

THE HEBREW UNION COLLEGE-JEWISH INSTITUTE OF RELIGION
New York School

THE CONCEPT OF A LIFE AFTER DEATH IN BIBLICAL THOUGHT

by Seymour Rosen

In recent years, due probably in part to the world crisis which began in 1929, scholars have begun to re-evaluate the biblical material and to incorporate the extra-biblical material dealing with immortality, the soul, the hereafter, the Sheol, and the like.

Mr. Rosen has made an independent and pretty exhaustive study of the Hebrew Bible with the view to determining what, if anything, the Israelites of biblical times had developed in the nature of these ideas. He has found that there is no basis whatever for the opinion, sometimes expressed, that there developed during that period the belief in a life after death, or that there was anything in Sheol which promised more than the end to life on earth, a lifeless existence for all humanity. The idea of a life after death, of a resurrection, first came into being in the course of the struggle of the pious Jews against the idolatrous acts of Antiochus IV and Epiphanes of Syria about 166 B.C.E., and this belief is first expressed in the book of Daniel. (Incidentally, it is only the "Righteous" (Zaddik) who are there promised resurrection.)

This belief came to be developed in Pharisaic circles and constituted one of the most fundamental points at issue between the Pharisees and Sadducees, the latter refusing to incorporate into their system of theology such a novel and radical belief. After the destruction of the second Temple in the year 70 C.E., when the Sadducees as a group disappear from the scene of history, the belief in a hereafter and in some kind of resurrection became cardinal in Jewish life and thought.

While there is much more that could have been done with the subject, and while more of the secondary material should have been utilized, the thesis as submitted by Seymour Rosen is just acceptable for the Master of Hebrew Letters Degree.

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Dr. Harry M. Orlinsky

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DEDICATION

I wish to acknowledge my indebtedness to Doctor Harry M. Orlinsky for his constant encouragement and constructive and detailed criticism during the course of this research. It was because of his supervision and guidance that this study was undertaken and completed.

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During World War II over ten million men were called into the armed services of our country. There were very few families who did not have a brother, son, father, or relative in the service. As the global war wore on, casualty lists were published weekly. Everyone began to wonder whether those whom they knew in the armed forces would return, or whether they would have to make the supreme sacrifice.

When the war ended, the nearest of kin of those boys who had died overseas, were asked whether they wanted to have the remains of their loved ones brought back to the United States for burial. The greater majority of these people requested this service from the government, so that they would be able to place the remains of their dear ones in a family resting place. As the boats touched our shores and the coffins were unloaded, newspapers carried the announcements of dates and times of funerals, people began to wonder and think. Death seems to be the catalytic agent that brings a family closer to religion.

For thousands of years, man has stood inquiringly at the portals of death, trying to look ahead into the unknown, and wondering about his exit with an uneasy feeling of fear, hope, or resignation. Man has refused to accept death as the end of all things. The belief in a survival after death has strangely fascinated the

immagination of man. We have been taught that the basic law of chemistry is "Matter can neither be destroyed nor created; it can only be changed." When a person dies and his mortal body is placed in the earth, we know that it disintegrates there. But what happens to the guiding force, the soul, spirit, or conscience? Does that disappear or disintegrate like the body?

It has been the contention of Orthodox Judaism that death is not the final end of man. In years to come, when the Messiah will appear on earth, he will be followed by a physical resurrection of all mankind. This belief is generally founded on the text of the Old Testament. It is our contention that the Old Testament does not mention a life after death, until the book of Daniel in the Macabbean period. I assume that the authors of each Book in their writings give us the general belief of the people during their lives. Therefore I intend to go through the Old Testament verse by verse, and with the help of modern commentators, discover what the belief of the Israelites was during biblical times.

The Patriarchal Period

A. Babylonian

Since the Israelites and the Babylonians both have Semitic origins, we expect them on general grounds to have had some common outlook. Since the early Hebrews came from the region of Ur of the Chaldees and brought with them ideas prevalent in their old home, it may be well to introduce this study with a description of the Babylonian and Mesopotamian ideas of future life.

The Babylonians were keenly concerned with the government of this world by the gods. They had some sort of a belief in a life to come, but it was minor and occupied a relatively small place in their thoughts.¹⁾ Their literature, therefore, has comparatively little to say about the future life. They were very conscious of the obligations of proper living and they believed that the gods watched carefully all their actions. Even though the gods were thought to be "the punishers of evil and the rewarders of good" it was primarily the present life that was affected by punishment and reward. The Babylonian gods preferred that a man should walk uprightly, but his future salvation did not depend on his conduct in this life. We might say that the question of salvation did not arise for the Babylonian;

1) Intellectual Adventures of Ancient Man-H.A. Frankfort-P.25

after death, a common fate awaited all. This idea can be expressed in another way: the gods of the Babylonian and Assyrian peoples were gods of the living, who punished the doers of evil and rewarded the doers of good in their life-time.

Let us consider the Babylonian prayers. They are almost all exclusively for temporal benefits, that is for a long life, continued prosperity, victory over the enemies, and so forth. Only in rare instances, do we find a prayer for spiritual gifts. There are noble prayers, but nowhere is there found a prayer for a happy eternity, or for help to avoid the wrath of the gods in the world to come. It was their belief that the life of the pious was prolonged, and the life of sinners was cut short. Sickness and calamity were the punishment of sin.

Throughout the Babylonian literature, as well as in the Old Testament, we find verses that cannot be read and understood at face value. The writers were literary men and were given freely to the use of metaphors. "To live" for the patient was to recover health. The expression "to make to live" was to restore health to him. It is a mistake to make too much of these expressions, and to see in them an indication of a belief in resurrection. There was the question rather of the healing of a mortal sickness. We cannot be misled because

several of the gods, Marduk, Ninib, and Gula were called "restorers of the dead to life" into the belief that the dead could be brought back to life. These gods were appealed to for a special purpose, such as the delivery of a sufferer from disease. The gods are appealed to as against the demons, whose grasp meant death. Ninib and Gula are viewed as gods of healing. To be cured by their aid, was to be snatched from the jaws of death. Then again Ninib and Marduk as solar deities, symbolized the sun of Spring which brought about the revivification of nature. The return of blossom and vegetation suggest that those gods had filled with new life that which appeared to be dead. The trees that seemed dead began to blossom, the bare earth became covered with grass and flower. In such a way, the suffering and sick individual could be awakened to new life by recovery. This "restoration" lay in the power of the gods, but once a man was carried off to Aralu, (i.e. died), no god could bring him back to this earth. This is the true meaning of these expressions, because the underworld was commonly called "the land without return".

B. Mesopotamian

The Mesopotamian way of looking at life was to consider the entire universe as a state. And so obedience must necessarily have stood out as a prime virtue. Therefore we do not wonder when we read that in Mesopotamia the "good life" was the obedient life. The individual was in the center of ever widening circles of authority which checked his freedom of action. The nearest and the smallest of these circles was his family: father, mother, older brother and older sister. There is an interesting hymn which describes a coming golden age, and we discover, that the character of that age was obedience.

- 1) Days when one man is not insolent to
another,
when a son reveres his father,
days when respect is shown in the
land, when the lowly honor the
great,
when the younger brother....respects (?)
his older brother,
when the older child instructs the
younger child and he (i.e., the younger)
abides by his decisions.

The Mesopotamian is constantly admonished:

"Pay heed to the word of thy mother as
the word of thy god"

"Revere thy older brother"

"Pay heed to the word of thy older
brother as to the word of thy
father"

"Anger not the heart of thy older
sister".

The Mesopotamian looked with disapproval on the society that had no leader. So an orderly world is unthinkable without a superior authority to impose his will. The individual had a personal god which was the personification of his luck and success. To attain success was to acquire a god.

Now this theme of obedience to the family and the gods was the essence of ancient life in Mesopotamia. So what did man tend to gain by leading a good life? Man was created to be the servant of the gods. A diligent and obedient servant could call on his master for protection. A diligent and obedient servant could expect to receive from his master promotion, favors, and rewards. A disobedient servant, moreover, could hope

for none of these things. Thus the way of obedience, devotion and worship was the way to achieve protection. This was the way to earthly success, to the highest values in Mesopotamian life: health and long life, and honored standing in the community, many sons, and wealth. The personal god is near and familiar, and he is interested in the welfare of his worshiper. One may talk to his god and plead with him like a child does with his parents. Many of the Mesopotamians frequently wrote letters to their gods. Perhaps they thought that one could not almost be certain to find the god at home when he called, but the god would be sure to look at his correspondence. Here is a sample of such a letter:

"To the god my father speak, thus says Apilodad,
thy servant

Why have you neglected me (so)?

Who is going to give you one who can take my
place?

Write to the god Marduk, who is fond of you,
that he may break my bondage, then I shall see
your face and kiss your feet!

Consider also my family, grownups and little ones;
have mercy on me for their sake, and let your
help reach me!" 1)

1) IAAM - P. 205 - Jacobsen

Here we have an individual asking his personal god to intercede with the big god on his behalf. And so we see that good will and obedience may win the good will of a personal god, who in turn may intercede with a greater god. The people were interested in temporal rewards. A good life would be rewarded on this earth by the gods, and no mention is made of receiving any kind of a reward after death.

C. Genesis

The concept of life after death occupied no place in the thoughts of the early Hebrews. Life in the Old Testament was identified with perfect obedience to the Divine will and with retention of Divine favor. When God created man and placed him in the garden of Eden, He said Gen 2:16,17

מכל עץ הגן אוכל תאכל: ומעץ הדעת
לוד ורע לא תאכל ממנו כי יום
אכלק ממנו מות תמות:

"Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."

When man disobeyed God and ate of the fruit of the tree of knowledge, he passed from the state of bliss in the Garden of Eden, with the possibility of living forever, into the mortal state, with the certainty of dying, sooner or later. And so a new condition emerged, to which not only Adam, but all his descendants, in every part of the world, became subject.

Death is the common lot of man, firstly because of his own personal sins, and secondly because it is part of the inheritance which Adam transmitted to his descendants.

In Genesis we find that God did not want to grant Eternal life to Adam after he had disobeyed Him, so,

Gen 3:19 קצת אכילת תאכל לחם עד שוק ארץ
האדמה כי נתתה לקחת כי-עפר אותה
ואל-עפר תשוק:

"In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken; for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return".

Along this trend of thought, we read that God did not want man to live forever, and so He says Gen 3:22,

ויאמר יהוה אלהים הן האדם היה כאחד ממלא
אנשים טובים ורע וצלה בן-ישראל וברו וקח גם
מגד החיים ואכלו וחי לעולם:

"And the Lord God said: 'Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil; and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also

of the tree of life, and eat and live forever".
And so God drove Adam and Eve out of the Garden of Eden, so that they would at the end of their days, perish, like all future mankind.

If the author had believed in life after death, he would surely have made some mention of it here when Adam was driven from the Garden. But no mention is made. Then we have God saying in Gen 6:3

לא-יבון לחי קאדק זעזק דעלך קואן דע ק
והיה ימיו מאה וצערף שנה:

"My spirit shall not abide in man for ever, for that he also is flesh; therefore shall his days be a hundred and twenty years." In this instance we have God Himself saying that all men must come to the fate that awaits them. He even puts a time limit on human life. And yet no mention is made or no idea is hinted as to what will follow when the individual dies. Man is flesh and will go the way of all flesh and disintegrate in the earth, and still no mention is made of a life after death.

We are confronted in the fifth chapter of Genesis with the stern reality of death. Regarding man after man, mentioned in that chapter, the end of his life's story is given in the simple record ונפ'

"and he died". Just this single word is said about them and nothing more.

When we read about Noah we discover that in

Gen 6:9 גַּם אִישׁ צַדִּיק תָּמִיד הָיָה קִדְרַתָּיו
אֶת-הָאֱלֹהִים הִתְהַלֵּךְ גַּם:

"Noah was in his generation a man righteous and whole hearted; Noah walked with God." We read that the entire earth was corrupt before God. And God decided to destroy every living creature except Noah, his family, and certain animals. Certainly the author in describing this righteous individual who "walked with God" and knowing that soon the flood would appear and wipe out almost the entire earth, would have made mention of a hereafter, if there would have been such a belief at this period. But nowhere in the entire story do we have God or Noah speak about what would happen to the people who would die in the flood. So surely we can suppose that the people in this period had no thoughts on a life after death.

As each patriarch dies, he is "gathered to his people". This phrase is no more than a metaphor. As the authors of this Book were given freely to the use of metaphors, I can see no reason why it doesn't apply here in this case. The only meaning that we can gather from this phrase is that the individual has died, and the author wished to express the event in a literary manner. Up to this point in our narrative, not a single

idea is introduced that would lead us to believe that the people at that time had or were developing an idea of life after death. Therefore there is no reason why a foreign or alien thought should suddenly be introduced. And so this phase can mean no more than that the individual had died, just as his forbears before him. When his children die, they also will "be gathered", and join fathers who have died before them. For example

we read in Gen 25:8,

וַיָּמָוֶה אַבְרָהָם בְּשֵׂנִי וְיָמָוֶה
וַיִּסָּפֶד אֶל-עַמּוּנוֹ:

"And Abraham expired, and died in a good old age, an old man, and full of years; and was gathered to his people." And farther on we read in Gen 35:29,

וַיָּמָוֶה יִצְחָק וַיִּסָּפֶד אֶל-עַמּוּנוֹ לִקְנוֹן
וַיִּקְדְּרוּ אוֹתוֹ עֵשָׂא וְיַעֲקֹב בְּגִיּוֹ:

"And Isaac expired, and died, and was gathered unto his people, old and full of days; and Esau and Jacob his sons buried him." Then we read where Jacob charges his

sons and says to them in Gen 49:29,

אֲנִי גִּסָּפֶד אֶל-עַמּוּנִי קְדְּרוּ אוֹתִי אֶל-אֲדָמָה אֶל-הַמַּעְרָה
אֲשֶׁר דִּשְׁפָה עַפְרוֹן הַחִתִּי:

"I am to be gathered unto my people; bury me with my fathers in the cave that is in the field of Ephron the Hittite." Again we see the longing of Jacob to be near his kin even in death. And when Jacob died, his children obeyed his wishes.

In Isaac's death we read Gen 49:33,
וַיֵּאסֶף רַגְלָיו אֶל-הַמֶּטֶה וַיָּאָז וַיֵּאסֶף אֶל-עַמּוּנוֹ:

"He gathered up his feet into the bed, and expired,
and was gathered unto his people."

Let us consider the life of Abraham the first
patriarch. When the monotheistic idea seized him, he
left his father's household to travel to Canaan. When
God told him "לך לך", Abraham, without a word of
hesitation, broke camp, took his family, and went to
this strange new land. In his old age, think what a
blessing it was to him to see a son of his own flesh
and blood. Yet when God ordered him to prepare Isaac
for sacrifice, he didn't hesitate, but hastened to do
God's bidding. In not a single instance do we find
God displeased with Abraham, and so when they speak
of death God says (Gen 15:15),
וְאַתָּה תָּקוּא אֶל-אֲבוֹתֶיךָ בְּשָׁלוֹם תָּקוּר
בְּשֵׁיטָה וְשָׁלוֹם:

"But thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt
be buried in a good old age." Abraham must have been
in God's good graces and yet God doesn't mention to
him that he shouldn't worry, that they would meet
again when he threw off earthly garb. Why wouldn't
God take Abraham to himself? Instead he lets him be

gathered to his fathers, there to sleep an eternal sleep. In all probability, if there was any belief in an afterlife at this period, the author would have mentioned it during the Abraham story. Therefore we can assume that Abraham knew nothing about a life after death.

We find an interesting statement being made by Jacob, when his sons return from Egypt with food to sustain the family for a short while during the famine. The viceroy, who in reality was Joseph, the son of Jacob, was anxious to see whether his brothers had repented and changed their ways since the time when they had sold him into slavery. And so Joseph asks them when they return for more food to bring along their youngest brother, Benjamin. Benjamin and Joseph were the sons of Rachel, who was Jacob's favorite wife. Of course when Jacob was told the false report of Joseph's death he mourned for him, and still yearned for him. Now, at this request of the viceroy, he could foresee the possibility of his losing his youngest son. And so to prevent any possibility of his losing his youngest son, he said to his other sons (Gen 42:38),

לא- ירד ג' עמכם כי אחיו מת והוא ירד
 גסאר וקראנהו אסון דדרך אשר תלכו-דה
 והורדתם את-שיבתו דיגון סאולה:

"My son shall not go down with you; for his brother
 is dead, and he alone is left; if harm befall him by
 the way in which ye go, then will ye bring my gray
 hairs with sorrow to the grave." And then when the rest
 of his children plead to let Benjamin go down with
 them to Egypt lest their families starve, Jacob

repeats himself and says in Gen 44:28,

ולא ראיתיו עד-הנה: ונקחתם גם-אם-זה מעץ פג'
 וקרהו אסון והורדתם את-שיבתו דרעה סאולה:

" I have not seen him (Joseph) since; and if ye take
 this one also from me, and harm befall him, ye will
 bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave."

And the sons, knowing that their father's life is
 bound together with Benjamin, say that when they
 return from Egypt and perchance Benjamin will be

forced to remain there (Gen 44:31),

והיה כראותו כי-אין הגער ומת והורדו עדדיק את-
 שבת עדדק אדגו דיגון סאולה:

" It will come to pass, when he (Jacob) seeth that
 the lad is not with us that he will die; and thy ser-
 vants will bring down the gray hairs of thy servant
 our father with sorrow to the grave." Here we can see
 that Jacob did not have any belief in a life after
 death. Jacob had mourned exceedingly for Joseph his

son. Again the author reverts to using metaphors freely. He says "these gray hairs would go down with sorrow to the grave". Certainly he never expected to see his beloved Joseph again in this life or any other life. Jacob's sons substantiate their father's belief by repeating his words, and so we can see that down until the time of the Famine, there was still no conception of immortality.

There is no thought or mention made in the book of Genesis on the idea of "Reward and Punishment" after death. The reason for this is that there is no mention of the hereafter made in this Book. However, there are many promises of a long life to the righteous, and death and suffering to the wicked in the "Reward and Punishment theory", but without exception, they speak of temporal rewards and temporal punishments. That is why it is incredible that there should not be a hint or trace of retribution in a life after death, if it had been known to the Hebrews. For example, when Adam and Eve sinned, they were put out of the Garden of Eden. Adam had to work the soil by the sweat of his brow, and Eve had her pain multiplied in her conception and giving birth. When Cain slew his brother Abel, he was forced to wander on the face of the earth. Not a

word was mentioned as to any punishment in a life after death. When the people who lived in Noah's generation were wicked, God brought a flood and destroyed every living creature except those who found refuge in the Ark. Nothing more is ever said about those people who lost their lives in the Flood. When God sent His angels to destroy the twin cities of Sodom and Gemorra, He did not have any mercy upon the inhabitants. Only Lot and his daughters were rescued. The inhabitants were burned in fire and brimstone, and we hear no more about them. In all the cases that I have cited, we have discovered that the punishment was meted to the sinners and evil doers in their own life time, and, when the punishment was so great, as to bring down death upon the evil-doers, no other mention is made of them after their demise. In fine, we have come to the conclusion that in the entire book of Genesis, there is no mention made of a life after death.

Egyptian Period

A. Egyptian

Because of the long sojourn of the Israelites in Egypt after the death of Joseph until the Exodus, one might suppose that the beliefs and traditions of this then highly civilized country would have helped in the shaping of the beliefs of the less cultured people, the Israelites. But actually we find that Egypt, to all appearances, did not influence the Israelites at all in their ideas of an existence after death.

Authorities agree that there is no complete logical and systematized exposition of Egyptian beliefs. The reason for this statement is the fact that the beliefs arose at different times and in different parts of the country. When the country became unified, these various beliefs were taken over by the people, and once accepted they acquired a sanctity which prevented the people from abandoning them. Our knowledge of Egyptian life in the hereafter is largely derived from three documents; 1) The Book of the Dead; 2) The Book of Am Tuat; 3) The Book of Gates.

The Book of the Dead (1) is a book of aids, intending to assist the departed. Its contents revealed how to prepare oneself against every danger, and how to obtain advantages for oneself in the other world. The chapters contain advice

(1) IAAM Wilson P. 51

on how to keep from being devoured by a serpent. It also tells the departed how to transform himself into a divine animal or any other form he pleased. The sun-god must die each night and so pass through the realm of the dead all night, until at daybreak he arrives at the place of resurrection ready to restart his journey through the heavens. The second book states that the god Ra is the ruler of the kingdom of the departed, and the third book gives the authority to the god Osiris. According to both, this realm of the departed, which strangely enough is never said to be underground, is traversed by a river. There are twelve divisions of the Tuat, and the books discuss all the gods and monstrous beings who dwell there. These books are important because they formulate the guides to the other world and provide the reader with a safe conduct passage through all the dangers that surround the path to travel.

What we now wish to discover is whether the attainment of future happiness in the hereafter depended on the individual's moral value in this life. We find that emphasis is laid upon the righteousness and moral actions in this world as a condition of happiness in the next world.

"(1) An individual must possess precepts for getting on with superiors, equals and inferiors. He must avoid impulse and fit himself by word and deed into the administrative and social systems. Smartness can be learned. If he pays attention, he will be smart. He will find the right way in all life's situations through this smartness; and in this attitude he will bring his career to success. Then he can enter the next world at death, and be happy there."

Egyptian religious thought was dominated by the belief in the life beyond the grave. And so this was the subject of the majority of the religious literature. As opposed to the Babylonians, the Egyptians were more concerned with how the gods would deal with them in the next world, than with the providence of the god over them in this world. In vain do we look for any influence of these ideas on the Israelites who were living among them in the land.

The Egyptians believed that the elements of the universe were of one substance and the elements could be interchanged. The individual after death wanted bread, so that he might not be hungry in the next world. And so before his death, he made arrangements whereby loaves of bread would be left regularly at his

tomb, so that his spirit might return and eat the bread. But the Egyptian was also aware of the greed and perhaps untrustworthiness of servants, and so he supported his needs by other forms of bread. A model loaf carved out of wood and left in the tomb would be adequate. Pictures of loaves of bread on the wall would continue to feed the deceased by representation. If there were no physical means of presenting bread, the word "bread" spoken or written with reference to his nourishment would be an effective substitute. This idea is easy to comprehend. Now that the physical man has died, the idea of representation was sufficient. The dead, and, above all, the king, were reborn in the hereafter. (1) Man was generally accountable to the king, to the creator-god, and to his own ka, and he was not formally responsible to Osiris, the later ruler of the dead. His wealth and position in this life gave him confidence that he was fully effective now and later, and, as the lively tomb scenes show, he wanted a next world just as gay and exciting and successful as this world. The Egyptian relished life to the full and so they denied the fact of death and wanted to carry over into the next world the same vigorous and merry life which they enjoyed here. (2)

(1) IAAM H.A. Frankfort - Page 22

(2) IAAM - WILSON - Page 98

B. Exodus

From the period of the time of Moses, who in reality was the religious and political founder of Israel, we can only with a small degree of certainty determine the religious views of afterlife held by the Israelites.

At the Exodus, God revealed Himself to Israel as their God, the God of their nation, and claimed Israel as His people. Through Moses the Lord became the national God of Israel, as we read:

(Ex 3:13, 14) וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה אֶל-הָאֱלֹהִים עֲדָה אֲנִי לְיִשְׂרָאֵל וְאָמַרְתִּי לָהֶם אֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתַיְכֶם שְׁלַחְנִי אֵלָיְכֶם וְאָמַרְתֶּם לֵאמֹר מַה שְׁמוֹ מֵה אֲמַר אֱלֹהִים: וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים אֶל-מֹשֶׁה אֲהִי־אֲנִי אֲשֶׁר אֲהִיָּה וַיֹּאמֶר כֹּה דֹבַר אֲמַר לְעַדְי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲהִיָּה שְׁלַחְנִי אֵלֶיכֶם:

"And Moses said unto God: 'Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and say unto them: The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they say to me: What is His name? what shall I say unto them?'

And God said unto Moses: 'I am that I am'; and He said: Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel: I am hath sent me unto you."

The early Israelite was not alarmed by the prosperity of the wicked or the misfortune of the righteous, for God was concerned with the well being of the people as a whole, and not with that of its individual members. The individual was not the religious unit, but the family or tribe. The

individual was identified with his family, and so a solidarity existed between him and the line of his ancestors and descendants. So it was natural for God to visit the virtues and vices of the fathers upon the children.

In the ten commandments we find in Ex 20:5

כי אנכי יהוה אלהיך אתה קדש פקד עון
אבות על בנים על-שאיס על-רדעים
לשאי:

"For I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate Me."

And again we find this same thought repeated in Lev 20:5,

ואמת' אבי את-בני קאיש יהוא וקמשפתו
והכרת' אתו ואת כל העלם אחריו ללגות אחר'
האלק מקדק עת:

"Then will I set My face against that man, and against his family, and will cut him off, and all that go astray after him, to go astray after Molech, from among their people".

The act of the individual is taken to be a true expression of the whole man at the moment of its occurrence. If the act is wicked, the man will be destroyed, but if the act is righteous, he will be preserved in this life. The doctrine of a strictly individual retribution is taught in greater details

in the books of Psalms and Proverbs, but I will discuss them in a later chapter. Naturally such a doctrine was a continual stumbling block to the righteous whenever he suffered or ran into trouble. Just as the individual in trouble couldn't understand this doctrine, so too the nation in time of stress couldn't understand why God was deserting them. And so as long as the nation was convinced that there was a perfectly adequate retribution in this life, there was no need to ponder on the hereafter.

And so we find in the book of Joshua, God saying

הלא צויתיק חזק ואמץ אל-תערך ואל-
תחת כי צמק יהוה אליך דכל אשר תלך:

"Be strong and of good courage; be not affrighted, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest".

As long as the children of Israel obeyed God's laws and commandments they had no need to be concerned with the future. Their reward was promised them in

this life. And so we have God saying in Jos 1:7

חזק ואמץ מאד למען לעשות ככל-התורה
אשר צוה משה עבדי אל תסור ממנו ימין ושמאל
אמץ תשכיל דכל אשר תלך:

"Only be strong and very courageous, to observe to do according to all the law, which Moses My servant commanded thee; turn not from it to the right hand

or to the left, that thou mayest have good success
whithersoever thou goest".

In the next verse 1:8 God continues
לֹא יֵאָמַר סֵפֶר הַתּוֹרָה הִיא מִפִּי וְהָיִיתִי קִוִּי וְאֵלֶיָּהּ
אֲמַרן תִּשְׁמַר וְעֲשֹׂתָ כְּכֹל הַכְּתוּבָה קִוִּי כִּי אֵל תִּצְלִיחַ
אֶת דְּרֹכְךָ וְאֶת תַּשְׁכִּיחַ:
"This book of the law shall not depart out of thy

mouth, but thou shalt meditate therein day and night,
that thou mayest observe to do according to all that
is written therein; for then thou shalt make thy ways
prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success."

In both verses we find God telling the Israelites
that if they live in a righteous and God fearing manner,
they will be rewarded with prosperity and success.

The community constituted the frame of reference
for Israel's writers. Even death was viewed in the
national setting. Death was thought to come because of
the nation's sin or because of the sins of the nations
who were Israel's enemies. This means that death on a
national or even international scale was controlled
by God whose righteousness was a determining factor
in its use as a means of punishment. National causes
such as plague, disease, famine and earthquake, were
never looked upon as natural phenomena directly
responsible for widespread death. These were
merely the means selected by God for vindicating and

upholding His righteous will. God's power to bring death was, in the eyes of the biblical thinker, a valid convincing argument of His power over the universe and over men.

C. Numbers

In the book of Numbers, we have the story of the rebellion of Korah and his followers against Moses. They questioned the authority of Moses and wanted him to prove himself. Moses prayed to God and was told to tell those in the rebellion to separate themselves from the community. And as soon as Moses had finished speaking we find in Num 16:31, 32, 33:

וַיִּכְלֹם אֱלֹהִים אֶת כָּל הַדָּרִים הָאֵלֶּה
וַיִּתְּקֵם הָאֲדָמָה... וַיִּאֲדָרְוּ מִתַּחַת הָקֶהֱלֶה:
"that the ground did cleave assunder that was under them. And the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up, and their households, and all the men that appertained unto Korah, and all their goods. So they, and all that appertained to them went down alive into the pit; and the earth closed upon them, and they perished from among the assembly." In daily conversation, we speak of a person being burnt alive, and our meaning if analyzed, is that the person is alive when the process of burning begins.

Similarly, in the above case of Korah and his followers who were "swallowed up by the earth and they, and all that was theirs, that went down 'alive' into the pit", what is meant? Nothing is said or implied as to the subsequent state of the victims. The principle holds in all cases, that a popular way of speaking, though objectively inaccurate, nevertheless represents a truth. These rebellious people were alive when the earth opened, but subsequently perished in the earthquake or whatever phenomenon it was. Therefore no belief in a life after death can be implied from this story.

In the Books of Exodus and Numbers we find, as in Genesis, that the reward of obedience was long life. In Num 4:18,
 אֶת־כִּבְרֵיהֶם אֹתָם שָׁלַח מִסִּבְחַת הַקֹּדֶשׁ הָאֵלֶּיךָ: (וְלֹא יָמָוֶה עֲלֵהֶם וְחֵיוּ וְאֵלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל דִּבְּרָה אֶת־קִרְבָּם הַקִּרְבָּשׁ.
 "Cut ye not off the tribe of the families of the Kohathites from among the Levites; but thus do unto them, that they may live, and not die, when they approach unto the most holy things."

When the Israelites are faithful, God rewards them as in Ex 23:25,
 וְעִזְרְתֶּם אֹתָם יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם וְדִרְכָּם אֹתָם לְחֹמֶק וְאֹתָם מִיָּמִיךָ וְהִסְרֵם מִחֹלָה מִקִּרְדָּן:
 .

"and ye shall serve the Lord your God, and He will
bless thy bread, and thy wyter; and I will take sickness
away from the midst of thee."

And God continues in verse 26,

את-מספר ימים אמתא:

"The number of thy days I will fulfil."

In the book of Numbers, we find on several occasions that a person is called to, or gathered to his people. As in the book of Genesis, these statements are only another way, or a metaphor for saying that he dies: such as Num 20:24,

יאסוף אהרן אל-עמיו.

"Aaron shall be gathered unto his people."

Num 20:26,

ואהרן יאסוף ומת שם:

"And Aaron shall be gathered unto his people, and shall die there." Here we have the definite mention of the word die with the phrase "gathered".

Then God speaks to Moses and says in Num 27:13,

ואספת אל-עמיתך גם אתה כאשר גאסף

אהרן אחיך:

"Thou also shalt be gathered unto thy people," as Aaron thy brother was gathered."

Thus we read in the ten commandments Ex 20:12
כְּדָרֶיךָ אֶת-אָבִיךָ וְאֶת-אִמְךָ יִתְּכֶן יְיָ

עַל הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר-יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ נָתַן לָּךְ:
"Honour thy father and thy mother, that thy days may

be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee." The most effective and best reward that God gives an individual is an extension of his life, a prolonging of his days. And so the Israelites are told that if they will honour their parents, God will prolong their lives in a land that He will give them. If the people during this period in Israelitic history would have had any belief in a life after death, certainly it would have been more impressive to have promised them that reward. However, they are told that their reward would be given them during their lifetime. Their mortal life would be prolonged.

We have gathered that in the books of Exodus and Numbers the Israelites were interested in temporal rewards. They wanted to bask in God's favor during their lifetime. No word is mentioned as to what would happen when they died. Therefore, we can assume that in this period of Israelitic history, there was no belief in the hereafter.

,Canaanite Period

A. Joshua

In the opening verses of the book of Joshua, we find God speaking to Joshua, saying (Jos 1:2)

מֹשֶׁה עֲדָבְנִי מֵת וְעַתָּה קוּם עֲדָרְךָ אֶת-הַיַּרְדֵּן הַזֶּה
אֶתְּךָ וְכָל-הָעָם הַזֶּה אֶל הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אָמַרְתִּי
לְבָנִי אֶלְדָּבְנִי יִשְׂרָאֵל:

"Moses my servant is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them, even to the children of Israel." Joshua is elected to lead the Israelites into Canaan. Moses had taken them out of Egypt, and for forty years had wandered with them through the Wilderness. At the gateway to Canaan he had died. Since Moses is dead, nothing more is said about him, and so God tells Joshua to assume the leadership of the children of Israel, and go forward.

Throughout the book of Joshua we read that human life had comparatively little value. Joshua and his army annihilate all foes who stand in their way. All the murder, destruction and devastation was committed at the command of the Lord. Thus

(Jos 8:26)
וַיִּהְיוּעַ לֹא-הָשִׁיד יָדוֹ אֶשֶׁר גָּמַלָה דְּכִי צֹוֹן עָרָה
אֶשֶׁר הִחְרִיק אֶת כָּל-יִשְׂרָאֵל הָעָרִי:

"For Joshua drew not back his hand, wherewith he stretched out the javelin, until he had utterly

destroyed all the inhabitants of Ai".

Then (10:40) וַיִּכֶּה יְהוֹשֻׁעַ אֶת כָּל הָאָרֶץ הַהִיא וְהַצִּיָּק וְהַשְׂפֵּלָה
וְהַגְּשָׁמִית וְהַחֲרִיב כֹּל מִלְכֵיהֶם לֹא הִשְׁאִיר עֲרִיד וְאֶת כָּל
הַגְּשָׁמִית כְּאֶשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל:

"So Joshua smote all the land, the hill-country, and the South, and the Lowland, and the slopes, and all their kings; he left none remaining; but he utterly destroyed all that breathed, as the Lord, the God of Israel, commanded". Before the Israelites crossed over the Jordan, Joshua called together the Reubenites, the Gadites, and half the tribe of Menasseh. These two and a half tribes were given this land by Moses, the servant of God. Joshua then told them that they must leave their wives, families, and cattle on that side of the Jordan, and help their brethren to take possession of the land on the other side of the Jordan. That was the land that God had promised to the Israelites. Only when their brethren had taken possession of the land, would the two and one half tribes be allowed to recross the Jordan and return to their families. Throughout this course of conquest there must have been hundreds of Israelites slain in battle. Their only hope in the conquest of Canaan was to receive land which God promised them and their children. Nothing is promised about a life after death, to

those who will die in battle. So we can assume that their only interests in the battles were to gain a homeland for themselves and their families.

B. Judges

Throughout the book of Judges we find temporal reward and punishment being received. When the Israelites do evil in the eyes of the Lord, they are delivered into the hands of a hostile king. When they repent, God forgives them and appoints one of their number to lead them in a victorious attack against their oppressors. Thus (3:12),

ויספו דג ישראל לעשות הרע דעיי יהוה ויחלק יהוה את-עמאל
מלך-מואב על ישראל על-כי-עשו את הרע דעיי יהוה:

"And the children of Israel again did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord; and the Lord strengthened Eglon the king of Moab against Israel, because they had done that which was evil in the sight of the Lord." Then when the Israelites repented, we read (3:30),

ותכבד מואב דיום ההוא תחת יד ישראל.

"So Moab was subdued that day under the hand of Israel."

Again (4:1),

ויספו דג ישראל לעשות הרע דעיי יהוה וארוג מת:
וימכרו יהוה דיב ידן מלך-כנען.

"And the children of Israel again did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, when Ehud was dead. And the Lord gave them over into the hand of Jabin king

of Canaan". When the Israelites repented we read

(4:23)
וַיִּכְבַּד אֱלֹהִים יְיָ הַיּוֹם הַהוּא אֶת יָבִין מֶלֶךְ-כְּנָעַן
אֶפְרַי קִנֵּי יִשְׂרָאֵל:

"So God subdued on that day Jabin the king of Canaan before the children of Israel." When the Israelites were oppressed by hostile kings and many of their number lost their lives, they wanted God to relieve them from their oppressors. They wanted to lead a peaceful life with their families and friends while they could. They did not mention or show any interest in a life after death.

The one account of necromancy contained in the first book of Samuel, 28:7 is the story of Saul's visit to the witch of Endor. Unfortunately the details of the story are not clear. The woman is described as having a "familiar spirit" דַּעֲוֵת-אִוֶּה. According to Lev. 20:27 "a man, also, or a woman that divineth by a ghost or a familiar spirit, shall surely be put to death; they shall stone them with stones." Saul, by royal edict, had banished all these people from his kingdom. When God would give him no divine guidance in the approaching Philistine conflict, Saul decided to visit Endor and have the witch, who had escaped his edict, bring

up Samuel so that he could consult him. The story continues that Saul disguised himself and went with two companions to see her. He then asked her to divine for him by the **פיל**, and bring up Samuel.

The text continues that the woman saw Samuel, and cried out with a loud voice, and said to Saul "Why hast thou deceived me? For Thou art Saul". And the king said to her, "Fear not. Say what thou hast seen". This account leaves us in doubt how it was that the witch recognized Saul just at this moment, especially as she would presumably be looking at the apparition of Samuel and not at the king. The surprising thing is that Saul's unusual height, which could not be easily concealed, had not betrayed him from the start. And it is quite clear that with this unrecognized clue in her mind, the appearance of Samuel would have awakened her to the fact that none other than the king was likely to have asked for Samuel. Was it possible that the witch did not scrutinize carefully her three nocturnal visitors, being well aware of Saul's decree? Moreover, Saul's question is addressed to her 28:13,

אִל־תִּירָא וְכִי נָחָה רָאִיתָ

"be not afraid; for what seest thou", implies that

the king knew that she had already seen something or someone besides her visitors. It is interesting to note that only the woman up to this point saw or imagined that she saw an apparition. The king realizes or thought that by her cry she had seen something. He tries to calm her and asks her what she has seen. She replies that what she saw was a supernatural being *אֵלֹהִים* ascending out of the earth, in appearance, an old man clothed in a mantle. Only by the description does Saul realize that it is Samuel. If the witch was expecting the appearance of Samuel, why should she be alarmed? This woman in her profession was probably an imposter like others of her kind. When the witch told Saul that it was Samuel, we read 28:14,

וַיִּקַּד אֹפֶיֶם אֶלְדָּה וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוֶה:

"He bowed with his face to the ground, and prostrated himself." With his face to the ground, it would have been quite impossible for Saul to have seen the apparition. Might not the entire episode have been planned and executed as do many of the mediums and spiritualists of today? The "apparition" talks and says, "Why hast thou disquieted me?" This seems to be a normal and leading question. When Saul answers, the "apparition" wants to know why Saul came to see him, if the Lord

has left him. Saul answers by saying that he is distressed because he has no sign of victory in the coming conflict, and so expects to lose the battle. Isn't it natural for the "apparition" to continue the conversation along these lines, and since the king is in a pessimistic mood, predict defeat? He might even go a little farther and predict the death of the king and the delivery of his camp into the hands of the Philistines. Since there is no other instance of necromancy being practiced in the Old Testament among the Israelites, why should we believe that in this one place, it was possible to recall the dead or speak to them? In fine, this story of the witch of Endor cannot be used in favor of the argument that there is a life after death.

C. Samuel

In the second book of Samuel, we find David's wife Bath-Sheba bearing him a son that was weak and sickly. David prayed to God and fasted in the hope that the child would be spared from death. When after seven days the child died, none of the servants dared tell David the tragic news. When David saw the servants whispering to each other, he realized that the child had died,

whereupon (12:20),
 ויקם בורח מהארץ ויחזק ויסך ויחולץ... ואמר מתי למתי
 לה אבי... לא האוכל ארשיו עור אבי הלא אולי והוא לא
 ישוב אלי:

"Then David arose from the earth, and washed, and annointed himself, and changed his apparel; and he came into the house of the Lord, and worshipped; then he came to his own house; and when he required, they set bread before him, and he did eat. Then said his servants unto him: 'What thing is this that thou hast done? thou didst fast and weep for the child, while it was alive; but when the child was dead, thou didst rise and eat bread'. And he said: 'While the child was yet alive, I fasted and wept; for I said: Who knoweth whether the Lord will not be gracious to me, that the child may live? But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he will not return to me." While his son was alive, David did everything within his power to prolong the child's life. Now that the child was dead, David realized that nothing he could do, could restore life to the boy. He realized that death is the fate of all men. Since it is God's will that man should die at an allotted time, there is no need to mourn at an act committed by God. David now had to turn his eyes to the future and forget the past. So he went in unto Bath-Sheba and comforted her. Therefore, we can assume that in the Davidic period, the idea of a life after death had no support from the people.

Monarchy Period

A. I Kings

In I Kings 2:2, we read that King David about to

die, admonishes his son Solomon, saying.
אֲנֹכִי הֵאָךְ דָּרִיךְ כָּן הָאָרֶץ וְחֻלְקֶתָ וְהָיִיתָ לְאִישׁ...
לְמַעַן יָקִים יְהוָה אֹת דְּדָרְוֹ אֲשֶׁר דָּדָר עָלַי:

"I go the way of all the earth; be thou strong therefore, and show thyself a man; and keep the charge of the Lord thy God, to walk in His ways, to keep His statutes, and His commandments, and His ordinances, and His testimonies, according to that which is written in the law of Moses, that thou mayest prosper in all that thou doest, and whithersoever thou turnest thyself; that the Lord may establish His word which He spoke concerning me." Here Solomon is told that if he obeys the word of God, he will prosper. Neither father nor son are concerned with what will happen to them after they die. David's advice to his son is to be a good ruler, follow the word of God, and then he will be rewarded with a prosperous rule.

In 2:6,
וְעָשִׂיתָ כְּחִכְמָתְךָ וְלֹא תִהְיֶה שִׁיתָ דָּלָת עָלָי:
"Do therefore according to thy wisdom, and let not his hoar head go down to the grave in peace." The author here uses his poetic license, and is writing with free use of metaphores. In this sentence, David instructs Solomon to do away with Joab. He doesn't want Joab to die a natural death of old age. If Solomon has Joab killed, then he will meet a violent death

instead of a normal, peaceful one.

In describing David's death, 2:10, we read:

וַיִּשָּׁכַב דָּוִד עִם אָבוֹתָיו וַיִּקָּדֶר קְדָוִיךָ בְּיָמָיו:

"And David slept with his fathers, and was buried in the city of David." This phrase "slept with his fathers" is once more a metaphor; it means that David died as did his fathers before him. After his death, Solomon ascends the throne, and David is never more mentioned.

While Solomon is building the Temple, God

appears and says to him (6:12),

הָיִיתָ הֵלָּה אֹמֵר אֵלֶיךָ דָּוִד... וְשָׁכַנְתִּי
בְּתוֹךְ דָּבִי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְלֹא אֶעֱזָב אֶת עַמִּי יִשְׂרָאֵל:

"As for this house which thou art building, if thou wilt walk in My statutes, and execute Mine ordinances, and keep all My commandments to walk in them; then will I establish My word with thee, which I spoke unto David thy father; in that I will dwell therein among the children of Israel, and I will not forsake My people Israel." God is pleased that at long last, He is getting a permanent home in which He can reside. Not immortality nor life after death does He promise Solomon, but that He will dwell in the new edifice, and not forsake the children of Israel.

Another example of temporal reward is found in

ואתה אם תלך לפני כבודי הלא אצא אתך
והקמת את כסא ממלכתך על ישראל לעולם:

"And as for thee, if thou wilt walk before Me, as David thy father walked, in integrity of heart, and in uprightness, to do according to all that I have commanded thee, and wilt keep My statutes and Mine ordinances; then I will establish the throne of the kingdom over Israel forever." God spoke to Solomon after the death of David and wanted to bestow upon him a Divine gift. Therefore He asked Solomon whether he wanted riches, a long life, or a vast empire. Solomon without hesitation, asked for a "wise and understanding heart",

לך חכם ונבון so that he might discern between good and evil. God was so pleased with this answer that He gave unto Solomon also that which he had not requested. Solomon receives his reward from God of a long life. Not a word is mentioned about any reward after death. So we can assume that during his reign, there was no thought about a life after death.

When Elijah is depressed, and sees no hope for the future, he says in 19:4:
עתה ידוע קח נפשי כי לא טוב אני לך אבנני מאדתי:
"Now, O Lord, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers." Elijah realizing that death must come to all men, as it did to his father, prays that he will die. In his mood of depression, he seeks death so that he will be relieved of all his worries and cares. He believed that death was the end of man,

and in death he would be separated from all his worries.

B. II Kings

In II Kings, we read that Ahaziah fell down through a lattice in his upper chamber, and was confined to bed. He sent messengers to the Phillistine god Baalzebub to discern whether he would recover. Because Ahazia had forsaken God, He became angry and sent Elijah to prophecy his death. Here we see that the punishment of evil was the cutting short of an individual's life. Not a word is uttered about cutting Ahaziah off after his death. His punishment is that he will not be permitted to enjoy the fruits of this life. The wicked are punished by being removed from the land of the living.

There are three interesting cases that I should like to mention. In I Kings 17, the story is told concerning Elijah and the widow of Zarephath. Elijah came to visit her when there was a famine in the land. Although she possessed only a little flour and oil, she asked Elijah to join her and her son for the meal. After a period of time, the son fell sick. His sickness became severe, *עַד אִשָּׁר לֹא נִחַתָּהּ בְּנֵהּ* "until there was no breath left in him." The tearful woman summoned Elijah, who went in to see the boy. Elijah stretched himself over the boy, and prayed to God. Soon the breath

of the child returned and he revived.

In II Kings:4, we read that there was a woman in Shunem who was accustomed to invite Elisha to partake of food with her, whenever he was in the vicinity. She was sad because her husband was old, and she could not bear children. On one of his visits, Elisha blessed her for her generosity, and in a short period of time she gave birth to a son. As the child grew up, he was accustomed to accompany his father to the fields. One day, the boy's head began to ache, so they fetched him to his mother. He sat on her lap for a while, and died there. The mother set out immediately to find Elisha in the hope that he might be able to help her. Elisha returned with her, and entered the house to look at the boy. He locked the door, and layed upon the child. Immediately the flesh of the child became warm, and he opened his eyes.

In II Kings 13:20,21, Elisha dies and is buried. A short time later, another person died, and it was decided to place the corpse in the same grave with Elisha. As they cast the man's body into the grave, his body came into physical contact with the bones of Elisha. Immediately he revived, rose up upon his feet, and walked away. The above three accounts of

how seemingly dead people were restored to life, were written down a long period after the events actually took place. In each case, the revival took place soon after death and before internment. In those days, the Israelites did not practice embalming. It was the procedure to bury the dead before sundown on the day of death, whenever possible. It is quite possible that a sudden jolt, or a form of artificial respiration, or another form of shock, might have caused the person thought to be dead to "return" to life. Medical science tells us that people in "comas" appear to be dead. It is quite possible that in a period of time, a crisis may pass, and the individual once again may appear normal. Artificial respiration has been known to revive people who were thought to be dead from drowning or electric shock. Taking these facts into consideration, make us believe it highly impossible that on these three occasions miracles happened, and that "dead" were restored to life. It is quite possible that the individuals appeared to have been dead. Since there were no skilled doctors at that period, we can understand how a coma might be mistaken for death.

C. Deuteronomy

There are many promises of rewards and threats of punishments in the Old Testament, but without exception, they are temporal in character. In these circumstances, it is incredible that there should be no hint of retribution in a life after death, had such been known to the Israelites. An example of a temporal

reward of prosperity is found in Deuteronomy 7:12,
והיה עקב השמיעון את המצוות האלה ושמרתם
וצייתם... אשר גשם לאבותיך אתה ואך:

"And it shall come to pass, because ye hearken to these ordinances, and keep, and do them, that the Lord thy God shall keep with thee the covenant and the mercy which He swore unto thy fathers, and He will love thee, and bless thee, and multiply thee; He will also bless the fruit of thy body and the fruit of thy land, thy corn and thy wine and thine oil, the increase of the kine and the young of thy flock, in the land which He swore unto thy fathers to give thee."

In Deut. 18:9, God tells the Israelites that when they come into the land He will give them, they shall not learn and practice the customs of the alien people living there, particularly (18:10),

לא ימצא דין מצרים קדש וזמא דאס קסם קסמים
מצותן ומנהגם ומכשד: וחזר חזר וסעל אוס
ואצגו ודרס אל-המתים:

"There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the

fire, one that useth divination, a soothsayer, or an enchanter, or a sorcerer, or a charmer, or one that consulteth a ghost or a familiar spirit or a necromancer." We here read that God orders the Israelites not to practice necromancy. This practice presupposes a life after death. All the above mentioned practices are an abomination to God and bring forth His displeasure. Therefore we can assume that in this period there was no such belief held by the Israelites.

Another example of temporal reward and punishment is found in Deut 4:26, where God says that if His people become corrupt and make graven images,

כִּי אִדָּה תִּאֲדָוּן מִדָּם מֵעַל הָאֲוֵרָה אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי
עֲדָרִים אֹתְךָ בַּיּוֹדֶן מִתְּהִיבָהּ, לֹא תִאֲדָוּן
וְיָמֶיךָ עֲלֶיהָ כִּי הִשְׁמַדְתִּי אֹתָם:

"Ye shall soon utterly perish from off the land whereunto ye go over the Jordan to possess it, ye shall not prolong your days upon it, but shall utterly be destroyed."

The positive aspect of this theory is found in Deut 11:9, where God tells the Israelites that if they keep all of His commandments,

תִּאֲדָוּן וְיָמֶיךָ עֲלֶיהָ אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי
לֹאֲדָתִיכֶם אֶתֶּן וְאֶתְּכֶם וְאֶתְּכֶם:

"Ye may prolong your days upon the land, which the Lord swore unto your fathers to give unto them and to their seed."

Frequently in the book of Deuteronomy, God mentions

that if the Israelites will listen to Him, He will reward them with a long life on this earth. Allow me to quote several examples: (4:1) וְעַתָּה יִשְׂרָאֵל שִׁמְעֵ אֵל אֱלֹהֵי הַתְּקִיפִים וְאֵל הַתַּשְׁפִּיתִים אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי מֵלֶמֶד אֶתְכֶם לַעֲשׂוֹת לְפָנַי יְהוָה: "And now, O Israel, hearken unto the statutes and unto the ordinances, which I teach you, to do them; that ye may live."

In 5:16, כְּדָה אֶת אֱלֹהֶיךָ וְאֶת אִמְךָ כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוְּךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לַעֲשׂוֹת וְאֶת יְהוָה יְהוָה יִתְּנֶךָ לְפָנַי יְהוָה: "Honour thy father and thy mother, as the Lord thy God commanded thee; that thy days may be long, and that it may go well with thee, upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee."

In 8:1, כָּל הַמִּצְוֹת אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי מְצִוֶּה הַיּוֹם תִּשְׁמְרוּן לַעֲשׂוֹת לְפָנַי יְהוָה וְרַדִּיתֶם וְדִבַּרְתֶּם וְיָרַשְׁתֶּם אֶת הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר גִּשְׁלַח יְהוָה לְאֲבוֹתֵיכֶם: "All the commandments which I command thee this day shall ye observe to do, that ye may live, and multiply, and go in and possess the land which the Lord swore unto your fathers."

The entire chapter twentyeight is devoted to the temporal rewards that will be bestowed upon the Israelites if they will hearken to the word of God.

The individual Israelite was concerned with his

present life. No thought was given as to what would happen when he died. Because he did not think about a life after death, he was concerned with staying alive, and spending his days in as much contentment as was possible. To keep the individual in line, many offenses against the community were punishable with the death penalty. Life perhaps would not have been such an important item, if the people had believed that there was some sort of a life awaiting them after death. Therefore in the Deuteronomical period, we can safely assume that there was no belief in a life after death.

D. Isaiah

During the period of the monarchy, there were many prophets who influenced Israelitic history. The foremost of these was Isaiah. Like his predecessors, he preached a reward for the righteous and punishment for the wicked. In 3:10 אמרו צדיק כי טוב כי כרי מעוליהם יאכלו: אוי לרשע
רע כי גמול ידיו יעשה לו:

"Say ye of the righteous, that it shall be well with him;

For they shall eat the fruit of their doings.

Woe unto the wicked! it shall be ill with him;

For the work of his hands shall be done to him."

The righteous and the wicked will receive their just reward in this world.

Isaiah tells the people that they are foolish if they try to penetrate the future by believing in wizards and other false seers. (8:19)
 וכי-יאתרו אוליכס דרשן און-האקדו ואלו היצצגים
 המצצצבים והמחגים הולא-עפ אול-אלהין ידרס דעס דח"י
 און המחגים:
 "And when they shall say unto you: 'Seek unto the ghosts and the familiar spirits, that chirp and that mutter; should not a people seek unto their God? on behalf of the living unto the dead for instruction and for testimony?' It was the custom for the witches and wizards in those days to give their prophecies by means of chirping and muttering. The Torah stated that it is forbidden to penetrate the future by these false means. (Lev. 19:31, Lev. 20:6, Deut. 18:11).

A clear cut denial of life after death is found in 26:14,
 מתים דל יחיו דפאייס דל יקחן אפן פקדית ותשאיעם ותאקדו כל לכר און:
 "The dead live not, the shades rise not;

To that end hast Thou punished and destroyed them, and made all their memory to perish." Now that the enemies of the Israelites were dead, there was no longer any need to fear them. After death the enemies were not able to return to earth to frighten the people. Once the enemies were dead, it would not take the living long to forget them.

In 25:8, we read,
 קלר הַמָּוֶה לְבָרִיךְ וְהַחַיִּים אֶלֶּי יְהוָה אֱמַרְהָ
 מֵחַי כָּל בָּרִיִּים.

"He will swallow up death forever;

And the Lord God will wipe away tears from all faces."

The above is one of the sentences in Chapter 25, that was thought to be added to the text when it was compiled.

The repetition of the word קלר probably stems from a reader who did not quite understand the original meaning of the author. He therefore projected the idea of death into this line. He probably got his idea from the succeeding line which foretells the Lord God wiping tears from all faces. The original author undoubtedly had in mind war, plunder, and devastation, when he mentioned the tears. 1)

In the very next chapter (26:19), we read:
 יְחִיֹּה מֵתֵיךְ לְקִוְיָתִי יִקְוֹנוּ הַקִּיּוֹנוֹ וְרִגְלוֹ שָׁכֵן עִירֵי כִּי־אֵל
 אֹרֶת אֵלֶיךָ וְאֹרֶת רַב־אֵיִם תִּבְּרִי:

"Thy dead shall live, my dead bodies shall arise -

Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust -

For thy dew is as the dew of light,

And the earth shall bring to life the shades."

In reading the entire chapter, we understand that this verse is used as a metaphor in describing a national resurrection.

"Thy dead shall live", is addressed to Israel, and "My dead bodies shall arise", is the confident assertion that the nation will once more rise and be great. T. K. Cheyne in his

1) Das Buch Jesaia - Duhm - Page 156-157

Book of Isaiah states that there are several verses from chapter twenty five to twenty seven that were added at a much later date. This particular passage is one of the verses under discussion. He quotes Professor Driver as saying that there are features in this composition that make it in advance even of II Isaiah. He places it at between 536 and 440 B.C.E. Kuener said that there is a consensus of opinion in favor of placing the prophecy in the Persian period. Vatke places it in the Maccabbean period. 1) Professor Kirkpatrick places this verse in the fourth century B.C.E. 2)

Although the prophets rarely touch on the theme of immortality, only at a later period did the idea of immortal life become an element in their conception of the kingdom of God. 3)

In 38:18, 19, we find a definite taking for granted that there is no life after death. Isaiah says that people who have died cannot praise the Lord. Only those who are living are able to do so.

כ-לא שאול תודין אותי יהאין לא-ישכרו יורדי-דזר אול-אמתך:

- 1) Introduction to Book of Isaiah - T. K. Cheyne - Page 160
- 2) Doctrine of the Prophets - Kirkpatrick - Page 475
- 3) Cambridge Bible Isaiah - J. Skinner - Page 189

חי הווא יודק כח היום אך אדגים יודיע
אח-אמתק:

"For the other world cannot praise Thee,

Death cannot celebrate Thee,

They that go down into the pit cannot hope for Thy truth

The living, the living, he shall praise Thee,

As I do this day."

העם ההלכים דחשק ראו אור
צלות אור גלה עליהם:
In 9:1 we read

"The people that walked in darkness

Have seen a great light;

They that dwelt in the land of the shadow of death;

Upon them hath the light shined."

The people in this passage refer to the inhabitants of

Jerusalem who were besieged by the Assyrian Army . Being

fearful for their lives the Israelites walked around in the

"Shadow of death". This is only a metaphor. In a discussion

with Dr. Harry Orlinsky, it was shown that the word צלמות

"Shadow of death" was originally read צלמות "Shadow".

Only in later years was the vowel changed to a consonant and
thereby the implication of death added to the meaning of the
word.

In 28:15, we have Isaiah saying to the scoffers of the Lord,
כי אחרתם כרתו דרית את מות ועץ שאול
עשינו חנה.

"Because ye have said: 'We have made a covenant with death,
And with the nether-world are we at agreement?' This is only
bitter irony. Isaiah, talking for God, tells them that what
they believe are only lies and falsehoods. He also tells them

in 28:18,
וכפר דריתכם את מות וחיותכם את שאול
לא תקום.

"And your covenant with death shall be disannulled,

And your agreement with the nether world shall not stand."

"Isaiah tells them that death will be their lot and all or
any agreements that they think they have made with Sheol are
useless.

E. Jeremiah

We now turn to the next great prophet Jeremiah and in
9:22, 23, we read,

אם יתהלל חכם דחכמתו...
כי אג' יהוה עשה חסד משפט וצדקה דארץ:

"Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom,

Neither let the mighty man glory in his might;

Let not the rich man glory in his riches;

But let him that glorieth glory in this.

That he understandeth and knoweth

That I am the Lord who exercise mercy

Justice, and righteousness, in the earth."

"We find that Jeremiah too knows only temporal rewards. Glory, might, and wealth can be enjoyed nowhere except in this life. The true glory in this life is to know and understand God. And God says through Jeremiah that He exercises mercy, justice, and righteousness in the earth to all the inhabitants. Not a word is mentioned as to what is in store for those who have died. So it seems that God is interested only in the living.

God says in 17:10,

אוי יהוה חקר לב דין כליות
והתת לאיש כדרכו
כפרי מעליו:

"I the Lord search the heart,

I try the reins

Even to give every man according to his ways

According to the fruit of his doings". This line is just an affirmation of the doctrine of reward and punishment.

In 32:19, Jeremiah says about the Lord,
גדל העזה ודג העליוה אשר עיניו פקחות על כל
דרכי דג אדג לתת לאיש כדרכו וכפרי מעליו:

"Great in counsel and mighty in work, whose eyes are open upon all the ways of the sons of men, to give everyone according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings." This is another example of reward and punishment to be meted out to each individual in this life.

In 31:30 Jeremiah brings forth what is apparently a new idea in the Bible,

כי אף איש קצונו ימות כל האדם האכל הקסר
תקדימה שגיו:

"But everyone shall die for his own iniquity; every man that eateth the sour grapes, his teeth shall be set on edge." Up until this time it was thought that the sins of the fathers were visited upon the children. But now each individual will be punished for his own wickedness and be rewarded for his own good deeds.

In the book of Jeremiah we see that there is no reference to a life after death. The people recognize only temporal rewards.

F. Hosea

In the book of Hosea (6:2),

יחיינו תמים
דיוק השלישי יקמנו ובחיה לפניו:

"After two days will He revive us

On the third day He will raise us up, that we may live in His presence". In reading the text we learn that God is always ready to receive the penitent. If they acknowledge their sins, the effect would be a speedy release from their trials. The Israelites realized that the cause of their calamity was living without knowledge of God in the land. The description is

purely figurative, it is not a literal resurrection. It is applied to moral revival in the national life. The nation is regarded as an organic whole, capable of having life infused into it, and of being raised out of its dead condition for the service of God. It is with Israel as a nation that the prophet is primarily concerned. His mind is more concerned about the future of the nation than about the fortune of the individual Israelite. The life of the individual is merged in the well-being of the nation as a whole.

The thought is that He will deliver us in a short period of time. Revive is used in the sense of healing the sick, as, Jos. 5:8, II Kings 8:9, 20:7. This passage is really the basis of Ez. 37:1-10. 1)

The religion of Israel in common with Semitic religion was dominated by the idea that it was not the individual, but the people or nation which was the unit in the religious relation. The insignificant place, which was for many centuries assigned to the individual, to a large extent explains the strange absence from Hebrew eschatology of any definite hope of personal immortality. The word פִּנְיָן

1) ICC - W.R. Harper - Hosea - P. 283

is a Hebrew idiom to express after a short while. When the people repent they will be received in God's favor and live happily on this earth. Throughout the Book we see that the wicked will be punished for their sins now, in this life, as

9:16

ככה אפריים שרשם ידש פרי לוי יצאון אף
כי יאדון והתת מחמדו קטגס:

"Ephraim is smitten

Their root is dried up

They shall bear no fruit

Yea though they bring forth

Yet will I slay the beloved fruit of their womb". The children of Ephraim, a name meaning "fruitful" will be "barren". Because the people are wicked God will punish them now, He will take away from them the greatest pleasure in life; that is bearing children.

This is a good example of temporal punishment. Another such example, is Hosea talking about Samaria 10:7,

גדמה שחרון מלכה כקצף על פני תיפ:

"As for Samaria, her king is cut off

As foam upon the water". Foam that floats on the surface is soon washed away. So will the Samaritan kingdom, because the people are wicked. This punishment will take place during the people's lifetime. To continue this line of thought in 13:1,

כדקר אפריים רתת גסא הוא קיסראל ויאפס
קדעל ויתת:

"When Ephraim spoke, there was trembling

He exalted himself in Israel;

But when he became guilty through Baal, he died"

In earlier times when Ephraim spoke, his words carried weight and were respected in the earlier stages of the Northern Kingdom. But Ephraim signed his death warrant with his lapse into Baal worship. Here is the punishment theory at work. When Ephraim turned from the worship of God to the worship of idols, he was punished and he died.

In 13:14,
אֵיךְ אֶחָד אֶחָד מֵעַם אֱלֹהִים יִצְדָּק וְיִחְיֶה
אִם קִטְלָן אֶחָד מֵעַם יִסְתֵּר מֵעֵינָיו:

"Shall I ransom them from the power of the nether-world?

Shall I redeem them from death?

Ho, the plagues, O death!

Ho, thy destruction, O nether-world!

Repentance be hid from mine eyes! "

In this instance we have God speaking about the iniquity of Ephraim, which in reality is Israel. He is so wicked that God has decided to punish him. The way the question is phrased implies a negative answer. National evil has so developed, that God will not avert the bitter fate that awaits the children of Ephraim. Death will be the punishment for the wicked, but at an early age as

compared to the reward of long life for the righteous. Because verses 12 and 13 seem to announce punishment, verse 14 is to be understood as a threat rather than a promise. 1)

In 6:6, God says:

כי חסד חפצתי ולא זבח
וצדקת אלהים מעלות:

"For I desire mercy and not sacrifice and the knowledge of God rather than burnt-offerings." God was pleased with sacrifices when they were offered with a pure heart and in faithful obedience to His own precepts concerning sacrifices. He was pleased rather with loyalty and He did not want a sacrifice offered with a revengeful and unforgiving heart. When God was merciful, he prolonged the length of men's days.

G. Amos

There is a general consensus of opinion, that Amos prophesied between 765 and 750 B.C.E. His message was, that if Israel was going to continue to exist, there must be justice between man and man, as well as between nations. Amos preached against the ill-treatment of the poor by the rich. He says in 5:14,

דעו טוב ואל רע
אמרו תחיו:

"Seek good, and not evil, that ye may live." He offers added days to those people who will turn away from wickedness

1) I.C.C.-Hosea - W. R. Harper-P.404

and accept social justice. We note that in his appealing words, the most effective thing that he can offer to the people is a promise of added days. No place is it mentioned that the good will receive an award after he dies. Therefore, we can assume that during the period of Amos, the people did not have any belief in a life after death.

H. Micah

The prophet Micah visions the future glory of Zion.

Therefore in 4:1, he says:

וְהָיָה לְאַחֲרִית הַיָּמִים וְהָיָה בֵּר דִּית יְהוָה גָּבוֹה כְּרָאֹשׁ
הַהָרִים וְגֵשֶׁת הָאֵל מֵעֵדֹת וְהָיָה צִיּוֹן צִיּוֹן:

"But in the end of days it shall come to pass,

That the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established

as the top of the mountains,

And it shall be exalted above the hills;

And people shall flow unto it."

When Micah speaks of the "End of days," he doesn't mean the end of time but rather the end of the present age and beginning of the Messianic era. Therefore we can assume that Micah when he spoke about a utopian earth where peace and harmony would reign, anticipated it for those individuals who would be fortunate enough to live during that period. No place in his writings is mention made of the dead sharing in the future age. Therefore we can safely assert that Micah had no belief in a life after death.

I. Psalms

The consciousness of God's nearness seemed in Biblical times to exceed that which ordinary men have today. God's presence was realized and men longed to enjoy it. Thus Ps. 27:4 asserts,
אחת שאלי ואות יהוה אונתה אנקש עדתי קדעיהוה
כל-ימי חיי לחיות קדע-יהוה.

"One thing have I asked of the Lord, that will I seek after.

That I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life,

To behold the graciousness of the Lord..."

To whatever this vivid sense of God's presence was due, it certainly existed, and the religious meaning of it is not affected. That which constituted the essence of heaven to other men, the Israelites profoundly enjoyed on earth.

Let us look at the view of life held by the Psalmists. Life was to be found only in the body. Earth was the abode of man. And so God would come down and dwell among the people on earth. The tabernacle of God would be with men, and He would be their God and they would be His people. Then He would forgive them their sins and He would write His law upon their hearts. Then the earth would be transfigured and all hindrances to a perfect life with God would be removed. God in His fulness was ever felt to be imminent.

Any thought of a future life was over-shadowed by a consciousness of the presence of God Himself. The psalmist being keenly conscious of his own personal life, longed earnestly to share in the blessings that the community would become endowed with, when God would dwell among them. He, together with the community longed to see the glory of the Lord revealed. Thus in Ps 17:15,

אני דצדק אחזה פניך.
 "As for me, I shall behold Thy face in righteousness."

Perhaps it was the prospect of death that brought forward individualism, and revealed its energies. The life of the individual was perennial, but with death before him, the individual could enjoy to the full this life. Yet his whole being reacted against death, and in the fellowship with God, he said "Thou wilt not give me over to Sheol". Perhaps a great danger threatened the psalmist, but his words are more than an assurance that he will be delivered from this danger.

The living can promote the glory of God in a way that the dead cannot. This is alleged by David as the reason why God should rescue him from danger (Ps. 6:5,6),

שודר יהוה חלוצה נפשי הושיעני למען חסדך:
 כי אין דמות זכרך דשאול וי יודה-לך:

"Return, O Lord, deliver me;
 Save me for Thy mercy's sake
 For in death there is no remembrance of Thee.
 In the nether-world who will give thee thanks?"
 We have this idea which recurs throughout the book
 of Psalms. God is omnipotent, all powerful, His
 wonders are without number, yet, what good is His
 greatness or His power if no one can sing about them?
 Therefore the psalmist tries to make a compromise
 with God. If God should spare his life, then he will
 sing about God's greatness. For, says the psalmist,
 only the living can tell about God's majesty and power.
 "The motive proposed for this deliverance is, that if the
 life of the community is destroyed, the commemoration
 of Yahweh, His praise, in the worship of the ritual will
 be destroyed. They will be no longer a congregation
 worshipping Yahweh in the ritual of the Temple, as
 prescribed by Yahweh in His law, and so well pleasing
 to Him."¹) We have the same thought in Ps. 30:10,
 "What profit is there in my blood, when I go down to the pit?
 Shall the dust praise Thee? Shall it declare Thy truth?"
 What advantage would the psalmist's death be to God? The tone
 of the question implies a negative answer. A dead man cannot
 praise God; this remains only for the living. If God spares
 his life, then he will continue to speak God's truths. This

1) LCC - Psalms - E. G. Briggs - P.48

plea may sound strange to the modern individual, but it was a natural one to the ancient Israelite. The same type plea is used by Hezekiah in his illness. The plea shows us a touching picture of the psalmist's childlike intimacy and communion with God. There is an interpretation that the nation is meant here and not the individual. It is the national ritual worship that would cease if the nation perished. 1)

Psalm 1:5 reads,

על-כן לא-יקח רשעים חסד
והטה אים דעת צדיקים:

"Therefore the wicked shall not stand in the judgment Nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous". God is the judge of the universe and He decrees that the righteousness shall succeed and the wicked shall fall. Once again the idea that the righteous will be rewarded and the wicked punished is confirmed.

Psalm 28:1,

צורא אל-תחדש ממני כן תחשה ממני
והמשלת עץ יורדי דור:

"My Rock, be not thou deaf unto me;

Lest if thou be silent unto me

I become like them that do down into the pit." The psalmist gives us here his conception of what happens to those people who die. Since he believes death to be absolute silence, he does not want God to be deaf unto him. From this we can imply that the psalmist had no belief in a life after death. This same idea is repeated in Ps 143:7,

אל-תסתה בגיך ממני
והמשלת עץ יורדי דור:

1) 1CC - Psalms - E.C. Briggs - P.261

"Hide not thy face from me

Lest I become like them that go down into the pit." Or PS.30:4,
יְהוָה הִצִּילֵנִי מִן־שְׁאוֹל גִּבְשִׁי חַיִּיתִי מִיּוֹרְדֵי קוֹר:

"O Lord, Thou broughtest me up from the other world; Thou didst keep me alive, that I should not go down to the pit." This psalm is a hymn of gratitude for redemption from a danger which threatened imminent death, possibly a grave illness. The condition of the psalmist was so grave, that he thought himself to be as good as dead, or already on the threshold of Sheol. Therefore, he thanks God for having saved him, for having prolonged his life, and for bringing him back from the dark regions of Sheol to life and health. He was extremely grateful that he did not go down to the grave, but rather had his health restored.

Psalm 33:18 reads: רְבִיבָה עֵין יְהוָה אֶל־יֹרְאֵי אֱלֹהִים אֲחִיחִי
אֲבִיחִי מִמָּוֶת גִּבְשִׁי חַיִּיתִי מִיּוֹרְדֵי קוֹר:

"Behold, the eye of the Lord is toward them that fear Him,

Toward them that wait for His mercy

To deliver them from death

And to keep them alive in famine." We have here the two severest national dangers enumerated: the destructive sword and famine.

God will prolong the life of the righteous and keep famine from their door.

Psalm 39:14 reads: בָּשָׂר וָדָם אֲנִי וְכָל־לִבִּי אֶחָד
בָּשָׂר וָדָם אֲנִי וְכָל־לִבִּי אֶחָד:

"Look away from me, that I may take comfort

Before I go hence, and be no more." Under usual circumstances we find the sinner asking for a favor from God, for God is his critic. When he dies, he can no longer ask for the favors of God.

Here the psalmist denies his belief in a life after death by saying that when he dies he will be no more.

Psalm 49:15 says:
כִּבְּצֹאן לִמְעוֹן שָׂמָּה מוֹת יִרְעֶם
וְיִרְדּוּ דָם יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲדָקֶר וְצִירֵם אֲדָוִת סוֹנֵן מִיָּדָם לוֹ:
"Like sheep they are appointed for the other world;

Death shall be their Shepherd;

And the upright shall have dominion over them in the morning;

And their form shall be for the other world to wear away.

That there be no habitation for it." This psalm indicates clearly that death is the common leveller. Even wealth cannot prevent death. When death comes both rich and poor are reduced to the same level. The frame of the body at death is perishable and will crumble to dust. At death there is no habitation, or any future abode, or life after death.

Psalm 71 is the prayer of an old man who has undergone many trials and is still beset by relentless enemies. The psalmist is the spokesman of this nation whose plight is comparable to his own.

In verse 20:

אֵלֶּיךָ הִרְאִיתִנִּי צָרֹת רַדּוֹת וְרָעוֹת
תִּשּׁוּבָה תַחֲיִינִי וּמִתְקוּמוֹתַי הָאֵלֶּיךָ תִּשּׁוּבָה תַעֲלֵנִי:
"Thou, who hast made me to see many and sore troubles;

Wilt quicken me again, and bring me up again from the depths of the earth." This phrase is no more than a metaphor implying

that God has rescued the psalmist from the very gates of destruction. As God has rescued the psalmist from dangers in the past, so **he** now feels confident, that once again God will remove

the obstacles from his path, and prolong his days.

In PS 73 we have a psalm that is a confession of a man whose faith has been sorely tested. He was disturbed by the sight of wicked men triumphing and flourishing while righteous men suffered. And so he says (PS 73:24),

דעצתק תגחני
ואחר כדור תקחני:

"Thou wilt guide me with thy counsel,

And afterwards receive me with glory" One might think that this refers to the hereafter, but this is improbable since "glory" never has such a significance in the Bible. "Receive" has the same meaning as "took" in Gen 48:1 and Ex 14:6 viz. lead a person to an appointed destination. A preferable translation is "Thou wilt conduct me to honour".

Psalms 88 is shrouded in gloom and it contains no gleam of light or hope. The author appears to have been smitten early in youth with a dreadful ailment, which caused him to be shunned by all, and made his existence a living death. As in verse 5, 6,

גחשתי עץ ירדתי קור הייתי כגדר אין און:
קצתים חפשי כמו חללים שכדי קדר אשר לא לזכרתך עור
והמה מידך גללו:
סתמי קדור תחתיות דמחשכים דמציאות:

"I am counted with them that go down into the pit;

I am become as a man that hath no help;

Set apart among the dead,

Like the slain that lie in the grave,

Whom thou rememberest no more;

And they are cut off from Thy hand
Thou hast laid me in the nethermost pit,
In dark places, in the deeps."

He is set apart among the dead because of his ailment which is probably leprosy. He says that in his ailment he is remembered by God no more just like those who have died and descended into Sheol. Here is a definite saying that God does not remember those who have gone down to Sheol. Not only doesn't God remember those who have died, but they are out off from His hand.

In the same Psalm verses 11, 12, 13, we read,

הֲלֹמְתִים תַּעֲשֶׂה כִּלְאֵי אִם רַב־אִים יִקְוֹתוּ יוֹדוּךָ סֵלָה:
הַיּוֹסֵף דָּקֶדֶר חֲסֵדְךָ אֲמוֹנֶתְךָ הַאֲקִדְוּ:
כִּי יוֹדַע דַּחֲשָׁן כִּלְאֵן וּבִרְקִתְךָ דְּאֹרֶל גְּשִׁיָּה:

"Wilt Thou work wonders for the dead?

Or shall the shades arise and give Thee thanks?

Shall Thy mercy be declared in the grave?

Or thy faithfulness in destruction?

Shall Thy wonders be known in the dark?

And thy righteousness in the land of forgetfulness?"

Unless God soon answers his prayer, the psalmist will be dead and beyond His help. These rhetorical questions imply a negative answer. God's marvelous acts are restricted to the living. The "Shades" refer to the "weak, helpless ones", the powerless dead.

In the same line of thought we read (PS 115:17)

לֹא הִתְהַיֵּם יְהוָה וְלֹא יֵה וְלֹא כָל יִרְדֵּי דִמְתָּה:

"The dead praise not the Lord,
Neither any that go down into silence"

Man should occupy himself with benevolent acts before he dies,
for on his death he cannot any longer perform good deeds and
without good deeds God finds nought to praise in him. This is
the popular view found in the Old Testament regarding the state
of the departed. Along with this (PS.94:17)

אולי יבוא עליה זלזלה
כמעט סכנה דומה גפלו:

"Unless the Lord had been my help,
I had soon dwelt in silence".

If God doesn't help him, then he will die. The psalmist saying
that his soul will dwell in silence shows us that he had no
belief in an afterlife. Death is final, nothing occurs after it
to the deceased.

In Psalm 89 we have a meditation in national adversity by the
psalmist. So great is the contrast between the promise and its
frustration, where God said that David's throne would endure for-
ever and the overthrow of the kingdom by the enemy, that the
psalmist gives utterance to his perplexity in forceful language.

In verse 49 he says,

מי גדר יחיה ואם יראה מות יתעלם גפלו
מיך אנוח סלה:

"What man is he that liveth and shall not see death,
That shall deliver him from the power of the grave? Selah".
The psalmist shares the mortality common to all man. He hopes
that God will remember and hasten the end of the captivity.
He wants to enjoy the freedom of the Israelites in this life in
their own land. He knows that after his death, what happens in
the captivity cannot interest him, for there is no possible way
for him in death to know what is happening among the living.

Psalm 102 contains an Exile's plea with God. His one gleam
of hope is God's eternity which kindles faith in Zion's restoration.
So he talks about the heaven and earth, the physical world, which
men think of as symbols of permanence. But God will outlast them.
In verse 26.27,

תעשה ידיו שמים
התה יאדך! ואיתך תעמך:

"The heavens are the work of Thy hands,
They shall perish, but Thou Shalt endure."
The only thing permanent in the world is God .

In Psalm 103 the author talks about the frailties of man.
God's mercy is a reward to those who fear Him and keep His
covenant during their life cycle. About man, he says (V 14)

כי הוא ירע יצרנו לכוך כי עפר אנחנו:
אגוש כחציר יתן כצוף השדה כן יצוף:
כי רוח עזרה לו ואיגלו ולא יכירנו עוד מקומנו:

"For He knoweth our frame/

He remembereth that we are dust

As for men, his days are as grass;

As a flower of the field, so he flourisheth

For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone;

And the place thereof knoweth it no more."

Once man dies he disintegrates and is forgotten. The wind passes over his grave and in time no one remembers it anymore.

In Psalm 104:29, just as in Gen 2:7 and Eccles 12:7, death is the withdrawal of God's breath from the individual. When this happens, the individual is no more and becomes part of the dust of the earth.

תפזיר כניק ידהיון תכל רוחת יאוצון ואנ צרפ יאורון:

"Thou withdrawest their breath, they perish!"

Psalm 115 is a prayer of thanksgiving by the people to God. The psalmist is grateful that God has saved him from death and permitted him to live and enjoy this life. The psalmist wasn't worried about an afterlife, he wanted to live during his time on this earth and so he says in V:7, 8,

כי ידועה גתו עליכי
כי חלצת גבאי ממות:

"The Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee,

For thou hast delivered me from death".

The psalmist is still thankful for the gift of life as he says (Ps 118:17,18),

לא אמות כי אחיה ואספר מעשי וה:
יסר יסרגי וה ולמות לא מתגדי:

"I shall not die, but live,
And declare the works of the Lord.
The Lord hath chastened me sore;
But he hath not given me over until death."

Because God has looked with favor upon the psalmist and granted him added days, he decides to declare the greatness of the Lord. This is the way he can show his appreciation for deliverance from an expected death. This same thought is found in Psalm 30 where the psalmist questions God. What good is the marvelous acts that God commits, if the psalmist will not be there to sing his praises? The mind of the psalmist was focused on extending his own life, and he therefore does not think about or make any mention of a life after death.

We believe that writers of the Psalms were not aware of a life after death.

There is an opinion that says, in the light of the Ugaritic remains of Canaanite religious literature, many of the Psalms must be pushed back into early Israelitic times, not later than the tenth century. There is thus no longer any reason to refuse a Davidic date for such Psalms. At the same time, it has become improbable that any of them descend below the fourth century B.C.E., and the assumption that there are Maccabbean Psalms, dating from the second or early first century B.C.E., has become almost

incredible. 1) However the general consensus of opinion is that the Psalms reflect Israelitic life from the tenth century to the Persian and Hellenistic periods. The Psalms reflect the beliefs of the average persons in those days. The Psalms were used as prayers by the people when they were in need of help or guidance. The Psalms were written to reflect the feelings and aspirations of the ordinary Israelite. If there was any belief by the Israelites in a life after death, surely the book of Psalms would have made reference to it. However, we find no inkling of any belief in a hereafter in the book of Psalms. We may safely say that during this period the Israelites did not have any belief in a life after death.

- 1) The Archaeology of Palestine - W. F. Albright P.226
Pelican Book Series

The Exile Period

A. Ezekiel

Ezekiel, like the prophet Jeremiah, maintained that God holds each individual responsible for his own acts, and that irrespective of heredity, the individual man may make a new beginning in his conduct. That is

the meaning of 18-26-27.
זאך צדיק מצדקתו ועשה צדו ואת עליהם קצונו אשר
עשה ימות: וזאך רשע מרשעתו אשר עשה ויעז מפני
וצדקה הוא את גפשו יחיה:

"When the righteous man turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, he shall die therefor; for his iniquity that he hath done shall he die again, when the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his life". The reward for obeying God is long life, and the punishment for wickedness is death. This principle is maintained

in his utterances when in (18:4) God says:
בן כל הגופות אי הגה כגפס האד וכגפס
הדן אי הגה כגפס החטאות היא תמות:

"Behold, all living beings are Mine, as the life of the father, so also the life of the son is Mine; the person who sinneth, he shall die." Ezekiel says that all living beings belong to God and come from Him, So God can reward or punish as He sees fit.

The thirty-seventh chapter constitutes a remarkable vision. The prophet gives us a picture of the redemption, reconstitution and revival of Israel,

when the people, now scattered and dead like dry bones, shall rise to a new life. It is the dead state of Israel, and the reanimation of the idealized nation, that is in the mind of Ezekiel. "The hand of the Lord was upon me, and the Lord carried me out in a spirit, and set me down in the midst of the valley, and it was full of bones; and He caused me to pass by them round about, and, behold, there were very many in the open valley; and, lo, they were very dry. And He said unto me: 'Son of man, can these bones live?' And I answered: 'O Lord God, Thou knowest.' Then He said unto me: 'Prophecy over these bones, and say unto them: O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord: Thus saith the Lord God unto these bones: Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live. And I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am the Lord.' So I prophesied as I was commanded; and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and behold a commotion, and the bones came together, bone to its bone. And I beheld, and, lo, there were sinews upon them, and flesh came up, and skin covered them above; but there was no breath in them. Then said He unto me: 'Prophecy unto the breath, prophecy, son of man, and say to the breath: Thus saith the Lord God:

Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live.' So I prophesied as He 'commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great host. Then He said unto me: 'Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel; behold, they say: Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are clean cut off. Therefore prophesy, and say unto them: Thus saith the Lord God: Behold, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, O My people; and I will bring you into the land of Israel. And ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I have opened your graves, and caused you to come up out of your graves, O My people. And I will put My spirit in you, and ye shall live, and I will place you in your own land; and ye shall know that I the Lord have spoken, and performed it, saith the Lord." At the word of the Lord God, the spirit of life is breathed upon the bones, and the dead appear to be reanimated. This vision, with its elaborate allegory, is meant to teach that the dismembered nation shall be brought together again, transformed out of its dead condition, and reconstituted. It is a vision of the moral resurrection of a people, who are represented as being brought up out of their graves to life again. It is not concerned with the

resurrection of the individual. Ezekiel is distinguished by his vivid imagery and allegory. "Here the prophet beholds the nation itself dead, as it were, in exile, and then, through the gift of the spirit already announced in 36:26, rising to new life."¹)

In 18:32, God says:
כִּי לֹא אֶחָדָם לָמוּת הָמָת גֵּאֹף אֶרְצִי יִהְיֶה וְהִשְׁכֵּרוּ וְחָיוּ:

"For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God; wherefore turn yourselves, and live." In the same vein we read in 18:23

הַחֹפֵץ אֶחָדָם מוֹת רָעָה גֵּאֹף אֶרְצִי יִהְיֶה הֲלוֹא זָשָׁקוּ מִדְּרָכּוֹ וְחָיוּ:

"Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? saith the Lord God; and not rather that he should return from his ways, and live?" The Malbim says that the change in the fate of the individual is effected by his own change of heart which is subject to his will. God does not want the sinner to die, but if he doesn't repent, then God will see to it that he meets an early death. The sinner that repents, God will grant added years.

1) The Century Bible-W.F. Lofthouse P.271

B. II Isaiah

According to the second Isaiah, there is in store for Jerusalem not punishment but redemption, for already she has received double punishment for all her sons. The city of Jerusalem is emblematic of the people of Israel. Through Cyrus, the Persian power will be overthrown and the exiles will be able to leave Babylonia and return to Jerusalem. The reward for being faithful to God while in Exile is to live and be able to see Judah flourish again.

(51:3),

ויסר מדברה כעדן
וערדפה כאן יהוה

"He hath made her wilderness like Eden,
And her desert, like the Garden of the Lord".
The righteous will be assured of God's everlasting salvation and favour.

In previous chapters we have shown that God rewards the righteous by granting them added years.

When Isaiah talks about the birth of a new era, one reward he mentions for the people there to enjoy

is (65:20)
לא יהיה משם עוד צוף ותיס ויקן אושר לא יתאן את
ותיו כיהגדר קן תאוו שגה יתלת והחוטא קן תאוו
שגה יקל:

"There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor
an old man,

That both not filled his days;

For the youngest shall die a hundred years old,

And the sinner being a hundred years old shall be accursed."

There is no place in the utopian world that Isaiah preaches about for those individuals who have died. The reward for those individuals who will be fortunate enough to live in that era will be a long life, where the youngest will live at least a hundred years. The aspect of a life after death had no role in the creed of II Isaiah.

In 51:14 we read,

מִהֵר לְעֵזָה לְרִפְתָּח
וְלֹא יִמָּוֵת לְשֹׁחַת:

"He that is bent down shall speedily be loosed;

And he shall not go down dying into the pit."

This passage refers to the Israelites who were in bondage. The author reverts to a beautiful metaphor to explain their emancipation. God will soon redeem the Israelites from the hand of their oppressors.

God speaks (65:22),

כִּי כִיְתִי הָעֵץ יִמֵּי זַמִּי, וְתַעֲשֶׂה יְדֵיהֶם יָדָיו דְּחִירִי, לֹא יָגֵזוּ לְרִיק
וְלֹא יִלְבְּדוּ לְדָהָר, כִּי לְרַע דְּרוּכֵי יְבוּהָ הֵמָּה, וְצִאֲצִאוֹיָהֶם אֹתָם:

"For as the days of a tree shall be the days of my people,

And mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands.

They shall not labour in vain,

Nor bring forth for terror;

For they are the seed blessed of the Lord,

And their offspring with them."

Those people in God's good graces will live a long life, for God compares their lives to a tree that lives

very many years. **לדורו** terror, is a sudden or premature death, which will not happen to those people who are blessed by God. Several generations will live together simultaneously. Peace and happiness and long life will be the reward of the faithful.

In the closing verses (66:23,24) we read,

והיה מצי חגש קודשו ומצי שדת קדשו
יקראו כל דשר להשתחוות לפני אומר יהוה:
ו'צאון וראו קדרי האגשים הפסעים ק'
כי תולעתם לא תמות ואש לא תכדק והיו זכאון לכל דשר:
"And it shall come to pass,

That from one new moon to another,

And from one sabbath to another,

Shall all flesh come to worship before Me,

Saith the Lord.

And they shall go forth, and look

Upon the carcasses of the men that have rebelled against
Me;

For their worry shall not die;

Neither shall their fire be quenched;

And they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh."

It was believed that the righteous would be rewarded with long life and they would be permitted to come and worship regularly before God on every new moon and Sabbath.

The sinners would have their life cut short, and their bodies would return to the earth, there to be devoured by the worms. No further mention is made to the deceased person. Therefore we can assume that the author, expressing the views of the people of his times, was interested in material rewards i.e. long life, health and prosperity, during their life time.

In 55:3 we read,

הִנָּה אֶזְכְּכָם וְאֶכְוֶה אֹתִי
שְׁמִעוּ וְתֵחִי גִפְתָּכֶם:

"Incline your ear, and come unto Me;

Hear, and you shall live."

Those people who listen to the word of God are promised a long life. Again we have an offer of a temporal reward for the faithful. "Ye may live involves not a restoration from death in the narrow sense of the term, but rather a deliverance from adversity and a consequent reinforcement of one's vitality or enlivening of the whole personality."1)

In fine, we can see that a belief in life after death did not exist with II Isaiah, or "No hint of immortality exists in Deutero-Isaiah" 2)

1) A Study in Cultic Phantasy-Prof.A.R. Johnson

Studies in Old Testament Prophecies-P.93

2) Studies in the Book of Isaiah-Glazebrook-P.157

Post Exilic Period

A. Haggai - Zecharia

The prophet Zechariah (both I and II) like his predecessor Haggai, was interested in inducing the Israelites to rebuild the Temple. The appeal of Haggai was supplemented two months later by Zechariah, and the work was under way. In the first chapter, when God is displeased with the actions of the Israelites, He says (1:3),

שׁוּבוּ אֵלַי גֵּאֻם יְהוָה צְדָאוֹת
וְאִשׁוּב אֵלֵיכֶם :

"Return unto Me, saith the Lord of hosts, and I will return unto you". The people were indifferent toward the rebuilding of the Temple, and the prophet called on them for a renewed and vigorous effort, holding out promises of blessing and prosperity. God wanted the people to turn from their evil ways and attend Him. Therefore, He says (1:5),

אֲדֹתֵיכֶם אֵיךְ הֵם וְגֵדְאֵיךְ הֵלְלוּם יְחִיו :

"Your fathers, where are they? and the prophets, do they live forever?" From the tone and rhetorical nature of the question, we understand that the prophet expects a negative answer. The prophets who delivered God's word, as well as they who heard it, have passed away; but only the word of God endures. We can assume that during this period the people thought that death was final, the end of all things.

B. Ecclesiastes

This book of Ecclesiastes must have been written by a person who faced the vanities of life and yet, somehow never lost the joy of living. He looks on life with open eyes, hating hypocrisy, despising injustice and wrong. It may well be that in this Book we have the common speech of the people as against the more polished stype of the literary writers. Common opinion favors a date early in the third century. Kobleth, looking on the world of things as they are, discovers no signs of immortality. Of another world, and an immortal soul he knows nothing. In 3:19-21,

כי מקרה דני האדם ומקרה הדומה ומקרה אדם אדם כמות
לפני מותו ורוח אדם אדם ומקרה אדם אדם כי הכל
בדל: הכל הולך אל מקום אחד הכל היה מן העפר והכל שז אל העפר:
"For that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts;

Even one thing befalleth them; as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all one breath; so that man hath no pre-eminence above a beast; for all is vanity. All go unto one place; all are of the dust, and all return to dust." Man and beast are alike in that they are both subject to death. They both come from dust, and they both return to the dust at death. When they die, the grave is their final resting place. The author makes no mention of a life after death for each of them. Continuing in 3:22,

וראיתי כי אין טוב מאשר ישאח האדם דמעתיו כי הוא
חלקו כי מי ידעונו ארמות דמה שיביא אחריו:

"Wherefore I perceived that there is nothing better, than that a man should rejoice in his works; for that is his portion; for who shall bring him to see what shall be after him? " Nobody can take him, while he is alive, to catch a glimpse of what awaits him in the hereafter. Man dies as the beast dies, he has no advantage over the beast. In 9:5,6, כי החיות יוצאים שימתן והמתים אינם יוצאים מאומה ואין עוד להם עקר כי גשח לקרם: גם אהבתם גם שבאותם גם קנאתם כדר אהבה וחלק אין להם עוד אולם דכל אשר גשה תחת השמש

"For the living know that they shall die; but the dead know not anything, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten. As well their love, as their hatred and their envy, is long ago perished; neither have they anymore a portion for ever in anything that is done under the sun." Here Koheleth gives the reason why he holds life, despite all its contradictions, preferable to death. While alive, man possesses consciousness and awareness, while in death all perception ceases. The author is not thinking of a reward in the hereafter. The reasoning is that during lifetime, man is able to earn something from his labour, but that possibility ends with death. "To have power to perceive that one must die is to be greater than the dead, who have no knowledge." 1) The element in death that Koheleth feels badly about is that the memory of the deceased is

1) I.C.C. Ecclesiastes - Barton Page 160

soon forgotten. A living person is a somebody; a dead person is less than a nobody; he is not even a memory. That a dead man would be forgotten seems to have been taken for granted by the Israelites. 1) This fact constitutes for Koheleth one of the great tragedies of life. And thus he says in 9:4,

כי אכלד חי הוא טוב
מן האוריה המת:

"For a living dog is better than a dead lion".

In 9:10, כל אשר תמצא ידך לעשות דחק עשה כי אין מעשה וחשדון ודעת וחכמה בשאול אפס אמה האל שמה:

"Whatsoever thy hand attaineth to do by thy strength, that do; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest." While a man is alive he should use all the sources of happiness which he has at his disposal. When death comes and ends his brief span of life on earth all his activity and planning come to an abrupt end. "This verse is perhaps the strongest of Koheleth's statements about the absence of physical or mental toil or progress after death." 2)

From the above material we can assume that Koheleth was interested only in this life and had no beliefs about any life after death.

1) Ps 9:6, 41:5, 31:12

2) The Cambridge Bible, revised ed. Ecclesiastes-A.L.Williams

C. Proverbs

The main contents of the book of Proverbs formulate rules of practical ethics, which were the special concern of the "wise". We also find discourses on moral philosophy. The author or authors who have given us their doctrines do not stand on a lofty height and preach impracticable ideals. They use common sense and verifiable experience. If one conducts himself in the light of wisdom, he will get the best out of life.

Most of the proverbs that we shall quote show us that those people who live by their wise council will be rewarded with long life. This must reflect the life of the people during this period of history. In 2:21, 22,

כי ישרים יושבו ארץ ותמימים יותרו קד:
ורשעים תאריך יכרתם וקוהגים יסחו ממנה:

"For the upright shall dwell in the land,

And the whole-hearted shall remain in it:

But the wicked shall be cut off from the land,

And the faithless shall be plucked up out of it."

Residence in Palestine implied the favour of God and his blessings. The wicked would have to forfeit all that they had enjoyed. In 3:1

קני תורת אל תשכח ומצותי וזכר אדק:
כי אורך ימים ושגות חיים וארץ ימיסו לך:

"My son, forget not my teachings;
But let thy heart keep my commandments;
For length of days, and years of life,
And peace, will they add to thee."

We remember reading in the ten commandments (Ex 20:12) that God's reward for honouring parents was to lengthen their days upon the land. If one walks in God's ways, his days will be lengthened and he will not come to a premature end, as those who follow evil ways.

To those that acquire wisdom (3:16),

אורן ימים קיימים.

"Length of days is in her right hand."

There in 4:10,

שמע קול וקח אומרי
וירדו לך שנות חיים:

"Hear, O my son, and receive my sayings;

And the years of thy life shall be many." Again we have a promise of long life to the obedient.

The author speaking about his words 4:22 says:

כי חיים הם למצאיהם
ואכלו דשדו מרפא:

"For they are life unto those that find them,
And health to all their flesh."

In 6:15 he speaks about the wicked and says:

על כן פתאום ידוא איצו
פתג יסדר ואין מרפא:

"Therefore shall his calamity come suddenly;

On a sudden shall he be broken, and that without remedy."

The author is probably thinking of sudden death which was regarded as a Divine visitation. "The writers sense of the seriousness of the vice described is indicated by the abrupt, vehement, almost fierce, declaration of punishment." 1)

This same thought is repeated in 29:1.

אויס האכחות מקשה ער
פתע יסדר ואין מרפא:

"He that being often reproved hardeneth his neck

Shall suddenly be broken, and that without remedy."

The author believes that the wicked will not be allowed to live out his allotted span of years. His punishment 8:35, 36 is death.

כי מלאי חיים ויפק רצון תיהיה:
וחמאי חמס גפסו כל משגאי אוקדו מות:

"For whoso findeth me findeth life,

And obtaineth favour of the Lord.

But he that misseth me wrongeth his own soul;

All they that hate me love death."

Wisdom is the tree of life to those who accept it. The favour of the Lord is a long life and life's necessities.

Death was believed to be the penalty of sin, and those people

1) International critical commentary - C.H. Toy - P.127

who did not hearken to his word would have their days shortened.

Again we have promise of longer life for those who fear God and have a knowledge of Him in 9:11.

כי די ירקו ותין
ויסיפו לך שנות חיים:

"For by me thy days shall be multiplied,
And the years of thy life shall be increased."

When the author speaks about the gains of lawlessness and the reward of righteousness he says 10:2

לא יועילו אוצרות רשע
וצדקה תציל תמות:

"Treasures of wickedness profit nothing;
But righteousness delivereth from death."

In chapter ten we have a collection of proverbs expressing rules of conduct, warnings, and moral reflections. These are not presented in systematic order and no logical sequence is followed. "Right action is recommended because it pays, wrongdoing is deprecated because of its disagreeable consequences. It must be borne in mind that the Book was directed not so much to the "wise" who could appreciate the loftier motives of virtuous conduct, as to the "simple" who needed the lesson that 'honesty is the best policy'." 1)
As sin causes death, virtue protects man from it, by deferring its coming.

1) Westminster Commentaries - The Book of Proverbs -
W.O. E. Oesterley - P. 854

In 10:27, 28
 יראת יהוה תאריך ימים ואבות רשעים תתקצר ה
 תחלת צדיקים אמה ותקות רשעים תאדא:

"The fear of the Lord prolongeth days; but the years of the wicked shall be shortened.

The hope of the righteous is gladness;

But the expectation of the wicked shall perish." The doer of good will be happy, while the wicked will not live his allotted time and will not receive the blessings of God. The life of the wicked shall be shortened either by vicious living, or by a violent end at the hands of an evil associate.

When he talks about business, he says (11:4)

לא יוציל בון דיון עדרה
 וצדיקה תציל ממות:

"Riches profit not in the day of wrath;

But righteousness delivereth from death."

In a time of crisis or national calamity, the wealth for which a man bartered his honour does not protect him from the misfortunes that befall the rest of the population. All he possesses is taken away from him. If the individual is righteous, God will avert a national disaster, and reward him with added length of days. In a national disaster, which is brought about by God, many lives are sure to be lost.

In 11:31,

כן צדיק דארף יאן
 אף כי רשע ומוטא:

"Behold, the righteous shall be requited in the earth;
How much more the wicked and the sinner!"

Even the righteous man is not perfect, but he will receive
divine retribution in this life. So will not the wicked who
is guilty, be judged and punished by God before he dies, or
have his life shortened?

In 12:2,

טוב יפיק רצון מיהוה
ואיש מערות ירעע:

"A good man shall obtain favour of the Lord;
But a man of wicked devices will He condemn."

Following our line of reason, the "favour of the Lord" is a
prolongation of days and a "condemnation" is a curtailment of
one's allotted years. In the same vein of thought 21:21,

רצה בצדקה וחסד
ימצא חיים בצדקה וכדו:

"He that followeth after righteousness and mercy
Findeth life, prosperity, and honour." God rewards the
righteous with added years.

In 14:12,

וע דרך ישר לפני איש
ואחריתו דרכי-מות:

"There is a way which seemeth right unto a man,
But the end thereof are the ways of death."

"The figure is that of a journey, in which the traveller
imagines that he is pursuing a straight path that will lead
him to his desired goal of success and happiness, but finds,

too late, that it leads to an early death, that is, to the destruction of happiness." 1) The road to evil leads to an early death. This same verse is repeated in 16:25.

The bad perish and the good endure as we find 14:11,

כִּית רַעֲזִים יִשָּׂא
וְאֹהֶל יֹשְׁרִים יִפְרִיחַ:

"The house of the wicked shall be overthrown;

But the tent of the upright shall flourish."

Those who live in an upright house shall have their days lengthened. Those who dwell among the wicked shall be overthrown, and meet an early death.

In 11:19,

כִּן צִדְקָה אֲחִיִּים
וְתִרְצֵה רָעָה אֲמִיתוֹ:

"Stedfast righteousness tendeth to life;

But he that pursueth evil pursueth it to his own death."

The sense is clear and yields the familiar doctrine of this Book, viz, righteousness prolongs life, evil shortens it.

With the punishment of evil 15:20

מִוֹסֵר רָע אֲזַל אֹרֶחַ
שׁוֹנֵא תוֹכַחַת יָמוּת:

"There is grievous correction for him that forsaketh the way;

And he that hateth reproof shall die."

"Life is represented as a discipline woe to him who fails to profit thereby." 2)

When we deal with avarice, the author says (15:27),

זָכַר דִּיתוֹ דּוֹצֵעַ דָּצֵעַ

1) I.C.C. - Proverbs - C. H. Toy - P.289

2) I.C.C. - Proverbs - C. H. Toy - P.307

ואנא מתגת יחיה:

"He that is greedy of gain troubleth his own house;
But he that hateth gifts shall live." Money obtained
through greed cannot be enjoyed as when honestly earned.
When the gainer is punished and loses his fortune, his
family suffers. But the man who hateth, i.e., does not
have an eager desire for gain, he will have the blessings
of the Lord. The same thought is expressed in 1:19

כן אורחות כל דליל דליל
את גפס דליל יקח:

"So are the ways of every one that is greedy of gain;
It taketh away the life of the owners thereof."

The prospect of abundant loot has the same effect upon
greedy men as the corn in the net has upon birds which are
tempted by it, -- death.

Those people who fear God are blessed as 19:23

יראת יהוה לחיים
ושלל ולין דל יפקד רע:

"The fear of the Lord tendeth to life;

And he that hath it shall abide satisfied,

He shall not be visited with evil."

Again, he that fears the Lord will be blessed with added days.

The opposite of this statement is in 21:16

אורק תודעה מדרק הסכל
דקה רבאית יגוח:

"The man that strayeth out of the way of understanding shall
rest in the congregation of the shades."

Here we realize the fate of the unwise. "The man who is not guided by wisdom wanders aimlessly through life. Only when he dies, does he cease from his wanderings." 1) The man that strays from the learning of knowledge will surely die before his time:

In 22:4,

עקד עגוה יראת יהוה
זכר וכבוד וחיים:

"The reward of humility is the fear of the Lord,

Even riches, and honour, and life." If a person is humble, he is in God's good favour and will receive from Him added days.

In 28:16,

לפי חסד תקדמות ודק מעשיות
עגוה זכר וכבוד וחיים:

"The prince that lacketh understanding is also a great oppressor; But he that hateth covetousness shall prolong his days." A prince who lacks understanding won't have a happy reign and a secure throne. When a ruler is not greedy and vice is absent, both he and his people are happy. Then God will bless him and he will have a long, happy, and secure life.

When the author speaks about an immoral woman (5:5)

רגליה ירדות מות
עגוה זכר וכבוד וחיים:

1) Metsudath David

"Her feet go down to death;

Her steps take hold on the netherworld"

Her immoral life hastens her end, and they who associate with her meet with a similar fate. God will punish the immoral by shortening their days on earth. Continuing about the immoral, the author says, ^{7:27} דרכי עוון דלתות ירדות אל חדרים מות:

"Her house is the way to the nether-world,

Going down to the chambers of death." From her house many paths to Sheol have their beginning. This form of vice brings on other kinds, leading to various crimes, ultimate destruction, and loss of favour with God. When that happens, death draws near.

This Book is strikingly universalistic even though it was meant for Jewish consumption. The word "Israel" does not occur once. Its teaching is applicable to all men, everywhere. We find that sin is a rebellion against God's will and man is accountable to Him for his deeds. Thus we read in 3:33,

מארת יהוה דלית רשע
וגוה צדיקים ידרג:
"The curse of the Lord is in the house of the wicked;

But he blesseth the habitation of the righteous."

In all chapters, the author lets us know that those who listen to his wisdom and walk uprightly before God will be blessed by long life. The reward was to be received in this world and enjoyed here. In fine, we can assert that there was no belief in the afterlife in this Book.

D. Job

The clash between dogma and human experience is the battlefield where the protagonists of each fight for victory. Prophetic Judaism said that God ruled His universe with absolute justice. The belief had become intrenched among the Israelites, that God rewards with material blessings those who live virtuously, and punishes the sinner with suffering. Experience could not always confirm this comfortable faith. What happened to the individual was regarded as the immediate act of God. The notion, we can assume, had not yet taken shape that the scene of retribution and reward could be transferred to another world in a hereafter.

Job, thinking about death, rejects any idea of resurrection when he says in 14:14,

אין ימות גזר, היחיה.

"If a man die, does he come to be again?"

By the tone of the question and from the context we realize that Job expects a negative answer.

כי יש לזר תקוה אין יכרת ועצה וקליפה
אין יתן דשאון תצפנה תסתירני צד שאל אפך
תשית לי חק ותזכרני:

"For there is hope of a tree,

If it be cut down, that it will sprout again,

And ~~that~~ the tender branch thereof will not cease.

Though the root thereof wax old in the earth,
And the stock thereof die in the ground;
Yet through the scent of water it will bud,
And put forth boughs like a plant.
But man dieth, and lieth low;
Yea, man perisheth, and where is he?
As the waters fail from the sea,
And the river is drained dry;
So man lieth down and riseth not;
Till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake,
Nor be roused out of their sleep.
O that thou wouldest hide me in the nether-world,
That thou wouldest keep me secret, until Thy wrath be past,
That thou wouldest appoint me a set time, and remember
me!"

Here we have a plea for some brief snatch of enjoyment
before death. It is based on the impossibility of any
enjoyment after death.¹⁾

In this passage Job discusses the bitter destiny of
man's extinction in death. A new growth may come
forth out of a stump of a tree, grown old and cut down,
but man dies and he knows no awakening. Of verse 8
Metsudath David translates: "Yea, even if the root thereof
wax old in the earth so that there remain no sap in it."

95.
1) I.C.C. * Job - Driver and Gray - P. 128

Buddenweiser on verse 9 translates: 'As soon as it scenteth water, it will bud again, and send forth sprouts as if newly planted'. Both these commentators talk about trees that seem lifeless but in reality are preparing to burst into burst into bloom. There are trees on the east side of the Jordan which through age begin to decay and yield poor crops. These are cut down close to the ground in the case of vines, figs, and pomegranates. The next year new shoots spring from the root, and these subsequently bear fruit freely. The spark of life is within the root, and water makes it sprout forth again like new. But when man dies, he never rises up from the earth. 'When man dies, he shall never rise again, until the heavens fade away and are destroyed' so says Metsudath David. Job says he can no sooner conceive of the disappearance of the heavens, which the psalmists speak of as being established forever, than of the resurrection or awakening of man from death. Job realizes that when man dieth he shall never rise up again. In the same trend we read 17:15, 16,

ואיפה אפוא תקוותי ותקוותי איני יארגנה:
דרי סאל תרגנה אמן יחד על עפר נחת:

"Where then is my hope?

And as for my hope, who shall see it?

They shall go down to the bars of the nether-world,
Where we are at rest together in the dust."

Both lines, by rhetorical questions imply that hope does not exist for Job. Since Job feels that death is near, he wants to know where the hope of future prosperity is, that his friends had spoken about. All who die or go down to Sheol will rest together and never rise.

Job is convinced that the fight for truth and the struggle to reconcile faith with reason must be fought in the only place he knows, on earth.

Job, wracked with disease, knows that God is the ruler of the universe. He wants to speak to this God and not listen to the wordy platitudes of his friends. Job knows that he has committed no wrong, but he wants to know why God doesn't listen to him and believe his protestations. He believes that God will eventually take his life, after He is finished torturing him. This belief is unaccompanied by any hope of a life after death. Therefore, Job says (13:15)

בן יקראני, ואני אענה לו
אך דרכי אל פניו אסכים:

"Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him;

But I will argue my ways before Him."

This is one of the imperishable lines in the entire Book. It is the Hebrew spirit of faith as contrasted with the acquiescence of pagan philosophy.

The first of Job's three friends, Eliphaz, declares that faith in the God of goodness brings its sure reward of health and long life. We can assume that the quiet, unassuming Eliphaz was typical of the people of his day and age. If they would just believe in God with a blind faith they would be rewarded with length of days. Nowhere does Eliphaz mention a life after death.

Job speaks and wonders if perhaps it would have been better if he had never seen the light of day. Why did he have to pass through the stages of childhood and manhood just to receive these terrible afflictions with which God had smitten him? In 3:13

כי צתה שכלתי ואשקוף
ושגתי און יגוח יי

"For now should I have lain still and been quiet;
I should have slept; then had I been at rest".

In death Job might have been with the mighty, the wicked, and the weary, who have been delivered from all cares and are now at rest in the democracy of death. Sheol has one attraction for Job which in his present mood outweighs all the rich interests of life. There he would be at rest; he would have no cares, worries, or sufferings. From this we can assume that Job believed that death was the ultimate end of the individual.

In 7:7,

לכר כי רוח חיי אראות טוד:
אן תשא ציג אראות טוד:

"Oh remember that my life is a breath;

Mine eyes shall no more see good."

Rashi comments that Job in this line denies the dogma of the Resurrection of the Dead. When Job closes his eyes in death, he will no longer be able to see good or evil. In 7:9,

כֹּה זָמַן וַיָּלֶךְ
בֶּן יוֹרָג אֲחוֹלָא וְחֵלֶה:

"As the cloud is consumed and vanisheth away,

So he that goeth down to the grave shall come up no more."

Just as the clouds disappear so does the individual when he dies. This verse is a clean cut statement of the impossibility of a return to earth after death. Just as in 10:21 it states that no return from Sheol is possible. When Job talks about Sheol in 3:17,

שָׁם יִפְּצוּן חַדְלוֹ רָעָל
וְשָׁם יִנְחוּ יְהִיזִי כֹחַ:

"There the wicked cease from troubling;

And there the weary are at rest,"

The main idea is that the evil and good, the great and the small are on an equal level in the place of the dead. Job continues 3:19,

קָטָן וְגָדוֹל שָׁם הוּא,
וְעַדָּה חֶבֶשׁ מְאֻבָּל:

"The small and great are there alike;

And the servant is free from his master."

The inequalities on earth vanish at death. From here

Job continues and denies that there is such a thing as
a shadowy continuance of existence after a man's death.

In 14:19 to 22
אדגיק שחקו מים תשלי סביחיה עשר אורח
ותקות אנוס האדגית:

"The waters wear the stones;

The overflowings thereof wash away the dust of the earth;
So thou destroyeth the hope of man."

Job has dismissed the possibility of life beyond the
grave. Ibn Ezra interprets that man's hope is
completely destroyed in death. If water can destroy
mountain and rock, how much more does man bring his
days to an end without hope of living again! Continuing,
תתקדשו אגזח ויהלך תשנה פניו
ותשחהו:

"Thou prevailest forever against him, and he passeth;

Thou changest his countenance, and sendest him away."
יכלדו דגין ואו ידע ויצערו ואו ידיו חמו:
אין דשרו עליו יכאד ופשו עליו תאדל:

"His sons come to honour, and he knoweth it not;

And they are brought low but he regardeth them not.

But his flesh grieveth for him,

And his soul mourneth over him."

The thought that knowledge ceases at death is impressively
formulated. Ibn Ezra comments that the verb קדו
means 'heavy, weighty', as well as 'honour'. So that

even though they (i.e. sons) become heavy (i.e. wealthy) in silver and gold, the father cannot know it. When the sons become impoverished, it cannot affect the father, for he is dead and cannot know their situation. As for verse 22 Battenweiser says 'Only his kin 1) grieve after him, and his servants 2) mourn for him.' Here the author takes for granted that there is no such a thing as a continuance of one's existence after death; for him when a man dies, he ceases to be. It is impossible for the dead to have any knowledge of that which would most intimately concern them, if they were alive on earth.

When Job considers what happens to an individual after death, he says (7:10),

לא יאוד עור לדימו
ולא יכירגו עור מקומו:

"He shall return no more to his house,

Neither shall his place know him any more."

How final the author wants us to believe death is! Then

Job passes from the individual to himself when he says,

(7:21),

כי עתה אשכב
ושחרתי ואיני:

"For now shall I lie down in the dust;

And Thou wilt seek me, but I shall not be."

1) קר means kin also in Gen 37:27, Isaiah 43:7

2) עבד signifies servants also in Gen 12:5, 14:21,

36:6, Ezek 27:13.

"With matchless pathos Job brings his speech to an end, he will die; but God will not remain in this present mood; He will think on His devoted servant once more in love, filled with remorse for His fit of anger. He will long to renew the old communion. But His vain regrets will come too late, Job will be gone beyond recall." 1)

Job in a later chapter pleads with God for a brief respite before the death which he expects. Realizing that his days on earth are few he pleads that God grant him peace and comfort and "let him alone" 10:21,

הִרְחַם אֱלֹהֵי וְלֹא אִשּׁוּק אֶת אֱלֹהֵי חֶסֶד וְצִלְמוֹת: אֱלֹהֵי דַבָּר
כִּי אִפְּלֵ צִלְמוֹת וְלֹא סִדְרִים וְתַבַּע כִּי אִפְּלֵ:

"Before I go whence I shall not return,
Even to the land of darkness and of the shadow of death;
A land of thick darkness, as darkness itself;
A land of the shadow of death, without any order,
And where the light is as darkness."

What can Job look forward to after death? Only the nether-world with its utter darkness. Milton in "Paradise Lost" speaks of "The light in that region is no light, but rather darkness visible". The author speaks of complete darkness and no movement of any kind there. In fine, we can assume that there was no activity after death, no life after death.

1) The Century Bible - Job - Peake - P.

Again contemplating his few short years on earth, Job says (16:22),

כי שנות מעט באותי
ואורח לא אשוב אלי:

"For the years that are few are coming on,

And I shall go the way whence I shall not return."

The few years allotted to Job are drawing near to completion. He realizes that when he dies, there is no turning back. His life is finished and there is no way that he can prolong or sustain it. Job also rules out any idea of resurrection; Once he dies he can never return to this life. When Job talks about the sinner, he says (21:21),

כי מה חפצו דקיתו אחריו
ומסד חרשיו חרשו:

"For what pleasure hath he in his house after him?

Seeing the number of his months is determined."

What interest can the sinner have in his household once he is dead? Job says that the visiting of man's iniquity upon his children is no punishment at all for the wicked man, because the departed has no concern in or knowledge of his children's fate after his death, cf above at 14:21. "He can have no interest in what goes on in his old home, for being dead he knows nothing about it."

Job speaks about the equal treatment by God of the wicked and righteous (21:26),

יחד עו עבר יסכרו
ורמה תכסה עליהם:

1) I.C.C. - Job - Driver and Gray - P. 187

"They lie down alike in the dust,
And the worm covereth them."

The wicked and righteous share the same fate. After their death it is impossible to tell who was bad and who was good, for the one is like the other in the dust.

In 19:25 we find an ambiguous passage and therefore we must go by the meaning of all the other passages that are clear.

ואני ידעתי לאולי חי, ואחרון לו עפר יקוץ:
ואחר עורי בקפו לאת ומקשרי אומה אלוה:

"But as for me, I know that my Redeemer liveth,
And that He will witness at the last upon the dust;
And when after my skin this is destroyed,
Then without my flesh shall I see God."

These verses are no more than metaphors. The true meaning is that even after his skin has been torn from his flesh, i.e. when his illness has reached the very last stage.

Buddenweiser renders these verses with beautiful clarity.

'But I know that my Redeemer liveth,
And that at last He will appear on earth.

Even after my skin hath been torn from my flesh.

Still will I cherish the hope that I shall see God.'

Not only has after life no basis in this passage, but it is contradicted by the rest of the poem. It is for vindication in his lifetime, not after his death, that Job hopes. Job doesn't expect to be restored to health and prosperity. He hopes that God may reveal Himself

to justify him and attest his innocence. This hope is fulfilled at the conclusion of the narrative. This Book must have been written prior to the general belief of the Israelites in a hereafter or a world to come, for as soon as this belief came into being, the problems raised in Job ceased to exist. Later Judaism answered the question, how the suffering of the righteous and the prosperity of the wicked are to be reconciled with the idea of a just God. "Better one hour of bliss in the life to come than the whole present life-time." 1) Job declares that if there were such a thing as life after death, he would bear his present lot with patience (14:14). Not only does Job emphatically deny a belief in a resurrection, but we find that there is no reference made to it by his friends. If there was such a hope prevalent or beginning among the people at that time, the friends, as the chosen exponents of the views of their age, would have been bound to introduce it into the argumentation. Job implies that it is absurd to speak of hope on this side of the grave or beyond. Job expected to die at any moment and realized that there was no return for any one from Sheol. R. J. Gordis toyed with the idea of an incipience of resurrection in this Book, however he regretfully dismisses it. 2) Job shares the ordinary Hebrew belief

1) Mishna Abot

2) H.U.C. Annual 1913-14 Vol. 18 R.J. Gordis P.103
105.

that this life is all, and his ignorance of life after death is one of the presuppositions of the narrative. Faith in a future life would have completely altered the argument of the problem of suffering. The author is too clear sighted and too sensitive to overlook the manifest instances of undeserved suffering and prosperity in the world. Yet he cannot accept the Pharasaic solution of a life after death, even though he is familiar with it. 1)

1) ICC-Job-Driver and Gray P. 128

The Maccabean Period

A. Daniel

We have discovered that until the book of Daniel came into being, (about 168 B.C.E.), the Israelites in the Old Testament period had no beliefs concerning a life after death. They did think, however, that when a person died, he passed on into the utter darkness of Sheol. In death, all men were equal, rich and poor, righteous and wicked. At death, communion with God came to an end, and God's mercies could ~~could~~ neither be apprehended nor acknowledged. During the age of the Maccabees, (165 B.C.E.), the religious imagination of pious Jews, meditating about a future life, arrived at a conception of resurrection, a final judgement, a place of punishment (Gehenna), Paradise, and a future life.

For the first time in the period of Daniel, this idea of resurrection, a life after death emerges. We find it expressed in 12:2,

ורבים מישי ארצות צר וקיצו
אלה אחי עולם ואלה אחרות אבראון עולם:

"And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to reproaches and everlasting abhorrence." This doctrine comes into being, produced by a period of revelations, that the final redemption of Israel could not be accomplished within the limits of nature. It became clear that the hopes and aspirations of the prophets and people pointed forward to the great miracle here described. Therefore the belief in the resurrection became firmly bound up

with the indestructible hopes of the future of Israel. The immediate reference is to the Israelites only. The desire was to set up an eternal Messianic kingdom on earth. The martyrs, prophets, teachers, and the righteous will be blessed with a resurrection to life. The wicked also have a place in the plan. They too will be resurrected, but to an everlasting shame and contempt. This leaves the great majority of the nation, those who were neither too righteous nor the other extreme, wicked. The average person would have no share in the kingdom to come, but remain in Sheol as his permanent abode. So Sheol became the intermediate abode of the righteous and the wicked in Israel, and the eternal abode of the rest of the Israelites and all the Gentiles.

The belief then came into being, that God would overthrow the enemy of mortal man, death, and bring His kingdom here on earth. The kingdom will consist of the living and the former dead Israelitic righteous, who will live forever with Zion as the Capitol of the kingdom.

"The book of Daniel was written in the midst of the Syrian persecution of 168-165 B.C.E., while the 'Abomination of desolation' stood in the Temple. It was an appeal to the faithful to remain steadfast even unto death, a promise that their God would some day miraculously destroy the heathen empires, and give world dominion to the Hasidim - including those slain

for their faith, who would be brought back to life! 1)

Here for the first time in the Old Testament, the doctrine of resurrection is stated as a dogma. In earlier passages, the authors were concerned with a national rebirth, and not as in Daniel with individual retribution after death for those Jewish martyrs, who had died for their faith by order of Antiochus Epiphanes. Unless God be guilty of injustice, he must justify His saints, who gave up their lives in the sanctification of His name. The Maccabean crisis transformed Job's dream of a vindication of his innocence after his death into a dogma.

1) Introduction to the New Testament - Pfeiffer - P. 63

B. Sadducees and Pharisees

After the time of the Maccabean war (165 B.C.E.), there developed two main groups in the Jewish Commonwealth, the Pharisees and the Sadducees. The Sadducees believed that the enjoyment of this life was the goal of man. God bestowed free will on man so that he could work out his own well-being. They believed that reward and punishment were the natural consequences of people's actions. The Sadducees believed that the punishment ordered by the Bible (as they knew it in their times), for the infliction of any bodily injury, should be literally interpreted. Their interpretation was, "An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth." Because of this, they obtained the reputation of being cruel executors of justice. They also said that only the ordinances which were clearly expressed in the canon of the Bible, as they then knew it, were binding. Those ordinances that rested in oral tradition, had a subordinate value and could not claim to be inviolable.

The other group whom we now consider was the Pharisees. They, appealing to the traditional interpretation of the Scriptures, allowed mercy to intercede in their judgments, and often only required a pecuniary compensation from the offender. The Pharisees were governed in their actions by the necessity of preserving Judaism. Their answer as to why the wicked flourished and the righteous suffered was that Divine justice would manifest itself not during life but after death.

A serious disagreement between these two groups arose over the doctrine of the resurrection.

We have shown that until the time of Jeremiah and Ezekiel, the doctrine of reward and punishment for the individual was not mentioned; the tribe or people was the important element. Then when the individual came into prominence, the question arose as to why the wicked prospered and the righteous suffered.

About 168 B.C.E., Antiochus IV Epiphanes swept down with his Syrian armies over Judea. His intention was to Hellenize all the peoples whom he conquered. There were many Jews who accepted this new Greek culture. The majority, however, clung to the religion of their ancestors and refused to accept the new culture. Antiochus was not satisfied with the pace of the assimilation, and he decided to use drastic measures. Jewish piety became punishable by death. The houses of the faithful were burned. Sacred scrolls were mutilated and desecrated. Thousands of Jews fled to the caves scattered throughout the land, but the forces of the tyrant followed them and slaughtered them unmercifully. As their numbers decreased, and because they could not foresee any possible chance of a victory against the numerically superior forces, many Jews turned to the vague beliefs of the Hasideans, who felt that their future lay not in this world, but in a world to come. Many people began to believe that they would have to die, before the "new era" would come. The doctrine of resurrection became an integral feature of Pharisaic

Judaism, and began to spread among the people. The writer of the book of Daniel, as we have shown, held forth this belief and assured those who died among the faithful that they would be revived and be called back to a life eternal. It was felt that God would not forsake the righteous even after death. The teachers of wisdom, such as Ben Sira earlier, and members of the upper classes did not feel any compulsion to adopt these views. They maintained the Biblical view that retribution would be meted out by God on earth during the lifetime of the individual.

The resurrection was the Pharisaic belief that at some future time, all those who had died, would be recalled to eternal life. "Immortality means that the soul does not die with the death of the body, but lives whether there be a resurrection or not. The prevailing expectation was that the resurrection of the body and the soul would unite again as they had been in the former life on earth."¹)

The prophets had spoken about a time to come when God would establish peace and righteousness on the earth. Eventually the world of wickedness and disorder would have to disappear and be replaced with one of beauty and love. The Pharisees, in their interpretation of the law, wanted to discover who would be permitted to live in this new era, which the prophets had promised would be heralded by the Messiah. Would this new era

1) The Pharisees-R. T. Herford-P.170

be reserved only for the living? What of those people who had died and yet while alive had been faithful to God and walked in His ways? What about the martyrs, saints, and teachers who had allowed themselves to be tortured and slain rather than be unfaithful to their God? Unless God be guilty of injustice, He must justify them after death.

We have shown that until the time of Daniel, the general belief of the Israelites was that the departed spirits reposed in Sheol, remaining there without any hope or change in their condition. Gradually the Pharisees came forth with the answer as to what would happen to these spirits when the new era arrived. At that time, all the righteous would return from Sheol to life, and share in this new era which was, to the later way of thinking, described by the Prophets as the time when the lion would lie down with the lamb, and war disappear from the face of the earth.

When the Pharisees became the religious authority in Judaism, their belief became authoritative so that the Mishna regarded this doctrine as one of the essential beliefs in Judaism. In tractate Sanhedrin, 10:1, we read:

כל ישראל יש להם חלק לעולם הבא.

"All Israelites have a share in the world to come." In

the same verse we read,

ואלו שאין להם חלק לעולם הבא, האומר
אין תחיית המתים:

"And these are they that have no share in the world to come; he that says that there is no resurrection of the dead." The Mishna recorded the opinions of the Pharisean party, when it was compiled at the end of the second century.

One method by which the Pharisees made this belief generally accepted, was by the insertion into the beginning of the daily prayers of a test benediction. This prayer was inserted into the second benediction of the Shemoneh Esreh (the Eighteen Benedictions). It reads as follows:

וְאַתָּה אֱלֹהֵינוּ אֱלֹהֵי חַיִּים. דְּרוּךְ
אֱלֹהֵינוּ "אֱלֹהֵינוּ חַיִּים":

"Yea, faithful art Thou to revive the dead. Blessed art Thou, O Lord, who revivest the dead." This benediction contained the statement of resurrection; it was a declaration of belief which a Sadducee would shrink from proclaiming. By the end of the third century, the Pharisees had conquered the Sadducees and their beliefs became the prevalent ones among the Jews.

Conclusion

The doctrine of resurrection or a life after death, we have seen, does not come into popular belief in the Old Testament, until we reach the book of Daniel. In Daniel, for the first time, we have this doctrine stated as a dogma. I have hoped to prove that all earlier passages in the Old Testament that have ambiguous meanings and that might be construed as referring to an afterlife, either were poetic references, or dealt with a national rebirth, rather than an individual resurrection. We have shown that during the time of Antiochus IV Epiphanes many pious and faithful Jews were slain only because they wanted to remain true to the tradition of their ancestors. Unless God be guilty of an injustice, there had to be a way that He could justify these martyrs after their death. The Maccabean conflict turned the Hassidean hope into a dogma. The Pharisees, whether they borrowed the idea of an afterlife from the Hassidim, or developed it independently, brought forth an idea that the people accepted readily. It then became an integral part of Judaism.

In the apocalypses the resurrection became a prominent feature. In II Maccabees we read about the martyrdom of seven brothers and their mother. In 7:9, as the second brother is brought forward to meet his death, we read: "And when he was at the last gasp, he said, Thou cursed miscreant, Thou dost dispatch us from this life, but the

King of the world shall raise us up, who have died for His laws, and revive us to life everlasting."

Then the third son, on the brink of death, holds out his hands courageously and says: "

"These I had from heaven; for His name's sake I count them naught; from Him I hope to get them back again."

The poor mother after seeing six of her sons killed by a slow tortorous death, turns to her youngest son and says, "Fear not this butcher, but show thyself worthy of thy brothers, and accept thy death, that by God's mercy I may receive thee again together with thy brothers." From this story we can see that the idea of a life after death was becoming a dogmatic belief with the Jews in this period.

Let me quote a story about Judas, the hero of the Maccabean struggle. After one of his campaigns near the town of Adullam, he sent troops out to gather in the corpses of the slain, in order to send them home, that they might be buried in the sepulchres of their fathers. Judas discovered that the slain among the Jews were wearing idolotrous amulets. Therefore, he decided to send a sum of money to Jerusalem for a sin-offering. We read in II Maccabees, 12:43,

"In this he acted quite rightly and properly, bearing in mind the resurrection, for if he had not expected the fallen to rise again, it would have been superfluous and silly to pray for the dead, and having regard to the splendour of the gracious reward

which is reserved for those who have fallen asleep in godliness,- a holy and pious consideration. Hence he made propitiation for the dead, that they might be released from their sin." The idea was coming into being that there was something to look forward to after death. In this story we can see that Judas did have a respect for his dead soldiers for this reason.

In Enoch, 51:1, we read,
"And in those days shall the earth also give back that which has been entrusted to it,
And Sheol also shall give back that which it has received,
And hell shall give back that which it owes." The apocalyptic literature is complete with examples to show us that this dogma was part of the belief of the Jews at that time.

It is not my intention to prove that there is a life after death, or if there will be a resurrection at some future time. This thesis deals with the beliefs of the Jewish people during Biblical times as seen through the authors of the various Books of the Old Testament. To come to my conclusions, I have read various modern commentators and quoted from them freely. I hope that I have succeeded in proving that the Jews living in the Old Testament period had no conception about a life after death. Only when the Pharisees came into being as

a important political party, did their idea begin to take root and spread. I have given several examples to show that during the period that the apocalyptic literature was written, this idea had become an integral part of Judaism. When Judah ha Nasi compiled the Mishna, the belief in a life after death was taken for granted.

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Abbreviations

IAAM Intellectual Adventures of Ancient Man

ICC International Critical Commentary