THE IDEA OF RETRIBUTION

IN THE

OLD TESTAMENT

A Thesis submitted in Partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Rabbi.

1

Hebrew Union College Cincinnati, Ohio May----1926

JULIAN B. FEIBELMAN .

то

MY MOTHER

Who, because of me has known suffering; and from whom I have learned its value as a means of opening the heart.

TABLE OF CONTENTS.

INTRODUCTION

Chapter I	· P	age 1
a)	Idea of Retribution in the Old Testament	1
b)	Early Society	2
c)	Idea of Retribution	4
a)	God in all forms of Life	5
e)	Idea of Sin	6
f)	Idea of Sin Collective Retribution	9
Chapter I	I	12
	Introduction to the Prophets	12
a)	Judges	17
ъ)	Prophetic Movement & Jahwist Code	18
c)	The Prophets	
	Апов	19
	Новеа	22
	Isaiah	24
	Deuteronomy	26
	Jeremiah	28
	Ezekiel	33
	Priestly Code	37
	Liesofà Cone	0,
Chapter I	II	38
a)	Post-Exilic Period	38
b	Deutero-Isaiah	40
c)	Wisdom Literature	
	The Psalms	44
	Proverbs	49
	Job	51
	Koheleth	58
d)	Daniel	61
e)	Chronicles	63
Chapter I	V	64
30.00	Immortality	64
	Conclusion	66

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Buttenwieser, Moses, The Prophets of Israel; New York. 1914. Buttenwieser, Moses, The Book of Job; New York . 1922 Cheyne, Thos. Kelley, Jewish Religious Life after the Exile. New York, 1898. Commentary on the Bible, Ed. Arthur S. Peake. New York & London. Davidson, Andrew, The Theology of the Old Testament. New York, 1904. Driver, Samuel R. Isaiah, His Life and Times. New York. Anson D.F.Randolph & Ca. Driver, An Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament. Ed. Rev. 1913. New York, 1922. Duff, Archibald, The Theology and Ethics of the Hebrews, New York, 1903 Humbert, Paul, The Old Testament and the Problem of Suffering, Art. in Biblical World, Vol. LII, Nu.2. 1918. Kautsch, The Religion of Israel, Art. in Dictionary of the Bible, Ed. Hastings. New York, 1924. Kuenan, A. The Religion of Israel. Vol. 2, London 1884-85. Kohler, K. Jewish Theology, New York, 1918. Monteflore, Claude G., Hibbert Lectures, London , 1892. Montefiore, Claude G., Retribution: Hebrew and Greek views of Providence and Divine Retribution. JQR. c.8., Vol. 5. Montefiore, Claude G., Doctrine of Divine Retribution in the Old Testament. JQR. o.s. Vol. 3. Schechter, Solomon., The Doctrine of Divine Retribution in Rabbinical Literature. from Studies in Judaism. JPSA, 1996. Smith, Robertson, Religion of the Semites, London, 1888-89. Smith, Robertson, The Prophets of Israel. New York, 1882.

Abbreviations.

Buttenwieser, Pro. Isr. Buttenwieser, Book Job. Cheyne, Jew.Rel.Life.

Davidson, Theo. O.T. Driver, Isai. Duff, Theo. and Ethics.

Bib. Wor. Suff.

Kautsch, Rel. Kautzsch,

Kohler, Theo.

***Montefiore, Hibbert.

Montefiore, JOR. Vol. 3

Montefiore, JQR.Vol.5

Robt. Smith. Rel.Semites,

Robt.Smith, Pro.Isr.

The Prophets of Israel.

The Book of Job.

Jewish Religions Life After the Exile.

The Theology of the Old Testament

Isaiah, His life and times.

The Theology and Ethics of the Old Testament.

Humbert, Paul. Art. In Biblical World: The O.T. and Problem Suffering

Religion of Israel, Dictionary of the Bible.

Jewish Theology.

Hibbert Lectures.

Doctribe of Divine Retribution in the Old Testament.

Retribution, Hebrew and Greek views of Providence and Div. Retribution.

The Religion of the Semites.

The Prophets of Israel.

ERRATUM

*** Montefiore has been spelled thruout 'Montifiore'. Attention is called thereto for correction.

PREFACE

When treating a subject such as Retribution, and specifying its limits within the bounds of the Old Testament, one meets with almost obvious difficulties. This subject might be treated in a thoroly scientific manner, or developed chronologically, or presented with a tinge of theological bias. The first of these is entirely too much to claim, since the writer can assume no such ability. He has, after a fashion, sought to incorporate the second method. Yet, in doing so, obstacles were apparent as to the definite position to be assigned certain Books, or divisions, or intermediary codes. He can only claim to have tried to present these to the best of his powers. Particularly in the Division of the Prophets was this fraught with doubt. But the Codes are indluded herein for the simple reason that it will be recognized that these two parts of the Bible are almost directly interwaved. The Jahwist Code, we are told, was a development of a prhphetic school, even before Amos; Deuteronomy was influenced by prophetic teaching, yet fell short of its ideal, as gathered from the attack of Jeremiah. No other place was found quite as suitable for Daniel and Chronicles as near the end, yet it must, perforce, be gathered with the books of Wisdom Literature. Immortality should perhaps follow Daniel directly, but because of its very nature was placed immediately before the Conclusion. It will be seen, then, that a Scholarly and Scientific presentation is the least claim of the writer.

The problem is quite alive today. It is shot thru with emotional as well as human interest. It touches man. This side has, as well, been treated. It can only be hoped, therefore, that the problem in at least some of its broader aspects, and more human appeal, has been treated in a manner commensurate with these modest requirements. CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

THE IDEA OF RETRIBUTION IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

Man has never been a complete creature. Endowed with reason and discernment, he has, neverthpless, been far from an independent mortal. Raised higher than the beasts by his mental power, and ability to provide sustemance and survive hardship, he is yet far lower than the angels. Like the heel of Achilles he is sadly, tho perhaps fortunately, vulnerable in at least one spot. He is unable to solve the higher mysteries of life, and peer into the eternal enigmas of the very universe in which he lives. His mind is alive to all the questions that perplex. his heart is attuned to constant yearning, all his acumen in concentrated on running the gauntlet of his days. But he is doomed, even at the apex, and goal, to arrive face to face with a stone wall. All his questioning and yearning must forever go unanswered and unexplained. And he must devote his days, if he be wise, to getting him a heart of widdom and living as best he can, for beyond that he can only seek to discover; cogitate on all the manifold meanings; speculate on mystery deeper than darkness and sleep. He shall never 'mow. Before this wall of the unknown the wisest are as if without knowledge, and men of understanding as the they had never been.

Yet, men's souls strivings are never to be quenched with beautiful words taken from the Psalmist's sweet reflections. They are never beffled by the impossibility of their goal, and they give themselves over unto the ceaseless search. Early in their thinking days they felt that life was not all on the mere surface. These were some things which the mind could never fathom, but these were things which the heart and soul might divine. And rising with fervent hope to this level they peopled their empty spaces with things of beauty which inspired and over-awed. It was perhaps thru this sheer necessity that God was first revealed to the heart of man. It was thru this means that unsolvable and baffling mysteries were to be at least partially cleared up. It was thru this great discovery that man might fill out his nature to the widest breadth, and feel in his heart that he should live and not die.

There is little wonder then that certain fundamental problems which befall man should cause consternation and dismay, and challenge the deepest power of man as a resourse of explanation. So he looked into his life. He got along perhaps well in many ways, yet certain things befell which were beyond his hen. If he loved, he did not always understand why his love should not be requited by utter bliss. He perhaps begrudged the parting that death inevitably imposed. If he sought to live an unright life, and propitiated the gods, surely he was bewildered that prosperity did not follow in the wake of his worship. Perhaps ill health reduces fervor, disappointment diminished ardor. A thousand things might have occured and prevailed which lead him to look into the fundamental "why" of life and living. His answers were perhaps no more satisfactory than the forced querries which challenged his days, yet he had to allay, to some degree, the doubt that gnawed, and the craving that constantly beckoned. In early society these ffotts to understand must have been poignant and fraught even with suffering. In its social setting, to some degree, we can construct this primitive realm in which men lived.

EARLY SOCIETY

Man became a member of a certain sphere and position in early society by virtue of his birth and family. Likwwise his relation to the gods were also automatically established. (Robt.Smith,Rel. Semites, 29-30). He was scarcely an individual at all, but one of the radii

2.

which made up the wider and all-inclusive arc of the circle of people. His relation to certain gods was as fixed as his relation to his fellowman. Religion and life were one, and there were no divisions as such in them. His every act was in correspondence to some relation with his gods, and to his fellow-man, for "the social body was not made up of men only, but gods and men."

The chief concern of religion in these early times was not for the salvation of souls, but for the good and preservation of society. The community and the tribe and its welfare were all important, and in this the power of the gods were inextricably bound. Men, without choice, even knowledge, were of this group, and this was society.

Political connection, social relationship, religion, all were one. We find even in David's time a typical case which might illustrate. When he was driven out from his connection with the heritage of Jahweh, he represents Saul as saying to him "Go, serve other gods." (I Sam. 26,19). He complains in his bitterness of this separation. For to leave his tribe and land, however small a circle that comprised, he left HIS people and his gods. He had to adopt another nationality and citizenship, so to speake His religion, surely, then, had to undergo change, for this was part of his political affiliation. (Robt.Smith,Rel.Semites, 35-36)

THE IDEA OF RETRIBUTION

One of the perturbing elements of early times was that bound up with the problem of suffering and punishment. The explanation of these enigmas was almost as troublesome as the idea of life itself. There was always this barrier of the unexplained why. Today, even, we have begged the problem by definitely assigning it to a realm of which our knowledge is purely speculative and conjectural. Such an idea could not occur to ancient man, naturally. His wags no lofty, nor highly mystical, nor ethical relation with the deity. It was purely materialistic. The idea of reward and punishment was limited strictly to earthly life. (Montiflore, JQR, Vol 3, 3). It concerned itself altogether with the long enjoyment of life as a typical reward, and with premature death as a just punishment. In the phrase "Lex Talionis" we find perhaps its crudest form. The conception of justice was expressed in the now familiar proverb "tit for tat" or "measure for measure". This dispensation of judgment and justice applied to God as the supreme Judge. (Montifiore, JQR, Vol 5, 553.) your

"And the blood of lives would God require at the hand of every beast." (Gen. 9,5) "Reuben urged no sin against the child, but because they would not hear, blood was required in atonement" (Gen.42,22). "David pronounced blood upon the head of those who slew the Lord's anointed" (2 Sam. 1,16) Similar examples of retribution for murder abound (2 Sam. 4,11;16,8; 1Kgs. 2,32-). There was no refuge even at the altar for some sins (Ex.21,14) so inexorably did retribution follow. Because of the wrong which Amalek did to Israel in the past Saul was commissioned by Samuel to destroy him and his people, even to the animals, until they were all extinct (I Sam.15,2). These are but some of the usages which this doctrine entailed in the early times. It will be seen that the strictly material side of this dcctrine was stressed. The limited sphere of punishment was confined entirely to this earth and handled in the span of life of the involved parties. (Kautsch, 689). Bloodshed was pitilessly atoned by bloodshed; and sin was punished. (Jud. 1,7; 2Sam 3,29; 12,9-10; 2Kgs 5,27). Leaving aside the perplexing ethics of the doctrine during these times, we note that no theistic religion has ever wholly dispensed with the idea of treating sin in different manner, even the the idea was refined and exalted into spirituality and religion. (Montifiere, JQR, Vol.5, 553). People were living in the present world, with faint shadows of subterranean passages dawning in their mental spheres. (Kohler, Theo. 300). Their problem was one of time and not eternity (Montifiere, JQR.Vol.3,1). The doctrine did not forsee the possibility of ever being transferred into some transcendental state. (Davidson, Theo 0.T. 410).

GOD IN ALL FORMS OF LIFE.

Yet, in this entire system there was the immediacy of God back of every form and happening in life. This was the direct relationship with the Deity thru which the doctrine found its authority, and so called justification. Everything was of God and by God. The dew of heaven and the fat places of the earth, the corn and the wine. (Gen. 27,28; Amos 4,6-11; Zech. 10,1). He gave birth and sterility (Gen. 16,2;30,2;49,25). The Lord was the strength of Israel and none was likened to Him in victory (Ex. 15), as both the songs of Moses and Deborah showed (Jud.5). But this same Arbiter was manifest in defeat (1Kgs. 22,20-23;2Kgs. 3,13). So inextricably bound up with His people was this God that thm foe of one was identical with the other. Enemies of the people were His, and it was not only the principle of retributive justice herein employed but likewise the violence for an insult offered to God (Montifiore,JQR. Vol.3,7). If Israel's foes were more prosperbus it was not that they

were more righteous, for Israel's chastisement had an altogether different meaning. The help of this God in adversity might be relied on only when His people were blameless (Jud.11,23). Their disaster meant that they had turned back from following the Lord (Nu.14,43). And the Lord, therefore, was not with them in trouble. Speedily His wrath came at times as in the cases of Er and Onan, who were wicked in God's sight, and "The Lord slew him" (Gen. 38,7,10) also Davidson, Theo. 0.T. 409). The faith in an inflexible retribution in this life prevailed fully and was seen in this world. There were no complaints against such beliefs, as developed in the later books of Wisdom. The righteous were to be reconpensed now (Prov. 11,31), even more so the ungodly and sinful.(Pa.1)

THE IDEA OF SIN

The distinct category of sin to which the individual might lay himself liable was broad and not always an indication of his voluntary will. The far range of offenses spanned the degrees between man and God, and was practically all inclusive. It had no particular reference to the sonscience of the sinner, and containly involved no moral guilt; it was, so to speak, forensic liability.(Robt Smith. Pro. Isr. 103,4,5). God's presence as a King, commanding His subjects, not failing to **efforce** His decrees, gives prominence to the conception of sin against Himself. This implies the religious offenses, worship of false gods, or even God Himself in a manner not fitting. (1Sam.14,38;Jud.21,24). Man's relation to man took on like prop ortion because God was the judge who must issue decrees concerning such intractions (Jud. 11,27; I Sam 11,25).God is in the role of vindicator, and before Him is the whole range of law.

"The sphere of religion in the present life, and the truths of religion are the truths of an every day experience in which to Hebrew faith Jahweh is a living and personal 1 actor as men are. His agency in Israel is too real to invite to abstract speculation; all interest

6.

turns, not on what Jahweh is in Himself, or what He does beyond the sphere of the present national life, but on His present doings in the midst of His people, and the personal character and dispositions which these doings reveal." (Robt.Smith, Pro. Isr. 64-65)

We see His hand working thru this doctrine in the implacable decrees against the sins of Adam and Eve, (Gen. 3); in the flood story, (6); where Noah was saved thru his righteousness (7); in the decree against the men of Sodom (18); in the immorality of Er and Onan (38); where Abimelek is slain because of his crimes (Jud 9,56); and where Absalom's death is looked upon as just (@25am. 18). Similar cases are in Ex. 32,34; 1 Kgs. 20,42; 21; 2 Kgs. 5,27; 9; 17,25.

A man's identification with individuals or family, even in the future, or with race, might lead to strange consequences. This was one method of providing an explanation for an otherwise inexplicable doubt. The punishment might be relegated to coming progeny. Or suffering, as a converse might be because of ancestors. In this manner, the fact of suffering was none the less alleviated, but the explanation assuaged the mind, and salved the doubt. It was natural to visit both vice and virtue on children to come. And it was an added boon to look upon goodness being carried much further than eval or sine Indeed, it promulgated itself into the thousandth generation, whereas the effect of Bin spent itself in the fourth. (Ex. 34,7; Deut. 5,9)& Mentifiore JQR. Vol 3, 4). It was even a sign of God's mercy to allow the sin to fall on the innocent son, rather than the sinner. (Gen. 12, 17; 20, 18; Ex. 20, 5; 12, 9; Lev. 20,5; Josh.7,11+12;22,17-20;1Sam. 3,13; 1Kgs.21,29; 11,12;2Sam,21,1; and Montifiore, JQR, Vol. 3,4.) Because Ahab humbled himself before God, evil was to come for his sin in his son's day, not during his life. As late as the exile this idea predominated so forcibly that the people thot they were suffering for the sins of their fathers, and that no escape was possible, and this wrath would continue until the nation as a

whole would be consumed. (Montifiore JQR, Vol. 3,4.)

Often in the case of the suffering the victim had no knowledge of committing a sin. (Robt. Stath, Pro. Isr. 102.) Without any conceivable intention of infracting the law a man might thru his deeds run fowl of the inexorable doctrine, (Gen. 20;26; 2 Sam. 5, 32, 34;16, 11, 12; 20, 10; Jud. 9, 5; 1Sam 22, 13.) as in the case of Jonathan, tasting the honey, (I Sam. 14, 43) Sam. 6, 7. Information Both the innocent and the guilty died in battle. (2 Sam. 11, 25)

Sin is likewise caused, at times, thru the direct intervention of God, for which He punished the sinner, Yet this justice must not be questioned. (2Chron. 25,20). In the case of the census taking two vastly different interpretations are reported, the one in 2 Sam. 24,1, where God moves David to take the numbering, and in 1 Chron. 21,1, where Satan is the agent. Some were lead on to their destruction as in the case **M** Pharaoh, whose heart was hardened by God; the sons of Eli, whom God would destroy; and those whose hearts Isaiah was urged to fatten, being already wicked and sunk in iniquity. (Ex.4,21; 7,3; 9,12; 1Sam. 2,25; Isai. 6,10.) And Sihon who refused to allow His people to pass thru. (Montifiore, JQR.Vol.5,537; Deut. 2,30.)

These sins which involved ritualistic violations were not pardoned nor to be explated. No sacrifice could allay the wrath against Ell's sons, the census taking, Aaron's sons, and Korah (Nu. 16.) The ark was one of the principle sources of violation, Uzzah was punished by death for touching it, (2Sam. 6,7;1 Chron. 13); and the men of Beth-Shemesh merely for looking at it. (1Sam 6.19.) On the other hand the Levites were blessed. Holy things were taboo, except with expressed stipulation and assignment. God was not concerned with the public morality in these times, nor infractions of such a code, but only to punish offenses against Himself. The retribution is an off-shoot of His wrath; and extreme severity is its consequence. (Montifiore JQR. Vol 3, 2-3.)

God is displeased by any form of wickedness, as a matter of course, but He is especially concerned with "violations of the social order, desecration of His sanctuary, or attacks on His covenant." He vents His wrath likewise on those who despoil the poor, and needy. (Kohler, Theo. 108; Ex. 22,23; Nu.17.10: 25,2; Deut. 29,19; 32,21; Isai.9,16) His wrath is a means of moral discipline, even as the injunctions of parents guide by punishment and warning the way of their children. (Khhler, Theo. 107). In all analyses, it is God who determines the right and wrong acts of His children (ISam. 25, 39; 2Sam. 18, 31). He is the supreme Judge between man and man, as offenses involving such relationship were construed as violations of the religious order, and His place as arbiter was undisputed. (Robt. Smith. Pro. Isr. 104). Tho God was inexorable in His judgment, there was likewise an essence of favoritism in His retributive justice. Moral faults, as such, at this time were not regarded as sins, and punishable as were ritual offenses. (Bib.Wor. Suff. 119.)

COLLECTIVE RETRIBUTION

The the conscience of the early religious people was perforce cognizant of the individual suffering of its members, and quite aware that there must have been some discrepancy in a system which allowed the wicked to prosper as they did, and the righteous to suffer as they were seen to suffer, still this early mind was not alarmed nor greatly perturbed by it. It was the lack of individualism that precluded this puzzle. (Montifiore JQR. Vol.3,2.) Consciousness was, in fact, yet in its nascent state. In these early centuries the individual was completely merged in the clan of the community, **All** of whose members were account able jointly. While it is true that there are instances where the individual is blotted out, still the families, rather than its members, are all the same in suffering. It is God who visits the iniquity of the

fathers on the children unto the third and fourth generations. It is God who extends over these several generations, and over an entire community, the punishment deserved by one. The individual was hardly conscious of his own individuality in any sense. (Bib.Wor. Suff.117.) This idea persisted until prophetic times, and the individual being in no wise autonomous was not aware of his prerogative as a man. There was no idea of purpose nor soul culture hehind it .(Bib.Wor. Suff. 117). It was not the habit of this people to look upon religion as we look upon it, nor its relation and influence on life and soulful desires. To us it might seem strange and even cruel, but it was the setting of their mental state to fit properly into the community, and but little into the life of individual beings. God was God of the tribe and people as a whole, and His interest in the component parts of this group was only interest in a member of the group. (Robt. Smith. Relig. of Semites, 259); It was not "the business" of this God, at these times, to supervise the individual by special dispensation of watchful interest. Benefits were expected, to be sure, but these were of a public nature, to help the community as a whole. These found expression in fruitful seasons, greater numbers of flocks and herds, and success in war. And when this came to pass, the individual sunk into obscurity, and if suffering tore his heart, or lacerated his breast, his misery was not a reflection on the deity. Indeed, we may compare it to the hurt of a small child who is said to be unable to feel. It did, however, give rise to the doctrine that the individual was but an evil-doer, justly hateful to the God, and his punishment was highly justifiable. The individual, as in the case of David, (I Sam. 26,19) being banished by Saul, " could share in the service of God, and enjoy the fellowship of faith only by virtue of being a member of the social religious community. The prime object of all celebration and function was the promotion of the commonweal, not of the individual well-being." (Buttenwieser, Pro.

Isr. 321.) The entire principle was determined by the principle of tribal solidarity and collective responsibility as it held in those days. Individuality was effaced, and all members of the group were accountable for the sin committed in its midst, either present or pas. (Buttenwieser, Job. 71; Ex. 34,7; Nu.14,18; 16,21; Josh.7,10-15; 22,20; 2 Sam. 21, 1-9; 24,1-17).

There is a powerful protest against the mode of making the nation suffer because of an individual. David, after the effect of his census taking is seen to cause 70,000 innocent people perish, complained "I have sinned, and have done wickedly; but these sheep, what have they done? Let Thine hand, I pray Thee, be against me, and against my father's house." But his protest avails naught, and shows how firmly rooted is the principle of group solidarity, even in the eyes of the victim. Solidarity of race, however, has driven almost too far for further bearing. (Montifiore JQR. Vol 5,544.) Even the eighth century prophets did not deal with these questions; the problem of the individual had not yet been raised by sufferers. It was collective retribution for collective guilt. An entire nation must repent of its inicuities. (Mont. JQR. Vol 3, 4; Josh.7; 2Sam 21; Sam 14; 2 Sam. 24; 1Kgs. 17,1.) The religious that and imagination, even of the post-exilic period, still remained with the group, or nation. The calamities or adversities were directly interventions of God. Israel was a holy nation, and this relationship involved interference in its course of events. Divine Retribution is one constant process in its development. The individual might be the means of bringing it about, but his punishment is incorpofated in the general suffering, as in David's case of the census. The injured could wait for the judgment of God, meanwhile it was the community to be dealt with.

CHAPTER II THE PROPHETS

THE HE IS

INTRODUCTION TO THE PROPHETS

The period in Israel's history when the great literary prophets emerge on the scene, and occupy the stage thru the important spiritual changes that go to serve their role, is one set in peculiar fashion. At this time everything was a religious problem, the affairs of the state as well as the social order. Things religious assumed their own special position, always tinged with these extra religious considerations. Each change in national life was a specific religious challenge. And at this particular time the history, land, and condition of Israel were to to undergo the most violent upheaval they had known. Just why God allowed these crises to follow fast upon one another's heels was the cause of much excitement and disturbance in the minds of the people and lead to the heightened religious fervor thru cult, ritual, and sacrifice in order to win back or retain the favor of this God. So ardent was the desire of the people to be even over-zealous, that they borrowed new practices from their neighbors in order to supplement what they that was lacking in their own worship. (Robt. Smith, Pro. Isr. 68.) Even this brot no help, and little assurance, and but served to blind their eyes and fatten their hearts to the efforts of the men who truly understood the situation in all its terror. The common judgment seemed to reaffirm the idea that God had forsaken His land and His people. Yet, the one manner in which they might have sought to win back His favor was closed to them, because their ears were closed to the message which He Himself inspired His prophets to speak to the people as a single mode of salvation.

The people desired to maintain fellowship with God at all cost, and understood, in their limited fashion, that if they forfeited this in any way they might expect a day on which His retribution would seek them out. ((Duff. Theo & Ethics. 124) Grim terror awaited those who would be doomed to the underworld, those who did not take care to agree with God, Who controlled that place as well as His own abode. On the contrary, those who loved Him would be blessed with long life and prosperity; He controlled the soil to furnish their needs, giving them barren desert, as well as fertile springs. Their God was, after all, differ. ent from the other gods, and not in a metaphysical but in a practical sense. This wa defined in His attitude to His people, as they went their course thru history. Robertson Smith says the prophets supplied all the commentary to Israel's history, and all that befell Israel was thru the hand of God; that this was not arbitrary nor changeable in char. acter, but fraught with definite purpose and plan, which has Israel for its object, but is positively sovereign to it thruout, giving way to it neither by indulgence of its desires nor pardon for its iniquities, "No other religion can show anything parallel to this." (Robt. Smith, Pro. Isr. 70.71.)

M. 151

Davidson comments that the idea of retribution in this life is just the essence of prophetic teaching. It is balanced by God's mercy and purpose of grace. Nothing could foil this nor restrain it. And thru it His righteousness worked in its definite justice. (Davidson, Theo Q.T. 409).

At this period of the prophets the universal God emerged, and this fact gathered Israel into the broad sweep of international relation. (Kautsch Hel. 681. Amos,2,14; Isai.5,26; 10;19;23; Jer. 1,15; 27.Hab1,12 Its chief result, however, was to stamp Israel's sin in an unmistaken dye, and affix to it surety of retribution. Yet, repentence, or some possible amelioration of its doom was held out, (Kautsch,Rel.675) and even promised, and would have come but for the closed ears of the people. Morality and justice were the things required by these men of

God, not the ritual and cult they gave. (Kautsch Rel. 687; Montifiore Hibbert, 127.) Life was governed by these higher ideals, their sin was due to the misconception of the people. (Jere. 9,24; 6,20; 18,15; Micah 6,6-8.)

With the broadening of the nation's horizon the forces gradually narrowed the people down to strict individualism. A more personal faith was required, one in which the intermédiaries of the ritualistic system were hardly even necessary. Ethics was to take the place of rites, the very axis of sstablished religion was changing, but unfortunately, it was shifting in a menner which was over the heads of the people, beyond their hearts, without the radius of their ears, and too distant for their narrow vision to perceive. God, was not a capricious Being, to be quickly offended, and as rapidly appeased; to punish wilfully, because of want of favoritism; to continue amoral as He had been. Now He was moral in the strictest sense, and just to a point of exorability. As God was becoming moralized and individualized, it was the one means of salvation for His people to apply themselves to this Holy example. (Bib.Wor.Suff. 118)

At the same time, however, Robertson Smith points out that, the prophets were not concerned primarily with the amandment of individual sinners. The nation was their concern. But, as he points out, "They were too practical not to know that the path of national amendment is to get rid of the evil-doers, and put better men in their place." (Pro. Isr. 107.) And can this, after all, be so very removed from individualism?

These prophets are, therefore, directly responsible for attacking the problem of suffering, stating it, and bringing it before the people of Israel. This very idea of Retribution becomes one of the most vital consideration for them, both on the large scale of the nation, and then on the component entities which grow into the national group, the in-

individual. (Bib.Wor. Suff.118.) They knew that the retribution was a ri ghteous measure. Yet the great stumbling block was that this involved the righteous as well as the wicked. But this, at this time, was because all suffering was in the nation's fate, each individual was linked with his people, and their destiny. The intimacy of the relation. ship between God and Israel precluded just such. God was the Spring of Morality, His task was to inspire the elimination of sinfulness. This relationship was indeed a living one. Man could seek God within the domain of his own self, if he would but hearken to the voice emanating from his innermost being.

The prophets could not feel any confidence in the people responding to such a divine opportunity. In spite of conditions they persevered, yet they saw the hopefermess of their task. All that seemed high and magnificent in the state appeared tainted to them, and as a blasphemy to the nº ture of the Deity. Professor Cheyne says : "The idea of eminence, pride and opposition to God, melt into each other in the Old Testament." (Montifiore JQR.Vol 5.530; Isai,2,13-17; Job 40,11,12; Ps. 75,8.)

This change in the religious order is described by Dr. Buttenwieser as being the result of the prophets, thru their conception of God's Divine immanence. His presence in the human was forever determined and established by their words. No longer able to fill the confines of nation and country, but within the breast of individuals, His sway was even larger than their hearts. It meant religious righteousness, and emphasis was laid on God's absolute justice, and man's righteous living. (Buttenwieser, Book Job, 71.) Religious piety was their basis of true faith. Tribal responsibility, mediatorship, and sacrifice must go forever. The consciousness of God because He is a "Present God", the moral obligation and the desire for justice and righteousness because He is

a "Holy God", were to take their places. "This conception of religion makes a new era in the religious development of Israel, for thru it religion became dissociated from the confines of nation and country; it ceased to be a part and parcel of the politico-social order, into which a man was born, and became preeminently the concern of the individual." (Buttenwieser Pro. Isr. 322)

đ

JUDGES

The regularity of Israel's punishment and redemption set forth in Judges so often repeated leads Wellhausen in his "Prolegomena" to say : " The historical factors with which the religious pragmatism here has to do are so uniform that the individual periods in reality need only to be filled up with the number of the years." (Jud. 3p1-11. 12-; 4; 6; 8,33-;10,6; 13,1.) Montifiore likewise comments on this "rhythmic repetition of sin, punishment, contrition and deliverance." (JQR, Vol 3,6.)

The just retribution for a nation's sins is set forth as coming from a moral God, and shows essentially a prophetic influence. However, as put into practice, they were uttered in dogmatic tones, and found their "expression in the collective suffering by this rhythm in four beats." (Bib.Wor. Suff. 110) All the evils, however, emanated from God as retributory measures, and suffering is due to moral as well as ritual motives.

PROPHETIC MOVEMENT

While the books of the Prophets seem to draw a dividing line in many respects between the first parts and balance of the Bible, while it appears that these individuals seem to stand out in new light from all that has gone before, it is nevertheless true that little beside themselves, and the particular things for which they s tood, were in any way strikingly different. The mind of the people was hardly changed. Their course of natural development was normal under the circumstances and conditions which produced it. Their beliefs and ideas had become almost permanently fixed. It is little wonder that deaf ears were turned to the small band of men who helplessly beat their wings against store barriers. The even, or uneven, current of the people flowed on heedlessly to its unmistakable consequences. While thru this current there shot there with swift and incisive blows these potent and lasting streams. Rather than complete assimilation there turned out discord. For these people now gorged with fixed convictions and beliefs, now able to sustain themselves materially; thinking that they could placate their God, and perhaps intimidate Him, had little patience with the adverse strengt of new winds blowing against their already too well set sails. There was little deviation on either side. The current flowed on to its destruction, and the stream within it turned not to left nor right of its purpose.

JAHWIST CODE

The Jahwist Code is a result of the earliest prophets, those before even Amos. It ante-dates Ezekiel considerably, and shows that a sufficient minority of righteous men can obtain the salvation of the wicked. (Bib.Wor. 1199 Gen. 18,17.) An explanation of suffering is contained in early Genesis. (3,16-19.) The first clear note in all the medlyy of development came from Amos, the shepherd of Tekoa. Impelled by a power greater than himself, and moved by an irresistable force, he confronted Israel and beat down upon it with a power theme effect of which is still resounding. The situation he clearly took in. It must have wrung his heart no little to realize the inevitable course which events must take. But it was not within him to color his feelings or his prejudices. One clear path lay ahead. He was guided by a spirit which he could not withstand, even the it would have been an easier course to pursme. But the Lord had spoken, and he could but prophesy.

A new note is sounded in Amos preaching. Heretofore Israel's sh had come from a more or less course of practice. Ritualistic discrepancy seems to stand outs and sacrifice and offering were sufficient to placate the deity, and also to salve the conscience. The new order, tho assumes vastly different proportions. It is no longer so much a matter of fault that the hands commit, and can restore. Now it is a matter of the heart -- the very seat of God's indwelling. It is moral and ethical sin now. The new order is a moral order, and Israel's sins become of such a kind. (Robt. Smith. Pro. Isr. 132.) It was no longer a matter of adhering strictly to the cult and ritual, any deviation of which produced sin and transgression. But now it became, in the eyes of Amos, a sin, to adhere and follow this very course. (Amos 2, 8,8;4,4; 5,5,22;23) Religion became a social organism, (Keunan, Relig. Isr. Vol.1,61.) , and the practice of ethics was to be the mainstay of it. It was too deplorable to look upon the sanctuary and see in it the very seat and center of guilt. To find therein that justice was twisted (Amos 2,6;3g10;5,7; 8,4-6.) and morality perverted. (Amos 2,7 & 8; 6.) The courts could no longer be trusted to administer justly. Man, as a matter of fact, had

AMOS

no refuge anywhere -- and he had not yet come to the point where he might have followed Amos, had he been able to realize that the indwelling of God in his being would have enabled him to stand all else. Still he could not go quite this long way yet. God asked but that justice should be in the land, but this was too much to ask of a people steeped in sin. (Amos 5,24; 5,27; 5,14-15.)

Counted with the rank injustice of conditions, and the utter down fall of, or perhaps one should say, the as yet completely unawakened, moral consciousness, was the era of prosperity in which the nation found itself. " It was the injustice of these conditionsand the undue inflation of the nation at large, because of the successful issue of the wars of Jeroboam II, that fired the soul of Amos to wrath, and to the belief that retribution must follow." (Buttenwieser, Pro.Isr.323.) And so the keynote of the entire preachment is struck when Amos pronounces the inevitable doom.(Amos 4,6,7,9,10,11.)

It is no mere snap judgment nor hasty thotless utterance that is spoken. Behind it all is the impelling force of God which makes him speak, then comes the determined conviction of the punishment, and thru it all the splendid, logical and powerful arrival at the final climax. His roll call of the nations removes forever the boundary and circumscribed position of God. Universalism begins to be a keynote in Israel thru imos. All the nations must face judgment, for all have departed from the beaten track. This roll call of nations is as the slow, soft ominous bounding of stringed instruments which finally leads up to the crashing crescendo of Israel's inclusion. (Amos 1,3; 2,5,6.) Because God has lavished more care on His people, therefore He shall exact more responsibility from them.(Robt. Smith. Pro. Isr. 132.) In the former days it was the doctrine of favoritism that retribution assumed. Now the inclusion of the moral issue abandons this. (Montifiore. JQR.Vol.3,2 God is ruler of heaven and earth; (Amos 5,8; 4,13); Israel is not His

strength and assurance which comes only to him who laves a life of righteousness and is at one with God." (Buttenwieser Pro. Isr. 109.) "To every man is given according to his ways, according to the fruit of his deeds." (Jere. 17,10b) It will be seen from this verse in the Confession that man is absolutely dependent on God, and that his salvation will rest on whether he places this trust in Him or not.

Jeremiah's strength, which enabled him to pursue, without wavering, his stolid and bitter, and compelling course, was derived solely from the reliance he placed on God. Despite his suffering he felt within his heart of hearts this same reliance God placed in him. Together with his impelling faith he likewise derived from this selfsame Fountainhead. his hope, and whatever comfort his saddened life was to know. His reason and his heart prompting were complements of each other. It all came thru the severe lesson of his own drastic life. (Buttenwieser Pro. Isr. 323.) His surety and his mission comes from the implicit consciousness that transcends even the most discourageing moments. He is positive of his innocence, and knows that his suffering is because of the prophetic call which he has sounded within his bosom. His suffering, for truly that is what it is, is because of his sorrow for his people, and his conviction that their ears and hearts are closed, closed beyond even the faintest hope of hearing a sound which comes from God's voice as he speaks it. (Bib.Wor. Suff. 123.)

But just as these people could not hearken because they could not understand, so Jeremiah was forced to affix some reason resulting from this too. He came to the realization that the "divine world economy" must ever remain an hidden page to the eyes of man. And so all that is within the power of man is to sense his nearness and closeness to God, and seek Him by living in such harmony. And this spells prosperity for man, only this. To Jeremiah this was his one comfort and solace, it was the "supreme good" for him, and this alone has sustained

and upheld him thru all the bitterness and revilement of his enemies-his own people. But this he had and "if I have but Thee, I care not about Heaven nor earth." (Ps. 73,23; Buttenwieser, Pro. Isr. 119-120) This assurance led him to hold out hope and assurance that there would be a return despite the impending destruction. So certain was his faith that he even had land deeded to himself to be retrived after the return. (Jere. 23,3,4; 24,7,10; 30,2,18; 31,31-84; 32,37.) Yet his main assurance was his trust in God, and his consciousness of God's trust in him, indwelling within his own heart.

EZEKIEL

Ezekiel lived during and thru one of the most serious and epochal periods of Israel's history. He came at a time when, so to speak, Israel was bridging the vast gap which lead from homeland into exile. Following in the fo**tstops** of the earlier prophets he likewise foresaw the oncoming seige and destruction of his people. (Ezek. 4,1-,16,17; 5,14; 9,4; 12,3.) Yet his work is not so much consumed with this, because of the nearness of that all absorbing event in their history. As a matter of fact this prophet is given more to reestablishment and rebuilding, than prospective and threatening preachment of doom. This latter he thotdly understood and accepted. In fact, there was no recourse, such an event was before his very eyes. He did not require prediction and conjecture when the very armies were before him. His recourse was to announce that it was the judgment of God, and that thru such judgment was God vindicated. (Ezek. 14,3; 16,48,51,59; 17,12)

And so it shall not be with the problems of the doom, nor the political aspects of Israel that we shall treat this prophet, but instead his conceptions of the problem of retribution and punishment and suffering. In short, his treatment of the individual and the forces that play in his life.

With him we find the clearest pronouncement of an individualistic conception. While Jeremiah had already formulated it he did not go quite the length that Ezekiel did. With pitiless logic he expounded this in dividual theo ry. The sum of it all is, the son never suffers owing to his father's faults, nor the latter owing to his son's, but each from his own sins. (Bib. Wor. Suff. 120.) His doctrine in its sharp and precise formulation is little better than mechanical, yet it does not preclude development which later emerged into a more noble doctrine. At first, however, it is too hard and fast. But this fit in well with the events current at the time. He predicted the punishment, and promised it. But this was for the guilty alone. The virtuously acting shall live.(Montifiore JQR. Vol. 3, 5.) The individual came to the fore as a result of the fall and exile. (Montifiore, Hibbert, 252; JQR, Vol. 3, 4; JQR. Vol. 5,545; Kautsch, Rel. 702.)

Against the idea of a solution in Genesis 18, Abraham pleading for the righteous of Sodom, and the proverbial righteous men, Noah, Job, and Daniel -- neither of whom could save the entire guilty people, Ezekiel believed that the individual righteousness of these certain exceptional few men mars spared them. This justifies the demands made by God in the name of justice and love, for God takes no delight in exacting death from the sinner -- only that the wicked shall turn from his evil ways and live. (Bib. Wor. Suff. 120; Ezek. 18,23.) This reflects on the moral conviction of Ezekiel if not on his clear insight. And it was no little thing for a character, even with the exceptional qualities which Ezekiel must have possessed, to have dared to issue this doctrine into a world such as he lived in. "Once and for all he refuted the idea of guilt transmission and hereditarysin and punishment" says Kohler "insisting on the doctrine that personal responsibility alone determines Divine retribution." (Ezek.18,20). But here a new element affects Divine Retribution. God's long suffering and mercy do not desire the immediate punishment, the death of the sinner; he should be given time to return to a bettermode of life. (Ezek. 18,23,32. Tohler Theo. 209.) There is no doubt that circumstances bore and nurtured his doctrine. This is probably not different from the ascension and promulgation of all doctrines of belief. The men of the exile were naturally astonished at God's treatment of the innocent; children bearing the punishment for something their forebears did awakened them; in all likelihood, for the first time to what Jeremiah had striven in vain to din into their closed ears. Ezekiel stepped into thes quandary and pushed his results

to a deeper end. God was, after all, just; and He considers the individual, notionly the community--according to the rules of strict justice. And from this came his famous dictum of the sour grapes, condemning the children for the sins of the fathers. This which he refuted by stating in almost dogmatic fierceness : "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." (Bib. Wor. Suff. 120; Ezek. 18,17-20) Ezekiel came to be in one sense the comforter of his people, those who felt they were innovent. On the other hand the exiles were sunk in despair and guilt, and their conscience could allow no solace to derive from such a message. (Montifiore. JQR. Vol 3,4.) But to these he held out the hope of repentence, and even urged it. (Ezek, 18,23;33,11.)

The solution of the problem was fitted equally well to every case, even with mechanical exactness, and did account, as far as it went, for all suffering. This, therefore, came to be the adopted view of suffering in all post-exilic literature. (Bib.Wor. Suff. 130.) To all he held out the constant hope of God, and a God that dwelt within, within the community. (Ezek. 37,27;48,35) With Him they would walk again.(Ezek. 11,19,20; 36,26,27.) And He would restore them. (Ezek. 11,17;34,12; 36,8; 37,25-28; 39,25-.)

61

1.0

15

This view of Ezekiel's, which came at the exile, found its highest developmen't later when it was crystallized into theological dogma and enunciated by the so-called friends of Job. This is to be treated later. At present there is this conviction of Ezekiel's which must be considered. As the individual came into his position of prominence in the question of suffering, it seems but natural that the fuller consideration is bound to yield one more fruit; namely the explanation of suffering per se. It is hardly ingenious to see what was naturally forthcoming, that there must have been some sin to produce this Suffering. In general then, reward and punishment follow directly on the heels of righteous and unrighteous living respectively (Ezek. 18;33,12-20). He goes so far as to say that if punishment is visited upon a guilty community, the righteous will be spared." (Ezek. 14,13-2C; Buttenwieser Book Job, 74.)

As a just punishment this idea brought cruel suffering for personal sins. Exchiel intended to give fullest force to the gravity of sin, and to affix it onto man as a means of awakening him to his individual responsability. Yet. it is surely possible that reasonableness of the part of some of his contemporaries convinced them that there are certain sufferings for which we can be only indirectly responsible, if at all. (Bib. Wor. Suff. 120.) Yet it must have been strange to affix on to the righteous the utter condemnation that this all inclusive doctrine involved. What could be said, according to him, to the suffering of a Jeremiah, and later on, Job, who faced the same questinn, and answered it in a manner totally different from anything Ezekiel could have that of. But from now on this doctrine of no suffering without sin came to be the recognized one from his time. (Bib.Wor. Suff. 121) While this view was generally held, Dr. Buttenwieser referring to the doctrine in his "Book of Job", says, " But altho Ezekiel ascribed the sanction of divine authority to the belief in a rigidly individual retribution, declaring the old view of collective retribution null and void, the new belief did not take root in the minds of the people during the exile." (75) A general view on the inception of such a belief refers to it as being contrary to sound common sense, and actual experience, had the greatest success, and became the leading dogma of Judaism from the exile on. (Bib.Wor. Suff. 120).

Thru the propagation of such doctrines of individuality and suffering from sin, it is unquestionably easy to see the effect that Ezekie: had both on his time, and the development of later Jewish Theology. Today, many adhere to this very idea in an attempt to explain both suffering as well as blessing. That he was a vital step in the development of the doctrine of retribution is hardly nemessary to state.

PRIESTLY CODE

When the Law of Holiness and the Priestly Code <u>came into being</u> it was then that the individualistic point of view, so greatly stressed by Ezekiel came into prominence. (Buttenwieser Book Job 74-75) The lawgiver addressed himself, therefore, to the individual. Higher motives began to be the appeal to men, and no longer were the so-called "outward blessings" held out. Ezekiel as well as Leviticus 26 revealed this. The idea of holiness was to be gotten in mind, and the legislators of this Code were not concerned with making any concessions to the people, or appealing to their lower instincts, such as seeking the things which seemed pleasant in their eyes. (Montifiore JQR,Vol 3.10)

In the Priestly elements of the Pentateuch and Chronicles we have the remnants of the old notion of violent and fatal retribution, following upon the violation of God's holiness. Whoever shall bear iniquity, even Aaron and his sons, shall die. (Montifiore JQR, Vol3,9; Ex.28,35,4; Lev. 10,2-7; 16,2;Nu.1,53;4,26;8,19916,46; 17,3; 1 Chron.15,13; 11Chron. 26,11) Guilt brought material punishment direct to the individual, even as meritorious conduct was rewarded with blessing: Be Holy, for I am Holy. (Montifiore, JQR.Vol 3, 10. Lev. 19; 26,12;Ex. 29,45; Ezek.37,27; 48,35.) God was to avenge all violations of holiness, Aaron's sons were not an exception, nor the Levites who bore the Ark, and just as Uzziah was stricken. (Lev. 10; 1 Chron 15,13; 2 Chron 26,19; Ex. 28,35,43; Lev. 16,2; Nu. 4,19,20; 8,19; 16,46;17,13) Chronicles likewise shows this relation between sin and retribution, (Montifiore Hibbert 446; 2 Kgs. 23,25; 2 Chron 35,21,22; 1 Chron.5,20,25,26;10,13,14; 2 Chron. 10,15; 12), in Josiah's case, there was none before nor after like him.

Outside the Priestly elements of the Pentateuch, the doctine of Measure for Measure is abandoned. It does not deal after our sin, nor reward for iniquities, says Montifiore. (JQR.Vol3,9.)

CHAPTER III

POST-EXILIC Period and Wisdom Literature

POST EXILIC PERIOD

A word need be said of the course of the doctrine in the Post-Exilic period. Conditions had changed greatly, the very foundations of life and all its aspect of living had been shaken by the violent quake. Yet, thruout it all, it is strange to see how tenaciously the people held to their traditional belief in older doctrines. Despite the suffering they were undergoing, they firmly that their suffering was but the actual result of sin, the very retribution which they merited. Their iniquities and guilt had piled up beyond their heads. (Ezra 9,6.) Their fathers had been the ones who dealt proudly, now these children could not hold up their heads. (Nehe.9,16:Hag.2.17; Zech. 1,4 f; 8,14.) How could this belief have changed, they had seen no amelioration of their suffering, none of the prophecies had been fulfilled. They bewailed their fate, and implored God to lessen the burdens they that their ancestors had piled upon their well rounded shoulders: "Remember not against us the iniquities of our forefathers; Let Thy compassion speedily come to meet us: For we are brought very low." (Ps. 79,8; Nehe,1,6 1; 9,16m Ezra,9,7; Zech.7.)

Because of following other nations, and adopting strange cults were these sufferings brot upon the people. It is these nations which cause Judah's fall. (Zeph.1,4,6,9,15.) And there is no escape for the people as a result. (Zeph. 2,3). Habakkuk thot Israel more righteous than other nations, and asked how God, whose eyes were too pure to behold evil, who could not look upon mischief, could see the wicked swallow up the righteous? (Hab. 1,13) The Chaldeans must have been but the instrument of God to be used to correct Israel, and make it see the evil of its ways, in order to turn from them and live. (Montifiore JOR.Vol3,7.) Why should Israel deserve such treatment as she was now receiving? (Isai. 47,6) It was truly the yoke^{of}the gentiles they were bearing, the cruelty these nations imposed on Israel; they that they were hurting God by doing so. Yet, God would see the tears of His children and avenge them. (Ps. 56,9;18,48; 33,18,19;5,10;7,16)

God will not only avenge His people, but He will shatter the very heaven and earth to vindicate them. (Hag. 2,7,21.) His people shall be reestablished, and avenged, and finally vindicated. The they suffer now, and seek for reason as to why their lot should be so hard, they are to be finally vindicated and justified, " For the day of the Lord is near upon all nations." (Obsd.1,15; Joel, 4,1 f; Zeph, 3,8; Micah 4, 11-13.)

DEUTERO-ISAIAH

The advent of Cyrus, and his position as one who had direct hand in shaping Jewish history, is perhaps, responsible for one of the greatest of the prophets. This man, referred to as Deutero-Isaiah for want of a better designation, has been the cause of considerable comment, disputation, and controversy among the exegetes. A variety of impressions are gathered from his writings by these scholars, and the points of interpretation are so diverse that it is as difficult to reconcile them, as it is to set the various views down. It shall therefore be our purpose, not to seek harmonization, but merely, to point out as nearly as possible the correct estimate of this writer and his treatment of our particular subject.

There mare several points which must be determined at the outset, in order that the specific view herein set forth may have its ground work. In the first place, the problem of suffering is treated by this prophet only incidently. "The heart of the problem is left untouched." (Buttenwieser Book Job, 83.) In Job it is a question of suffering primarily, with this, almost alone, the writer grapples, and it is treated strictly from the individualistic point of view, or its result on the human soul. But in Deutero-Isaiah it assumes the phase of efficacy as this accrues to others. While the crux of the problem is treated in chapters 52:13-53:12, this is "only incidently" an answer to the question. Another point is that, contrary to a number of critics, Deutero-Isaiah in his writings speaks of the servant -- the suffering servant -- as Israel. "The suffering of Israel is personified by the servant." (Buttenwieser, Book Job, 83; Driver, Isai. 149, 153.) Many of the critics treat this servant as one suffering vicariously, and that his great worth is his atonement by such suffering for the sins of others. (Driver, Isai. 154) Montifiore shows us the "unique picture" of this suffering servant, suffering which he undergoes -

consciously, for the sins and well-being of others. (JQR. Vol.3.8.) It would, from this as well as other writings similar to this, shed a peculiar light on our entire problem of suffering and retribution to have it treated in the manner of vicarious suffering. That this should absolve Israel from its own sins is hardly possible, since from such a treatment it is more likely the sufferer must be considered as an individual. This can hardly be posited, however. The writer of these verses does not think that Israel's sinning is over even now, much less, already atoned for. Israel's sin, interpreted by some as being over; her retribution already made, is not actually the case. (Isai.40,2) The redemption of Israel is not an end in itself, but a means to an end. This chapter points to a new era dawning for Israel, an era brought about by God, who is the sole God of the universe. And Israel is not only already "paid off in her guilt." but is as yet "steeped in sin," and if there is to be any deliverance at all, it shall come only as a means of God's grace. (Buttenwieser Book Job, 83) And Israel's suffering is considered not from Israel's point of view, that is, subjectively, but from the standpoint of the nations around her. These consider her, as compared to their own guilt, almost pure and blameless, since they have gone much farther from God's ways than has Israel. (Isa1.53)

God was now to help Israel and in doing so it would ultimately be restored. His help should be manifest in many ways. (Isai. 40,10; 46,13; 51,23; 54,7p17.) But thru Cyrus this would be chiefly brought about. (Isai. 41,2; 44,28; 45,1; 46,11.) God has a great purpose for Israel, His servant, to play, and this purpose is its role to the other nations. Agreat moral purpose, in living such it becomes a true servant of God, and God's missionary to the people. (Isai. 41,8,9; 42, 1--; 49,1--; 51,4; 52,13--; 53.) Indeed, from the time of Abraham was Israel destined for this role, but she had to go thru

much before she was ripe to act her role as missionary. (Isai. 41,8,9; 42,1; 43,10,15; 44,1-; 48,3,4; 51,2.) Our author is not, as other prophets were, inspired by the retrospect of Israel's sins and coming doom, but rather by the glorious prospect of deliverance for the people, and a coming broader spirit in mankind. Cyrus, and his rise to power, was the foundation of his hope. Here must be the dawn of a new era, a glorious revelation of God. This would entail the mission of Israel, as set forth in the Ebed Jahweh songs. This deliverance, as he conceives of it in his religious idealism, is high above the perishable things of the earth, when seen thru the light of God and His world phan of salvation, it is universalism, before which all else must vanish. Israel is privileged to suffer for the whole world. Universalism is the final step in the ideal of the prophet.

"Looking out into the future he associates the restoration of Israel with the extension of Israel's religion to the gentiles." (Driver, Isai. 140) This promise is not because of meritorious conduct in Israel's past, for it has been guilty even in exile, but for God's own sake He has blotted out Israel's sins, and will "remember them no more." (Driver Isai.142; Isai. 48,26.) And Israel shall lead the nations to God, thru its own redemption, and in its new and divine purpose.

It was probably because of the still theoretic and philosophical nature of the problem 6f suffering that the writer left it almost untouched. (Bib.Wor.Suff. 124.) Yet his treatment of the righteous suffering is a paean and an hymn almost as deep as it is original. One writer says that this servant is an everlasting type of the suffering righteous, "whether it be an individual or the personafication of Israel." This suffering has the redemption of the world for its raison d'etre, and is its role in the divine mission. He takes on himself the sins of others, that which the wicked deserved to endure,

and becomes answerable with them. And in this suffering is the true character of Israel's atonement. (Bib.Wor.Suff. 123-4)

This idea of suffering, especially that set forth in 52:13-53:12, owes, then, its birth to religious and spiritual thot, rather than to philosophy. The debt of the world, herein conceived, is due rather to Israel, than to Greece. ((Montifiore, JQR.Vol.5, 573.) In this Isaiah the suffering of the people is over-shadowed by this new interpretation, this great role and vision of Israel's restoration and regeneration of mankind. "Isaiah is so carried away by this vision that the casual reader of his book is altogether oblivious to the problem of suffering. " (Buttenwieser, Book Job, 84)

However, suffering there must have been, just as suffering there is, and shall ever be -- and so: "In the life of every day, no less than in great crises and mighty deeds; in the willing acceptance of suffering, sometimes self-chosen, and sometimes inflicted from without; in the joyful sharing of a common burden; in the love which almost welcomes pains if so be that another's anguish be lessened; in the love, more glorious still, which bravely carries the transferred weight of another's sin, here is the 53rd Chapter of Isaiah still exercising its potent influence for good, still explaining pain and explaining evil so far as any explanation is accessible or advisable for man." (Montifiore, JQR. Vol. 5,) This writer hardly meant the personified Israel, yet he means to show, and beautifully, just this idea of ubiquitous and eternal suffering, and attempts, at least, and explanation of its wherefore and why. And in the setting of his words, we shall substitute Israel and allow him to bear these burdens until he shall have accomplished that glorious mission of the Divine, and borne the world's sins as well as its own until it lead a regenerated mankind "with clouds of glory trailing, to God, who is its home."

THE PSALMS

The general aspect of the Psalms is, of necessity, vastly different than the previous books considered. Composed by many may writers, written in more than one period, containing a variety of views and doctrines, it is, therefore, more difficult of presentation than the views of Jeremiah, Ezekiel or Job. Yet, the very nature of these bits of wisdom, their high devotional note in places, and their deep spirituality make them potent factors in this subject of retribution and suffering.

In most of these we find reflected the current theological views and dogmas. In many, the patent questions are tacitly implied, and we read their answers in sublime phraseology, tho in unsatisfactory solution. However, the group of these writings reaches a climax in one of its number, which alone, might justly stand out, were others lost, and stamp its great spiritual worth to mark the impression of all. The general idea prevailing, however, seems to be the contrast of the lot of the wicked and the righteous. The same idea of perplexity runs thru many as to why the righteous have such a difficult path to trudge, while the wicked seem by their perversity to prosper so splendidly.

We see one note struck to the impression that the wicked, tho they prosper, are automatically the enemies of God. (Ps. 68,2; 74,4,22,23; 83,3-) The well grounded dogma of the time, that of suffering being a sure result of sin, is likewise often established. (Ps. 25,7,18; 32,5; 38,4-6; 40,13; 41,5; 69,6; 79,9;00,8; 119,67.) Even sin of past generation reaps its inevitable harvest before being blotted out. (Ps. 79,8) Sin can often be used as a test of character, or even as a discipline of life; for "The Lord trieth the righteous, but the wicked...His soul hateth." (Ps. 11,5; 39,12; 66,10-; 94,12; 118,18; 119,67,71.) In Psalm 119 we find the conception that the fulfillment of the Law for its own sake and as its own reward, is held out as the ideal plan of life. (Mont. JQR. Vol.3,11.)

Psalm 1 holds out the pleasant reward of bleasedness for the righteouses, "He shall be like a tree planted by streams of water," while the wicked shall suffer the fate of chaff which wind carries off and blows away. That the righteous suffer Psalm 57 sets forth in majestic song, as being the ode of David while hiding in a wave from Saul. Yet despite his unhappy fate, and baneful lot, his heart is steadfast, tho his saul is bowed down, and he sings praise to God and will "await the dawn.""For Thy memory is great unto the heavens, and Thy truth unto the skies."

In contrast to the prevailing idea is this hopeful strain in the paean of faith "Yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging for bread." (Ps. 31,25). The author of Psalm 37 merely waits a while, and then the wicked shall be no more. And the humble shall come to inherit the land, and delight in peace. (Ps. 37,10-11). It might seem that he is ready to deny the general idea altogether. It is for the sake of God that misfortune has befallen the faithful. (Ps. 44,22; 119,67; 19,13; 90,9; 94,12,13.) It is, perhaps, this same idea of the discipline of suffering, when before realization came to the sinful, he was but being schooled in one kind of life only to renounce it later and adopt the more divine living. The variety of branches of widkedness which seemed to sprout and blossom into prosperity were manifold. The iniquitous (Ps. 17,9; 50.16; 38,20; 41,6; 3,2,3.); the proud and violent (Ps.17,10,11; 73,6-8); those who scoffed at justice (Ps. 32,2- ; 73,8.); those who perverted justice (Ps. 26,10; 27,12; 35,11,12); those who despoiled the righteous, (Ps. 17,9; 35,10,25;) those who ignored God's laws (Ps. 50,17); those who asked 'where is God?' (Ps. 42,4,10); those who denied His rule (Ps. 53,2 f; 14,1 f); and those who continued in their widkedness. (Ps. 10; 37,7; 39; 44; 49: 73,12.)

The writer in Psalm 139, 21 and 22, allows his hatred to carry him to far fields, and he loses himself in mystic fervor for God. He is beating his wings against the gage in which the wicked are still alive, despite their iniquity. Thruout this Psalm the author is veritably carried away with his description of the holy Omnipotence. (Bab. Wor. Suff. 126). As constant, almost, as is this prevailing idea of suffering righteousness, is the thot of trying one's piety thru the fires of pain: "For Thou, O God, hast proved us; Thou hast tried us, as silver is tried. We went thru fire and thru water; but Thou broughtest us out into a wealthy place." (Ps. 66,9-12). This precluded the conviction, as found in Job, that explanation is beyond the world of human things. Here the author seems to see only one thing, that the great meaning of trial and suffering is but the proof of an individual's worth, and unlike Job, who sees with a far higher light into all the unknowable facets of edstence, and is certain of only one conclusiony-that man cannot know -- this lesser writer speaks with authority, and discovers the raison d'etre of suffering. (Bib.Wor. Suff. 123.) Of a similar nature is the assurance in a number of Psalms of the righteousness of the writer. So confident is his attitude or even assumption, that he begs God to try him. It might seem in cases that he even defies God. His righteousness is flung into the face of his ill-fortune, and in all we must suppose that it is his devout faith that permits him to stand in this light. (Ps. 17; 12,24; 28; 41,13; 44,18,19; 69). He almost sounds the note which Job strikes when he grows indignant that actual sin can be imputed to him.

Some of the Psalms believe complacently that such a thing as material retribution is a fixed conclusion. (Ps. 18,21,25; 30,12; 32,10; \$4,19,23;37,4,18,19,25,37; 92,13.). "Weeping may tarry for the night, but joy cometh in the morning." And even in the direct suffering there was always possible that divine communion with God. This appears as

almost the note of splendor which the group of high minded songs strike. (Ps. 13;23;27; 63;73;84.) Prayer is the chief thing, and we may take it as a form of noble communion, for "The Lord is night unto all them that call upon Him, to all that call upon Him in truth." The author could close his eyes and soul to suffering, and find solace in God. (Ps. 145,18.)

While it appears that there is no fixed idea of an hereafter in the sense of immortality, at the same time there is a thoro notion of Sheol. That God will not abandon the souls of His people to this nether world, seems almost a certainty. Yet, these writers are vague when they hint at what might substitute for this abandonment. They were, possibly, alive to the hazy thot that there might be something other than this, as a haven for blissful retribution. Yet, they consigned definitely the wicked and sinful to Sheol. (Ps. 5,6; 16,10-11; 30,4,10; 39,14; 49,11,16; 73,24; 88,6,11,12; 115,17.) Montifiore says this possibly refers to notions of the Messianic Age. (Bible for Home Reading, Pt.2, 504 & 595.)

Many writers place the giant apex of all the Psalms in the 73rd one of the collection. Its contents abound in what one writer describes as the highest pitch a victim of suffering can attain. The author does not struggle to prove his innocence. He partakes of the divine mysteries of mystic closeness and attains the assurance of the faith that can raise mountains, and surmount every obstacle. He does not strive, as did Job, to grasp God, but he is in full possession of God, and in this he finds supreme peace. (Bib. Wor. Suff. 134,135.) God's loving kindness is superior even to life. "Whom have I in heaven but Thee, and there is none on earth I desire besides Thee." "Die Nahe Gottes ist mein Gott." In here the soul is laid bare by confession, and without hesitancy or fear. "And so I thot how I might know this, a trouble was it in mine eyes." He is not oblivious to the distress and pangs this

costs him to know and feel. But in a rapture of sublime faith he throws himself into the loving arms of God. And in this mystic rhapsody what does the happiness of the wicked mean, or even, indeed, the suffering of the righteous? Intimate communion with this Rock and Redeemer is the only thing. The wicked shall never experience this, and that loss alone is punishment sufficient. The righteous shall never be deprived of this, this is reward sufficient. "Nevertheless I am continually with Thee. Thou shalt guide me with Thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory. Whom have I in heaven but Thee? And there is none upon earth that I desire beside Thee. My flesh and my bone faileth, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever."(Ps. 73,23 T) Whether this be hope in immortality, or not, it is exquisitely sublime; and one wonders if there is anything in all the Psalms that can reach a nobler pinnacle of faith, beautiful and hermic, than in this.

PROVERBS

...

The Proverbs are far more utilitarian than the other writers or books we have considered. Many are not without their sheep moral and spiritual worth, but within the scope of our subject we find them comparable to such writers as the great literary prophets and Job in a degree sadly lacking their noble insight, as well as the heroic manner in which they faced the questions of suffering and at least attempted an answer. The very nature of such techinal composition precludes a treatment such as Job rendered, and yet it is quite possible to compare the two. Of these two books Dr Buttenwieser has this to say: "The Book of Proverbs preaches utilitarian piety, recommends a life of virtue as the road to material well-being, whereas Job sets up the idea of unselfish devotion to the good, of love of virtue without that of material reward. The Book of Proverbs advocates that one refrain from rejoicing over the fall of one's enemy for fear of God's displeasure (24,17 F) but the Book of Job insists on genuine nobility towards one's enemy (31,39f) and exemp lifies the truth that evil must be conquered with good. The Book of Proverbs warns against intercourse with an adulteress, but the Book of Job considers it immoral to "look with lust upon a woman." (31,1; Buttenwieser, Book Job 82.)

The verse "whosoever dig a pit shall fall therein, he that rolleth a stone, it return upon him," (Prov. 24,27.) shows the relation between sin and punishment or suffering. It sets forth the doctrine of retribution in unmistakeble dicta: piety and prosperity go hand in hand, good and bad fortune depend directly on our conduct. (Bib.Wor. Suff. 121)

"Whom the Lord loveth he reproveth, even as a father the son in whom he delighteth." (Prov. 3,12) is the schooling or discipline of suffering. There was undoubtedly a strong faith in the minds of many that suffering was just for this purpose, and therefore it was not looked upon as eval per se, but that which contained primarily an '-- intrinsic value of ultimate good. This suffering did break into the spirit of even the strongest man; when pride crumbles before misfortune, we look into ourselves. Herein is the incentive to piety, to love of God. (BrB.Wor. Suff. 131.) It might also, however, drive one into despair and such depression as to undermine all faith. But this was not countenanced in these early days.

There are any number of verses which set forth the marked contrast, as well as the hope and despair of people, in this one Book. The sinner is given much place, but at best he might know that his sin leads but to judgment. (Prov. 10, 27; 11, 5, 6, 19; 24, 20) The evil that men do in their lives lives after them. (Prov. 1,19; 5,22; 11,31; 13,6,21; 14,32; 16,4.) Men are cautioned not to be envious of the wicked, despite their seeming prosperity. (Prov. 3,31; 23,17;24,19.) For their righteousness will be vindicated, and ultimately set up before the people in justification of their lives. (Prov. 23,18; 24,16) And likewise shall the fault of the wicked be established to their utter ruination. (Prov. 10, 28; 24,16.) And even if not in their lives, then there are to comen some manifestations of belated retribution, and "the memory of the righteous shall be for a blessing", even tho it be after his life is used up in suffering. (Prov. 10,7; 14,26; 20,7.) There is an inexorale aftermath of retribution as fixed as the stars, and it follows every human action. (Prov. 11, 51; 12, 14.) But the righteous may confidently look for their reward, (Prov. 2,21; 10,24; 11,25; 13,21; 19,17.) for they are protected by God, (Prov. 2, 7,8; 11, 4,8.) and He grants to these righteous lng life. (Prov. 3,2; 10,27; 12,28; 19,23.)

QQ

A discussion of this problem of retribution and suffering reaches a mighty climax in the Book of Job. It might seem that all the previous writing is but preparation for this exalted utterance, so much stage setting and minor stringing of second violins for the great crescendo, to fall on the ears of the people. This sublime story, poem, drams--call it what you will--is shot thru with the loftiest conceptions of a thirsting soul, striving for but a snatched glance at his Creator. All that we may say of this magnificent soul stirring symphony would perforce seem futile and tawdry when compared to the utterances of this spiritual poet who voices sentiments which have never as yet been surpassed for their beauty and sublimity.

We have here a background framed by the doctrine of Ezekiel. The scenes have arisen since his day to the point and position of permanent and fixed ideas. Standing out in a clear stage in sharp relief against this doctrinaire background is the lonely figure of Job. Plagued, cursed ill, embittered, disappointed, forlorn and sorrowful, he seems a mighty figure put there to justify both God and the heaven which he could not see. Withal, tho, strong, secure, mighty and powerful in faith and confidence. He knew that His Redeemer lived, and therein was his vindication. One approaches the study of this figure and the reading of his words, with a feeling of awe and deep reverence; one feels that he is actually in the presence of some creature divine, reading the words of an holy book, peering into the secret places of a living pulsating heart, all but lacerated by its own suffering, suffering which attune d it, tho; suffering which brought out these very beats and poured out its very blood for the sake of a deep rooted conviction and faithfulness. The mere reading of which seems almost a sacrilege so painfully beautiful is its expression. And yet, enthralled we read on and on, transfixed

51

JOB

and overpowered. We are in the presence de a man of God.

Before Job this problem seems to have grown out of actual conditions and circumstances prevailing, and inducing such speculations. Jeremiah might seem to be excep ted, for his personal experience and suffering brought on as thoro an attempt to face it as he was able. Ezekiel, on the other hand, lacks the purely personal element. He is an author, or perhaps a theolog, who framed a doctrine and seeks to affix it--almost ruthlessly and mechanically -- to the exigencies of time, condition and space, regardless of the hearts he tears or the minds he befuidles. To Job is left the supreme task of wrestling with it in all its entirety We need to look in vain for a complete and all inclusive solution, today the people ask the same questions, seek the same solutions, cry for the actual meaning of their days in life. But to Job must go the glorified renown of facing the problem squarely and unflinchingly -- not only the problem of why the righteous suffer, but why there must be suffering at all. •1:-

The suffering of Job, a man recognized and famed for righteousness, would have completely upset the theory of Ezekiel, in that it contradicts the idea that the righteous prosper and that adversity is a result of sin. (Buttenwieser, Book Job, 9). Yet, this view 'ad been so in effect for generations now that a man became an infidel if he denied it. It was part of the tradition from the past by this time. From the basis of this conclusion people framed estimates regarding a man's past by his present condition, and particularly when adversity helf him and proved his wickedness. " The more crushing the man's calamity, the greater his need for human sympathy, the more convinced were the people thatGod's punishment had been visited upon him for some great sin. It was to protest against this view of individual retribution and to arouse pity for human suffering that the Book was written." (Buttenwieser,Book Job,73; Job, 8, 8-12; 15, 17-24; 20,4 -.)

DM

This entire treatment of suffering in Job shows the thoroness of the doctrine on the minds of the people, and this belief came directly thru and from the great prophets. (Buttenwieser, Book Job 71.) The Poet who handles these two subjects and shows them in contrast, namely the strength of dogma, and the man who innocently suffers, is an artist and poet of rare merit. The dogma which ignores life in all its facets, elicits from Job the bitterest the fiercest sarcasm. (Bib. Wor. Suff. 125); Job 21, 28-) Job was one of the few solitary minds raised in protest against the current doctrine. Reality in all its sombre aspects impressed these few too deeply, and in fearlessness and in frankness of conscience they stir us with their high purpose against this universally accepted doctrine. The break down of orthodoxy, in theory, at least, we find in Job. Every strain follows the current idea of retribution; save that of Job's suffering. There was no sin. (Bib. Wor. Suff. 122). This intention to face the problem squarely brings a change over Job's soul, He draws nearer to God, as the He were standing closely by his side, close enough to address him. Job could not understand God, even in this spiritual proximity, but he turned to Him not so much to beseech help, as to attain his own justification in face of the view which condemned him. Job's pathos, in his seemingly futile effort, to attain to God, even says that God will some day be regretful that He greets his outburst in such silence. Job begins to fear that when God will be ready to heed his cry it will then be too late. (Bib. Wor. Suff. 126; And Job 7,8; 9.55: 13,20-22.)

Job's timerity leaves gradually, and before long he openly charges God with injustice! Yet thru this Job derives a far greater experience of the world of the spirit than those who condemn him. Thru this so-celled blasphemy he gives rise to a new theology, and sounds the ending of the old orthodoxy. (Bib. Wor. Suff. 126.) But he staggers his hearers by doing so. (Davidson, Theo. 0.T. 411; Job 23, 16; 9, 24.) The older men

va

who are exponents of the traditional cult, who claim to have found God, have convinced Job that they are rapidly losing Him forever. And at this juncture, stands Job, steeped in sin, according to their deepest conviction, who has lost God, and who in blessed reality has actually found Him thru his ceaseless searching. Above all else, sin, condemnation, forlorn hopp, embittered denunciation, and the all but too certain feeling of the futility of his efforts, Job continues constantly to seek Him. He is striving towards God. He recognizes that it is thru God, because He will not vindicate him, that his intense suffering comes. His friends find the explanation of suffering in man-not God. Job, in his extremity fighting against man and circumstance finds his only refuge against God in God himself. (Bib. Wor. Suff. 126.)

It is the right of his conscience that Job upholds, and to him this is a vastly higher right than the crystalized but unnatural right of dogma. Job does not mean to imply that he is thoroly guiltless, he is not so vain nor self righteous as to think that he, above any man, is so righteous that he sinneth not. Like all other men he has done wrong. But hedenies that sin is sufficient warrant for the intense inner suffering -- that which he is so concerned with now -- which he endures. In despair, almost, he challenges God: " If I have sinned why doth Thou not pardon my transgression and take away my iniquity?" He will hold steadfastly to his integrity, yea, against God himself will he hold out. What, indeed, had he done to God, even tho he had done perversely? Job's heart did not reproach him, and as an heir to prophetic teaching, almost as an apex and culmination of their lofty teaching, as the embodiment of an heart in which God dwelled and prompted thru divine Voice the music of his inner consciousness, he found no hint of inner condemnation, but only a vindication. (Bib. Wor. Suff. 125.) His anguish was due to his inability to understand all the mechanics of the great drama which went on without his knowledge, between God and Satan. But heark-

ening to his inner voice, this voice of God, he refused in all his agony to reproach himself. We have here not only a saintly figure but an heroic man. On the other hand, the Job doesnot see, nor realize, nor fully understand it, God is defending him. He is defending "the proposition that there is such a thing as disinterested piety in man, such a thing as real, unselfish love for the good---with the corealary that once the love of good is firmly implanted in the human heart, no power in heaven nor on earth can avail to upset it. " (Buttenwieser, Book Job, 40).

It was thru the force of his own personality and moral sense that Job rose to his conception of God's rule of the world. And in this, he felt secure against the friends who hurled at him the current conceptions of the time. He felt that his great Ally, after all, was God, and he began to feel that somehow and sometime He would vindicate him. True, his trials are still with him, but he must have reasoned with himself: what can all this mean, when he is conscious of his oneness with God? His trials and suffering pale into nothingness when he is ready to aurrender himself to the unfathomable wisdom of his infinite God. (Buttenwieser.Book Job.40.)

Yet his voice was as the helpless beating of wings against a cage which did but emit a faint sounding. These men about him had a much easier way of answering such questioning, let the explanation of sin bear it all. It is true that Job himself could not offer a thoroly satisfactory explanation either. No more so than the prophets could hope to have their words fall on heeding ears, it was too much to expect. Yet Job realized that no matter how great and powerful a man might be, he must bow down and remain silent before the incomprehensible God, Whose essence must surpass our formulae. To this God everything must be delivered in entirely, self as well as all else. Yet, before this awful nature, compared to which man is small indeed, before this mighty

God, to which man is as naught, there is just this ray of hope "Tho the world be greater than Man, it is still God's world." And the inner consciousness of man tells him that in this world it is possible to be in infinite communion, that God is mindful of His creatures, and that the very ray of hope for God, is divinely implanted .

Job realized only too well, in his natural humility, that man is not the center of the universe. The universe is so vastly greater than he that he cannot pose as the measure of all things, neither is he the object, alone, of divine providence. According to His might, does God act, not in proportion to man's volition. The sign and measure of faith is that man should have profound faith in this just Creator, for God is the guarantor of man's conscience. In all His might and power, Job knows that God is interested in the universe and actively at work in it. His Being permeates it, and His Intelligence is its master. He is undoubtedly a God of life. (Bib.Wor. Suff. 128.9) . Job is more than convinced of this, for after God carries him the length and breadth of the Universe, Job bows down and realizes his utter insignificance. He can grasp practically nothing save the awful majesty of it, and he thinks of what small account is man. He was ready to repent for the words he had already spoken. (Bib. Wor. Suff. 128). Nothing could be explained. Man was destined to continue his wonderment. Upon God he had to rely again and again, so fraught with difficulty did his problems become. Even in the interview Job sought, he met God in a violent storm, not in the peace and stillness he anticipated. But this was proof of the vast chasm between God and man, in the ultimate analysia. God was above Job, man was miserably small when compared to him. Job, the his inability does not explain the gnawing "why", does succeed in drawing closer and closer to his God. He has advanced thru the morass to the point where his clear conscience is his sole vindication, and God is the staungh Ally of that conscience. His condition of suffering

righteousness is no nearer solution nor explanation, even the God stands by his side. Yet, he is morally and spiritually strengthened to feel, beyond doubt, that his God is so near even in his affliction. (Buttenwieser, Book Job 57.)

Job comes to believe in retribution too, but of a strangely different kind than prevails in his time. He believes in "spiritual, not material retribution."Job makes it plain that retribution is no longer for him a matter of outer fortune but of inner experience." His clear conscience is his "priceless good"; it is his strength and jow and endurance. He feels assured in God's presence. (Buttenwieser, Book Job, 57.)

Job did not foresee the great ascent of this very problem he was striving to solve. He did not realize the possibilities of immortality, and therefore that he was asking for something very unusual when he sought an hour's interview with his Maker after death in order to vindicate himself. This idea occurs to Job only momentarily, and he cannot conceive of it as a veritable answer to his quandary. (Job 14,13-;19.) He does not mention immortality nor resurrection, but only one final beat of his wings, so sure is his faith in his conscience, that his righteousness shall be divinely absolved. (Bib.Wor. Suff. 127.) And his denial of resurrection reveals that such a doctrine was at least current. His friends make no reference to it, and he refuses to countenance it. (Buttenwieser Book Job, 76.) He shallbe amply satisfied that his clear conscience is the conviction that God is within him.

Renan, in his book on Job says, "The blaspheny in it is little short of a hymn, or rather is in itself a hymn, for it is nothing but a cry to God against the fallings that conscience finds in the work of God."

(Renan "Job" 62.) Dr. Buttenwieser writes (Book Job 66) ",..the end of the conflict an à the end of the book; and what a fitting end it is! It will be remembered that it was on the thesis of the invincible power of the good that God had staked His honor in the opening scene in Heaven and now, by this crowning victory of Job's, His thesis is vindicated, His confidence is fulfilled. It is not merely a victory of Job's; we are made to feel it is God's victory--the triumph of the Eternal good-

KOHELETH

Koheleth is a writer who would be eternally popular. At best, people do not always wish to have their sores healed, some grow so used to their wounds that they would be loathe to have their body whole. Life, in final, is not, nor cannot be good, all the time, and there are always many who realize this, tho their thots cannot express what is written so keenly in their lacerated breasts. To these, in all ages, and at all times, there is a definite appeal in Koheleth. He is a writer of depth, and keen insight, not blind to the stark truth, nor the bitter reality of living. He is brave and outspoken, free in expression which must have startled readers then, even as it strikes strange, but truthful, notes now. He is bister in places, synical and pessimistic, sour and skeptical, yet he looks at life straight ahead and unflinchingly. It appeared at times unduly oppressive, and it appeared also that he did not with-hold such thots from his readers. It was an inevitable nature against which man spent his strength, and he wanted man to use up every ounce of energy in winning as much as he could from every play he made with life.

He saw that suffering was universal and that the pious as well as the wicked shared it. (Ecc. 7,15; 8,14) God Mimself was the ultimate Arbiter, and why should the wicked prolong his evil, and cut off his days before his time? (Ecc. 7,17; 8, 12,13; 3,17; 11,9; 12, 1,4.) Before this God, men should fear, for "He hath made it" that they should fear Him. (Ecc. 3,14; 5,1; 7,18) He doesnot attempt any solution of this grave problem which affects practically every man, yet he is utterly fearless in showing it up in all its cruel and harsh aspects.

Koheleth came at a time when the Jewish people were in closer contact with other nations who were neighbors, and likewise had tastes of foreign civilization. After such a morsel of strange culture, this man broke definitely in his fearless manner from the old bonds that had so long circumscribed his people. He does not hold to the traditional idea of divine retribution, for he has but to show that "There is a vanity which is done upon the earth, that there be righteous men, unto whom it happeneth according to the work of the wicked; again there be wicked men to whom it happeneth according to the work of the righteous." (Bib.Wor.Suff. 131)/Ecc. 8,14)

"All things come alike to all: there is one event to the righteous and to the wicked; to the good and to the clean and to the unclean, to him that sacrificeth, and to him that sacrificeth not."(Ecc.9,2) He appraises the problem in its actuality and does not stand back with his conclusions and deductions. Certainly he realizes that sacrifices are no more than the prophets said they were.

Without an attempt to draw conclusions, or posit means of definite understanding, he resignedly attempts to show that this is God's manner of ruling the universe, and to all intents and purposes, it is vastly beyond our scope of comp rehension. (BiB.Wor. Suff. 132) " I beheld all the work of God, that man cannot find out the work that is done under the sun; because however much a man labor to seek it out, yet he shall not find it; yea, moreover, tho a wise man think to know it, yet shall he not be able to find it." (Ecc. 8,17) He is not unlike Job, in that he places man in a powerless and futile position, thru which human reason cannot penetrate to discovery. It is a problem insoluble. But he, unlike Job, does not impute blame to God, nor demand any explanation nor vindication from Him. He accepts life as inevitable. Job is a creature of tragedy, deeply hurt, and beating his wings helplessly; Koheleth merely records the fact in a patient, calm, real istin, without any fretful attitude, nor disappointed hope. He believes in God, yet he sees these things which strike humanity in a totally dispassionate manner. He is cold even in his faith. God is

Gis sovemign, He gives us the gifts we enjoy, be they wealth, pleasure, good, evil or sorrow. (Bib. Wor. Suff. 132.) And no particular sanction distinguishes the good from the evil (Ecc. 7.14).

His method, then, is to gather the rose-buds "while ye may, old time is still a-flying." He is in this respect not different from the Epicure nor Omar, and his thot is even in common with Horace in his doctrine " Carpe diem ". These moments are short enough and fleeting, perishable and deltsive--when joy is around us we must give ourselves to joy.

"Go thy way, eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart, for God hath already accepted thy workd; let thy garments be always white, and het not thy head lack omntment. Live joyfully with the wife whom thou lovest all the days of thy vanity." (Ecc. 9,7-9) He does not see far beyond the old horizon, at best, and is chiefly taken up with the present moment. He has no fear beyond that. He thinks that death is likewise the end, " And the dust returns to the earth, as it was, and the spirit returns to God Who made it." (Ecc. 12,7)

The thot in Koheleth with its recurring "All is vanity" is so disturbing to the general opinion that an effort was made to tone it down by the gloss which is rather well known. "Fear God and keep His commandments", for this is the whole duty of man." (Ecc. 12,13,14.) This and other verses show conclusively that the echoes of Ezekiel were still resounding in the ears of men. Such thots as "Rejoice, Oh young man in thy youth; but know that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment," (Ecc. 11,9) caused consternation when compared to the standards of the tradition which still held the minds of men.

Renan seems to have put into a sentence all that Koheleth is: "You may find him a skeptic, a materialist, a fatalist, and before all a pessimist, but one thing he most decidedly is not, an atheist." (L'Ecclésiaste, 20.)

DANIEL

In Daniel we find one step definitely advanced in consideration of this problem. An effort is made herein to take the idea of suffering entirely out of its present world status and remove it to the next. Not quite the ultimate step of immortality is reached, perhaps not even conceived, yet this is one fixed process in advancement.

The idea in the minds of of men at this time as to their sinful nature, and consequent suffering was quite as well fixed as in other times. They were conscious of their short-comings. "We have sinned and have dealt iniquitously, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled and have turned aside from thy commandments and from Thine ordinances." (Dan. 9,5) Yet, as truly as this seems to be a confessional of their personal sins, Montifiore says it is because of the sins of their fathers and that they confess sins not their own, but their ancestors. (Montifiore, JQR.Vol 3,8.)

From their neighbors, after the period of the exile, came the inception of the belief in resurrection, which was so popularly spreading at this time. It came rather late into Israelitish belief, but its advent supplanted the belief in Sheol so long abiding in their faith. That this was a definite manner of facing the problem of suffering, of removing it from its impenetrable wall of powerless struggle against any definite explanation of satisfactory merit, need not be said. This came during the Maccabbean times, about 165-164 B.C.E., and was given out as a definite hope to people, especially at a time of dire crisis, and for very obvious reasons. It was a hope and a peg to hang to. Men were needed to fight, as well as keep whole the body of religious practice. These men required some substantiation for their faith, and it became the homage of martyrdom in the form of the faith they manifested. Such examples as the Three Hebrews in the furnace, as well as Daniel in the den of lions, were illustrative of an abiding faith that could

withstand any torture, survive any crisis, and withal retain a staunch faith in the God of Israel thruout the severest suffering. Suffering was freely admitted, yet the answer to its problem in Daniel is fidelity to God. (Bib. Wor. Suff. 133.)

Man is not to succomb in this life, nor need he fear that this vale of tears and suffering is to be his end. Life hereafter is the hope, and herein shall be answered all his perplexities, and his doubts and questionings are to receive complete and satisfactory solution. "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to reproaches, and everlasting abhorrence. And they that are wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn the many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever." (Dan. 12. 2.13.)

The problem of suffering, the doctrine of strict retribution, the heretofore attempted explanation of sin, is by this belief, therefore, bereft of its intensity and keen sharpness. The problem was literally removed from the speculation &t required in contact with this world, and set over into the world beyond. As a matter of fact, it was no more accurately answered nor solved, but was more satisfactory in that it abided and condoned the futile effort of man to solve it. (Bib. Wor. Suff. 133.)

CHRONICLES

In Chronicles every adversity befalling the nation is ascribed to some particular sin. The Priestly or Levitical author almost always represents sin as a deflection from worship, much more so than the Detteronomic author of Samuel and Kings. (Montifiore JQR, Vol 3,6.) If parallel accounts are compared one finds that Chronicles brings in the theory of Divine retribution to account for the facts of modify the facts to suit the theory, More frequently than does Kings. The death of Josiah was naturally a severe shock for the pious, and it was accounted for on the usual principle, implying the truth of the old position that there was no suffering without sin. (Montifiore JQR Vol 3, 79 2 Chron. 35,21-22;32, 25.) The Chronicler is in duty bound to recall some failing of this righteous man in order to justify his misfortune. (Bib. Wor. Suff 121; 2 Chron. 25, 14-24).

The postponment of suffering from father to son tas due to the mercy of God, This came before a more thoro-going individualism had taken hold, and was regarded as something due, and not an injustice to the sufferer. This is exemplified in the case of the child of Bath-Sheba; and in the case of Ahab, whom God will condone, tho sinful and tardily repentent, and require retribution of his son. And the editor of Kings, tho he could seek to excuse the worthy Josiah on the grounds of the sins of Manasseh, the Chronicler does not. He uses an "obvious invention" of his own to explain this shameful death on the ground of disobedience. (Montifiore JQR,Vol 5, 546-7. 2 Kgs. 23; 23; 2 Chron. 35, 21, 22.)

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

IMMORTALITY

This doctrine of Divine Retribution had gone now about as far as it could. Swaying between the stubborn adherence of traditional views on the one hand, that there could be no suffering without sin, and the few great minds, on the other, who pierced thru the mental haze and advanced step by step forward, it hung in the balance so to speak. Explanation as far as this world was concerned was at a stand still. Therefore such that penetration in this life coming to its end, the next logical step was to go out and beyond, into the next world, the world to come. Job gave a hint at this, and even expressed the hope that there might be such a thing, in order that he might require vindication at God's hand. He did not believe in the doctrine of resurred tion, tho it must have been current in his day, for the reason that he expressly denies it. (Job 14,14 T). Yet we have no specific reference to the idea of immortality. The restoration, the ray of light which the prophets held out, must be considered in its true scope, and that was in a national sense, if the two thots may be connected at all. (Hos. 6,2; Ezek.37.)

The first real mention is found in Daniel 12, and reads: "Many of them that sleep in the dust shall awake." (12,2; Montifiore Hibbert 455).

Actual conditions of life did not affirm the older views held so long. That the "righteous would be requibed on earth" and that "evil pursueth sinners," (Prov. 11,31; 13,21.) was seen to be no satisfactory solution, since the righteous were pursued by evil, and it seemed the sinners were all too quickly requited with good in their life time. Their faith in God had to be substantiated, and in another manner. It reached beyond this sphere, into another world, in which the righteous would be recognized, and find their justification. (Kohler, Theo. 299.) The idea of retribution had grown steadily into the future--"at first to a future on earth and later to one in the world to come, until finally it developed into a pure spiritual conception in full accord with a higher ethical view of life."

(Kohler, Theo. 298.)

CONCLUSION

Now that we are at the point of concluding, just how far did the doctrine of retribution pierce the Great Secret in its effort at explanation of suffering? This same solution might as well be required of us today, just as it was required of the thinkers who first bravely faced the problem, and carried it as least as far as we could at present. It is poor solace to say 'we can never know', yet our limited minds can feed on the morsels, indeed the surfeiting banquets, of these men of the past.

The men of our Book, so tormented by suffering, progressed in steps feeble and halting, against great odds of rigid tradition and orthodoxy, to more and more original, and because of faith in the individual, to a more personal attitude. Not one of these men, however, reached a thoro-going solution, or answered the riddle. Job, alone, perhaps, spanned its fullest breadth. Yet these men were balked only by the fundamental barrier of the righteous man's suffering. (Bib. Wor. Suff. 135) And what, indeed, was that, compared with the great truth of Job's discovery, or even the discovery and proclamation of the prophets that there might be another consummation more devoutly to be wished than righteousness vindicated -- that of the knowledge of the indwelling God within man's bosom. "The sovereign efficiency of suffering is when it is the self willed sacrifice of the innocent for the guilty, the nothingness of suffering when compared with the blissful communion of the soul with the God it loves, and of whom it is loved." (Bib.Wor.Suf. 135.)

Montifiore points out that the Law, the thing which is often that to have debased the religion of the prophets to a formal and mechanical creed, is the very instrument which secured permanent overmastery of idealism. "And among the results of this Torah worshipnone is more important than that it should have secured for Judaism the triumph of the doctrine that virtue or religion, goodness of the love of God is, and always must be, its own reward. " (Montifiore.JQR.Vol 3.11.)

This eternal problem of suffering finds another expression, by way of solution, in the words of Mishna Aboth: "Better one hour of bliss in the life to come than the whole present life time. Prepare thyself in the ante-chamber that thou mayst enter the palace." In short, whether our suffering be for: purposes of discipline, or merely part of a life which finds its completest fulfillment in another world, and is but a preparation for that after life, still it must be for something. Dr. Buttenwieser says, in explanation, "....man's life on earth is preparatory to the life everlasting; the true reward and punishment are meted out, not in this world, but in the world to come.-there the righteous will enjoy everlasting bliss and the wicked suffer eternal damnation."

And mankind, even today, tried to pierce the thick veil of thwated understanding. Men suffer today, as they always did. Sorrow is still one of the sureties of life, disappointment a fate common to all. Hope springs eternal, yet its fulfillment is ever belked and frustrated, and often strives vainly against no conceivable consummation. Life in none of its aspects can ever be complete. Up to our very lips is the refreshing cup with its cooling draught held, but when we would lave our parched throats, and pour balm into our torn hearts, some unkind hand quickly snatches away this flagon of elixir. Still we live on, hope on, and suffer ever. And it must be good. Perhaps one of the greatest values of life is this suffering. Suppose we understood its meaning thoroly? Would we, even then, be strong enough or wilful enough, or even anxious enough to deny other facets in our nature their expression? Be our souls the very haven of suffering, it is still the harbinger of peace within that we can feel thru this

comman bond with all humanity. The lot is a common one, and it may be that this is the single bond which binds us thruout all eternity to God. As we seek Him in the realm of perfect peace above, and as our soul yearns for His nearness within, our suffering is, perhaps, the bridge over which our troubled spirits shall finally carry aloft a tired heart to merge it with the constant beating of all the wo rld. "If you have a great sorrow, keep it sacred, and it will prove to you an inward guard and shield against the petty griefs and annoyances from which in external fashion we can never wholly keep ourselves fmee. And how can what is small and petty affect him who has something truly great enshrined within his soul?"

His soul which he shall finally bring Home and then learn why it has suffered so.