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Biblical Conception of Divine Retribution

Louis D. Mendoza

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Preface

There is hardly any necessity of a foreword unless it be one of apology for the defects of this paper, of which the writer is fully conscious. In extenuation let it be urged that the time has been too short, the subject too large, the writer's attention distracted by too many other studies, to permit of that scientific accuracy which a thesis should possess.

No attempt has been made to traverse new territory or to propound new theories as to the Biblical conception of Divine Retribution. The writer is indebted to the authors whom he consulted for most of the views expressed; although he has diverged from them when their views followed a Christological tendency, and in this latter fact, perhaps, lies whatever merit the thesis may possess, that the writer has sought to treat the subject from a sympathetic, Jewish view-point.

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Part I

The Conception of Divine Retribution in Early Israel§1 Introduction

A. The attempt to reconstruct a remote period of history is extremely hazardous. For no matter how thorough one's scientific equipment and unbiased his attitude may be, he is liable to read into that period a state of consciousness peculiar to the time at, and the conditions under which he writes; or, by treating that period as remote, he is liable to predicate of it a state of consciousness not only quantitatively but also qualitatively different from his own.

B. Such an attempt is likewise difficult of attainment. In but few instances has the material been sufficient for anything more than an incomplete generalization. Especially true is this in the subject under consideration. We are forced to base our knowledge of the ancient Israelitish conception of Divine retribution on (1) isolated passages in the Bible. The difficulty is further enhanced by the fact that

these passages are often contradictory. Add to this, the undetermined chronology of most of the Bible records and it will be seen how incomplete a treatment of this theme must be.

C. In this thesis, the method has been to preserve only the bare chronological outline upon which the majority of critics agree, and without attempting to be more exact, to show the development of the Retribution idea in that time.

§2. The Divine Rule in Early Israel.

A. Early Israel did not possess a dogmatic belief in Divine Retribution. For dogma arises, only when the need of refuting any alternative of the thought to which it gives expression is felt, and any such alternative is possible only when the child-age of a nation with its harmonious relation to environment is succeeded by the age of reflection and doubt, the result of a disturbance in that harmony.

'v.c.' of books written in preprophetic, prophetic, and post-exilic times.

B But if the Divine was not conceived in terms of dogma, He most certainly was conceived in terms of activity¹. His rule over the affairs of men was very vividly felt. But it was not only from the side of Retribution.² In all life experience whether of the individual or of the nation the Divine Rule was supposed to evidence itself.³ He gave the dew of Heaven, the fatness of the earth, corn and wine.⁴ He caused sterility and fruitfulness⁵ He lead His people to victory,⁶ or discomfited it in war.⁷

C. This may account for the fact that the Divine Rule was sometimes held to be inexplicable;

¹ Smeud: Lehrbuch der Alttestamentlichen Religionsgeschichte. pp. 96 f. Also Sellin: B. zur L. u. j. R. I. pp. 7.

² Köberle: Sünde u. Gnade.

³ See W. R. Smith: The Old Testament in the Jewish Church pp. 254 ff.

⁴ Gen. 27²⁸; 1 Kings 17^{1,6}; Cf: Amos 4⁶⁻¹¹ 8⁹; Hosea 2^{8,9}; Jer. 10¹

⁵ Gen. 16²; 30²; 49²⁵

⁶ Ex. 15; Judges 5; 2 Sam. 5²⁴.

⁷ 1 Kings 22²⁰; 2 Kings 3¹³

See also Judges 9²³; 1 Sam. 16¹⁴.

i.e. since all life-experience, fortunate or unfortunate, was attributed to Him, the principles according to which He acted were often unknown¹ - a natural conception of an absolute monarch. Happiness could not always be the consequence of virtue, misfortune of sin, because these followed too quickly upon the heels of one another to admit of a compensatory interpretation. Misfortune, in fact, was not always considered the result of human fault.² The innocent suffered in certain instances.³ In war, the sword slew both innocent and guilty.⁴

D. Jahveh was to early Israel its king, and the relation of subject to monarch had accordingly to be maintained. He was greatly wroth over the crime of lese majeste - whether it had been done consciously or not - and punished the offender with

¹ But not caprice, as Smead, Stade, et al. term it. On the contrary God's righteousness even in those passages where He incites to sin, is never questioned.

² Köberle: Sünde u. Gnade p. 57.

³ 2 Sam. ^{33,34} 3 ; ^{11,12} 16 ; ¹⁰ 20 Judges ⁵ 9 ; 1 Sam. ¹⁸ 22 ⁴ 2 Sam. ²⁵ 11

great severity! Any unnecessary contact with holy things was held to be an offense against Him.² Thus He punishes Uzzah with death for merely touching the ark,³ and smites the men of Beth Shemesh⁴ because they had looked into it. Census-taking was regarded as an offense against God and treated accordingly,⁵ as well as any violation of His ordinances or contemptuous treatment of the sacrifice.⁶ Aaron's sons died for not having made use of the proper fire in the incense offering and it causes death to Korah and his followers who were not entitled to use it.⁷ A sin against the divinity was unpardonable.⁸

¹ 1 Sam. 2

² Montefiore: Doctrine of Divine Retribution

³ 2 Sam. 6⁷; Cf. 1 Chron. 13.

⁴ 1 Sam. 6^{19ff}; cf. 1 Sam. 5. On the other hand, He blesses Obed-Edom as long as the ark remains in his house. Cf. Num. 1⁵³; 4²⁰

⁵ 2 Sam. 24

⁶ 1 Sam. 2

⁷ Num. 16

⁸ 1 Sam. 3¹⁴

§ 3. Jahveh as Judge.

A. Religion and justice were closely connected with one another in early Israel and religion inspired the motive for upright dealing among men.¹ Hence it is, that when Amos began his prophecies, the rampant injustice that he beheld,³ he³ considered⁴ a great religious transgression and doomed to punishment because God was the God of Justice. "In all ancient peoples" observes Wellhausen, there exists a relation between God and the affairs of the nation, and religion is employed as a motive for law and customary morality."²

B. As the God of His people, Jahveh was the supreme judge.³ He (gave) punished those who violated His revealed ordinances in Israel.⁴ He demanded severe punishment for premeditated murder, the blood of the murdered should be upon the head of

¹ Köberle: Sünde u. Gnade p. 34

² See also Robertson Smith: Prophets of Israel p. 72. and O. T. in the J. C. p. 339. ³ Prophets of Israel. p. 104.

⁴ Ibid. Also Smeul. I. der A. T. p. 106 and Stade B. T. des A. T. p. 87

the murderer', who was not allowed the refuge of God's altar.² Jahveh, through Samuel commands Saul to destroy the Amalekites because of a past wrong against Israel.³ He supported the cause of the weak and those who could not obtain human justice.⁴

C. He was further the guarantee of the inviolability of treaties⁵ or compacts between individuals, and of the unwritten laws of equity and justice; any violation of which was to be punished by Him.⁶ Men placed their cause in His hand, and according to the outcome was the one in the right, the other in the wrong.⁷ The injured party should not attempt to avenge himself, he should wait for

¹ Gen. 9⁵; 42²²; 2 Sam. 1¹⁶; 4¹¹; 16⁸; 1 Kings 2^{32 f.}

² Ex. 21¹⁴. ³ 1 Sam. 15^{2 ff.}

⁴ Gen. 16, 21; Ex 22^{21 ff}

⁵ Smend: L. der A. R. p. 106.

⁶ Gen. 31⁵³; 1 Sam. 20⁴²; 24¹²

⁷ 1 Sam. 25³⁹; 2 Sam. 18³¹

the judgment of God! When men fail to execute justice He brings their laxity to mind, generally from the side of nature.² He visits the kingdom of Israel with a three year's famine because the blood-guilt of Saul and his house has been unatoned (2 Sam. 21).

D. It was natural that the Israelite should conceive the Divine judgment to be of a kind with human justice. And as the law of retaliation was held to be a fit mode of punishment in the administration of human justice³ so it was thought to be evidenced in the Divine judgment.⁴ Thus, the Divine Anger causes the first-born of the Egyptians to be slain because Pharaoh had refused to allow the Israelites to offer the firstlings of their flocks to God.⁵ Samuel announces to Saul his rejection by the Lord, because he has rejected the Lord.⁶ The shedding of blood

¹ 1 Sam. 24¹², 25^{26, 31, 33 f. 39} 26^{9 f}

² Wellhausen: Prolegomena; also Stade B.T. des A.T. p. 89

³ Ex. 21^{12, 23 ff}; Lev. 24^{17 ff}; Deut. 19^{19, 21}, etc.

⁴ Koberle: Sünde u. Gnade p. 53

⁵ Wellhausen: Prolegomena

⁶ 1 Sam. 15²³

must be atoned by the shedding of blood.¹

§4. Covenant Relationship.

A. There was no covenant relationship in the sense in which it was later conceived², although it was in a way prepared for, by the consciousness of a mutual pact between Jahveh as king and Israel as His servant.³ Jahveh, as Israel's God, helped it in its wars⁴. The conquest of Canaan, the fertility of the soil, national prosperity, in fact everything that made for its welfare were His gifts to Israel. In return for these benefits, Israel was to recognize Jahveh as its God, and of course to obey His commands. In its victories over the nations, Israel celebrated Jahveh's victories⁵ for Israel's wars were His wars⁶, Israel's enemies, His enemies.⁷

¹ Gen. 9^{5ff}; Ex. 21¹⁴; Judges 1⁷; 2 Sam. 3²⁹, 12⁹⁻¹⁰ 2 Kings 5²⁷ etc

² Smend: L. der A. R. p. 117.

³ Kautzsch: Religion of Israel (Dict. of the Bible p. 632) also Montefiore: Hibbert Lectures p. 63

⁴ Num. 23; Deut. 33²⁹

⁵ Smend: L. der A. R. p. 38

⁶ 1 Sam. 17⁴⁵, 18¹⁷, 25²⁸

⁷ Judges 5; 1 Sam. 30²⁶; 2 Sam. 5^{20, 24}

1.) In Jahveh's cause, v. v. in His wars no sacrifice was too great,¹ either for the individual or for the nation, especially when the matter stood in abeyance.² Whoever held himself aloof from participation in Jahveh's wars was cursed (Jud. 5²³), and a punishment commensurate with the offense³ was dealt out to those who refused to obey the commands of the divinely appointed leaders in Israel.⁴ When they carried out these wars they must perceive the sanctity of them and any transgression of that sanctity was punishable. Hence the gravity of Saul's offense in the war against Amalek (1 Sam. 15), since to spare Jahveh's enemies was held equivalent to being His enemy.⁵

B. There was a pact in this sense, and it involved distinctly moral conditions⁶. He had chosen Israel

¹ Köberle: Sünde u. Gnade p. 33.

² Deut. 33^{8,9} Jud. 11^{30,31}; 2 Sam. 11¹¹

³ Köberle: Sünde u. Gnade p. 33

⁴ Jud. 8; 1 Sam. 11^{7 ff.} ⁵ Kautzsch (Dict. of Bible p. 632.) also

Köberle: Sünde u. Gnade p. 33

⁶ See Sellin B. zur I. u. f. R. p. 116

from motives of kindness and mercy,¹ and expected it to display moral conduct². His help was relied upon only when He found His people blameless (Jud. 11²⁷) and disaster was interpreted as punishment for sin.³

§ 5. Divine Retribution.

A. The retributive activity of the Divine was, on the whole, vividly felt. He acted (~~on the whole~~) ~~from~~ from principles of justice,⁴ and His dispensations of good and evil were correlated to (to) human virtue and guilt.⁵ The sinner might for a long time be undisturbed eventually he would be punished⁶ and the punishment mentioned as such for the specific sin.⁷

B. Still the consciousness of guilt does not appear to have been very strong in the early period. The

¹ Kautzsch (Hist. of the Bible p. 634)

² Regarding the Ten Words in their essence as of Mosaic origin. See Kuenen: Religion of Israel, v. I. p. 283 ff. ³ Num. 14⁴³ etc.

⁴ See Sellin: B. zur I. u. f. R. p. 71 ff. For a contrary view see Stade B. T. des A. T. p. 88 ff. Montefiore also thinks the Retributive action was qual-

ified by favoritism (Id. of I. R. p. 3. ⁵ Gen. 38^{7,10}; Ex. 23²¹; Jos. 7; Jud. 9^{24, 57}; 1 Sam. 15; 2 Sam. 12¹⁰ etc, etc. ⁶ Köberle: Sünden. Guide Gen. 44¹⁶; Jud. 9²⁴; 2 Sam. 12^{10, 16}; etc

nation became conscious of the fact that its relation to God was impaired by its guilt chiefly through present sufferings, and conversely the Divine forgiveness was perceived when the suffering was alleviated.² The consciousness of sin followed often after the misfortune

1) Sin was regarded as something not necessarily bound up with human intent. One might be sinful without being aware of the fact.³ This view was maintained in later Judaism in connection with ritual observances, in which case it was possible to make atonement by confession and sacrifice. But in the earlier view one was sinful often through the deed and apart from any intention.⁴

C. Somewhat difficult of explanation are the situations with which the early literature deals in which God Himself is the cause of a man's or a community's sin whom He then punishes for the transgression.⁵ It

¹ Smeud: Lehrbuch. p. 109.

² Ex. 8¹⁹; Jos. 7; 1 Sam. 15²⁴; 2 Sam. 12.

³ Robertson Smith: P. of I. p. 102 f. Stade: B. T. des A. T. p. 20. Smeud: L. der A. R. p. 109.

⁴ Gen. 20, 26; 1 Sam. 14⁴³; 2 Sam. 6⁷ etc.

⁵ See Köberle: Sünden u. Gnade. p. 51

appears that the punishment is the desideratum in accomplishing (H) which His justice must not be questioned, consequently the man or the community must be made to sin.¹ Moreover, it has the partial justification that the sin-incited man is naturally of a sinful temperament. Thus Jahveh hardens Pharaoh's heart (Ex 4²¹ 7³ 9¹²) as He does with Eli's sons who had been guilty of misconduct. (1 Sam. 2²⁵) Isaiah is told to make the heart of the people fat (6¹⁰)² who were already sunk in iniquity.

1) The doctrine is upheld when a particularist³ motive is brought into play as when He hardens the heart of Sihon to deliver him into the hands of the Israelites (Deut 2³⁰) as also with the kings and cities given over to Joshua.

2) The doctrine becomes extremely difficult of explanation in those cases where innocent men⁴

¹ As late as Chronicles (2 Chron. 25²⁰) the view was maintained but notice the change ~~below~~ from 2 Sam. 24¹ to 1 Chron. 21¹

² Cf. Isa. 63¹⁷

³ Montefiore: H. and Gk. Ideas of P. and R. (J. Q. R. v. 5 p. 37)

⁴ 1 Sam. 25¹⁹; 2 Sam. 16¹¹ 24¹.

are involved in disaster.¹ They were possibly considered as punishment for previous sins without it being found necessary to mention the fact or else regarded as an evidence of the all-ruling power of God from Whom, alone, emanated the good and the evil. We must remember, also, that sin and misfortune were, generally, dual aspects of the same thing to the ancient mind.² Where the one was expressed, the other was presupposed. Very possibly the thought is due to the peculiar idiom of the language. At all events it is meant in no wise to reflect on the moral character of the Divine.

§6. Individual³ Retribution⁴

A. Individuals looked to God for help and guidance and in their life-experience attributed to Him the good and evil. And this good and evil carried with them

¹ Smead (L. der A. R. p. 109) et al. make capital of this as showing irrational desire on the part of Jahveh. For an unprejudiced exposition see Sellin's B. zur D. u. j. R. p. 171 ff. ² Montefiore H. & S. Ideas of Providence & Retrib. p. 537. ³ Sellin p. 144 ff and Köberle p. 91 appear to me correct in maintaining that ancient Israel had an idea of indiv. Retrib. altho' it appears this Retrib. was more closely connected with the nation.

an ethical implication i.e. fortunate experience was received as reward for virtue, punishment was the consequence of sin. The banishment of Adam and Eve was punishment for disobedience (Gen 3); the flood was caused by prevailing sinfulness (Gen. 6); Noah was saved because of his righteousness (7); the men of Sodom (Gen 18), Her and Onan (Gen. 38) were killed because of their immorality; Abimelech is slain because of his crimes (Jud. 9⁵⁶); Absalom's downfall is looked upon as a just Retribution (2 S. 18) and on the other hand, his rebellion is regarded as a just punishment of David.¹

1) There were individuals toward whom Jehovah was especially favorable². These were the patriarchs of Israel and the leaders whom He called to rule over it. He showed especial favor to Noah and Joseph. He raised Saul to the kingship (1 Sam. 9¹⁶) also David (2 Sam. 6²¹). He loved Solomon (2 Sam. 12²⁵) So great was the favor they enjoyed that it descended upon others through mere contiguity.

¹. See also Ex 32³⁴; 1 Kings 20⁴², 21; 2 Kings 5²⁷ 9, 2 Kings 17²⁰ etc

². Smead: L. der A. R. p. 103

Thus Laban is blessed on Jacob's account; Joar is spared through the intercession of Lot; Jahveh reassures Isaac for Abraham's sake (Gen. 26²⁴) and His Providence is so unmistakably over him that the men of Gerar make friends with him (Gen. 26²⁸). God's favor to Joseph likewise reflected itself on the Egyptians. Yet this favoritism is based on ethical grounds.¹ The literature of this period insists that God's favor is enjoyed by these individuals to a special degree because of their rectitude. That this is so, is seen from the fact that when they sin they are punished therefore.²

B. The misfortune or downfall of the individual thus signified generally sin against Jahveh; whatever fortunate experience he enjoyed was an evidence

¹ Smead does not so consider it. He makes the favoritism seem unconditioned by the fact of moral behavior. This, to my mind, is not so. To be sure the patriarchs, for example, have ^{sometimes} ~~often~~ scruples toward unethical conduct. Abraham and Isaac even lie. But on the whole, they are signally virtuous. What better proof can be offered against the view of Smead than Joseph's charity & his dealings with his brothers (Gen. 50)? ²⁰ 2. ^{1K. 11¹⁴} 2 Sam. 12¹⁴ etc.

of righteousness. This, of course was a judgment from the external side. Indeed, no other standard of judgment was possible, for the clash between man and his environment had not proceeded far enough to give birth to reflection. Hence innocence could not confidently justify itself in the presence of adversity nor guilt realize itself in the absence of punishment. The wedge of adversity had to be driven deep into men's hearts so that ~~from~~ its throes introspection would be born to absolve or condemn them irrespective of external good or ill, before morality could really triumph or God come to His own as the fountain head of righteousness. This could happen only when the discrepancy between casualty and conduct had so emphasized itself as to leave no doubt of self righteousness, and piety had so valiantly wrestled with the half-doubting question: 'Why do the righteous suffer and the wicked prosper?' that from its very inability to make certain of, it grew to have faith in the justice of God. Early Israel, seemingly, did not ask the

ask the question and was hardly if ever conscious of it.

C. The individual was considered as a part of a larger whole' and therefore it was a logical outcome that he be made to suffer for the guilt of the community.² This is apparent in the numerous cases given in the early literature in which individuals - not as such but as members of the community, which does not however lessen the force of the case - suffer for the sins of others (see p. 21) Abraham's request that, if there are any righteous men in Sodom they should not suffer with the wicked reads like a protest against a prevailing belief.³

§ 7. National Retribution

A. Jahveh was preeminently the God of the nation⁴ and His Retributive Justice was seen most strongly in connection with it. But here again the outcome

¹ Köberle: Sünde u. Gnade, Sünden: d. der A. R. p. 102 ff.

² This is really the converse of the proposition. See p. 21 ³ See also 2 Sam. 24¹⁷

⁴ Sünden: Lehrbuch der A. R. p. 102 also

Kautzsch: Religion of Israel

determined the ethical value of national activity. When the nation was victorious in war, it was a sign of national righteousness, when misfortune fell upon the nation it was a sign of guilt.¹ Having been plagued by Jahveh, Pharaoh is forced to believe that Jahveh is in the right, and he and his people at fault. (Ex. 9²⁷ 10¹⁶) The downfall of Simeon and Levi marked the injustice of the war in which they had engaged². Jahveh's favor is shown and Israel's righteousness vindicated in Israel's victories over its enemies.³ The national consciousness was, on the whole, free from a feeling of guilt against Jahveh, and His Retributive Justice was experienced chiefly, therefore, in the more beneficent sense. The victorious wars in which early Israel engaged were little calculated to effect a sense of national lowliness, and its fortunate life-experience produced a naive feeling of righteousness. Later, when disaster

¹ Smead: *b. der A. R.* p. 102 ff. ² *Ibid.*

³ Judges 5 Num. 23

overtaken the nation, the same natural process of reasoning took place. Misfortune had befallen the nation. Therefore it had sinned.¹

B The family, tribe or nation was in Hebrew Antiquity much more important than the individual.² The solidarity of the family or nation was the great desideratum and the individual was generally considered only insofar as he formed a part of it.³ And as long as this was held there could be no question or doubt of Retribution for the causal connection between sin and punishment, virtue and reward could be longer maintained in national or family life than it could in the life of the (b) individual. It was also easier to believe in a postponed condemnation or reward for the nation than for the individual, due to the brevity of the latter's life. So, the individual righteous could suffer, and the individual wicked prosper, without the Divine Retribution being brought into question.

¹ Of course, not so, with the prophets. ² Wellhausen, *Israel*: *L. der A. R.* p. 104, Montefiore; *Hebert lectures*, et al.

³ Montefiore: *Doctrine of Divine Retribution* (*J. E. R.* p. 2).

1) The solidarity of the nation led to a peculiar corollary of the doctrine of Divine Retribution. The community or family suffered for the guilt of the individual. It was not thought unjust that God should visit the crime of the individual upon the entire nation.¹ If the king does wrong, he is punished but the punishment falls also upon the people in the form of national disaster. The house of Pharaoh suffers from the plague because of Pharaoh's possible transgression.² The wives of Abimelech are stricken with sterility because of his intentions towards Sarah.³ The entire land of Egypt suffers because of Pharaoh's refusal to let the Israelites go. Achan sins and the entire people suffer from God's anger.⁴ With a famine Israel is visited because of Saul's sin against the Gibeonites.⁵ Jehovah's wrath moves against Israel because of the census made by David.⁶ Rain is withheld from the land because of Ahab's wickedness.⁷

¹ Montefiore: H. and the I. of P. and R. (J. A. R. p. 545); Köberle: Sünden. Guade p. 52, et al. ² Gen. 12¹⁷ ³ Gen. 20¹⁸ ⁴ Joshua 7; see also 22.
⁵ 2 Sam. 21; see also 1 Sam. 14. ⁶ 2 Sam. 24 ⁷ 1 Kings 17¹

2.) Not only does the individual suffer for the sins of the community and the community for the sins of the individual, but also the children² suffer for the sins of the fathers.³ This was merely³ the natural outcome of the belief in the solidarity of the nation and the collectivism of life, and just as we have seen that the individual was merged in the larger personality of the nation, so he was likewise merged in that of the family, the only difference being that in the former case the relation was viewed horizontally, in the latter case, vertically.

(a) Neither of these points of view was held to reflect upon the righteousness or justice of God. On the contrary, His goodness⁴ was shown in allowing His mercy to extend farther than His wrath.⁵ It was not a

¹ Montefiore: H. and Sh. I. of P. and R. (J. D. R. p. 546); Köberle: Sündenw. Gnade p. 55, et al.

² Ex 20⁵, 34⁷; Deut. 5⁹; 1 Sam. 3¹³; 1 Kings 11¹², 21²⁹ etc.

³ And not the philosophic truth wherein Kantzsch invests it. We hold to-day that suffering is transmitted but not that sin-responsibility is.

⁴ Köberle: Sündenw. Gnade p. 55

⁵ Ex. 20⁵, 34⁷

sign of His injustice but of His long-sufferance and compassion that the transgressor was allowed to go unpunished and in peace to his death and the punishment inflicted upon his children! And on the other hand the merit of the fathers worked for the welfare of the children. Ishmael became a great nation because of Abraham's righteousness. For the same reason, Canaan is promised as an everlasting inheritance to his descendants.²

C. Reward and punishment were in the preexilic period purely material and limited to this earth.³ God rewarded the nation by giving it fruitfulness of soil and punished it by withholding the rain and making the land barren. The Divine Reward was contained in the single word וְיָשַׁב⁴ which embraced all earthly prosperity, long life, settlement in the land⁵ blessing of children⁶, etc.

¹ Montefiore: H. and Heb. I. of P. and R. (J. D. R. p. 546); 1 K. 11¹², 21²⁹

² 1 Kings 11¹² f. ³²ff ¹⁵⁴; 2 Kings 8¹⁹ etc. ³ Kautzsch: Religion of Israel p. 689; Montefiore: D. of D. R.; Smend: Lehr. der A. R.; Köberle:

Sünde u. Gnade p. 67 ⁴ Achler: Old Testament Theology; Deut 4¹, 8¹, 30¹⁵ etc.

⁵ Ex 20¹² Deut 4⁴⁰, 11⁹ ff etc. ⁶ Gen 12² ff 16¹⁰, 15⁵ etc.

Part II

The Idea of Retribution in the Prophetic Period.§1 Amos.¹

A. The book of Amos begins with a roll-call of the nations, and a threat of Divine Punishment. Damascus, Philistia, Tyre, Edom, Ammon, Moab,

¹ It has been thought advisable, to begin with this, the first prophet who left written records behind him. There is, certainly, evidence in the Bible of a prophetic activity, like in kind to that of the great prophets, and previous to theirs. Yet this evidence is of too fragmentary ^{a nature} (an evidence) to be treated in the short compass of this paper. It may be sufficient to state that Amos had a number of predecessors who preached of righteousness and drew distinctly the relation between human conduct and divine response. Thus, Samuel (1 Sam. 15 (3)); Nathan (2 Sam. 12); Gad (1 Sam. 22; 2 Sam. 24); Ahijah the Shilonite (1 K. 11, 14); Jehu Ben Hanani (1 K. 16); Micahiah Ben-Imelah (1 K. 22); Elisha and notably Elijah (1 K. 18, 19, 21) a fine treatment of whose activity is given in Robertson's Script. P. of J., Kautzsch: K. of P. p. 54 ff; Nineteen Heb. Lectures p. 91-98 etc.

Judah, - all have been guilty of moral offenses against the Divinity therefore will His Punishment overtake them."

But the prophet does not stop here. Beginning with these nations in whom the Israelites could have little interest, he rises to a grand, dramatic climax,²⁾ striking ever nearer home until he finally reaches Israel in the arraignment.³⁾ This was probably inconceivable to the majority of Amos' contemporaries⁴⁾ who thought Jahveh's activity confined to the people by whom He was worshipped. But with Amos Jahveh is the supreme ruler of Heaven and earth.⁵⁾ His Providence is universal. He had brought Israel out of Egypt but He had also brought the Philistines out of Caphtor and the Arameans from Kir.⁶⁾

B. Amos' condemnation of the nations is notable in:

¹⁾ Amos 1³ 2⁵

³⁾ 2⁶

²⁾ Köberle: Sünde u. Gnade p. 133

⁴⁾ R. Smith: Prophets of Israel, p. 132, also Ewald: d. der A. R. p. 180, et al.

⁵⁾ 8¹³ 5⁴ ⁶⁾ 9⁷

that it is not made because of their failure to worship Him, but because of their infingement of moral laws.¹⁾ The same reason was given for the threatened downfall of Israel. There was no doubt that Israel recognized Jahveh as ~~its~~ God. There was no disposition on the part of the people to turn to other Gods. But, according to Amos, its method of worship constituted one of its sins. It had laid all stress upon the cult and disregarded God's moral laws. It profaned by its orgies the House of God.²⁾ It thought itself religious by going to Beth-El and Helgal³⁾ by offering sacrifices⁴⁾ by worshipping Him with songs and viols⁵⁾ whereas what He really desired was that 'justice should run down as water and righteousness as a mighty stream'.⁶⁾ Thus their religious practice is a mockery of His (real) real demands and therefore hateful to him.⁷⁾ And

¹⁾ Robertson Smith: Prophets of Israel p. 132.

²⁾ 2 7, 8

³⁾ 4 5-5

⁴⁾ 4 4 5-22

⁵⁾ 5-23

⁶⁾ 5-24; see 5¹⁴, 15 etc.

⁷⁾ 5-27

her religious is closely bound up ^{with} her social organism because the sanctuaries are the centers of Israel's religious life, and so also of its moral corruption.³¹ They twist the ways of justice³² they violate the laws of morality.⁴¹ The women are just as guilty. That they may pander to their depraved tastes they demand from their husbands the money gotten by oppressing the poor and crushing the needy.⁵¹

1) all this brings about the inevitable consequences: God will destroy them. By reason of His Nature He must destroy them, since their cardinal sin is injustice and His Being is justice. All previous intimations of Divine Anger have been in vain so that God will have to strike a final terrible blow in the form of a devastating

"The social evils against which Amos, and for that matter, the majority of prophets inveigh are the sins of the official and upper classes (Amos 2, 5^{7, 12} 6⁸ Isa. 1²³ 3¹² 10¹⁶ etc. Mic. 3⁹ 7³ Jer. 23¹ etc.) while the poor are regarded as their victims and seemingly do not share in their guilt. (See Kuenen: R. of I. v. I. p. 61 f.)² R. Smith:

P. of I. p. 14.
6) 6, 7, 9, 10, 11
4

3) 2, 6, 3, 10, 5, 7, 8 4-6

4) 7, 8
2 6

5) 4

horde of foreign enemies," probably the Assyrians²⁾

(A) The thought of this disaster runs through the book as a description of the יוֹם הַיָּהוָה. Amos' contemporaries longed for this day as the time when, through Jahveh's help they would triumph over their enemies.³⁾

Amos gave to the day a sadly antithetical meaning. It was for Israel a day of darkness not of light, the day on which His Retribution would be visited upon the iniquitous in Israel as well as in other nations.⁴⁾

(B) That which rendered the idea of national destruction

1) 3 11 2 27 9, 17 9 10 14
4 5 7 9 10 14

2) R. Smith: Prophets of Israel p. 130.

3) Smend: D. der A. R. p. 185; R. Smith: Prophets of Israel p. 132
Kautzsch: R. of I. (H. of the Bible p. 691) et al.

4) The destruction which Amos threatens, while inevitable, does not seem to be a complete one. A remnant will be saved. (C. 9) Smend (D. der A. R. p. 200) considers 9⁸ 10 to be a gloss and declares that Amos has absolutely no hope. Kautzsch, slightly more reserved, inclines toward the same judgment (R. of I. p. 691) Robertson Smith (R. of I. p. 106) seems to grant the genuineness of the passage. Also mention in his Hibbert lectures p. 138

incomprehensible to Israel was the apparent favor of Jahveh toward them. He had selected them from among the nations. He had shown His love by bringing them from Egypt and giving them the land of Canaan (2¹⁰). To all of this, Amos agrees but draws therefrom an unexpected conclusion. Just because Jahveh Jahboth has had more regard for Israel than for any other nation, therefore will He punish them (3²). Greater privilege brings greater responsibility. Jahveh was no patron deity. His favor depended upon their fulfillment of His moral laws, and civil justice.

§ Thus the idea of Retribution received from Amos the striking content that it, and it alone, was the measuring rule of Divine activity toward Israel. This thought was not new. As we have seen, early Israel entertained a distinct notion of Divine Retribution. But the uniqueness of Amos' preachment is ^{that} the unconditional response of the Divine toward human action is Retribution. Jahveh was for him, strictly a God of righteousness and he carried his belief to its full logical consequences, no matter how many cherished

thoughts of Israel's immunity had to be thrown overboard. Jahveh as the God of Justice had to punish Israel because it was unjust. The threat of overwhelming disaster conditioned by the principle of Divine Retribution forms, then, the principal content of Amos' prophecies.

§ 2. Hosea.

A. Israel was unfaithful to Jahveh because of the corruption in its midst² and because of the perverted worship³, only the relation that existed between God and Israel was for Hosea of a more tender kind than it had been for Amos.⁴ Israel was Jahveh's spouse who had broken her marriage vows,⁵ suggested to the prophet by his own life's history, or his son⁶ always treated by Jahveh with the most signal kindness.⁷ Yet that

¹ Both Hosea's and Amos' prophecies were directed chiefly against the northern kingdom.

² 4² 9⁷ 1³ ff etc.

³ 1² 7¹² ff 17¹² ff 5³ 7⁶ 10⁶ etc.

⁴ R. Smith: Prophets of Israel p. 162 ff

⁵ 1² 2,

⁶ 11¹

⁷ 11¹ 12¹³ 13⁵ etc. cf. Mic. 6⁴ ff.

See Köhler: Sünde u. Gnade p. 150

kindness was always repaid with the basest ingratitude extending back to the beginning of Israel's history. And Israel still was unfaithful burning incense to Baalim, arraying herself in her ornaments and going after her lovers. (c. 2.)

B. For this, the nation shall no longer dwell in the Lord's house, in Canaan but 'Ephraim shall return to Egypt, and they shall eat unclean things in Assyria'. They shall no longer be able to observe the cult which was so displeasing to Jahveh²⁾ and which while professing to be a worship of Jahveh was in Hosea's eyes equivalent to the worship of other gods.³⁾ The well-deserved and final catastrophe must take place.⁴⁾

C. While Hosea considered the whole nation sinful he believed in the possibility of repentance and amendment⁵⁾ Unlike Amos' God of stern justice

1) 8¹³, 9³, 11⁵

5) 2¹⁴ 6⁸ 6¹⁸ 10¹² 13¹⁴

2) 3¹, 8¹¹, 13¹² etc., cf. Mic. 6⁶⁻⁸

3) 3¹, 8⁴, 11², 14³ etc.; See R. Smith: Prophets of Israel p. 170.

4) It is unnecessary to go into details of the approaching destruction which Hosea foretells. See 1⁵, 5⁸, 11, 13.

Hosea's God was a God of mercy and love, therefore His judgment will not be a destructive, but a purifying one.¹ The necessity of a national disaster was absolute because the Divinity was a moral Power, but just as necessary for Hosea was the restoration of Israel, because Jahveh's unceasing love must arouse a reciprocal love² and consequent amendment.³ Then the old intimate relation with Jahveh will be renewed⁴

D. With Hosea, Retribution took for the first time the form of Divine love working through a chastening anger. Punishment was the medium by which man was brought back to the path of rectitude. It was not an end in itself⁵, but a means through which Israel should be forced to recognize God; and the religion of stern righteousness was softened by, and blended with the conviction of God's unending love, which later on enabled the Jews

¹ Kautzsch (Dict. of the Bible. p. 692); also R. Smith: P. of I. p. 188

² Köberle: Sünde u. Gnade p. 151

³ 29, 17 ff c. 14.

⁴ 2 19-23 6 1-3 14 4 ff

⁵ According to the interpretation of Smead, Smith, et al. the Divine judgment was ~~not~~ for a moral disciplinary but punitive

to weather every tidal wave of misfortune and to slifle every doubt of His ultimate intentions toward them.

§ 3. Isaiah

A. From the beginning of his prophetic activity, Isaiah announced the judgment of God over both Judah and Israel.¹ Like Amos, he thus freed himself from the popular conception of a national God, whose existence was inseparably connected with the people among whom He was worshipped.² A revolution of the existing order of things was nothing less to the prophet than a proof of God's world-dominion.³ He judges all the nations (3¹³) He is super-natural (33⁵) He puts the whole earth in fear and trembling (2^{19, 21}) Thus Isaiah rose to the conception of monotheism. Filled with enthusiasm by this thought, it was natural that Isaiah should be engrossed by the idea of His sublimity and unapproachable Holiness (C. 6), a Holiness

¹ (C. 2-5, 9⁸-10⁴ etc)

² R. Smith: Prophets of Israel p. 215

³ Ibid p. 226

which is in the strictest sense, however, righteousness!

B. The special charge to Isaiah is one of woe and doom.² The Divine order is given to him (C.6) to make the people so habituated to their guilt that all escape will be rendered impossible³. "But" as Kautzsch well remarks "an entirely literally interpretation of this Divine Commission is neither psychologically conceivable nor reconcilable with the actual ministry of Isaiah."⁴ It is far more probable that bowed in the first awful realization of national disaster - and Isaiah desired, most intensely, national continuation - the idea of a survival was lost, and only later when the thought had become habitual

¹ Robertson Smith: P. of I. p. 227.

² Symbolized in the name of one of his sons (8³)

³ There was, later, the possibility that Judah could avert the disaster by trusting implicitly in the Divine and by entering into no alliance. But as ~~she~~ ^{he} did form an alliance with Assyria Isaiah disheartened dire misfortune. See 5-5 ff. 9, 10, 24 ff 6 11 ff 7 16 ff 8 6 ff

⁴ Kautzsch: Religion of Israel p. 692

did the consolation and hope of perpetuity form a large part of his prophecies.

C. 1) Israel's especial sin is rebellion against the Lord of the universe (1^2) and that rebellion consisted of the violation of His moral laws ($1^{2'bb}$). They have rejected the yoke of the Lord of Hosts and despised His word (5^{24}). The elders and princes of the people grind the faces of the poor ($3^{13-15'8}$); the women are hasty and wanton ($3^{16'8}$); drunkenness is everywhere prevalent ($5^{11'28'bb}$).² Instead of justice being practiced, blood is shed, instead of righteousness, the cry of the oppressed is heard. ($5^{7'10'-3}$) In fact, the whole social organism is pervert, evil is called good, and good evil. (5^{20})³

2) Therefore has the Divine Anger been aroused to a terrible pitch. It had already evidenced itself in the past ~~and~~ and will not be appeased until the evil is exterminated and the nation 'walks uprightly and righteously.'

¹ Cf. also Micah 2^{8bb} 3^{1bb} 6¹² 7^{2bb}.

² No attempt is here made to give the order, even if it were possible, as it is in prophetic attitude toward retros.

note: B.T.

despises the gains of oppressions, refuses bribes, stops its ears from the hearing of blood and shuts its eyes from looking on evil.' (33¹⁵)

D. The majority of the people were undoubtedly doomed to destruction. But Isaiah was firmly convinced especially in his later prophecies that when the judgment came, a remnant of the people would survive. The truth would again be disseminated and a regeneration take place.² The judgment process would be of a sifting and refining character (1²⁵ff) Judah would pass through fire (6¹³) That which would be consumed would be the morally impure (33¹⁴) Then the filth of the daughter of Zion having been washed, and the blood of Jerusalem purged (4⁴), those that remained would be called holy (4³) and would live a simple life in the devastated land.³

E. The doctrine of Divine Retribution was, thus, the supreme factor of Divine activity for Isaiah just as it

¹ To one of his sons, he gave the name 'Shear-Jashub' (7³)

² Robertson Smith: P. of I. p. 209.

³ 1²⁶, 14³², 28^{5, 6}, 29^{17ff} 30^{19ff} etc.

was for Amos, Hosea and Micah, and he also conceived it chiefly from the point of view of punishment for sin, and then of gracious dispensation. It was not relevant to the message which these eighth century prophets bore to discuss Divine Retribution from other points of view. They brought a message of indictment and punishment, and confined within these limits, God's Retribution was exceedingly vital. Human affairs were all awry and needed readjustment and it is on this account that they discuss chiefly God's punitive justice. While they prophesy collective punishment for collective guilt it is by no means certain that they had not outgrown the solidarity idea. In the hope of a saving remnant, they probably included those who were least sinful; still, in that future hope, they probably looked forward to a partial national restoration.

§ 4. Jeremiah.

A. Jeremiah like Hosea, referred to the past¹ as the

¹ Grund: L. der A. R. p. 244. Also Stade: B. T. p. 256

beginning of Israel's transgression.' Like his predecessors, Jeremiah preached against immorality and perverted worship.² What God desired was social righteousness.³ But the people were hardened in their sinfulness. They were to God as a faithless wife to her husband, upon every high hill and under every green tree, they played the harlot.⁴ Judah was worse than Israel, because she had seen God's judgment upon that sinful kingdom⁵ and yet did not take heed. (3^{8,11}) The prophet therefore threatened the direst punishment. The nation would be destroyed through famine pestilence and the sword⁶ and led away into captivity.⁷ Jerusalem which the people imagined immune from attack would be laid waste.⁷

1) 7²² ff 15⁴, 22²¹

2) 1⁵ ff 1¹⁸, 20²⁸, 34⁷, 9¹³, 8¹⁰ 9³ ff; 2^{10, 27, 28} 3¹³, 5⁷, 7¹⁸, 11¹³ etc, etc

3) 7^{5, 6} 22³, etc. ~~4~~ c. 3, 4.

4) In the time of Josiah, he predicted that exiled Israel would take Judah's place.

5) 1¹¹ ff 14^{12, 16}, 15², 16⁴ ff etc. 6) 9¹⁶, 13²⁰ ff, 15², 16¹³, 17⁴, 20⁴ etc.

7) 7¹⁴ 9¹¹ 26⁶ etc.

B. Jeremiah exhorted the people to repentance for the decree was not absolutely irrevocable.¹ God would avert the calamity if the people would return to Him and amend their ways.² But it was useless. Sin was a second nature to them.³ and they could not escape the consequences which such a nature entailed. Nor was the prophet allowed to intercede for them.⁴ Repentance were only possible with another heart.⁵ From his sentence of judgment, Jeremiah makes no exception. The punishment threatened, had failed to make a convert.⁶

C. However, he announced the comforting promise of a return⁷ to those who were deported under Jeremiah, the son of Jehoiakim (24^{5th}) whereas those that remained in the land with Zedekiah would fall a

¹ Kautzsch: Religion of Israel. p. 694.

² 7^{5,6} 18, 22^{3,4} 26³ 35¹⁵ etc. ³ 7^{24,28} 8⁵ 18, etc.

⁴ 7¹⁶, 11¹⁴, 14¹¹.

⁵ Smend: d. der A. R. p. 259

⁶ 6²⁸⁻³⁰ 8^{6,10} 9. 5. 1¹⁸

⁷ Köberle: Sünde u. Gnade p. 198.

prey to the sword, famine and pestilence (24¹³) Jeremiah had a strong future¹ He believed in a future Israel that would take cognizance of the fate that had befallen its fathers, and acknowledging the guilt return and remain faithful to God. Then would He bring back to the land all the dispersed, and cause them to dwell under faithful shepherds.²

D. More than any other prophet Jeremiah gave voice to his own personality. Hence it is quite natural that, in looking forward to the ideal age he should lay more stress upon the individual than his predecessors had done.³ He was sufficiently a child of his own age to look upon God's present retribution as directed toward the nation and not toward

¹ See Köberle: Sünde u. Gnade p. 197

² 23^{3,4}, 24⁷, 30^{3,18 ff} 31³¹⁻³⁴, 32^{37 ff}.

³ Montefiore: Herbert Lectures p. 218. Yet, as he remarks, we must be careful not to generalize too freely on this so-called lack of individualism in the prophets, merely from the infrequent mentions of the individual.

the individual.¹ and some of the present suffering was due to the sins of manasseh² and of the past. (15⁺) But in that future when they should receive from God a new heart then they shall say no more 'The fathers have eaten sour grapes and the teeth of the children are set on edge. But every man shall die for his own iniquity; every man that eateth sour grapes, his teeth shall be set on edge.' (31²⁹⁻³⁰)³ Here the doctrine of individual responsibility is plainly set forth.⁴ This sentiment was in regard to a new order of things that should be wholly different from that of the present. The belief in the solidarity of retribution for the present was, seemingly unquestioned.

¹ Yet that may be due to the fact that he found every individual sinful. ⁵ certainly asserts that if there were a good man he would not be harmed. ² Cf. Lamentations 5⁷

³ Smend (A. der A. R. p. 249 f.^m) questions the authenticity of this chapter and declares that these verses do not refer to individual retribution in the sense of Ezekiel 18, namely that the future generation will not suffer for the sins of the past. I do not see why

should be taken otherwise than literally. ⁴ See 12^{1, 2} 5-10 19 32

§5 Jephaniah and Habakkuk.

A. With Jephaniah also the final judgment will take place on the day of Jahveh which is close at hand and which is 'a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of waste and desolation, a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness.' (1¹⁵)

On that day there will be a great sacrificial feast to which God has invited His guests v. v. the heathen nations who will bring about Judah's downfall because of its corrupt worship (1⁹⁻¹⁶) and social practices (1⁹ c. 3²¹). But the judgment will be world-wide³ in its scope. No one will escape it unless they turn themselves to God seeking righteousness and meekness.⁴

B. With Habakkuk, the doctrine of Retribution is somewhat differently applied. Judah's sinfulness is not so much regarded as that of

¹ Kautzsch: Religion of Israel.

² c. 3 is held by Smead (d. der A. R. p. 244) following Schenck and Wellhausen, and by Köberle: S. w. G. p. 195 to be post-exilic.

³ Smead: d. der A. R. p. 243

⁴ 2³ of Lev. 29¹⁹

the Chaldeans.' Compared with the Chaldeans, Judah is righteous (1¹³) Originally God had used the Chaldeans as an instrument (16⁶)² but they went far beyond His purpose and for their iniquity will be ultimately punished. (1⁷ 2³ 3¹⁵)³

§6. Summary of Prophetic Contribution to the Idea of Retribution.

A. The prophets in their lengthy catalogue of the sins which were hastening the Divine judg-

¹ Köberle (Sünde u. Gnade p. 210) takes the 'wicked' in 1¹³ to refer to Chaldea and the 'righteous' to Judah. Suerd (L. der A. R. p. 241 f. n.) following Wellhausen, also doubts whether the 'wicked' refers to Judah.

² See also Isa. 10⁵ 2³ 3¹⁵ 10^{ff}.

³ If Köberle, Suerd, et al. are right in their assumption that the prophet does not refer to the sins of Judah, then we have the conception, which was later on elaborated of the God-fearing community over against the God-inimical world, together with a conception of the *יום ה'* as a day of Israel's final vindication over the nations.

ment, differed from the preprophetic notions of sin. Sin, with them, was never an unconscious offense against the Deity. It was always a deed of the free will, and man was always a responsible agent. But in seeking to identify the nation with guilt, and in going back to the remote past for the beginning of national sinfulness as Hosea, Jeremiah and later, Ezekiel did the prophets in no wise expressed the belief that man was sinful by nature.¹ Moreover in the utter-

¹ We must remember - as W. Smith (P. of I.), to my mind rightly, says - that the prophets had but one mission to perform, to announce Divine Judgment for human sin, and because of this, they are apt to have an impression upon us of a state of universal and continuous sinfulness. This was probably not so. The reverse of this picture which the prophets might have painted, they did not, simply because it was not germane to their task. (Kautzsch [P. of I. p. 689] denies the truth of this observation.)

native, which they always held out, of averting the doom, repentance was, if not always probable, at least possible'. Only then was the doom irrevocably sealed when a ¹¹²W. x 4 accompanied it.

B. The old belief in a national God had given place (to the prophetic) to the prophetic God of world-embracing power.² The prophets in predicting national disaster - incomprehensible under the old conception of Jehovah - saw therein an evidence of the awfulness and moral nature of the Divine.³ These attributes were revealed in the destruction caused by Assyria and Chaldea, for Assyria and Chaldea as well as other world powers were but tools in His hand whereby He ordered

1. Kautzsch: Religion of Israel ps. 675.

2. Isa. 5²⁶ 10, 19, 23, Jer. 1¹⁵ 27⁶ 28¹⁴ 25¹⁵, Amos 2¹¹
Hab. 1¹² Dent. 4^{35, 39} 7⁹ 10¹⁴ etc, etc.

3. Kautzsch : R. of I. p. 681

on moral lines, His Universe and when in the arrogance of victory these world powers failed to recognize their purpose, they too, were thrown aside).

C. The cult¹ was only an additional cause of Divine Displeasure. It was not so much the worship of false gods which the prophets had to battle against. The nation recognized Jahveh as God but sought to worship Him with external rites only, while hearts and minds were given over to social and economic injustice. Whereas, according to the prophets, social justice should prevail. to establish proper relations between Him and the people. Moreover, the cult which the people observed was idol worship in all but name for both priests and people had taken over the extravagant and licentious

¹Kautzsch (R. of S. p. 685) in contradistinction to most critics declares that the prophets repudiated the sacrifices per se.

worship of their predecessors in Canaan and of their neighbors. These were the two main complaints - social immorality and perverted worship.¹ From early times He had demanded morality and justice, obedience to which, alone could gain His favor. His desire was that Israel's entire life should be governed by them², and all of Israel's sins rested upon a misconception of His wishes.³

D. The belief in Divine Retribution ^{of} among the pre-exilic prophets was most vividly conceived from the side of punishment.⁴ All of the great prophets are filled with a sense of impending punishment by the Divine. And His Retribution was

¹ See Kautzsch: R. of I. p. 687; also Montefiore: Hibbert Lectures p. 127.

² Jer. 9²⁴ ³ Jer. 6²⁰, 18¹⁵; Micah 6⁶⁻⁸

⁴ See Montefiore: Hibbert Lectures p. 122.

the more intensely believed in and expected, because the prophets viewed as so intimate the relation between Him and Israel, and also because, whether it took the form of Justice with Amos, Love with Hosea or Holiness with Isaiah, He was regarded as the fountain head of morality, who, by His very nature had to punish and correct all sinfulness. When the people sinned against His moral laws He had to correct them, and when they sinned greatly, His correction had to take the extreme form of destruction. The relation between Jahweh and Israel was for the prophets a living one, no dead formula, and His attributes, ~~was~~ Righteousness, Holiness, etc. were not metaphysical abstractions. Hence it is that He deals so freely in emotion and that His Retribution~~er~~ Justice is so keenly conceived and so concretely dealt with.

E. In all of the pre-cyclic prophets, the hope of a future salvation plays a great, if secondary part.¹ The zeal which they displayed in the discharge of their duties would be psychologically inconceivable, had they been merely bearers of woe. They sought to save, when their message of condemnation had been delivered, what was still capable of being saved, to rescue the remnant which would recognize God's justice and take cognizance of the fate of their countrymen. "Across the terrors of the Judgment there smiles an era of Grace and Divine Compassion, an era of renewal, when the remnant of the nation shall once more answer to the idea of a people of God and reap the fruits of such a privilege."²

¹ Kautzsch: Religion of Israel. p. 691

² Ibid

§7. Deuteronomy and Deuteronomistic Redactions of the Earlier History.

A. Divine Activity in the history of Israel and the government of the nation is presupposed in Deuteronomy, therefore the idea of Divine Retribution is likewise vivid. Deuteronomy shows how God's love¹ had manifested itself toward Israel at all times. Through His help the people had been led ^{out} of Egypt and guided in the wilderness. And in return for God's favor, reciprocal love² and obedience to Him was demanded.³

Punishment had not been an end in itself but a means of chastening the people. (8²⁰)

1) Punishment was levelled chiefly in Deuteronomy against idolatry⁴, which per-

1. Deut. 7^{8, 13} 10¹⁵, 23⁶

2. Kuenen: Religion of Israel v. 2 p. 23; Smend: G. des A. R. p. 286; Stade: B. T. des A. T. p. 319; Montfaucon: Herbert Lectures p. 14

3. 4²⁹, 6⁵, 10¹² 11^{1, 13, 22} 13⁴, 19⁹, 30⁶

4. Smend: G. des A. R. p. 270; Kuenen: B. of I. v. 2 p. 23¹⁸

puted Jahweh worship' was ^{also} held to be, ² but moral misdeeds were likewise severely punished and when human justice could not be administered, God's Retribution was invoked. Capital punishment was demanded for various crimes ³ as being the will of God, in order that the evil might be eradicated from their midst.

2.) Israel's prosperity and continuance depended upon its social justice ⁴. If they hearkened to His Commands they would be blessed with long life ⁵ and fertility of the soil ⁶. A high, humanitarian standpoint ⁷.

¹ Smend: L. der A. R. p. 288

² 4²³ff; 7^{4,5}, 8¹⁹, 13⁶ff, 13^{ff}, 17²ff, 18²⁰, 29¹⁸ff, 32¹⁶ff

³ 17³ff, 12¹⁸, 21¹⁸⁻²¹, 22²¹⁻²⁴ 24⁷ etc.

⁴ 16^{19,20} 24, 25¹³ff, 27¹⁵ff 28, 30¹⁵ff etc.

⁵ 4^{1,40} 5³³ 8¹ etc.

⁶ 8⁶ff 26¹⁵, 28, 30⁹ 30¹⁶ etc.

⁷ Kuenen: Religion of Israel v. 2 p. 30. Smend
L. der A. R. p. 289

was reached. Kindness was required for the poor the widow, the slave the orphan and the stranger. Montefiore in his Hibbert Lectures² remarks, that "it was not yet possible to get at the people or to secure their willing allegiance to Jehovah's law, except by promises of material well-being or by threats of material distress. This indeed, appears to be true, yet I see no reason for speaking of it in a deprecating tone, and as though it were something to be apologized for. In the absence of a belief in any future life other than that of the nation, it was perfectly natural to wish for a correspondence between conduct and experience. Piety had to look for such a harmony, if only to be assured that its belief in a righteous God had some reason for being.

¹. 15⁷⁸⁸, 14²⁹, 16^{11, 14} 24^{11, 12, 17, 18, 19-22} etc.

². Hibbert Lectures p. 1925.

3) Like Jeremiah, Deuteronomy has a pronouncement upon individual responsibility, "every man shall be put to death for his own sin". The fact that the doctrine while so wholly different from the prevailing conception (at least from the biblical records we possess of it) is yet so infrequently mentioned by Jeremiah and Deuteronomy, lends some plausibility to the assertion of critics, that these passages are not of pre-exilic date.² At all events, the doctrine first became elaborated by Ezekiel.

B. The prophetic belief that the Divine Rule was evident in all of the nation's history, necessitated the corollary that national disaster was Divine punishment, national prosperity Divine reward, and these in turn, the consequences of human conduct.

¹ Deut. 24¹⁶; see also 7¹⁰ and 2 K. 14^{5,6}.

² On the other hand, Kuenen argues for a pre-exilic date. (R. of I. v. 2 p. 35.

The fall of Samaria had been so regarded by Isaiah and Jeremiah. The fall of Judah accentuated the belief. Now all historical misfortunes were regarded as punishment and the sin therefore almost always idolatry. The Deuteronomic revision of Judges, Samuel and Kings carries this belief to an extreme. National misfortunes that befell in the time of the Judges is thus always explained as the Divine punishment for the nation's reversion to Canaanitic rites; redemption from the hands of their enemies as the Divine Favor following upon repentance. This began immediately after the death of Joshua when 'the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord and served Baalim' (Jud. 2¹¹ ff¹⁴) and the repentance was never lasting. As soon as the danger

¹ Stade: Bibl. Theol. des A.T. p. 284 and 319. Also Ewald B. des A. R.

was past, they again forsook God (2¹⁶ ff) again, He punished them and thus it went under Othniel, Ehud, Shamgar, Deborah, Barak, Gideon, etc.¹ "The historical factors" Wellhausen² remarks, "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." In agreement with this conception of the past, is the redaction of the book of Samuel.⁴ 1 Sam. 7³ says that if the Israelites return unto the Lord and put away the strange Gods, He will deliver them out of the hands of the Philistines. They do so and are delivered.³ The institution of the monarchy⁵ seemed later also as a rebellion against God inasmuch as it

1. Jud. 3¹⁻¹¹, 12^{ff} 4, 6, 8 33^{ff} 10⁶ ff, 13¹ ff etc.

2. Wellhausen: Prolegomena.

3. 1 Sam. 7⁹ ff see also 12⁹ ff

4. Montefiore: Hibbert Lectures p. 232

5. Smend: L. der G. R. p. 65, Stade: B. T. der G. T. p. 1. 7-33

signified a reliance on earthly power rather than in the Divine.¹ The period of the king was regarded in like manner. The perverted worship of Jahveh, the Baaloths, Magesbas and Asheras were generally regarded as the reason for national misfortune.² Solomon, because he served idols was told that the kingdom would be rent from him (1K. 11¹¹) For a like reason Jeroboam's house is cut off.³ Judah sinned in like manner⁴ therefore Judah had to fall as Samaria had fallen.

§8. Ezekiel.

A. In the fall of Jerusalem and the destruction of the people which Ezekiel predicted⁵, the prophet saw God's justice vindicated.⁶

¹ Stade: B. T. des A. T. p. 223. ² See 1 Sam. 8⁷ 10¹⁹ 12¹² etc.

² Wellhausen: Prolegomena.

³ 1 Kings 13³⁴ see also 2⁶ 14^{15, 16} 16^{19, 30} II K. 3^{2, 3} 10³¹
13^{2, 3} 17⁷ etc. 4) 1 K. 14²² 2 K. 17¹⁹ 21² 2 K. 12¹² etc.

⁵ Ez. 9⁴ 4¹ 16^{16, 17} 12³ 5¹⁴ etc.

⁶ Surenz: G. der A. R. p. 303; Stade: B. T. des A. T. p. 288

Divine Retribution had finally brought the punishment which that city - more sinful than Sodom (16⁴⁸) or Samaria (16⁵⁷) - well merited.

Ezekiel saw in the history of Jerusalem, a long series of harlotries,¹ &c. idolatry and unfaithfulness,² and corruption of the upper classes.³ Therefore the punishment was inevitable, for with Ezekiel perhaps more than with any other prophet the causal relation between sin and punishment, virtue and reward, whether national or individual, was given most emphatic expression.

B. With the fall of Jerusalem, prophecy conquered the national religion. God was never more the God of Israel⁴ only. His Rule extended to the ends of the earth. Mes-

¹ Kautzsch: Religion of Israel p. 703

² Ez. 8, 20, 16, 23, 14³ ff.

³ Ez. 13¹ ff 17¹² ff 22^{6, 26, 27, 28, 29} 34¹ ff etc.

⁴ Stade: B. T. des A. T. p. 275

sengers of woe had the prophets been heretofore
 preaching God's Retribution in the form of
 punishment. The punishment had come,
 and the prophets now became messengers
 of consolation, with His Kindness forming
 the burden of their teachings. Ezekiel be-
 came the comforter of his people.¹ He did not
 stop with the prophesying of the inevitable
 consequences of sin. The exiles were ~~were~~
 enough in despair² and a feeling of guilt
 weighed heavily upon them.³ (33'¹⁰) Ezekiel
 therefore urged repentance, declaring that God
 took no pleasure in the death of Israel and
 by repentance they could avert it.⁴ A new
 heart would be given, ultimately to them, a
 heart of flesh instead of stone and then they

¹ Smeed: L. der A. R. p. 307

² Montefiore: D. of D. R. (J. D. R. v. 3. p. 4)

³ Stade: B. T. des A. T. p. 286; Smeed: L. der A. R. p. 305

⁴ 18²³ 33" etc.

would walk in the statutes of God.' God would again restore His people to its land.² Its disgrace would be wiped out³ and it would again enjoy prosperity.

C. From the beginning of the exile a new conception of retribution had made itself felt. National existence had been threatened by the prophets and undermined by historical events. A nation without a country - the collective consciousness was, certainly not disintegrated, but at least somewhat weakened. Therefore the individual as such, forged more to the front. He began to establish a nearer relationship between God and himself than had

1) 11 19, 20 36 26, 27 etc
2) 36 8ff, 33ff, 11ff 34 12ff 37 25-28 39 25ff.

3) Somewhat of a recrudescence of the old conception of the מִדְּבָר appears in Ez. 38 and 39 where Gog of Magog is threatened with destruction by God at the time when he shall come into Canaan to conquer it.

been heretofore the case. While there are evidences of individualism in the pre-exilic records, Ezekiel is the first to take his stand definitely and decidedly upon an individualistic basis.¹ The exiles imagined that they were suffering for the sins of their ancestors. The guilt of Manassah, they thought was being visited upon them (Jer. 15).² "The fathers have eaten sour grapes" they said "and the teeth of the children are set on edge" (Ez. 18² Jer. 31²⁹). This, Ezekiel emphatically denies. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him."²

¹ Montefiore: Hibbert Lectures p. 252, 10. of R. R. (J. Q. R. v. 3 p. 4); H. and G. I. of P. and R. (J. Q. R. v. 5 p. 545); Kautzsch: R. of J. p. 702; Suerd: L. der A. R. p. 310; Stade: B. T. des A. T. p. 285 ff; Kuenen: Religion of Israel. v. 2. p. 110.

² Ez. 18²⁰ 14^{14, 16, 18, 20} 33¹² ff.

He even went farther than this, in declaring that the fluctuations in (the) life experience corresponded exactly with the individual's moral status at the time - in a word, that there was an exact ratio between a man's welfare and his worth. As such, his doctrine was as markedly exaggerated and false as the doctrine of the transmission of guilt.

It was disproved by the actual facts of life. Yet it, undoubtedly did render a great service to Israel. It was a ~~note~~ of optimism¹ sounded in a moment of deepest gloom (33¹⁰ 34¹¹); it taught that no sin was so heinous, but that it might be atoned; it expressed man's potential superiority over sin; and by emphasizing the fact that man's entire conduct was the result of his own ordering, it developed, as Montefiore observes, a personal religion.

¹ Montefiore: H. and Gk. I. of P. and R. (J. B. R. 11.5) p. 542.

§9. Deutero-Isaiah.

A. With Deutero-Isaiah, God's monotheism and His Universal world-rule¹ receives its most emphatic expression². He is eternal³, beside whom there is no God⁴. He is the creator of the world⁵ and all that is therein.⁶ He governed the Gentile as well as Israel and throughout the length and breadth of human history, 'one increasing purpose runs'.

1) He had chosen Israel to be His people at the time of Abraham.⁷ Throughout its history, all the vicissitudes in its experience had been divine dispensations for its conduct. (48^{18, 19})⁸

¹ Kuenen: Religion of Israel v. 2. p. 127; also Smeul: L. der A. R. p. 349 and Stade: B. T. des A. T. p. 305.

² Kuenen: R. of I. v. 2. p. 125; Kautzsch: R. of I. p. 706.

3) 41⁴ 44⁶ 48¹² 4) 43¹⁰ 44^{6, 8} 45^{5, 6, 14} 46⁹ etc.

5) 40^{12, 28} 44²⁴ 45^{6, 12, 18} etc.

6) 40^{12, 26} 42⁵ 45^{7, 12, 18} etc.

7) 41⁹ 42¹ 43^{10, 15} 44¹⁸ 46^{3, 4} 51² etc.

8) See also 64⁵⁻⁷ 40² 47⁶ 50¹ 59² etc.

When they sinned, He had given them into the hands of their enemies.' But now He will show himself merciful to His people by blotting out their rebellious and forgetting their sins.²⁾ He will carry them as a faithful shepherd³⁾, for He loves Israel.⁴⁾ Israel shall be filled with His spirit and become God's messenger of righteousness to the nations.⁵⁾

2) The Chaldeans, while fulfilling God's purpose, were more pitiless than Heclesired (41)⁶⁾ They had shown Israel no mercy, they had laid the yoke heavily upon her, like the Egyptians and Assyrians (52⁴⁰⁰), therefore would He punish them (c. 47) Israel had been more than sufficiently punished⁷⁾, God will now

1) 42^{24, 25} 50¹ 57¹⁷ 2) 43²⁵ 44²² 3) 10^{3, 4} 4, 10⁴⁹
40⁴⁶

4) 41⁸ 43⁴, 48¹⁴ 49¹⁵.

5) 41^{8, 9}, 42¹⁰⁰ 49¹⁰⁰ 57⁴ 52¹³⁰⁰ c. 53

6) Kautzsch: R. of S. p. 706; Smend: L. der A. R. p. 351.
7) 40² 57¹⁰⁰

help her.' Israel would be redeemed through the instrumentality of Cyrus²

B. In the so-called 'Servant' passages, the destruction of Israel is also looked upon as a Divine Dispensation, but in entire contrast to the previous prophetic views, it has not been caused by Israel's unrighteousness³. ~~He~~ ^{For} he has suffered, the nations, she has borne the sins of the Gentiles.⁴ He had been given

1) 40¹⁰, 46¹³ 51²² f. 54^{7,17} etc.

2) 41²⁸ 44²⁸ 45¹⁸ 46¹¹. 4) 53

3) Smend (d. der A. R. p. 354) believes that this view of the past has been inspired by the comparison between Israel's conduct and that of the heathens and Israel's justification found in that comparison. But 53^{4,5} declares that the misfortunes have not been caused by the 'Servant's' guilt, hence it is difficult to read a comparative righteousness only, in these verses. I prefer to regard the 'Servant' as the ideal Israel within Israel, following Kuenen R. of D. v. 2 p. 13 ff; Köhler: b. v. made p. 241 ff; Montefiore: Herbert Lee

the great mission, by the Divine, to expiate the guilt of the nations. "He has borne our sicknesses and carried our pains" say the nations "yet we deemed him stricken, smitten by God and afflicted. But he was wounded because of our transgressions, crushed because of our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him and by his stripes have we been healed."

Here we meet for the first time in the Bible; and the last ^{the thought} that suffering may serve a vicarious purpose. It was a wonderful interpretation of misfortune, despite the later, unwelcome Christological interpretation given to it.

tunes p. 276 ff; Kautzsch: Religion of Israel p. 708
Stade also thinks that two Israels are here meant, the one, a people, blind and deaf that has been accordingly punished, the other faithful and true to God. (B.T. des A. T. p. 307)

"We do, however, meet with the thought in the Psalm that Israel is suffering martyrdom for the sake of God.

Part III

The Idea of Retribution in the Post-Exilic Period.

§1 Introduction

A. Retribution was still considered the inevitable consequence of human action and the Post-exilic community believed that national misfortune had been caused by God, because of sinfulness.¹ By this time the belief in Retribution had become, just because of vicissitudes in experience, and of reflection, and possibly of doubt, a clearly expressed dogma. Whatever punishment the nation had suffered had been merited. Israel's history was one long history of guilt and punishment therefore.² Much of this feeling of guilt was aroused by the fact that no amelioration in their condi-

¹ Smead: L. der A. R. p. 395 f.

² Ezra 9⁶; Neh. 9¹⁶ ff Hag. 2¹⁷ Jer. 1⁴ ff 8¹⁴ etc.

tion took place and none of the prophetic promises had been fulfilled. This could only happen as punishment either for their own sins or for those of past generations. And although they looked upon their ancestors' as more guilty than they and asked God not to punish them for the transgressions of the former (Ps. 79⁶) still the feeling of collectivism was strong enough in certain instances to identify them with their ancestors² in guilt-responsibility.³ It was the old view-point of inferring guilt a posteriori, from the condition in which they were to the sin which had caused it.

B. But the feeling of sin - despite many legal prescriptions - was not extreme. Compared with the nations round about, the Jews were righteous.⁴

¹ Köberle: Sünde u. Gnade.

² Stade: Bibl. Theol. des A. T.

³ Neh. 1, 6 Ps 91⁶ Ps 136⁹ Ezra 9⁷ Jer. 7, etc.

⁴ Montefiore: D. of H. R. p. 7. I cannot see however from whence Montefiore draws his ob-

The prophets had said that God had given His people into the power of the Chaldeans because of their iniquity. But the people could not believe, even if it was the will of God to punish them, that He desired such treatment as they received from the heathens' (Isa. 47⁶) When He was only a little displeased the nations had treated them pitilessly (Jer. 1⁵) Accordingly, it was hard to acknowledge the conquering nations as special emissaries of the Divine. And so their misfortunes were sometimes interpreted not as the result

servation "With them (i.e. the national foe) God deals not upon any principle of retributive justice but with that measureless violence, which characterizes His action in any insult offered to Himself." To my mind, it was just that principle of retributive justice which the Jews invoked upon the heathens so that men should say 'Verily there is a God that judgeth the earth' (Ps. 58¹ 98 Isa. 24⁶)

"Sunder: Index A. R. p. 362

of God's Retributive Justice, but of the Gentiles' cruelty, who believed that in conquering Judah, they, at the same time, overwhelmed its God. Thus every offense against Israel was an offense against God. But God counts the tears of His people (ps. 56⁹) He will ultimately avenge Israel.¹

C. According to Haggai (2^{7, 21} ff) God will shatter heaven and earth, and drive the nations to war with one another. This was a recrudescence² of the old Israelitish belief in the יְיָ יֵחַד which the prophets from Amos to Jeremiah had so differently conceived. Beginning with Ezekiel (38, 39) the old national particularism again gave to the יְיָ יֵחַד Israel's final vindication before the world.³

¹ Ps. 18⁴⁸ 33^{18, 19} 5-10 7¹⁶, etc, etc.

² Smend: d. der A. R. p. 369.

³ See Obadiah v. 15 Joel 4¹ ff Zeph. 3⁸ Isai. 29⁵ Mic. 4¹¹

§2 Priestly Code and Chronicles

A. The most emphatic declaration of retribution in the 'priest code' is from the side of punishment. 'Guilt brought a tangible, material punishment.' On the other hand, reward for obedience to the Divine Commands had become undoubtedly spiritualized. 'Holy shall ye be, because I the Lord your God am Holy' is the supreme reason for Holiness given in Lev. 19. 'Virtue for its own sake',² the presence of God with in the community³.

1) The old idea that God avenged any violation of His Holiness appears in the Priestly Code.⁴ Thus Aaron's sons meet an instantaneous death because they had offered a strange fire (Lev. 10). Only the Levites could bear the ark of God (1 Ch. 15¹³).

¹ Lev. 17^{5ff} 20, 24, 26, etc.

² Montefiore: D. of D. R. (J. L. R. v. 3 p. 10)

³ Lev. 26¹² Ex. 29⁴⁵, Ez. 37²⁷ 48³⁵ etc.

⁴ Montefiore: D. of D. R. (J. L. R. p. 9)

Because Uzziah attempted to burn incense, he was stricken with leprosy (2Ch. 26¹⁹)¹

B. The mechanical theory of retribution which attaches a causal relation between human conduct and experience² comes most strikingly to light in the books of Chronicles. The entire past of Israel is viewed in the light of a Divine Retribution working upon the conduct of the nation. Virtue is always rewarded, sin always punished and where facts are either wanting to substantiate this theory or directly contradict it, they are supplied or suppressed. An illustration of this is found in the case of Josiah. 2Kings 23²⁵ tells us that there was no king before or after Josiah who was so distinguished for piety. He was killed at Megiddo. For this the Chronicler must have a reason. He finds it, in dis-

¹ See also Ex. 28^{35, 43}; Lev. 16²; Num. 1^{53, 4, 19, 20, 8, 16, 17}.

² Smead: L. der A. R. p. 417; Wellhausen: Prolegomena; Moulton: Herbert lectures p. 448; H. of B. W. p. 5, et al.

obedience to the word of God. (2 Chron. 35^{21, 22})
 This tendency is seen in the whole work.¹

1) As long as this theory was applied post facto, it could be, more or less, maintaining, for in looking back, both phenomena were apparent, individuals had prospered and had met with misfortune; they had, at times, been sinful and virtuous. The two facts might well be put into causal relation with one another, without the possibility of a denial by proof. And when the theory was applied to the nation, it had contained some truth. The life of one generation does influence the fortune of the next. But when the need of seeing Divine Retribution in the life of the individual was felt, then the causal connection between

¹ See, 1 Chron. 5^{20, 25, 26}, 10^{13, 14}; 2 Chron. 10¹⁵, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17^{20, 37}, 21^{10 ff}, 22⁷, 24^{17 ff}, 25^{16, 20}, 26¹⁶⁻²⁰, 28^{5 ff}, 29^{8, 10}, 32^{25 ff}, 33^{12 ff}, 34^{24, 27 ff}, 35, etc.

it and human conduct could not be so easily maintained. The difficulty found expression in some of the post-exilic literature notably Job, Ecclesiastes and Psalms. The question was faced bravely, because much depended on the answer to it. A denial of Divine Retribution - while seemingly confirmed by the facts of life - would have necessitated for the Jews of that time, seeing for the most part in suffering no other purpose, a denial of God's Righteousness, which in the words of Elihu: חללה לאל מרשע וסדי מעול (Job. 34¹³)

§ 3. Proverbs and Ecclesiastes.

A. In the so-called "wisdom literature" of the Bible (Proverbs, Job and Ecclesiastes) and in the 'Psalter' individualism and nationalism run side by side. The nation is still conceived as an ego 'a living organism'

¹ Köberle: Sünde u. Gnade: p. 259 ff.

but great stress is also laid upon the individual. In the former case, national misfortune still carried with it some meaning of national sin from which the individual, as such, could feel himself free;¹ and by reason of his individual innocence, he could approach God. Therefore there was the more insistent desire to see the Divine Justice evidenced in individual life, and this brought the puzzle of Retribution into existence. The community could comfort itself with the thought that if the Justice of God was not now apparent, it would reveal itself on the day when He would pour out His wrath upon the godless, and would usher ~~this~~ people into the Messianic era. Not so, could the individual, as

¹ Surenud: L. der A. R. p. 459.

such, solace himself. God's Justice must evidence itself in the short, earthly career - since a future life was wanting - of each man. He must reward the good and punish the bad by some tangible demonstration, if reward and punishment were activities of the Divine.

And in the absence of such demonstration, the two correlated questions of retribution were asked: Why do the righteous suffer? Why do the wicked prosper?

B. In Proverbs, the doctrine of retribution is maintained with but few reservations and the causal connection between virtue and reward, sin and misfortune maintained. Recompense follows upon human action; the righteous are rewarded.² They are protected by God³ and are granted long life.⁴

¹) Prov. 11³¹ 12¹⁴

²) 2²¹ 10^{24, 28ff} 11^{25, 28, 31} 13²¹ 19¹¹ 49²² etc.

³) 2^{7, 8} 11^{4, 8}

⁴) 3² 10²⁷ 12²⁸ 19²³ etc.

But iniquity leads to death (in the sense of a judgment)¹; evil pursues the sinner and eventually leads him to destruction.²

1) But, even in Proverbs, if there is no denial of this principle there is some evidence to show that it is a rule with exceptions. The lot of the wicked was often enviable, as is seen in the injunction against envying them.³ In general, however, it was held that if the righteous suffered, his righteousness would be ultimately demonstrated⁴ as also the wickedness of the wicked.⁵ If all else failed, retribution would occur after death.⁶

2) That at least one of the two problems raised by the doctrine of retribution is faced in Proverbs is apparent from 3^{11,12} 17³.

- 1) 10²⁷ 11^{5,6,19} 24²⁰ 2) 1¹⁹ 5²² 11³¹ 13^{6,21} 14³² 16⁴
 21⁷ etc. 3) 3³¹ 23¹⁷ 24¹⁹ etc.
 4) 23¹⁸ 24¹⁶ 5) 10²⁸ 24¹⁶ 6) 10⁷ 14²⁶ 20⁷

Why do the righteous suffer? The answer here given is that suffering is educational, a timely dose of adversity, the purpose of which is to prevent further sin. There does not seem to be here the thought that ~~(that)~~ suffering can be continuous for the righteous.

C. Ecclesiastes², in whom according to Luedd,³ the communal feeling was destroyed, is brought face to face with the problem of individual retribution. He sees the misery which exists in the world, a misery not only dealt out to sinners, for the pious also share in it. (9²) Indeed, the condition of the two are reversed. The pious suffer the lot which should be given to the wicked and the wicked enjoy

¹ See also 2 Sam. 7¹⁴.

² Siegfried's theory as to the composition of Koheleth, I have been unable to accept. His arguments do not seem convincing.

³ Luedd: *L. der A. R.* p. 503

the life which the pious should have.¹

Even if Koheleth admits that God sometimes punishes² such an admittance of a partial retribution (and that it is partial, is evident from passages such as 7¹⁵ 8¹⁴) is equivalent to a denial. Injustice is everywhere manifest (3¹⁶ 4¹) Nevertheless the sinner dies before his time (7¹⁷?), like the shadow, he who does not fear God vanishes. (8¹³?) In the

1. 7¹⁵ 8¹⁴.

2. 7¹⁷ 8^{12, 13} also 3¹⁷ 11⁹ 12^{11, 14}. All of these passages are held by many critics to be interpolations, and seemingly with a great deal of justice for to admit their authenticity is to force upon oneself the impossible task of reconciling absolute contradictions. Yet, admitting that they are glosses, it merely proves, as Köster very acutely remarks, that Koheleth stood alone in his denial, and was entirely unrepresentative in this respect, of a Jewish viewpoint.

fear of God, he declares a man should live! Wisdom is a defense, and gives life to those who possess it; whereas godlessness is folly. The wise, by their wisdom will be enabled to go through life extracting the best from a miserable existence².

1) To this mournful pessimist, the two interconnected problems of the doctrine of Divine Retribution had arisen: why do the righteous suffer? Why do the wicked prosper? To neither question can he give an answer. He does not shove them off by appealing to a collective experience or to a future judgment.³ He raises the problems merely to declare them insoluble.

1) 3¹⁴ 5^{1ff} 7¹⁸

² Kautzsch: Religion of Israel. (H. of the B.)

³ Assuming the unauthenticity of the verses above mentioned

§ 4. Job.¹

A. When the doctrine of Divine Retribution had been entertained long enough to be tested by, and compared with the actual facts of experience, its incompatibility began to be felt. Inner conviction declared an inner rectitude. Outward experience demonstrated sinfulness. How was this to be reconciled? Either the feeling of selfrighteousness was false, or else the doctrine promulgated by Ezekiel was wrong. Both alternatives were considered and held to be possible. In the former case, the ethical consciousness naturally became weakened. Outward events shaped, or

¹ The interpretation here given while influenced by Köberle's *Sünde u. Gnade* pgs 375 ff; Smend's *d. der A. R.* pgs 467 ff; Davidson's *Commentary to Job*; Kautzsch's *R. of I.* p 730 and the presentation in the class-room is in general the writer's own. This is said, to disavow

at least influenced the inner state of mind. Subjected to the buffets of misfortune, the individual began to ask himself, whether some sin perhaps unconsciously committed was not being visited upon him, and with that thought, the feeling of self-righteousness, sometimes left him. In the latter case, self-righteousness vindicated itself by denying the truth of the doctrine as then conceived. Suffering and misfortune received also new interpretations. With the 'Servant' it served, as we have seen, a vicarious purpose.

B. In Job, for the first time the question

for these critics, and the faults that may be found in this interpretation.

'It is unnecessary to the subject under consideration - and in the lack of evidence impossible - to determine whether the book has reference to Israel as a whole, or not. It might have been - Smead denies it - that Job was

of retribution engages the author's entire attention. Properly speaking, only one of the two problems raised by the doctrine of Divine Retribution is treated. The two problems, as we have seen, are: Why do the righteous suffer? Why do the wicked prosper?

The book of Job being the narration of the sufferings of a righteous man, the second problem is only cursorily treated.

②. Job has, to my mind, both a positive and negative solution for the first problem raised by retribution. The positive solution is given in the prologue (c. 1-2) the nega-

meant to symbolize the nation, and the purpose of the book to deny that national misfortunes were due to national sins; to show that Israel although she suffered national disaster was really righteous, and to bring this consoling thought to light up the gloom which old ideas of retribution had effected.

" The interpretation here given depends, of course, upon assumption of the authenticity of the prologue

live solution in the prologue and the body of the book. (C 3-31)

1) That Job is an undoubtedly righteous man, whose sufferings so far as transgression is concerned, are causeless, is shown to the reader in one of the most artistic portions of the book, when transported to the Council Chamber of the Most High, he is given a peep into the inner workings of the Supreme Government. Here, God Himself is a witness to Job's piety (1⁸2³) so that any misery that is to befall him cannot be due to sin on his part. The negative solution is thus given. Misfortune is not necessarily the result of sin. But to stop with this solution, is tantamount to a denial of earthly Retribution. Hence it is entirely necessary for the author to find a positive solution.

2) Satan is given permission to try Job's probity, to see whether it will not break under the woes and ills of life. This offers a positive answer to the question: Why do the righteous

suffer? It is, that their righteousness may be tried, in order that no interested motive may intermingle with it, dragging it down to a barter arrangement between God and man. Man's righteousness is to serve in no wage-earning capacity; it must transcend all thought of misery, all bodily ills. It must break forever from utilitarianism. All this, is to my mind a legitimate conclusion from the prologue. To the objection: Why is not this solution offered by any of the actors in the drama? I would answer as follows: The reader has for the moment been shown of his human limitations and granted a super-mundane knowledge. But it is just those limitations which the actors themselves are never shown of, and therefore they do not reach a positive solution.' Nor does the fact that when God

"More than this: An entirely literal interpretation of the Divine ~~revelation~~ ^{revelation} is here given. Those who object to it, are forced to minimize the

Himself appears to Job without giving any reason for his sufferings, militate against this explanation. On the contrary, it substantiates it. For God's answer to Job is this: "You, as a mortal, cannot hope to understand the vast and coordinated purposes of the transcendent God which display His wisdom and

plain meaning of the prologue. Therefore the burden of proof rests with those who deny the possibility of a literal interpretation of the text. Some critics believe that the only purpose of the prologue was to impress upon the reader, through the fact that Jahveh Himself vouches for it, the certainty of Job's righteousness. But, that very same purpose could have been attained, by a few remarks to the same effect by the author in his proper person. They would have had as much force as God's words do, for the reader would have had no reason to doubt them. In fact, to explain the prologue with all its complicated, supernatural machinery in this way, seems to me a bit forced.

love in all the working of the Universe.' Indeed, had any other answer been given, the power of the prologue would have been vitiated. That, however, which is not beyond the ability of Job, as a human being to know is that he is righteous, and for that reason, he retains by a natural process the sense of innocence.

a.) It will be noted, that something far more important than the question as to the correspondence between conduct and welfare is involved in the book of Job. And that is the question as to God's Justice. For the Jew of that time to 'doubt earthly retribution, and at the same time never to rise to the absolute conviction of a future retribution was equivalent to his doubting God's Justice. Now, those who deny that the author of Job offers or attempts to offer any positive solution, attribute to him this doubt, from which even the Jahweh speeches do not

'in contradistinction to 'supernatural'.

save him.' But, were the prologue taken as the positive solution offered by the author, then there could be for him no questioning of Divine Justice, and it would be a solution eminently in consonance with the deep intellectual insight which the author possessed.

D. The body of the book is taken up with the attempt to prove that an ethical judgment may be made a priori. This can be done naturally. Job denies the suggestion of his friends of a hidden fault because both mind and conscience declare for innocence. He does not deny that all men are more or less sinful, that, in an absolute sense, God alone is righteous (c. 14 cf. 4th, 15th 14-16) but that does not invalidate the denial that suffering is not necessarily

¹ For then his position would be virtually this: "God must be just, although why, I do not know; as all the old conceptions of Him and His dealing with men are false;" just enough of a saving interest in the cause, to save him from absolute denial.

the result of sin, for if such a theory of retribution were true, then God would dispense punishment in some corresponding ratio, a little punishment for a little transgression. Sinful as he (Job) may have been as 'man that is born of woman' ^(14th) such sinfulness will not account for the magnitude of his sufferings; ^{and} the disparity that exists everywhere in the world between the wicked and their eternal lot is terrible.²

E. Job draws logical conclusions from his observations of life, conclusions which, however, despite their logic are displeasing in a religious sense, and incur for him a guilt of which he had been heretofore blameless, a guilt which speculation, not conduct, has caused. True religion must not speculate on the why or ^{the} wherefore. For it resignation

¹ C. 10, 13, 16, 17, 19 etc.

² 21st 7th 24, 12th

and faith must be sufficient. 'God has given, God has taken. Blessed be the name of God.' But Job does not rest content with that. Denying as he did any imputation of guilt save that which common humanity must needs incur, he is led beyond the limits of the religious realm, into that of the intellectual, when he seeks to know the reason for suffering. He is therefore compelled under the exigency of intellectual limitation to doubt the presence of Divine Justice in the government of the world. He sees to be sure the working of the Divine but it is through an omnipotence devoid of moral content. This leads him almost to the verge of blasphemy. (9²² 40, 12) Had he stopped there, he would have been doomed to religious shipwreck. But he does not. For the reader, the intellectual difficulty has already been solved by that peep behind the scenes which he received in the prologue. Of course, that solution

is denied to Job. He has almost ruined in attempting to find an intellectual solution. Poetic justice as well as human finitude demand that he be left intellectually unsatisfied. Through his religious and emotional nature he is brought to a satisfying conclusion. When most exhausted intellectually, the conviction bursts from him in triumph 'I know that my redeemer liveth!'. He begins to see in God a unity in duality. On the one side he recognizes in Him the God of power, who evidences Himself in the wonders and awfulness of nature (C 26), on the other, a God of love and mercy. (16¹⁹ 19²⁵ ff) And this gives what may be called the religious resolution of the difficulty; resignation and trust, such as come when the emotional nature of man trans-

¹ Class-room presentation.

sends the intellectual, and faith takes the place of proof.

§5. The Psalms.

A. The truth of the doctrine of Divine Retribution was never absolutely denied by the psalmist, but in its mechanical correlation of condition to conduct, was questioned from two sides 1) the discrepancy between the wicked and their lot 2) between the righteous and their experience.

1) The post-exilic community recognized that wickedness was practiced with a certain amount of impunity. Many among the Jews were iniquitous¹, proud and violent² who scoffed at justice³ and perverted it.⁴ despoiled the righteous⁵ and ignored God's law.⁶

1) 9, 17, 50 16 ff 38²⁰ 41 5 ff 3^{2,3} etc. 2) 17^{10,11} 73⁶⁻⁸ etc.

3) 36^{2 ff} 73⁸ 4) 26¹⁰ 27¹² 35^{11,12}.

5) 17⁹ 35^{10,25}

6) 50¹⁷

In the misfortunes of the pious, they sneeringly asked 'where is thy God' and denied by their deeds His rule on earth². Yet they continued in their wickedness³ because the psalmist cried to God to punish them.

2) Although the attempt was made to regard the sufferings of the community as the result of their own sins⁴ or of the sins of past generations⁵ or as a divine test and discipline⁶ still the misfortunes under which the community labored were out of all proportion to the sin acknowledged and in general⁷ felt so. And because of these misfortunes, v. v. because of the causal relation to guilt in which they were placed (c. 44), a protest which, to my mind, was perfectly

1) 42^{4,10}

2) 53^{2ff}, 14^{1ff}

3) 10, 37⁷, 39, 44, 49, 73¹²

4) 25^{7,18}, 32⁵, 38^{4,5,6}, 40¹³, 41⁵, 69⁶, 79⁹, 90⁸, 119⁶⁷

5) 79⁸ cf. Lamenta. 5⁷

6) 11⁵, 39¹², 66^{10ff}, 94¹², 118¹⁸, 119^{67,71}

justifiable, arose.¹ And that protest was—as in the case of Job—against the imputation of sin. The assertion of righteousness was flung in the very teeth of misfortune.²

B. On the whole, however, the writers of the psalms believe implicitly in the working of a future retribution on earth. The suffering of the righteous would be transitory, and changed into happiness and joy³ for 'weeping may tarry for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.' And even if suffering clings to the righteous, its dross is mitigated by the thought that they could always hold spiritual communion with God, and in this find their delight⁴ for prayer was more to be desired

¹ Montefiore is inclined to condone the majority of Christian critics, to sneer at the psalmist's assertion of righteousness.

² C. 17, 18, 24, 41¹³ 44^{18, 19} 69, etc.

³ 18^{21, 25} 30¹² 32¹⁰ 34^{19, 23} 37^{48, 49, 25, 37} 92¹³ etc.

⁴ C. 16, 23, 27, 63, 73, 84

than ought else, in the nearness to which it brings man to God. (145¹⁸) The high water-mark of religious fervor was reached in this simple faith in God, in which despite all obstacles the pious stood firm; and so far had Jewish piety advanced that, in the solace of God-communion it could close its eyes to its own suffering.

But the condemnation of the wicked must and will be clear and unmistakable. The heathens will be punished for their sins¹, the evil doers within the community will be likewise visited.²

1) In awaiting the day of judgment, the pious prayed that the nations (might) be destroyed and the wicked brought to judgment.³ It was

1) 9^{16, 20, 21} 2⁵, 11⁶, 20⁹, 47 etc. cf. Lam. 1 21 ff 3 64 ff 4 21, 22

2) 6¹¹ 7^{7, 9}, 11⁶, 34^{17, 22} 37³⁸ 49, 55²⁴ etc.

3) The wicked in their transgressions sinned against the very essence of His Being. They were therefore His enemies also (68² 74 4, 22, 23, 10 83³ ff)

a very natural and a very pathetic prayer. In the darkness of misfortune, not their own terrible lot could ~~can~~ make them falter in their allegiance or doubt His Righteousness. But something was necessary to show that they did not worship God or call Him the God of Justice in vain, that He still ruled in truth and righteousness. What else, than that His Retributive Justice should engulf the wicked? It was, as though they had cried: 'O God, show us a sign!' and as such, was inspired not by a desire for Divine Vengeance, but for a confirmation of their own religious convictions. Critics of the psalms who allow prejudice to warp their judgment speak of this tendency in very disparaging terms; one of them Staerk² in the following

"That the author of ps. 73 who attained to such lofty spiritual heights as to find in communion with God, the consummation of his desires, can find in the sudden and overwhelming destruction of the wicked proof positive of God's triumphant rule on earth substantiates this view.

² Staerk: Sünde u. Gnade

words: "we have to regard this kind of inharmonious piety as a typical life-declaration of the Jewish religion" ¹⁷

C. It is impossible to state absolutely whether the doctrine of a life after death is or is not expressed by the psalmist. The chief references to this thought are given in psalms 6⁶, 16¹⁰⁻¹¹, 30^{4,10}, 39¹⁴, 49^{11,16}, 73²⁴, 88^{6,11,12}, 115¹⁷. Psalm 6⁶ 30¹⁰ 39¹⁴ 88^{6,11,12} 115¹⁷ seem to imply that Sheol is a place where both righteous and wicked, irrespective of distinction, are gathered in death'. Psalm 49¹⁶, 16¹⁰⁻¹¹ 73²⁴ are taken by many critics to refer to the messianic age, ² and to the immortality of the Jewish community. Montefiore thinks it unlikely that these passages imply a belief in immortality but he thinks the psalmist is 'trembling on the verge of a fuller faith' ³ and 'moving forward toward a conception of life and death

¹ Cf Eccles. 3^{19,20} 9¹⁰; Isa 38¹⁸

² So Cheyne, Köberle, Smead, et al.

³ Bible for Home Reading Part 2. p. 504.

in which Sheol for those who love God can have no place."¹ Probably the most that can be said is, that the belief in immortality is implied rather than expressed.

§ 6. The Solution.

A. The belief in retribution was too vital to be abandoned by the religious consciousness, even though that consciousness arose thereby to heights otherwise unreachd, for piety although it may reject a crass material relation between itself and the externals of life must nevertheless find itself more closely united to the Divine than even a conviction of inner communion can give. In early times when there was still harmony between man and nature, when man could behold in every incident and every phenomenon the direct intervention of God, the earth

¹ Montefiore: Bible for Home Reading Part 2. p. 595

was an all satisfying place for the Divine
 Rule over men to be demonstrated. But when
 man began to clash with his environment; when
 the national sun had set and the individual
 could no longer find in national prosperity
 compensation for individual adversity; when
 for a national regeneration he had to await
 a remote Messianic era; when thrown back
 upon himself ~~to~~ he tried to discern a just
 ordering in his life, and failed to do so; when
 his moral and religious nature rebelled at
 the thought that for national sins long since
 committed, the Divine Anger was still unsatisfied;
 when instead of the harmony he looked for between
 conduct and condition, the reverse took place;
 when the wicked prospered and mocked at the
 sufferings of the righteous; when the heathen
 nations, without fear of the true God, trampled
 upon the people that carried the thought of Him
 continually with them, then was felt the nec-
 essity for something that would explain away

these seeming reflections upon the justice of the divine government of the Universe. And slowly the thought took form, to be barely articulated in the Bible, but elaborated in later Jewish literature that there was a life over and above this ~~earth~~ earthly existence which should most truly dissipate all doubts as to the justice of God.

B. The most explicit¹ statement of this in the Bible is found in Daniel 12, where a partial resurrection is promised both of the godly and of the ungodly, the former to receive reward, the latter, punishment. The most remarkable thing about this is, that the belief had not been previously enunciated. It certainly speaks volumes for the excellence of Jewish piety, as Montefiore observes² that amid all the stress of life and the

¹ Also Isa. 26¹⁹ which is generally held to be of late post-exilic date. Surenbrant takes it to refer to the pious who have died (b. der A. R. p. 479) Also Montefiore: Bible for Home Reading p. 368.

² Montefiore: Herbert Lectures p. 455

unsatisfactory evidence of the Retributive principle the Righteousness of God remained unquestioned.

1) There certainly are traces in the Biblical books older than Daniel, of a belief in resurrection but in the absence of any evidence to the contrary, we have no right to assume that they meant more than a national restoration. This is probably what Hosea thinks of¹ in 6². The prophecy of Ezekiel concerning the dry bones (37) refers probably also to a national restoration.² Job 14¹⁴⁻¹⁸ expresses the wish that there might be a life after death but does not there rise to the conviction that it will be so. In 19^{26, 27} he utters that conviction, but part of the text is obscure and it seems strange that he should not afterwards repeat a thought so novel.³

¹ Smeul: L. der A. R. p. 479

² Ibid; also Köberle: Sünde u. Gnade p. 225

³ Kautzsch (R. of S. p. 730) denies here a reference to immortality. He holds that 19²⁵⁻²⁸ refers to this life.

It is in Daniel that we find most satisfactory evidence. Formerly those who died were content to have themselves, according to the idea of solidarity, perpetuated in the national existence. But with the growth of individualism it was felt unjust that the martyrs who had died should be unrewarded or the wicked unpunished, just because they had died before the Judgment Day.

C. This view once promulgated and later refined into spiritual immortality became one of the fundamentals of the Jewish religion. It performed a yeoman service. It strengthened the religious consciousness and destroyed forever the relation between conduct and experience, by minimizing the previous meaning of suffering, and giving it a new interpretation. It spiritualized morality as nothing else could, by doing away with the expectation of material reward and punishment, and lifted high above all possibility of human questioning, God's moral government of the universe.