Angel, i. e. Yahweh in self-manifestation, the two readings are mutually interpretative, though the Septuagint is to be preferred.

Again, that the Messianic Angel of Yahweh is indicated as the Sufferer here is evident from a detailed consideration of the phrase 'the mourning of Hadad-Rimmon'. This deity was a West-Semitic god known by the two names Adad (*Heb.* Hadad) and Ramman¹: he was originally a solar god, but when introduced into the Babylonian pantheon he became the god of thunder and storm, though in a late Babylonian cylinder he is identified with Marduk.² In Palestine, where he was evidently well known, he appears to have assimilated some of the characteristics of Tammuz, just as Marduk had done in Babylon,³ and was honoured with Tammuz-rites as described in the prophecy.

We infer therefore that the universal lament for the 'pierced' one was to be a lament for the Messianic Angel, i. e. for Yahweh in self-manifestation, as the Hebrew text bears witness.⁴ His death brings new life to his people in the coming age whose glories the prophet next describes; for upon his death there follows penitence true and deep, and the penitent nation having turned to righteousness obtains the blessings which Yahweh had promised to Abraham and his seed. Further, though this is not stated in the Zechariah prophecy, I suggest that the slain Messiah—as in the Servant Songs—is to be thought of as rising from the dead to receive his kingdom; for Israel's foes are subdued by Yahweh, Who manifests Himself in a theophany upon

¹ A. J. Clay *The Empire of the Amorites* pp. 163 ff.

² A. W. Rogers *Cuneiform Parallels to the Old Testament* p. 193.

³ Langdon *Epic of Creation* pp. 34 ff.

⁴ The Septuagint paraphrases the Hebrew text: 'as the mourning of a pomegranate grove in a field, when it is being plucked'. The pomegranate was evidently sacred to this deity whose rites were celebrated at the gathering of the fruit, just as the rites of Tammuz were kept at the corn-harvest. The pomegranate was also sacred to Attis whose death was likewise lamented with Tammuz-wailings. See J. G. Frazer *Adonis, Athis and Osiris* i 263, 269, 280. Frazer's work, *The Dying God* pp. 112 ff., on the tenure of the kingship in Babylon, should be consulted. The 'pierced one' in the Hebrew prophecy is evidently the incarnate Angel of Yahweh whose coming in the Messianic role had been predicted from the time of Isaiah; and that the Angel of Yahweh was not a created angel, but Yahweh Himself in manifestation, the Septuagint of Isaiah, lxiii 9, makes clear, where for the Hebrew, 'The Angel of His Presence saved them', the Greek reads: οὐ πρέσβυς οὐδὲ ἄγγελος, ἀλλ' αὐτὸς ἔσωσεν αὐτούς.

the Mount of Olives, and his people dwell in undisturbed possession of the kingdom of peace.

The Zechariah prophecy therefore gives us a figure identical with that of the Suffering Servant of the Songs—the figure of an incarnate Divine Person who is slain by the people of Israel, but whose death brings penitence, and so redemption from sin. He symbolizes the Messianic Angel of Yahweh; is indeed that Angel, as is shewn by the imagery in which he is set forth. He resembles Joseph in that his undeserved sufferings bring salvation; but he is a transcendental Joseph, made to be such by the influence of the Messiah ben Joseph theme, as the testimony of the later Jewish rabbis also bears witness, since they interpreted the prediction as referring to this suffering, dying Messiah of ancient tradition.

V.

We must now consider certain of the suggestions which have been put forward for the interpretation of the two difficult passages in Genesis xlix 10, 24. These suggestions are based upon (1) a highly Messianic passage in Ezekiel xxi 25-27, and (2) the Greek and Latin versions of the Pentateuch.

(i) *Ezekiel xxi 25-27*. Yahweh, speaking through His prophet, addresses the people concerning the deadly wounded wicked prince of Judah whose day is come, i. e. Zedekiah:—

Remove the mitre and take off the crown:
This shall be no more the same:
Exalt that which is low, and abase that which is high.
I will overturn, overturn, overturn it:
This also shall be no more,
Until he come whose right it is;
And I will give it him.

The Hebrew text of line 6 in this passage appears to have a connexion, both as regards its grammar,¹ and as regards its meaning, with Genesis xlix 10. Let us assume first that the Genesis interpolation was earlier than Ezekiel's writing: it is extremely unlikely that the prophet read 'Shiloh' as a Messianic title, and far more probable that he rendered the passage 'until he (one) come to Shiloh', since nowhere is 'Shiloh' a personal name. But such a rendering would certainly fail to appeal to him, for Shiloh could never take the place of Jerusalem as the capital of the Messiah's kingdom. In his picture of the future ideal state, Ezekiel makes Jerusalem its centre, giving

¹ Driver *Genesis*, Excursus, pp. 411, 413: 'Shiloh' is made equivalent to a relative clause thus, $\text{שִׁלֹה} = \text{שֶׁלֹה} = \text{אֲשֶׁר-לוֹ}$.

it the new name 'The Lord is there'.¹ Consequently he would have rejected any implication that Shiloh could ever displace Jerusalem.

Moreover, Ezekiel says nothing as to the Messiah's origin; the genealogy is not referred to, nor is his descent from David, or from Joseph, spoken of. He is simply one whose 'right' the Messianic office is, and Yahweh will give it him. Otherwise he is unidentified.

I have assumed that the Genesis interpolation is earlier than Ezekiel, though this is by no means certain. It may be that Ezekiel's phrase is the older, and that the Genesis phrase identifies the one whose right the kingdom is as the Messiah ben Joseph. No doubt the Pentateuch was in process of shaping when Ezekiel was writing; but it had not reached its completed form by any means. I suspect that the interpolations in the Blessing of Jacob were later than Ezekiel's day, and that the interpolator intended to identify the Messiah spoken of by the prophet in such indefinite terms as 'he whose right it is'.

It has been argued that, by denominating 'the prince' of his ideal state as 'David', Ezekiel intended his readers to understand (1) that this prince would be the Messiah, and (2) that he should be of Davidic descent. Neither of these two propositions, however, is self-evident. Ezekiel's Messianic teaching is very difficult to follow, and it is quite uncertain whether 'David' is the prophet's Messiah. Rather this term appears to have a collective significance, and denotes a line of princes, since provision is made for sons and for their endowment with property.² Again, the prophet does not state clearly that the prince is to be of the Davidic family, though possibly this is implied by the title 'David'. There is no doubt, however, from the passage in chapter xxi, that Ezekiel did expect a Messianic king whose the kingdom was by 'right'—a mysterious person unnamed and unidentified—and upon whom Yahweh would bestow it. Is there any figure in his prophecy to whom the kingdom belongs by 'right'?

One stupendous figure, called 'the Glory of Yahweh' (i 26, viii 1 ff, &c.), is seen in vision wearing 'a similitude as the appearance of a man'. To Ezekiel's successors in the apocalyptic school this figure was known as 'one like unto a son of man' (Daniel vii 10), and 'the Son of Man' (1 Enoch); and we have identified him as that mysterious being, 'the Angel of Yahweh'.³ Whether Ezekiel recognized in him the future Messiah we do not know; but his new name for Jerusalem, 'Yahweh is there', would seem to imply that the Angel would manifest Yahweh in the Holy City. Certainly the kingdom was his by 'right'. If to Ezekiel this figure was to be the Messiah we can understand why

¹ xlvi 35.

² xlvi 16-18.

³ *J. T. S.* Oct. 1925.

he made no mention of the Angel's human descent, but merely left that question unanswered.

(ii) We next consider the Septuagint translations of the two Genesis interpolations.

(a) 'Until he come to Shiloh' becomes 'until the things reserved for him come.' The translators make the text apply to Judah: the tribe will continue to hold the kingship until every promised blessing shall be fulfilled. Thus they lay stress upon the Davidic origin of the Messiah, and reject the expectation of a Messiah ben Joseph.

(b) 'From thence is the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel' is paraphrased as, 'From thence is he who strengtheneth Israel'. This paraphrase, as is often the case with the Septuagint renderings, is extremely interesting and important, since it throws considerable light upon the meaning of the Hebrew.

The phrase 'he who strengtheneth Israel' is found in almost these terms in the *Testament of Dan*, where to the Angel of Peace is ascribed this very function of 'strengthening Israel that it fall not into the extremity of evil'. Dr Charles¹ has suggested that this Angel of Peace is the great angel who appears in Daniel x. It is a matter of considerable interest therefore that we should try to trace the genesis of this Angel, especially as the description of him in Daniel is used by the author of Revelation i in application to the ascended Christ, the 'one like unto a son of man'. Thus the writer of Revelation regarded the Danielic Angel as the Messiah.

Now this Angel exercises the function of 'strengthening' in Daniel as well as in Revelation, for he strengthens Daniel, Cyrus, and the Apocalypticist. Again, his title the Angel of Peace suggests that he is the same person as the Peace-bringer of Micah, and the 'Prince of Peace' of Isaiah ix. Again, in Isaiah lxiii 9, it is the 'Angel of the Presence' who saves Israel in its extremity. Thus the Angel of Peace, the Strengthener of Israel, is to be identified with the Messianic Angel, the Angel of Yahweh of whom the prophets had spoken.

Accordingly, by employing the phrase 'the Strengthener of Israel' the Septuagint paraphrase preserves the identity of 'the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel' of the Hebrew text: he is the Messianic Angel who is the self-manifestation of Yahweh. But while preserving his identity, the Septuagint says nothing concerning his human origin: it gives no indication of the tribe in which he will become incarnate, whether Joseph or Judah. Like Ezekiel and his predecessors it leaves that question open, possibly because at the time of translation the matter was much in dispute, possibly also because it preferred silence

¹ *Studies in the Apocalypse* p. 159: Revelation i 225, 226.

where it had no knowledge. But it did teach quite clearly that the Messiah of expectation was to be the Angel Incarnate.

(iii) The Vulgate translates the 'Shiloh' passage by 'Donec veniat qui mittendus est, et ipse erit expectatio gentium', thus departing both from the Hebrew and the Septuagint. The phrase 'qui mittendus est' changes 'Shiloh' into 'Shaluah', keeping the Hebrew consonants but altering the pointing; but the Messianic allusion remains, though the reference to the Messiah ben Joseph's capital city is obliterated.

To summarize the points made, it would seem that the interpolated Hebrew text gives the only direct evidence of the hope of a Messiah ben Joseph in pre-Christian Judaism; and that both passages in the 'Blessing of Jacob' really do this, appears to solve a problem of long standing, viz. the allusion to 'Shiloh'. Indirect evidence for the existence, in some circles, of this form of the Messianic Hope is forthcoming from the Testament of Benjamin, which speaks of a sinless sufferer of Joseph's tribe and associates him with the 'prophecy of heaven', i. e. with the Servant Songs, or with the prophecy in Zechariah xii, two predictions with which post-Christian Judaism likewise asserted his connexion. It may be that these two Messianic predictions were composed under the influence of the belief in a Messiah ben Joseph: if so, they are of Northern Israelite origin, and they teach that the Messianic Angel would become incarnate in the tribe of Ephraim—which may account for the fact that in the Zechariah prediction the lamentation for the 'pierced one' is restricted to Jerusalemites, no mention being made of the Northern tribes. It is improbable that the Josephite expectation was ever held by any large number of Jews, since in itself it was a fluctuation from the more usual Davidic hope, while it would certainly be rejected by official Judaism which looked for a Messiah who should bring compensation for sufferings endured rather than penitence for sins committed: but that the expectation lasted in some small circles is witnessed by its recrudescence in post-Christian Jewish rabbinism.

Finally, the genealogies of Jesus in Matthew and Luke are 'legal' and 'official', since both trace His descent upon the side of Joseph: nothing is said of the descent of Mary of Nazareth, and we know nothing of her kindred except that she was cousin to Elizabeth, wife of Zacharias the priest. May it be that through her the Josephite and the Levitical fluctuations in the Messianic expectation found fulfilment?