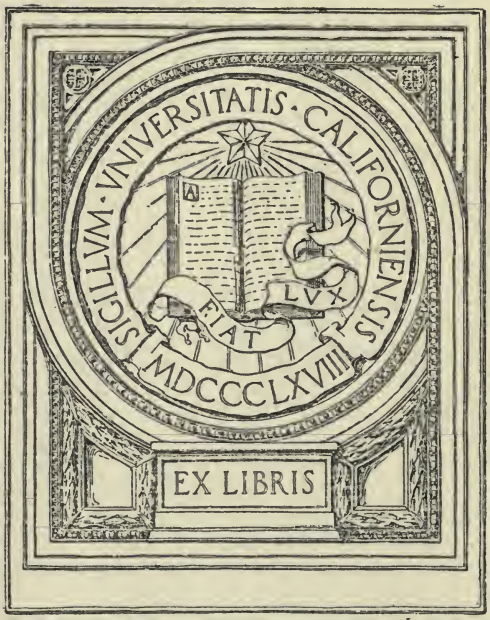

NATIONAL IDEALS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

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BY
HENRY J. CADBURY

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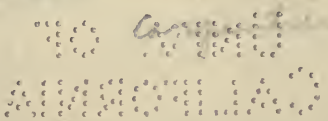

PREFACE

DIFFERENT theories have held the field with regard to the controlling factor in the destiny of nations. In the older study of history, especially of the sacred history contained in the Bible, God was regarded as the supernatural cause of every national disaster or development. Secular history has long been studied as the history of governments, with emphasis upon the military relations between states. Battles were the decisive events and "big battalions" were the accompaniments or the expressions of Providence. More recently the economic interpretation of history has come to the foreground, and the fate of nations has been said to depend on natural resources, commerce, and the appetitive and competitive motives which material needs stimulate.

Against these extreme views, whether superhuman or purely material, the influence of national ideals deserves emphasis. There is a collective human idealism of which neither economic determinism nor supernatural Providence is wholly independent. The folk songs, the war cries, the moral standards, and all the influences of civilization and religion have often determined a nation's history quite apart from the working of military

and economic factors. Ideals as well as expectation of profit have guided the course of events and animated national conduct. Providence has found expression through patriot and prophet, and through the developing experience of nations, no less than by miracle and military intervention. History must be interpreted spiritually as well as materially, naturally as well as supernaturally.

The correct interpretation of history is more than an academic question. It affects directly the conduct of individuals and society. The forces which seem to men effective in the past are the very forces on which they will pin their faith for the future. If we accept the apocalyptic interpretation of history as the inexorable working of a Divine plan, we shall merely await in passive reliance the unaided intervention of God to create the consummation of his will. All human endeavor will seem useless to hasten or to hinder his purpose. If on the other hand we accept the economic, the military, or the political interpretation of the past, we shall use our effort to secure economic, military, or political readjustment in the future. These are indeed the varied hopes of many men to-day—premillenarianism, socialism, militarism, democracy are some of the names for them. But if we believe spiritual forces and ideals are the real determinants of human life and progress, then our interest and our effort will be directed toward the creation of

a new public conscience, of a spirit of brotherhood, and of all the higher qualities of personal and social life. We shall interpret the movements of our time not as the unwinding of a divine machine nor as the conflict of states and systems, but as a conflict of ideals. "We know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now," and we shall appreciate with Paul "that the earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for the revealing of the sons of God." "The revealing of the sons of God"—this simple realization of Christian ideals in all the relations of men and nations is the

> "One far-off divine event,
> To which the whole creation moves."

The purpose of the chapters that follow is to sketch in outline some of the striking and influential ideals which were held by the Hebrew nation or its leaders through the thousand years of its history covered by the canonical Scriptures of the Old Testament. This study has been the natural outgrowth of an impulse given by the Great War for the comparison of national standards and aspirations. But it may be predicted that a few years will not make obsolete the analysis of these questions nor make valueless the study of the idealism in great nations of the past. An ancient and remote nation like Israel provides

a field where such study can be carried on without passion or prejudice.

It is a strange fact that so little investigation has been made of the subject. Even the study of political theory usually omits the ancient Orient altogether and begins in Greece only with Plato and Aristotle. Although the Bible has been studied from nearly every conceivable view-point, one cannot easily name any treatise that attempts to describe the development of its national ideals. This volume is not an effort to supply that lack so much as to call attention to it. A thorough and less popular study of the subject by a competent Old Testament scholar would be a useful contribution to modern political thought as well as to a knowledge of the Bible. As will be evident to the reader, the author has essayed no independent historical or critical investigations. He is indebted to the current English and American commentaries and general works about the Old Testament such as are mentioned in the footnotes. In the quotations from these books the spelling Jehovah has been substituted for Yahweh and other forms of the Divine name in order to be consistent with the usage of the Bible text adopted.

As a background for the study the author has adopted that reconstruction of the history of Israel which appears to be most generally accepted by historical criticism, although he is fully aware of the objections to which this reconstruction is

open from more than one direction. Perhaps two other criticisms will occur to the reader: the failure to emphasize in conventional fashion the development of Hebrew religion, and the omission of the New Testament. Both are due to the limited purpose of the book, in aiming to focus attention upon a single phase of a significant national history. The religious meaning of the Bible has so long overshadowed in our minds its social and political significance that it may be well here for the sake of clearness to leave theology in the background. It cannot be completely separated even from patriotism and politics. The implications of early Christianity for national ideals are also an essential supplement to the study of those ideals in Hebrew history.

To the editors of *The Homiletic Review* and of *The World Tomorrow* the writer expresses thanks for permission to reprint from their columns Chapter XX and Chapters XI, XII, XVII, and XXII, respectively.

HAVERFORD, PENNSYLVANIA,
April, 1919.

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I

INTRODUCTORY: THE BIBLE AND NATIONAL IDEALS

In every age the Bible has not only met the personal religious needs of men, but it has also proved rich in suggestion for the wider problems of a changing world. This is specially true to-day, when a great war has widened our horizon beyond our own nation as never before, and has encouraged us to examine and compare the ideals of states and to prepare for new international relationships. Trained to familiarity with the Bible and reverence for it, we instinctively turn to it for lessons and advice on the problem of the new world that is being born under our very eyes. As many generations have done before us, we search the Scriptures in the light of new experiences, and our search is richly rewarded. Such study of the Bible is scarcely new. Men have always turned to Scripture in national as well as personal crises. They have appealed to its guidance for statecraft and leadership. But such use has been sporadic and isolated, too often a reliance on texts for argument, rather than a scientific quest.

There are many reasons which justify such a national interpretation of the Bible. In the first place, it accords with the Bible's historical origin. We are wont to speak of the Jews as the people of a book, but it is no less true that the Bible is the book of a people. The Old Testament is the collected remains of a great national literature. It breathes throughout the national spirit. It portrays a single national culture. It traces the continuous development in political as well as religious and social institutions of the Jewish people, a people as distinct by race and by national self-consciousness as any that was ever called a nation. About half of the Old Testament is the history of this people. But even the parts which are not narrative deal far more directly with national questions than is often supposed. The prophets—in many ways the greatest contribution of Israel to civilization—were neither recluses nor merely spiritual reformers; they were men of affairs, statesmen, and political idealists. Like Moses, they were God's spokesmen to the nation. Their sermons were addressed to the people as a whole or to its representatives rather than to individual persons. As we have come recently to recognize, the prophets were social reformers, not evangelists, and the society to which they devoted themselves was their own nation. To a striking extent the prophets transcended even this limit and reached a kind of

"international mind." Both Israel and Israel's God were given by them a universal significance, and history was interpreted internationally. The political interests of the Hebrews did not end with the fall of Jerusalem. They still had a national life and a national hope which became more exalted and more vivid the less it seemed capable of realization. They not only hoped for Israel, but repented and prayed and planned and fought for their nation. So the later prophets and the postexilic writings of the Hebrews reflect their national thought and aspirations. Even the *Book of Psalms*, dedicated by centuries of Christian use as the prayer-book of personal piety, was, without doubt, the liturgy of the national sanctuary of Jerusalem, and some of its most individual expressions are to be understood, by a common Semitic idiom, as the personification of collective prayer or thanksgiving.

Little less real, though less obvious than in the Old Testament, is the national standpoint in the New. Its basis is the fulfilment of the Jewish national hope for the Messiah, and the writers of the new Israel not only inherit, but consciously adopt, much of the national terminology of Judaism. The relation of the individual to the state emerges more clearly in the New Testament as a problem of conscience. The persecutions of Jesus and of early Christian martyrs present the tragic conflict between loyalty to Cæsar and to

God. In the life and letters of Paul are revealed some of the difficult problems of internationalization, while the canon closes with a vigorous broadside against the world empire of Rome.

The political elements contained in the Bible are not only extensive, they are varied. Covering over one thousand years of history, the vicissitudes of this small though long-lived people provide a great variety of situations. During all this period the political ideals of the Hebrews are slowly and unevenly evolving from the simple Semitic nomadism of the desert to the cultured cosmopolitanism of Luke. In many cases certain ideas can be traced as they gradually develop from one age to the next; in other cases we see rival standards existing side by side or in open conflict—the new versus the old, the material versus the spiritual, the nationalistic versus the universal. We can trace the influence of religious, social, and economic factors upon political life and tendency. We can inquire into the individual qualities of the outstanding leaders in political theory and practice. We can test their loyalty to the past, and their adaptability to the present, and their insight as makers of their nation's future. But, above all, we can learn from the wide scope of time represented how constantly "new occasions teach new duties," and how true patriotism expresses itself in strange and often unrecognized ways.

For the Bible has this further advantage as the teacher of civic duties and the touchstone of national ideals, that its principal characters, in spite of diversity of aim and method, were throughout men of unquestioned patriotism. The long roll-call of heroes in *Ecclesiasticus* or in the *Epistle to the Hebrews* is a hall of fame that would make any nation proud. They were men of initiative, resource, patience, and courage. From Moses to Paul they were willing to be "anathema" for the sake of their countrymen, and they labored through suffering and often through misunderstanding for the better country that they saw with the eye of faith. Thus the prophets, though notoriously without honor in their own country and generation, were recognized by later generations and in many lands as the supreme type of patriot. The highest loyalties can always find both example and expression in the pages of Scripture.

But the greatest quality of the political idealism of the Bible is its high spiritual and moral tone. Religion penetrates even the most secular phases of Hebrew life and gives a spiritual outlook to every important utterance of the Hebrew nation. With this people the combination of church and state, as we call them, was ever peculiarly close. The two were co-extensive in scope and coincident in power. Even in its most primitive stages Hebrew political life was religious. The founding

both of the state and of its worship is to be traced to the same event—the Exodus from Egypt; and to the same human leader—Moses. Thereafter warriors and kings share their honors with priests and prophets. In the Bible, therefore, as nowhere else, statecraft is free from purely material and expediential bias. National ambitions are formed and tested by current standards of religion. National welfare is always the welfare of the nation's God. History is interpreted spiritually, and the development of the state is the medium for divine revelation.

Finally, by studying the Bible's lessons for modern national life, we are copying closely the example and purpose of its writers. Few of its records are contemporary with the events they describe, and few are written just for their own story. The narratives of the Bible are intended to teach lessons from the past for the present. This pragmatic element is characteristic of both the Old Testament and the New, and explains both the selection and the presentation of the narrative material. If one writer describes the life of Israel under Moses as a theocracy it is because he considers that kind of commonwealth the ideal for his own later days. If the sermons of Isaiah were recorded long after his death it was because they were felt to contain sound advice for the tangled but similar political conditions of the century that followed him. So the stories of

Elijah, of Jonah, and of Daniel are obvious efforts to train the national conscience of later generations. Surely such precedents justify us in applying to our own times the Bible's national ideals in so far as the historical situations are comparable and the moral principles involved are eternally righteous and universal.

II

THE POLITICAL INHERITANCE OF THE HEBREWS

THE founding of the Hebrew nation may be dated from the Exodus from Egypt, but the roots of the nation, of its physical and social history, of its economic and political institutions and ideals, lie far back of Moses and his generation in the desert life of Arabia. For the Hebrew stock was Semitic, and at some time it had been in the most primitive stage of culture—the culture of the nomad. Indeed, the Hebrews were but little removed from that stage when first they emerged from Egyptian slavery and pushed their way into Canaan, as some of their ancestors had pushed into the fertile lands of Egypt. Such migrations from the desert of Arabia into the richer lands about it have characterized the whole history of the barren peninsula, with its limited resources for the support of human life. Palestine itself seemed to the desert folk a land flowing with milk and honey, and was the lure of successive waves of nomad immigration long before and long after the famous venture of the Hebrew spies.

To these nomad ancestors, therefore, must we look to gain some idea of the Hebrew heritage

of political thought and customs. No records of these men have come down to us on paper or stone. They lived and died, as transient as the life of all their kind,

"Like snow upon the desert's dusty face."

Nor did their descendants soon enough commit to writing their memories of the past to preserve an accurate picture of the desert life. The Hebrew records, even in *Genesis*, all presuppose some stage of agricultural development. The first man, both in Eden and without it, was a tiller of the soil. It is true that many of the nomad habits and customs still survived in the age of Hebrew history that is known to us from contemporary records, and confirm our assumption of a nomadic origin and of powerful nomadic heredity. These clues, together with the similar survivals found in other developed peoples of Semitic origin, form one source of knowledge about the Hebrew ancestors. But a far more complete and no less reliable picture is to be found in the modern life of the Arab bedouin. Scarcely scratched with the civilizations that have risen and fallen about them for thousands of years, these children of the desert have kept unchanged most of the characteristics of the remotest past.

By studying these sources a clear impression can be formed of the life of the primitive Semites that was bequeathed to those hardy sons of the

desert who were welded into a Hebrew nation. Their life was simple and natural. It had no artificial boundaries; but religion, social custom, and government were all bound into one, and these were largely determined by the economic conditions under which they lived. If, however, adopting the modern method of classification, we select those elements in nomad life that can be called political, we shall find the following outstanding factors:

The unit of nomad life is neither the individual nor the nation but the tribe or clan.[1] The family, of course, exists, but the ties of kinship extend to more than the immediate family circle and include the larger circle of kindred by blood and marriage. The tribe is economically and religiously the unit, owning property in common—such property in cattle as the nomads possess—and worshipping the same totem or god. The tribe lives together at an oasis and travels together from place to place in the desert. But its unity is fortified not so much by the common ties of blood—which are often remote and even imaginary—nor by the bonds of mutual service, nor by the fellowship of common worship, but primarily by the need of mutual defense. Each tribe is hostile to its

[1] Clan and tribe are often used interchangeably by writers on this subject, nor is any effort made here to describe the more elaborate organization—which is possibly quite primitive—by which a group of clans are loosely federated to form a tribe.

neighbor, and it is this fear that creates the tribal loyalty and finds its most characteristic expression in the law of blood-revenge.

The vendetta, or law of blood-revenge, belongs to many primitive cultures and survives even to the present day, not only in backward regions but (in modified form) even in the penal and military institutions of the "civilized" world. As expressed in Genesis 9:5, 6, it is an ordinance of God that "whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed." In the life of the bedouin this means that the tribe is bound to avenge the death of one of its members, by the death not necessarily of the murderer nor of merely one member of his tribe, but by manifold vengeance on himself and his kin. And this duty is established by all the sanctions of religion. In striking contrast to the Ishmaelite hostility between clans is the well-known bedouin law of hospitality. Parallel with the anarchy of the desert, where all tribes are rivals and each must fight for its existence, is the unalterable and sacred custom which welcomes the stranger without question and without selfish restraint.

Within the political unit a simple patriarchal form of government prevails in all matters directly affecting the interests of the whole. The sheik is leader in peace and war, in religion, and in quest for food for his clan. But the sheik is raised but slightly in dignity and power over the other free

members of the clan, who stand to each other in the relation of brothers. The members accept his rule, and little individual initiative can arise where mutual dependence is the unconscious background, where custom is unquestioned law, and where personal ambition cannot disturb the simple equality within the tribe.

To any one familiar with the Old Testament the influence of these nomad standards and practices upon the Hebrew people is apparent. There is much of the nomadic not merely in the stories of *Genesis*, as we should expect, but also in the later narratives of the Judges and the Kings. As has been said: "In spite of the tradition of the national unity under Moses before Palestine was reached—the children of Israel are represented during the process of that invasion and after its achievement as still a number of loosely connected tribes. One of the strongest of these, Judah, was reinforced by, if indeed, it did not entirely consist of, clans which for centuries resided on the desert border. Another tribe, Simeon, never left the desert. The whole nation was reminded that it inherited a civilization which it did not create (Deut. 6:10, 11). Customs and institutions, tempers and attitudes toward civilization, religious conceptions and religious rites, long persisted in Israel, some of which were identical with those of the desert nomads and some were strongly reminiscent of them. 'To your tents, O Israel,'

was still the national cry in the days of the kingdom. Long after the monarchy had created a central executive government among the people, with guards or police and prisons, the private vendetta, mitigated by a modified form of the right of asylum, was retained in the national law."[1]

And so the influence of the political heritage of the desert long continued with the settlers and residents of Canaan. There was much of the restless independence, the practical democracy, the love of generous liberty, which the desert had bred. There was still the divisive tendency which made the achievement of a larger nationalism so difficult. As in the larger units of the modern time, making society safe required not so much the increase of democracy within the units as a more extensive integration and organization between the units. Nowhere has this been more evident than in Arabia, the cradle of all Semitic races. As Professor Smith says: "The population is broken up into tribes, that are defined not by the more or less vague areas over which they roam in search of pasture, but by ties of blood and kinship, supplemented by fictions of a common descent or other artificial expedients. Famine and war are the annual curses of their life. The insufficiency of water and pasture; the strain of hunger and the jealousy of

[1] George Adam Smith, *The Early Poetry of Israel*, p. 41.

blood, all the heat and recklessness which are bred of poverty and pride; the constant temptations to raid the camels and cattle of other tribes, with the sacred obligation which binds the whole tribe to avenge the slaughter of one of its members—all these create a climate of feud, while the necessity of living in shifting camps, and the absence (except for rare moments in the history) of economic or military interests common to the whole peninsula and of an authority effective over so vast and wild a surface, render impossible any policy save of the most loose and friable kind. Such incoherence, derived from residence in these deserts perhaps for millennia before the race broke into history, has cursed to the end even the most settled and progressive of Semitic peoples. Israel itself is an illustration."[1]

Perhaps to the same nomadic origin may be traced the deep-seated and spontaneous hostility to foreigners that has long been supposed to be instinctive to all humankind. The law and ethics of the desert, which differ little from the law of the jungle, were not completely discarded with the crossing of the Jordan. Perhaps not in excess of many other peoples in the same stage of culture, yet to a marked degree, the Hebrews who settled Canaan dealt ruthlessly with their neighbors and enemies, while in the later generations they developed a racial exclusiveness that

[1] George Adam Smith, *The Early Poetry of Israel*, pp. 27 *f.*

was only equalled by the hostile reaction of anti-Semitism which it met among all other peoples.

Yet in the historical period of Hebrew history, as in the life of the desert before it, there remained in striking contrast to the belligerent attitude to alien peoples the cordial hospitality to individual aliens. The Hebrew legislation throughout is tolerant and merciful toward the "stranger within the gates," and many narratives attest the strong public sentiment by which such laws were created and maintained. For inhospitality Sodom met a fate that made it a watchword, while Lot providentially escaped because he "entertained angels unawares."

Another noble heritage from desert life was the strong cohesive bond of loyalty that bound together the members of the tribe. To be sure, at first the motives for loyalty were merely self-defense, the objects of loyalty were small and conflicting, and the expression of loyalty was in the form of fanatical revenge and destructive violence; nevertheless, in course of time, all these limitations could be transcended. Mutual service could replace mutual defense; loyalty to the tribe could become loyalty to a nation, and still retain the feeling of solidarity, the sense of social obligation, and the practice of self-forgetting sacrifice. Hebrew history illustrates all these forms of development. The absence of individual ambition in many chapters of Hebrew history is only the

political counterpart of that sinking of the individual which is so marked a feature in Hebrew religion. Both are equally strange to more modern eyes, and both are doubtless due to the desert inheritance. The notable indifference to the physical life of the individual is like the notable indifference to the spiritual life of the individual. "The reason," says Professor Smith, "is in part the fact that the tribal interests, the security, and the survival of the tribe in this life, overwhelm the individual's interests, and the importance of what may happen to him hereafter."[1] It is no accident of history that the world owes to the Jewish race so many expressions of the highest vicarious sacrifice—from the prophetic picture of Moses praying to be blotted from the book of life for his people's sins[2] to the patriot martyr of Calvary.

Thus for good or for ill the ideals of a nation were founded on the habits of long-forgotten ancestors. So the nomad blood with all its contradictory passions and instincts flowed in the veins of the children of Israel to more than a third or fourth generation, and unconsciously affected the evolution of their political life and thought. New environment, a new civilization, new ideals modified the old heritage but never completely obliterated it.

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 38.

[2] Ex. 32:32.

III

THE BIRTH OF THE NATION

To few nations has Providence given so dramatic a beginning as the Exodus of Israel from Egypt. In most cases the origins of national life either are lost in obscurity or appear as the natural evolution of slow and insignificant factors. This is, no doubt, partly true of Israel as well. There is much in its early history that is now lost to view, and much of what we know indicates that the Hebrew nation only gradually developed from the nomads of the desert to the chosen people of God. Nevertheless, the Hebrew nation clearly dates its birth back to a distinct era, to a definite event. Whatever doubts may attach to other events in their early history, the story of their bondage and liberation can scarcely be an invention. This is the landmark that fixes their birth, and to this their historians forever turn back in grateful memory. Here was the founding of the Hebrew nation and the beginning of their distinctive national life.

The story of the Exodus is familiar to us from childhood. Historical study has only served to make its details more realistic and vivid. A com-

pany of nomad clans, children of the Arabian desert, find their way into Egypt in search of more abundant food. In course of time the ambitious rulers of the land impress them into the unwonted and restrictive labor of public works, and reduce them to the condition of virtual serfs. At length, galled by this yoke, guided by the inspired enthusiasm of Moses, and aided by a series of local calamities, they strike for freedom and make good their escape to the free, wild life of the desert. Such, in simplest terms, was the birth of the Hebrew nation.

The religious significance of this event has long been the subject of earnest discussion, but its political significance is clear beyond all argument. It was a great act of self-emancipation and the expression of the inherent love of human liberty. Just how long these revolutionists had eaten "the bread of affliction in the house of bondage" our records do not tell, nor can we be sure that the earlier freedom of the desert was a living memory or a conscious lure to them. But they were not of the servile stock of Egypt, and when their lives were made bitter they felt that holy discontent which brooks no opposition.

That the Hebrews in Egypt had exercised no political control goes without saying. Local autonomy they doubtless did enjoy, but in the greater affairs of the empire of the Nile they shared with countless other *fellahin* complete sub-

jection to the will of the king or the ruling priestly or princely caste. Probably they expected no voice in affairs of state: such a conception of citizenship was alien to all antiquity or at least could only be suggested when lack of representation was made acute by its non-political results. Indeed, the Scripture records declare that the oppression which inspired their unrest was not political but industrial. Their lives were made bitter, not by want of franchise, but "with hard service in mortar and in brick," by the exploitation of their labor. The primary political meaning of the Exodus was the liberation from industrial slavery, though with this liberation came political enfranchisement as well.

A second factor in the Exodus of Israel was the impulse for co-operation—an impulse which in this case, as in so many others, was born only out of the dire necessity of a common need. The lesson that in union is strength was learned once—if not once for all—in the first national emergency that made the beginnings of the real nation. The oppression of Ramses could continue as long as resistance was sporadic and unorganized. In a telling incident the biographer of Moses reveals the futility of individual effort (Ex. 2:11–15). Moses' first reaction to oppression was the angry killing of an Egyptian taskmaster. This deed of violence produced no real relief, but, rather, impaired and delayed the pos-

sible usefulness of the slayer for furthering his patriotic ideals. In the end the relief came through the more gradual method of patient insistence on rights and the education of the oppressed to work together for their common good. And, as repeatedly since throughout history, national liberty was found possible only through national unity. The two are forged together.

But the third factor of the Exodus was individual—the leadership of Moses. Through the accretions of legend that have gathered about his name can still be discerned the political significance of the great Hebrew leader. In him all the meaning and glory of the Exodus are summed up, and he is a convincing example of the power of personal initiative in the history of nations. Futile though individual effort often proves when isolated, it is most effective when associated with others in leadership. Without such leadership national progress seems well-nigh impossible. "Israel," it has been said, "perhaps more than any other nation owes its distinction to a few individuals. Poorly endowed as a people with the qualities which lead to national success, being gifted with tenacity and retentiveness rather than power of initiation, it has been indebted for its position amongst mankind to a few commanding personalities. Among these Moses occupies a foremost place."[1]

[1] G. W. Wade, *Old Testament History*, p. 132.

It is needless to say that these political factors of the Exodus were indelibly stamped on the later life of the nation. The event itself was never forgotten. It was celebrated annually in a feast of rejoicing, in which the love of liberty was forever renewed under the sanctions of religion. The passover was more than an act of worship. It was the holiday of national independence. The love of liberty which had called the nation into being was repeatedly roused in memory amid its later vicissitudes. The very existence of the Hebrew people served not merely as a monument of protest against industrial slavery like that in Egypt; it was a charter of independence for political and for religious liberty as well. There is something intensely modern in this national aspiration for freedom, that anticipates by three thousand years the "spirit of '76" and the French tricolor cockade. Throughout his history for all these years the enslaved Jew has been able to trace back his rebel spirit to the shepherd by the burning bush, to the great cooperative venture of faith of his fellow rebels, and to the triumphant vindication of freedom and of faith that cried over the fallen oppressor:

"Sing ye to Jehovah, for he hath triumphed gloriously;
The horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea."

For the cause of freedom cannot and could not be regarded as merely a political issue. It was a

religious and moral issue as well. It was Jehovah, as well as Moses, who had heard the cry of bondage, and it was by his guidance and power that liberation was achieved. By manifest signs God identified himself with the interests of the refugees—not merely because they were his people, but because their cause was just. No matter how partisan and unethical the ideas of God may have been in those or even later days, the Exodus proved that God was on the side of right and not of might. And no matter how blind to the claims of equality and fraternity were the worshippers of Jehovah, there was always at least a cogent humanitarian reminder in the lawgiver's refrain: "Remember that thou wast a bondman in the land of Egypt, and Jehovah thy God redeemed thee." Though the religious view-point of the historians of the Exodus doubtless obscures many political details, it has nevertheless surrounded this great struggle for freedom with an atmosphere of moral earnestness that is both appropriate and significant, purifying patriotic enthusiasm with the transcendent sacredness of a universal ideal. Into one event were crowded the motives of religious liberty, political independence, and industrial emancipation—motives that in other nations, like the American, have been successive legacies of different generations. And this event became, therefore, the corner-stone of

that Hebrew love of liberty which, in its nobler moments, shared the altruism of the poet Lowell:

"Is true freedom but to break
Fetters for our own dear sake,
And, with leathern hearts, forget
That we owe mankind a debt?
No! true freedom is to share
All the chains our brothers wear,
And, with heart and hand, to be
Earnest to make others free!"

IV

CONTACT WITH CULTURE

In their sojourn in Egypt the Israelites appear to have been little affected by the superior culture of the land of the Nile. Though we are assured by a Christian writer that "Moses was instructed in all the wisdom of the Egyptians," there is much more evidence that his religious and legal ideals were influenced by an obscure bedouin tribe near Sinai, with which he associated during his exile, than that they were affected by the court of Pharaoh. "He refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter," though he accepted apparently both the kinship and the religion of his Kenite father-in-law, and so remained essentially a child of the desert. So, also, his fellow refugees show no trace of the civilization of Egypt, except a passing memory of its flesh-pots and succulent vegetables (Ex. 16:3; Num. 11:5). When they enter the land of promise they are typical nomads. Several reasons combine to explain this fact. Their contact with Egypt was, after all, superficial. They are represented as living apart in the land of Goshen and as still employed in tending their flocks. Even when they were made "to serve with rigor"

on public works they were not thereby exposed to the ancient culture of the land, for, as has been found by more modern nations, the industrial exploitation of backward peoples does not tend to civilize them. The duration of their sojourn in Egypt is a matter of doubt. Archæological evidence suggests that only some of the tribes later affiliated were ever in Egypt at all, while the Bible insists that the whole generation of Moses died before the crossing of the Jordan.

The first real contact with civilization in Hebrew history must be dated, therefore, with the settlement of Canaan. Here was an experience that influenced deeply and permanently the whole nature of Hebrew national life. Between the nomads of the desert and the Canaanites, or Amorites, as the natives appear to be called indifferently, there existed a series of distinctions that affected their political, social, industrial, moral, and religious life. Probably both the immigrants and the natives of Canaan at this period belonged to the same (Semitic) race, and possibly they spoke the same language. But the standards of the settled Amorites differed in many points from the standards of the desert.[1] In part this difference of the Canaanites was due to their contact with the older cultures of the Euphrates and the Nile. The Tel-el-Amarna tablets, written in cuneiform characters by the Egyptian governors

[1] See Chapter II.

in Palestine not long before the advent of the Hebrews, are a striking testimony to the joint influence of these two ancient centres of civilization upon the land that lay like a bone of contention between them. The main cause of the Canaanites' culture was, however, the physical circumstances of their life. And for this reason it was more certain to affect the nomads of the desert as they came into the same environment.

The most obvious difference was in occupation. The nomad herded flocks, the Canaanite engaged, besides, in agriculture. The latter had, therefore, abandoned the wandering life in tents and had built houses, villages, and even walled towns. Their diet included now not only annual crops, like grain, but even the fruits, the grapes, and the wine that implied the prolonged residence in one place and the perennial culture of the olive and the vine. For agriculture new implements were needed, and with settled life household furniture could be expanded beyond what was easily portable. In addition to the city walls with which the Canaanites defended themselves, the Hebrew historian mentions among their achievements in military science their "chariots of iron."

These material elements of civilization produced, of course, their own characteristic ideals and institutions. Private ownership of land and chattel slavery are two far-reaching economic results of the transition from a nomad to an agri-

cultural society. And these economic changes produced new social standards of rich and poor, of urban and rural, of inferior and superior. Even new standards of morality are evolved, since new problems in justice arise, and new opportunities occur for antisocial conduct.

Political ideals are also different in a settled population like that of Canaan. In the new classifications of society with its contrasts, some of the simpler democracy disappears. Monarchical government becomes more pronounced, or, at least, the prestige of the prosperous landowners. The worth of the individual is minimized. The political integration also changes its basis, and the unit is formed by geographical unity rather than by kinship. The fiction of relationship is often long maintained, but in Canaan, as elsewhere, tribal names become place names. Nationality becomes local, not racial, and national ambitions become closely associated with the material interests of a community.

Religion in Canaan was somewhat different from that of the desert. As the most conservative of human institutions it perhaps differed less than other elements of life, but still the difference was well recognized. Over against the Jehovah of the nomads stand the baals of the Amorites. For in settled life religion, too, can be localized and the place of a man's residence determines his religion quite as much as it determines his politi-

cal adherence. Every nation had its own god, and in the subdivided political life of the Canaanites every village or town had its baal. These baals were looked upon as interested in the affairs of their worshippers, including not only cattle-raising and warfare, as in the desert, but the agricultural pursuits as well. They were worshipped with vegetable sacrifices as well as animal. Their festivals, like the annual feast at Shiloh (Judges 21:19) and the harvest festival at Shechem (Judges 9:27) were regulated by the farmer's seasons. "New wine, which cheereth God and man," flowed freely. That drunkenness and other license characterized these occasions was a difference noticeable to the more ascetic visitors from the desert.

The general sketch of the characteristics of Amorite life as thus presented, even without further elaboration and historical proof of the differentiating details, will probably be sufficient to establish the influence of the settlement of Canaan on the final standards of the Hebrew nation, including their political ideas. Here is a conflict of civilizations or, rather, a conflict between civilization and nomadism. This is the thesis that is clearly and emphatically driven home by Professor Wallis throughout his book, *The Sociological Study of the Bible*: *"The social group known as 'the Hebrew nation' came slowly into existence, in the land of Canaan, at the point of junction between*

two previously hostile races, the Israelites and the Amorites."

The story of this coalescence is one of extreme interest. To understand it one must first examine the historical facts about the settlement of Canaan. In spite of the statements of later historians it now appears evident that the Hebrews did not suddenly and completely destroy the Canaanites before them. Early statements in the first chapters of *Judges* and scattered elsewhere in our records indicate that from large sections of the country, especially from the fertile lowlands with their walled towns, the invaders "did not utterly drive out" the inhabitants. To the later historian, who thought that everything undesirable was characteristic of "the iniquity of the Amorite," it seemed natural that God should command and that Joshua should execute their annihilation. But annihilation is almost always impossible, and is rarely the actual method of invaders, especially such feeble, disorganized, and sporadic invaders as throughout the centuries overflow Palestine from the desert.

That the first relations between Hebrew and Canaanite were hostile must be granted, and for many years conflicts occurred between them. By such events were inspired the ancient Song of Deborah and many of the early epics of the *Book of the Wars of Jehovah.* But the impression one gets from the prose narratives of *Judges* is

that these conflicts were local and temporary, and that none, not even the famous battle of Megiddo, belongs to the list of decisive battles. And it is worth while to consider the other relations that existed between these two peoples, apart from the incidents of guerilla warfare.

There was much which may be called "peaceful penetration." In many districts the nomads from the desert simply pastured their cattle in the unoccupied uplands without disturbing their neighbors in the valleys. Sometimes property was acquired by purchase, as David bought a threshing-floor from the Jebusite Araunah (II Sam. 24:24; *cf.* Abraham's purchase of the field of Machpelah, Gen. 23), or by marriage. For many years cities like Jebus (Jerusalem) and Gezer remained in the hands of the Canaanites. But generally, as the *Book of Judges* describes the situation, "the children of Israel dwelt among the Canaanites, the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites; and they took their daughters to be their wives, and gave their own daughters to their sons and served their gods" (Judges 3:5, 6).

The story of Abimelech (Judges 9), though his joint rule over Canaanites and Israelites was only local and short-lived, illustrates the possibilities of political *rapprochement* in the period of fusion, and, like the other stories in the *Book of Judges*, "gives us," as Professor Moore has said, "a

glimpse of the relations between the two peoples thus brought side by side. The Canaanite town, Shechem, subject to Jerubbaal of Ophrah; his half-Canaanite son, Abimelech, who naturally belongs to his mother's people; the successful appeal to blood, 'which is thicker than water,' by which he becomes king of Shechem, ruling as well over the neighboring Israelites; the interloper Gaal and his kinsmen, who settle in Shechem and instigate insurrection against Abimelech by skilfully appealing to the pride of the Shechemite aristocracy—all help us better than anything else in the book to realize the situation in this period."[1]

The results of the coalescence between Israelites and Canaanites were not simple or one-sided. As a name the Canaanites disappear, lingering longest in a separate capacity in the more advanced arts of civilization, as smiths, merchants, and warriors. The resultant population were called Hebrews and the land became the land of Israel, except Judah, though this and some of the other tribal names were probably of Israelite origin as well.[2] Similarly in religion the name of Jehovah prevailed over the baals, and he is identified with the interests of the whole land and people. But

[1] G. F. Moore, "Judges," *International Critical Commentary*, pp. 238 *f.*

[2] It should, however, not be forgotten that Egyptian records speak of Asher and even of Israel in Canaan long before the Exodus.

the influence of Canaanites on Hebrews was no smaller than the reverse. Even where the Hebrews were finally victorious in war, the customs and ways of their subjects affected their own. As so often has been proved in history, military success determines neither cultural nor political ideals. As vanquished Greece gave her arts to Rome, and as the fall of Rome only civilized the barbarian victors, so the nomad invaders of Canaan soon succumbed to the ideals and institutions of the more civilized Canaanites. And thereby the nomadic heritage of the Hebrew people became completely transformed.

It is possible to mention by way of illustration two ways in which the settlement of Canaan affected the national ideals of the Hebrews. Possibly in each case the new conception was emphasized by the contrast with the earlier life of the desert. In the first place, it is evident that even prior to the settlement the land appeared to the eyes of the nomads, though it would not so now appear to most residents of Europe and America, a land of plenty. Its first appeal to the tentative invader would not be the corn, the wine, and the oil—products of agriculture—but its superior supply of nomad foods, a land flowing with milk and honey. But as the Hebrews settled in the land and tasted the blessings of civilization, all the more advanced forms of material prosperity appealed to them. If the ideals of the desert

expressed themselves in the blessings of war, the ideals of Canaan added the blessings of peace. Certainly those early poems which, in the form of benedictions pronounced by the dying patriarchs and Moses, portray the Hebrew standards of national desire, emphasize the increase of the field no less than the increase of the flock and the victory of battle.

"See, the smell of my son [Israel]
Is as the smell of a field which Jehovah hath blessed.
And God give thee of the dew of heaven,
And of the fatness of the earth,
And plenty of grain and new wine:
Let peoples serve thee,
And nations bow down to thee." [1]

Throughout much of later literature the language of agricultural prosperity was used to symbolize, if not literally to describe, the fulfilment of national hopes.

In the second place the transition from nomadic to settled life at once made possible the intimate identification of the people with a definite piece of land. In the desert there are neither individual nor collective rights in property as real estate; at most may be found collective property rights in water. But in settled life we get both private ownership of land and public sovereignty. Now in Canaan Israel developed a sense of local sovereignty rarely surpassed by

[1] Gen. 27:27 *ff.*; *cf.* Gen. 49; Deut. 33.

any people. As we have said, Canaan became their land, and the title was secured both by promise and by conquest. In both respects this made ownership a divine right. The conquest was God's gift, carried on by his direction. This was no uncommon idea in antiquity and Israel was as willing to grant the same sanction to other nations. As Jephthah says to the King of Ammon:

> Wilt thou not possess that which Chemosh thy God giveth thee to possess? So whomsoever Jehovah our God hath dispossessed from before us, them will we possess.[1]

But in Israel's case the title was conceived of as granted *in perpetuum*. The repeated promises of God made to the patriarchs and Moses in the pages of the Pentateuch are a reflection of the strong sense of special sanction which existed throughout later history. The actual loss of the land by conquest in no way annulled the deed. Rather in exile the sense of ownership grew with the longings of memory. It was still the promised land. And even to-day, after centuries of dispossession, the geographical element in nationalism is perhaps best exemplified by the ambitions of the Zionist Jew.

[1] Judges 11:24. The whole passage, though perhaps of Deuteronomic origin, is an interesting discussion of the law of sovereignty.

V

THE PERSISTENCE OF NATIONAL CONTRASTS

It is convenient to describe historical processes in simple terms, but the historical facts are not usually so simple. Thus we must guard against supposing that the fusion of races and cultures described in the preceding chapter resulted really in a perfectly homogeneous civilization. The process did not advance with equal pace in all elements of life or in all places or persons. The transition from nomads to farmers was not made at a stroke, and one can recognize to-day on the borders of the desert the half-nomadic stage which is reflected by the *Book of Genesis*, although the author writes at a time so late that when he recalls the age of the patriarchs his readers must be reminded that "the Canaanite was then in the land." [1] Judah and Gilead, with their closer relations to the desert and their inferior opportunities for agriculture, long stood in contrast with the richer lands of middle and northern Palestine. The notorious political independence of the southern tribes may be due in part to this economic distinction. Thus the contrast between

[1] Gen. 12:6.

cultures which was formerly racial became geographical. And even where the two forms of culture were closely mixed the contrast and the incongruity remained evident long after the race lines disappeared. Comparisons of standards were possible and the comparisons were often odious. It seemed to David anomalous that he should "dwell in a house of cedar, but the ark of God dwelleth within curtains." [1] Particularly in religion the fusion between Jehovah and the baals was difficult, and as late as the time of Hosea the contrast between them was as great as ever before. This is not the place to inquire into the exact method of syncretism which did occur, and, indeed, the evidence is not abundant. But it is probable that several tendencies worked at the same time: the subdivision of the single Jehovah into a whole series of local divinities, the coalescing of the separate baals into the single Jehovah.

The lines of cleavage between the contrasting standards which succeeded the racial alignment were social and moral. As Wallis says: "Although the distinction between Israelite and Amorite was at length wiped out, the social struggle unconsciously followed the original race lines. The moral codes of the city capitalist and the nomad were brought into active collision within the limits of one and the same social group. Two

[1] II Sam. 7:2.

different standpoints were brought into sharp contrast in the development of the Hebrew nation. This fundamental variance comes to the surface over and over again." [1]

The expression of the cleavage, however, rarely took the form of economic or moral definition. Rather, following the genius of Hebrew thought, it expressed itself in religious terms. In the third and final stage the conflict was phrased not as war between Israel and Canaanites, not as a quarrel between ascetic simplicity and the luxury of unrighteous wealth, but as the conflict between Jehovah and the baals. Thus, according to Wallis, "the conflict between the moral standpoints inherited from the Israelites and Amorites was at last viewed as a rivalry between Jehovah and Baal. The moral struggle was figured as a cult war." [2]

For the elaboration of the process so summarily here described we must again refer the reader to the work already quoted. But in order that the influence of the old struggle in its new forms upon the ideals of the Hebrews may be understood, it may be well here to collect some examples of the persistence of the older nomadic standards. Throughout the long period of the Hebrew kingdom there were never lacking men who protested against one or another phase of the new culture.

[1] *Sociological Study of the Bible*, p. 94.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 197.

Sometimes their motive was economic, sometimes moral, sometimes religious. It cannot in all cases be determined, though, as has been said, it almost always takes the religious form. The protestants were sometimes simply temperamental conservatives, sometimes they were hereditary sects like the Rechabites, but the most obvious and most notable objectors were the vigorous reformers that we call the prophets. These men were inspired, so far as we can see, neither by stubborn reaction nor by personal social grievance, but by their sensitive moral conscience and their deep interest in the highest ideals for their nation.

To our minds the most arbitrary conservatism finds its expression in the limitations of the cultus. In worship, if anywhere in the unchanging East, innovation is peculiarly taboo. To this category belong the restrictions forbidding altars of *hewn* stone, or *molten* images. Like the ritual use of knives of flint, they are preferences for the customs of the stone age. In the story of Cain and Abel the farmer and the shepherd are contrasted and their respective types of offering. No moral reason is suggested, but we are plainly told God's preference for the latter:

> And Jehovah had respect unto Abel and to his offering; but unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect." [1]

[1] Gen. 4:4, 5.

Equally neutral from the moral standpoint were the restrictions of the Rechabites. Descended from the nomad tribe of Kenites, they maintained the ways of the desert by the strict provision of their ascetic order:

> Ye shall drink no wine, neither ye, nor your sons, for ever: neither shall ye build house, nor sow seed, nor plant vineyard, nor have any; but all your days ye shall dwell in tents.[1]

Thus by their lives rather than by their words they offered a living protest against the innovations of civilization.

The economic complaints of the conservative protestants appear generally to be based on grounds of social justice. Thus while to Rechabites and to Nazirites the drinking of wine may have been at first a matter of ritual taboo, by the prophets it is condemned primarily as a mark of luxury and social injustice. The owning of real estate also has its moral snare. It leads to houses of ivory and all the attendant social inequality, to the ousting of little landowners by land monopolists, until they "dwell alone in the midst of the land." The notorious injustice of Jezebel in securing Naboth's vineyard naturally roused the ire of a prophet, like the injustice of the polygamous David in securing Uriah's wife. Nor are we surprised to read that Jehonadab, the

[1] Jer. 35:6, 7.

founder of the Rechabite order, was heart to heart in sympathy with Jehu's bloody overthrow of Jezebel and of the whole house of Ahab. In fact, the whole social programme of the prophets is a cry of the poor against the luxury, the oppression, the miscarriage of justice, and all the other abuses of highly civilized society. They miss the old democracy of the desert, and on behalf of the proletariat they score the greed and tyranny of the rulers. It is not surprising that they came in many cases from the more backward country, as Amos came from Tekoa and Elijah from Tishbeh. Even in the stories of the building of Babel and of the cities of the plain, we seem to hear a little of the prophetic feeling that "God made the country but man made the town."

It was inevitable that the complaints against abuse of power should be sometimes converted into attacks against the whole institution of government. The king himself was most subject to temptation, and most responsible for injustice by his nobles. And several kings received more serious treatment from the hands of the prophets than the mere rebukes of Nathan and Elijah. It is probable that several of the revolutions that were attempted against a reigning monarch were inspired and assisted by these champions of the people. David gathered the malcontents under Saul, and was aided by the prophet Samuel; Absalom made capital of the alleged miscarriage of

justice by his father. The oppressive system of forced labor that characterized the house of Solomon was a potent cause of the successful revolt of Jeroboam. And this was encouraged by the prophet Ahijah. Elisha inspired the double revolution carried out in Israel and Judah by Jehu; and later Hosea promises vengeance on the house of Jehu and the end of his kingdom. Other illustrations could be given.

It is probably in this connection that we are to understand the prophetic criticism of the whole institution of kingship. Parallel to an earlier account which seems to approve the introduction of a monarch, another writer considers it an innovation that first takes place in the time of Saul, in imitation of the more civilized nations, and condemns it apparently on economic grounds. The elaborate description of "the manner of the king" (I Sam. 8:11–18), with his heavy requisitioning of both labor and property, is no doubt based on experience and expresses the reaction against oppressive monarchical government which later ended with the kingless theocratic ideal.[1]

In religion as in government the reaction against abuse becomes a reaction against the institution as a whole. This probably explains why the prophets condemned the high places and even the whole institution of sacrifice. The former were the local sanctuaries where, prior to the

[1] See also Chapter IX.

reformation of Josiah, Jehovah was worshipped with the full approval of the current law.[1] No doubt these had originally been used for the worship of baals, and in not all of them had the substitution of Jehovah for the baal been carried through, nor the growing monotheism of the prophets become entirely understood. But the chief objection to them was moral. The worship carried on at many of these places, whether in the name of Jehovah or of a baal, offended the consciences of the prophets. If drinking is condemned because based on social injustice, it is a particular offense when men drink in the house of their God the wine of those that have been fined and lie down on garments taken in pledge. Sexual immorality is also objectionable to the prophet; how much more so when carried on in its most objectionable forms, at the high places, as a regular part of worship. To the writer of the Deuteronomic code and to those who attempted to enforce it, the simplest cure for these ills was the most drastic —the complete abolition of all the sanctuaries except Jerusalem.[2]

It is already evident that the prophets in their attack on Canaanite innovations could scarcely stop with those things for which a Canaanite origin could be traced. They began to extend the term to customs that were not of foreign provenience. Everything that offended their con-

[1] Ex. 20:24. [2] See Chapter XV.

science was branded as Canaanite, whatever its historical origin. The whole outlook on the past was affected by their new standards; the prophetic polemic was read back into the desert, and the settlement of Canaan was interpreted as a conflict between the prophetic ideals of the seventh century and the average religion of their contemporaries. For example, human sacrifice, though we know through the gruesome evidence of excavations that it was practised by the pre-Israelitic inhabitants of Canaan, was hardly unknown to the nomadic Hebrew; but when the prophets came to condemn it utterly, it was relegated to the category of distinctly Canaanite institutions. The same is true, probably, of the asherah and pillar, of the graven images, and, no doubt, of many other customs that once belonged to the worship of Jehovah. They are now branded as the heathen rites of baals, practised by the former inhabitants of the land.[1] While other prophets complain of sacrifice because of the insincerity of those who offer it without obeying the moral requirements of God, Jeremiah goes so far as to repudiate it altogether. In spite of the tradition carrying the cultus back to the Mosaic era, he declares that in the day that Jehovah had brought their fathers out of the land of Egypt he gave no commandment about burnt offerings, or sacrifices, but only about obedience.[2]

[1] Deut. 12:2–4, 29–31; 18:9–14, etc. [2] Jer. 7:21–23.

Amid all the details which we have given to illustrate the process which we have tried to describe, one thing should stand out clearly. The conflict of ideals which began with the contact of nomadism with civilization did not end with the coalescence of the two races. A divergence of standards originating perhaps in cultural lines, but soon transferred to other grounds, continued from that time on. Israel never settled down to a manner of life that was universal or that was accepted without question. The comparison of standards had bred a critical attitude, a moral judgment of national ideals and institutions. The prophets are a distinct witness to the fluid state of life and thought. Though they were a minority, and though they appear at first as reactionaries and conservatives, the very opponents of change and progress, they soon assumed the opposite position as the leaders of change and reformation, the pioneers toward a higher national conscience.[1] Through them material conservatism was transformed into spiritual advance, and in the wholesome medium of flux, which is indicated by their constant conflict with popular standards and with the prophets that opposed them, the ideals of Israel were preserved from stagnation or premature crystallization.

[1] Compare Chapter X.

VI

E PLURIBUS UNUM

WHILE our present subject is the history of the political ideas of Israel and not its political history, the growth of political unity under the monarchy is worthy of some consideration to show the effect of this movement on later Hebrew nationalism.

One of the legacies of Mosaic tradition, if not of Mosaic history, was the idea of national cooperation. By welding together in a common purpose a few clans Moses created a unit. But the unity achieved under Moses was only a temporary federation. The records which represent Joshua as a generalissimo commanding the united twelve tribes in the conquest of the whole land of Canaan are contradicted by the earlier records in which each tribe made headway and secured a place of settlement as best it could. And when at last this movement was completed and a *modus vivendi* existed between Hebrew and Canaanite, the old tribal divisions were only increased by the sundering effect of geographical barriers and distance and by the addition of new coalescent groups of natives.

The stories of *Judges* are witness to the lack of national unity. Defense as well as conquest

was the duty of each tribe to itself. The Song of Deborah, it is true, praises temporary alliance in the wars of Jehovah and curses the slacker, but it is significant that there is no reference in this early poem to the southern settlements. Other early poems refer to the several tribes and their comparative strength and leadership, but never to their co-operation or self-effacement in nationality. The kingdom of Saul is usually considered the triumph of national unity, but there is no evidence that it ever included Judah. Indeed, much of Israel was apparently subject to Philistine rather than Benjamite control. Even under David it was possible for "a base fellow, whose name was Sheba," to dissolve the hard-won unity of Israel by the cry, "Every man to his tents, O Israel" (II Sam. 20:1). "The call," says Professor Smith, "is not to war, nor to an individual anarchy. . . . It is the voice of a reaction against the monarchy on the part of that tribal autonomy which Israel brought with them from their desert days. How the habit and the music of the desert still lasts in Israel!"[1] We have elsewhere referred to this disjunctive element in Hebrew history.

The causes that led to national unity in spite of these tendencies are obvious. They were both internal and external. Between Hebrew and Canaanite, and between tribe and tribe, jealousies

[1] G. A. Smith, *Early Poetry of Israel*, p. 94.

and feuds prevented the stabilizing of life. No arbiter could settle disputes or punish offenses when more than one group was concerned. The appendix to *Judges*, in dealing with this difficulty, repeatedly notes that: "In those days there was no king in Israel; every man did that which was right in his own eyes." A king was essential for national unity against internal anarchy. Even more potent in the same direction was the influence of foreign attack. The Philistines, racially distinct from all the other peoples of Canaan, naturally inspired more united action, and we are justified in believing that the kingdoms of Saul and David were created by this military necessity. It is a notable fact that in the more modern age of national development unification has been often due to foreign attack, and common interests have created nations against external dangers or domination.

But it is important to observe of the nascent Hebrew nationalism that abstract unity was not a motive of much influence. Though, without doubt, the king, the capital, and the temple served as centres of united allegiance and greatly promoted the strength which is in union, the records nowhere allude to the appeal to unity. There is nothing in the story of the formation of the kingdom to indicate that either the actors or the historians felt any sentiment toward union as an end in itself. As Todd has said: "A practi-

cal desire to be allowed to cultivate the arts of peace, rather than a conscious straining to realize the ideal unity of Israel, was the motive for the foundation of the monarchy." [1] So with the division of the kingdom after Solomon. There is no hint in the *Books of Kings* that any one regretted the existence for two centuries of two independent and rival Hebrew kingdoms. The secession is commended by the prophet Shemaiah as of God (I Kings 12:24), and it is difficult to tell which king really should be called the successor of Solomon. Both of them are condemned, one as an oppressor, the other as an idolator, but neither of them as a usurper or divider; and none of their followers is judged by the standards of ideal national unity. Nor do our other sources, the prophets, seem to lament the divided house. With Hosea as a very doubtful exception, there is no reference in written prophecy condemning the northern kingdom as illegal, nor, with the same doubtful exception, do we meet with any desire for reunion until a century after the fall of Samaria in the prophets Jeremiah and Ezekiel.[2]

Still more striking is the absence of the ideal of unification in the later movement toward unity

[1] *Politics and Religion in Ancient Israel*, p. 67.

[2] Ezek. 37:15 *ff.*; Jer. 3:18; Hosea 1:11. On the authenticity of the last two passages and of other references in Hosea to Judah, see commentaries, also for Hosea's alleged opposition to the non-Davidic monarchs, or to monarchy in general (*cf.* p. 79).

in the little kingdom of Judah under Josiah. We may agree with Todd that this was in effect a *synœcismus,* the formation of the loose outlying villages near Jerusalem into the more compact city-state. But the purpose of *Deuteronomy* is religious unity and uniformity, and political motives are nowhere expressed.

Of the political ideal of national unity we shall have to say, therefore, that it was conspicuous by its absence. And yet the experiences that had taught national unity cannot have failed to leave some impress on subsequent ideals. Perhaps it was the experience of the exile that first awakened Israel to this ambition. They were conscious first of this ideal when circumstances denied it. Besides, they had long been schooled by prophets and lawgivers in a national unity that was not political, but religious or cultural. Chiefly by contrast with others their own unity had been fostered, and as the unity of Israel became conscious this cultural unity naturally grew. The ambition of exilic Hebrews was not limited to some future reassembling in Palestine; it developed into strict standards of present uniformity. It is an unfortunate fact of history that national unity, whether political or cultural, has usually been promoted by an artificial hostility to everything alien. So, at least, it was with Judaism, which achieved self-conscious cohesion by fostering an intensive and exclusive self-culture,

and by sacrificing all more generous and catholic impulses. Every effort was made to exclude foreign influences. Intermarriage was forbidden, and under the stricter nationalists, all alien speech, literature, and customs were taboo.

The exclusiveness of later Judaism is one of the least attractive characteristics of its national life, but it must be remembered that it is merely the exaggeration of a common and still prevalent emphasis on nationalism. It is fostered by two of the most insidious national faults: national pride on the one hand, and the implacable hatred of foreigners on the other. That these were artificially stimulated in Judaism is evident from the particularism of the priestly writers, and of the books of *Esther* and *Nehemiah*, and from the protest against it in *Ruth* and *Jonah*. That it created a principal problem in the latest periods of Judaism, including the age of early Christianity, is further attested by our records, as well as the more assuring fact that the higher international view-point was never forgotten and ultimately prevailed in Pauline Christianity.

VII

NATIONAL PROTOTYPES

The chief medium of patriotic instruction in modern times is the teaching of history. To train the youth of a nation for future citizenship we interpret the past of that nation to express our ideals. Indeed, it is a notorious fact that the science of history has often been perverted from the impartial presentation of truth to meet the requirements of national partisanship. Noted figures of the past have been idealized to suit modern standards. But even without such perversion the growth of one's own nation, its triumph over difficulties in the way, the example of the loyal men and patriots, who by their courage and wisdom served their country well, all form an effective factor toward national unity and progress.

In the ancient world this was as true as to-day, and though, perhaps, civic instruction was not so thorough or so systematic as is ours, nevertheless the boys of Greece and Rome learned at an early age the familiar tales of their national heroes. The Hebrews, too, were wont to review the past achievements of their race, and in the extensive

narratives of Hebrew history that occupy the whole first half of the Old Testament we see the inevitable written prose deposit[1] of the poet's cry:

> "Let us now praise famous men,
> And our fathers that begat us."

Even the *Book of Genesis*, although it represents confessedly the days before the nation was born, combines with its many other motives a distinct national spirit. In this respect it finds many parallels in other literatures. Indeed, it often happens that the most characteristic stories of a nation are taken from the history and even legends of the prenational period. Thus Wilhelm Tell has become the patron saint of all modern Switzerland; King Arthur, the Celt, is immortalized by the Anglo-Saxon race; and the German people honor along with heroes of their recent history the more shadowy figures of Teutonic folk-lore and tradition. Even in so recent a nation as America the tales of pre-Revolutionary explorers and colonists and the more shadowy legends of Ojibways and Delawares are cherished as part of the national heritage. Whatever, then, be the origin of the patriarch stories—and the question is one of great delicacy and complexity—it can

[1] There are, of course, some poems and poetic fragments remaining in the Octateuch, *e. g.*, in *Genesis*, chapter 49, for which see p. 33. Probably much now in prose was once in poetry. And in Judges 4 and 5 it is possible to compare a prose and a poetical version of the same story.

surely be said that they were so thoroughly appropriated and adopted by the Hebrew nation that both through many generations of oral transmission and after they received their present form, these stories served the Hebrew people as an inspiring national epic.

The miscellaneous character of the *Book of Genesis* is evident to every careful reader—even to those who are unfamiliar with the distinct linguistic differences in the original that seem to indicate the participation of at least three different writers. There is, for example, the difference of subject-matter that clearly divides the book in two after the eleventh chapter: up to that point its stories are cosmic and general, after that point they contain a cycle of narratives associated with the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph. Even within this cycle each story is complete in itself; each has its own particular purpose and view-point. Doubtless these stories came from many different sources and each had a long and independent history. In some cases the origin of the stories is known or can be conjectured with some probability. The stories of the creation and the flood may have been derived from the Babylonian versions that we possess or from a more ancient Semitic original. The story of Babel would naturally arise from the place it describes; perhaps the allusions to local shrines in the patriarch stories indicate a Canaanite origin;

while the local color and literary echoes of the Joseph stories suggest Egyptian provenience.

Very miscellaneous, too, are the purposes of the stories: the motives are varied and often mixed. Many are ætiological—intended to explain the origin of words, of customs, of characters, of races, and of the world. Others are told to exalt certain qualities, to make comparisons. In many cases the story can be justified simply for its own sake—as can an entertaining tale well told.

To such a varied book—a book, moreover, that is not a separate unit but merely the first volume of a continuous work—one can scarcely look for a simple distinctive political ideal. It may be misleading even to speak in the plural of the national ideals of *Genesis* when its materials are so diverse in origin and character. Nevertheless *Genesis* does illustrate as well, perhaps, as more homogeneous volumes of the Octateuch, the Hebrews' use of stories in inculcating patriotic spirit and in idealizing national standards. Besides, as it has come to us, much of the material has been welded into a partial unity and already fitted to the Hebrew norms. This is particularly evident in the religious adjustment of the heathen stories to the monotheistic view-point of the prophets and priests of the later days.[1] And if we are

[1] *E. g.*, the fourth chapter of *Genesis* carries the worship of Jehovah back to the sons or grandsons of Adam.

right in giving a foreign origin to any of its stories, these, too, are overlaid with a genuine Hebrew coloring, while the surviving archaic elements in *Genesis* represent with unsurpassed fidelity much of that ancient local inheritance that can be recalled in more historic ages only through the folk-tales of the older children of the soil. Like the *Morte d'Arthur* of Malory, the *Book of Genesis* represents fairly well the real ideals of the nation, combining the new religious and political ideals of the invaders with the native standards so long current in local song and story. Thus, perhaps more fully in this book than in any other, are reflected the resultant ideals of the Hebrew-Canaanite fusion.

Even the first chapters of *Genesis*, although, as has been said, their scope is general, reveal something of the international outlook of the Hebrew mind. The unity of all mankind is represented through common descent not only from Adam but also from Noah. Racial differences are, of course, noted, and differences of language,[1] but behind all smaller units the fundamental brotherhood of man is certainly suggested. The genealogical tables[2] are a most explicit presentation of the racial and tribal subdivisions. Their scope —from Spain to India—shows the geographical horizon of their authors' day and the relation believed to exist between the Hebrew nation and

[1] Gen. 11:1–9. [2] Gen. 10.

the other nations of the world. Throughout these lists and elsewhere each nation is spoken of as an individual according to the common assumption that each tribe was descended from a single ancestor and bore his name. And the relationship of the family chart represents the author's sense of racial affiliation. When, for example, Egypt (Mizraim) and Canaan are called the sons of Ham, and it is added that Canaan begat Sidon and the other Canaanite peoples,[1] it is plain that one should think more of geographical and national relations than of individuals. It is well known that the modern ethnological terms, Semitic and Hamitic, are due to these "maps" of the Hebrew genealogist.

The theory of tribal common descent, still maintained in the tribes of Arabia, explains the meaning of the patriarchs' relationships. Most emphatic is the assumption of such a people as the Hebrews that their national unity is a genuine physical brotherhood—a descent from a common ancestor. Their very names are patronymic—"Hebrews," from the eponymous Eber,[2] or "children of Israel" from the less shadowy Israel or Jacob. So the "children of Ammon" is an historical name that necessitates a prehistoric ancestor Ammon, as in Greece Dorians and Æolians were felt to presuppose ancestors named Dorus and Æolus. In some cases the race and the hero

[1] Gen. 10:6, 15–18. [2] Gen. 10:21.

have identical names, as Edom and Moab. As the earlier charts give the Hebrew relations to more remote and alien peoples, so the patriarchal stories supply their supposed kinship to these nearer neighbors and even the unity and subdivisions existing among their own tribes. Without reproducing the whole family tree it will be sufficient to recall as illustrations that Edom (Esau) was a brother, though a rival, of Israel (Jacob), that the brothers Moab and Ammon were only cousins of Israel, while among the twelve sons of Jacob certain groupings exist, due to their different mothers. Thus Joseph and Benjamin are associated as full brothers (sons of Rachel), while in the next generation Ephraim and Manasseh are similarly connected, as grandsons through Joseph.

It is often difficult to tell whether actual history is really intended, and where the individual hero shades off into a nation. But even at their face value the stories contain a meaning far deeper than any mere myth or folk-tale. The characters are national types. The interest of the narrator is in the present, not the past. His questions are manifold. He wishes to know, besides the relations of the tribes, the reasons for their respective traits and locations, for their ownership of certain places. "And with special frequency was it asked, How does Israel come to have this glorious land of Canaan?"[1]

[1] Gunkel, *The Legends of Genesis*, p. 26.

More important than the questions of relationship are the suggestions of national character which are undoubtedly embodied in the personal portraits. The patriarchs are national types. Without accepting the term "legend," which Gunkel applies to these stories, one can fully agree with him when he says:

> In these legends the clearest matter is the character of the races: here is Esau, the huntsman of the steppes, living with little reflection from hand to mouth, forgetful, magnanimous, brave, and hairy as a goat; and there is Jacob the herdsman, a smooth man, more cunning and accustomed to look into the future. His uncle Laban is the type of the Aramæan, avaricious and deceitful, but to outward appearances an excellent and upright man, never at loss for an excuse. A more noble figure is Abraham, hospitable, peaceful, a model of piety.[1]

Thus through the simplest stories, told quite objectively, the ideals of the Hebrews find expression. Both the nomadic and the agricultural ideals emerge even in the earliest chapters. The developments of the arts of civilization are looked on askance, on the one hand, with a nomad's dread of innovation; they lead, we may infer, to the rejection of Cain's offering and to the more violent punishment of the contemporaries of Noah and the builders at Babel. On the other hand, paradise is represented as a fertile garden, and

[1] *The Legends of Genesis*, pp. 22, 23.

the discovery of the grape and its rest-giving juice is hailed with joy. Moral judgments are expressed not only against the licentious crimes of foreigners or aliens like Canaan and Shechem, but even against the vengeful or jealous acts of the real children of Israel.[1]

But most undisguised is the patriotic tenor of the book. Much as the origins of the world and of other peoples roused their curiosity, the chief concern of the Hebrews was the genesis of their own race. Back they must push their inquiry beyond the dawn of clear history into a past that will explain their greatness and the glory of their land. Like all literature of its kind, *Genesis* is warm with patriotic emotion. How far its stories represent actual persons and events we need not here discuss. They are, at any rate, a reflection of the Hebrew national ideals. In the stories of patriarchal migrations is reflected the sense of alien origin outside the land of Canaan. In the stories of God's repeated promises is shown the consciousness of hard-won ownership and of prosperity achieved. Like Jacob at Penuel, Israel had wrestled with God and had won his blessing. In the stories of the humiliation or the outwitting of Lot, of Laban, and of Esau, we see the Hebrews triumphant over their kinsmen of the south and east. And through the repeated vicissitudes, selections, and providences of the whole cycle of

[1] Gen. 34 and 37.

patriarchal story there runs like a red cord the firm conviction of a special national election and destiny.

In summary we may say that in a sporadic and unorganized manner, but yet in a most effective way, the stories of *Genesis* expressed the temper of the Hebrew nation. The virtues and the faults of its character were personified in one or another of those prototypes from whom it claimed descent. In their experiences were embodied the experiences of the race—of wandering and of rest, of prosperity and disaster, of reliance on God and the assurances of his promises. The actual unity and solidarity of the nation both established the belief in a common descent and was established by that belief. Identity and continuity of national life were pictured by the simple thread of personal genealogy, while the antipathies and hostilities, the jealousies and moral scorn of sister peoples secured corresponding expression. Yet with all the national prejudices and limitations a wide horizon of interest and a generous sense of human brotherhood existed and a courageous trust in the providence of the Creator, and in the justice of the Father of all mankind.

VIII

WAR

A NATION'S ideals are often best revealed by war. War is a great national effort, and the aims of war indicate the common national goal. With the Hebrews, as in modern times, the aims of war were manifold and often mixed. They did not distinguish wars as aggressive and defensive, nor divide economic, political, and ideal motives. They fought for booty, territory, tribute, domination, prestige; to avenge wrongs, to defend rights. They fought to maintain or secure independence, to prevent invasion or even to gain commercial opportunities. Spheres of influence, strategic frontiers, unredeemed territory, national honor, were ideas known to them in fact if not in name. The Hebrews even fought to gain peace and security. And all these war aims can be called national ideals.

But war itself was not to them a national ideal. Rarely, if ever, has war been an end in itself to any nation. Certainly the Hebrews knew the risks and the horrors of war. They loved peace; but victory, too, was sweet, and the fruits of victory were to be had only by war. War was only a means to these ends, a method of realizing na-

tional ambitions. But the method of war is so closely associated with its ends, so easily confused with national hopes, so prominent as the expression of national life, that the institution of war must be included in any study of a nation's ideals.

The importance of war in Hebrew history is manifest from our records, especially those which are oldest and which are least edited and altered in the interests of religion. The Song of Deborah, probably the oldest extant piece of Hebrew composition, is a war poem. The ancient lost collection of folk-songs bore the significant title, *The Book of the Wars of Jehovah.* In those unvarnished tales of the early monarchy that make up our *Books of Samuel* the wars of Israel are the predominant interest of the author, who was nearly contemporary; while in the earliest strands of the records of the premonarchic period military history has a pre-eminent place. As military necessity was the constant creator of national unity, national loyalty is expressed chiefly by military service. Patriotism is nearly synonymous with the virtues of war—obedience, strategy, and courage. The Song of Deborah, as it calls curses upon the slackers of Meroz, calls blessings upon the leaders that took the lead in Israel, on the people that offered themselves willingly, and even upon the crafty woman who murdered the enemy general in her tent. The coefficient of popularity was military success:

"Saul hath slain his thousands,
And David his ten thousands."

And the prowess of David was never forgotten. The association of war and patriotism is too frequent in the Old Testament and too familiar in modern times to need further illustration.

But a third element should be mentioned which entered this association of war and nationalism on almost equal terms and, as it were, created a triangle. This was religion. The state, the church, and the army were never more clearly identical than in the primitive culture of the Hebrews and the other Semites. We have mentioned before the relation of religion and nationality, we have just declared the connection of patriotism and war; it remains to say a word of the connection of war and religion. As religion is national and as nationality is expressed chiefly in war, it is obvious that religion, except as a personal or family affair, also appears as military. War is a religious institution. It is undertaken at the behest of a national god, carried on under his direction, and concluded according to his will. To him belongs the glory and to him is given the bulk of the spoils. The king, the soldiers, and the weapons are anointed with holy oil. God is in the armed camp and on the battle-field, either in the shape of images or of a holy chest, like the ark of Jehovah of armies, or in less definite form. His presence and help are often manifested by

cloud, rain, hail, flood, earthquake. By his will "the stars in their courses fought against Sisera," and the sun and moon stood still to lengthen Joshua's victory.

That this religious interpretation of war is not due to the unique genius for religion of the Hebrew people is proved by parallels in all other national religions. The Moabites, to take one neighbor as an example, evidently shared the same view. King Mesha warred at the command of Chemosh, as Joshua warred at the command of Jehovah, and by established custom, each victor dedicated to his god and ally the spoil. The same Mesha, to escape the straits of siege, slew his son on the city walls, a sacrifice to Chemosh, much as Jephthah sacrificed his daughter as a burnt offering to Jehovah. As an Israelite expressed the likeness in a diplomatic dialogue, "Wilt not thou possess that which Chemosh thy god giveth thee to possess? So whomsoever Jehovah our God hath dispossessed from before us them will we possess." [1]

This religious interpretation of war was not entirely abandoned even by the prophets. On the contrary, the earliest prophets seem to have been, like the Zealots of the later era, the instigators of war, both civil and foreign. Under the

[1] See Mesha's own inscription on the Moabite Stone, and II Kings 3:27; Judges 11. Compare the story of Mesha's contemporary, Hiel the Bethelite, in I Kings 16:34.

kings of Israel the prophetic institution, with the priesthood, often became, like the Delphic oracle in Greece or the modern churches, entirely subservient to the political authorities. They were mobilized in time of war so as to be of great service in maintaining national morale. Independents like Micaiah, who refused to be a mere rubber stamp for the wilful Ahab; Isaiah, who opposed the statecraft of Hezekiah; and Jeremiah, the antiwar agitator of Judah's last days, though they were opposed by the religious officials of their day as bitterly as by political jingoes, were pioneers in a somewhat changed interpretation of war. Even for the writing prophets, however, victory still is the gift of God, and defeat his punishment. But his requirements are now ethical rather than ritual, and military success is closely related to personal and social justice. The prophets' internationalism in religion also affected their explanation of war. Jehovah was no longer bound to help his own people—right or wrong. Even Israel's enemies could be rewarded by him with victory, or used as the rod of his anger against Israel. Of course, to the monotheist Jehovah is the supreme controller of history; no other gods need be considered. He becomes then less of "a man of war," and though the term "Lord of Hosts" is retained of him, his military functions become less anthropomorphic, less partisan, and altogether less prominent in the religious thought

of Judaism. Nevertheless the older view never disappeared, and even modern Christianity at war has not emancipated an international Providence from some of the partisanship and other debasing attributes of a national god.

Though there is much that is quaint in the Old Testament attitude to war we have already seen that it contains much that is modern. The common saying that war is an anachronism only means that the man of to-day differs from his forebears less in this matter than in many others. Time has changed the implements of war, its scale, and perhaps its purpose, but not the emotional and irrational attitude of those who engage upon it. Concerning the necessity, the efficiency, and the morality of war, the early Hebrew exercised as much or as little intelligent judgment as the average twentieth-century Christian. It is easy, therefore, for us to picture the ancient attitude.

Like much of modern society, the ancient Hebrew looked upon war as a necessary evil. It was a bane, a "sore judgment," like plague or famine, and it was equally unavoidable. Modern man has only just discovered that pestilence and famine can be met and mitigated by human organization. He has still more recently conceived the idea of applying similar effort to the eradication of war. But the ancient Hebrew was equally innocent of human hope for any of these

ills. The origin of war seemed no more artificial than the causes of rain and earthquake; all three were assigned to supernatural causes. Jehovah brought war and defeat upon his people as a punishment, and he alone also gave peace. When Jehovah came to be conceived as an international God he did the same for other peoples. The doom which the prophets as his spokesmen threatened for their own nation and for other nations was chiefly in military terms, while among the blessings offered for the future none was more attractive than peace. But as the way to international peace only two paths occurred to them: a world empire based on conquest, and the intervention of God. Either the mailed fist and pan-Hebraism, or else such a divine miracle as should include within its scope the taming of martial men and the transformation of the lion and the adder—these two seemed the only sure curatives for war. So fully did the ancient Hebrew accept as a human necessity the will to fight.

In like manner the efficiency of war does not seem to have been questioned more in antiquity than in modern times. Pacific diplomacy was not entirely unknown to the Hebrews, the favorite form being alliance cemented by royal marriage. Such alliances were, however, rarely a substitute for war or a preventive of war. They often proved within one generation a chief cause of war, both domestic and foreign. An interest-

ing alternative to war is the request of Moses for permission to pass through a neighbor's lands under mutual guarantees. But this, too, proved rather an ultimatum of war than a substitute for it. For when the request was refused, either another route was sought, or the Israelite army hewed its way through against resistance.[1] No case of arbitration, as a preventive of war, appears in the history of the Hebrews. Of course then, as to-day, wars were followed by terms of peace. But the absence of any recognized alternative to war was a chief reason that the institution's efficiency was unchallenged. It had already the fatality which long traditions had given it. Even in the free, democratic life of early Semitic civilization its practical justification was unquestioned, and certainly with the growth of autocracy in Israel the citizens could scarcely expect to do other than give implicit obedience to the king's commands;

> "Theirs not to reason why,
> Theirs but to do and die."

Unwillingness to fight seems to have been due sometimes to personal feelings, rarely to logic. Gideon was able to reduce his volunteer army to a third of its size by dismissing every one who was "fearful and trembling."[2] And according to

[1] Num. 20:14–21; 21:21–31.
[2] Judges 7:3; *cf.* Deut. 20:8.

the early, though naturally partisan, Song of Deborah, indifference and selfish ease had kept other tribes from joining the great victory that the tribes of central Palestine secured over Sisera.

> "At the watercourses of Reuben
> There were great searchings of heart.
> Why sattest thou among the sheepfolds,
> To hear the pipings for the flocks?
> Gilead abode beyond the Jordan:
> And Dan, why did he remain in ships?
> Asher sat still at the haven of the sea,
> And abode by his creeks." (Judges 5:15–17.)

But the effectiveness of war as a means to an end was never questioned. Of course victory was never sure, but when a crisis came no other alternative suggested itself except the hazard at arms, and war became not a last resort, but immediately inevitable.

Neither does the moral justification of war appear as a problem in the Old Testament, at least not for Israel. It is true that the prophets were critical of ruthless warfare carried on by foreign nations,[1] and particularly of the predatory militarism of the great empires that successively held Israel under their hateful yoke; but this condemnation was scarcely based on impartial moral standards. The very prophets who were most zealous for the Lord of Hosts were most free to encourage and even to execute ruthless warfare.

[1] Amos 1, 2. (See Chapter XI.)

The Israelites appear as ready to exterminate the foe and to repay injuries as any of their neighbors. Illustrations are not necessary, though it must be remembered that some of the most vigorous narratives are probably exaggerations due to the patriotic idealization of past victories and the fanatic zeal of prophetic or priestly historians. The extermination of the Canaanites, for example, which shocks Christian sentiment, probably existed only on paper. There are other and older historical passages which plainly deny it. Indeed, according to one source, Jehovah left Canaanites in the land for the specific purpose of giving later generations adequate military training, "to prove Israel by them, even as many *of Israel* as had not known all the wars of Canaan." [1] Even could we believe with the Syrians that "the kings of the house of Israel are merciful kings," it is evident that the prophets of Israel were not merciful prophets. In two instances a king is rebuked by a prophet for sparing his enemy.[2] *Deuteronomy* repeatedly warns against the natural tendency to leniency in dealing with a beaten foe. In the case of Canaanite cities not even women and children are to be spared. The same writer's injunction to spare fruit-trees is prompted not by a primitive sense of international law, but by selfish reasons, and by the author's characteristic consideration for inanimate objects: "For is

[1] Judges 3:1. [2] I Sam. 15; I Kings 20:31 *ff.*

the tree of the field man, that it should be besieged of thee?" [1] But even were minor refinements of the conduct of war to be found in the Old Testament, they would not answer the chief question, Is war as a whole justified? As has been said: "The question of the right or wrong of war in general was never raised among the Hebrews, so far as we can judge from the Old Testament, and our sources never suggest that they had any doubt regarding the righteousness of the wars which they waged, either in the conquest or for the defense of the land of Canaan. Just as they assumed that Jehovah was righteous, so they had no other thought than that the wars of Jehovah's people against other nations were just and necessary. They had the easy and comfortable faith that *their* foes were *Jehovah's* foes, and, therefore, they believed that to fight those foes was a very essential element of loyalty to Jehovah." [2] Absorbed with confidence in the holy and patriotic ends for which they fought, unconsciously they assumed that the ends justified the means. In this respect, also, they reflect the modern mind.

The single moral or religious objection to war found in the Bible only makes this general statement more clear. The writing prophets do seem, as we have said, to oppose the military policy of

[1] Deut. 20:19.
[2] Gilbert, *The Bible and Universal Peace*, p. 42.

some of their contemporaries; but their motive is neither respect for taboos and priestly procedure, as at some earlier times, nor a moral condemnation for the whole institution, like that of the modern pacifist. Their opposition to war is due to their sense of trust in God. This appears particularly in Isaiah and Jeremiah, but it is not confined to them. In the *Book of Micah,* for example, the fortress of Lachish on the Egyptian border, with its chariots and horses, is said to have been the beginning of sin to the daughter of Zion;[1] when God purifies the land of idols he will destroy the munitions of war as well—fortresses, chariots, and horses.[2] Hosea, too, combines foreign alliances and trust in cavalry with idolatry. Ephraim, like a silly dove, turns for help to Egypt or to Assyria, but they return not to him that is on high;[3] therefore, the prophet calls them to the renunciation of both with true repentance. They are to say:

"Assyria shall not save us;
We will not ride upon horses [*i. e.*, Egypt shall not save us];
Neither will we say any more to the work of our hands, *Ye are* our gods;
For in thee the fatherless findeth mercy."[4]

The prophets objected to resort to war, because it showed a lack of faith that became in-

[1] Micah 1:13.
[2] Micah 5:10–14.
[3] Hosea 7:11, 16.
[4] Hosea 14:3.

fidelity, a neglect of God comparable to adultery in private life or to apostasy in religion. As one commentator says: "The defiant display of human strength which renders divine help unnecessary is particularly obnoxious to them." [1] By Isaiah especially these dangers of militarism were clearly discovered. It is a striking fact that God is first called spirit in contrast with the material preparedness for war and military alliance (Isaiah 31:3). Though the prophets, therefore, cannot be called absolute non-resistants or pacifists, their clear apprehension of the materialism of war-makers and their firm reliance on the spiritual alternatives to force are not without importance for the modern age.

[1] Margolis, *Micah*, p. 25.

IX

MONARCHY AND THEOCRACY

THE constitution of the Hebrew people throughout its period of real political life—the five hundred years from Saul to Zedekiah—was a monarchy. This institution was so prominent in the narrative of that period that the volumes describing it received the titles, "Kingdoms," or "Kings." The existence of monarchical government requires little explanation or comment. It was natural to the stage of civilization which the Hebrews reached in Canaan. We have already described the simpler organization of the nomad and seminomad age, and we are prepared to believe, with the writers of *Samuel* and *Deuteronomy*, that the kingship was adopted only by imitation and in the settled life of Canaan. It was characteristic of their Canaanite neighbors, and commended itself to the newcomers for obvious reasons, like many of the other inventions of civilization. It was a chief rallying-point for national unity, especially in war and self-defense. It was a cure for anarchy. It was, in fact, an inevitable development. Even in the days of the "Judges" when "there was no king in Israel," the begin-

nings of kingship are already suggested in the careers of Gideon and Abimelech and of Jephthah. In spite of later comments to the contrary, and the actual limitations of his rule, the appointment of Saul was to his contemporaries a real political achievement, while in David and Solomon the national life reached its zenith.

To judge from our records the Hebrew monarchy varied in its first century through a considerable gamut. Saul is represented simply as a peasant war-dictator, called from the plough like Cincinnatus. He has no capital, no permanent organization, no hereditary entail. David begins his career as a private adventurer, but provides the three elements of established monarchy just mentioned, while his son approximates the typical Oriental potentate. It is important, however, to recall that "even Solomon in all his glory" was not in reality the absolute monarch that legend made of him. The Hebrew monarchy never reached the despotism and autocracy of some industrial empires, past and modern. Solomon and many other kings found that the succession was not established for their heirs by an inalienable right. Throughout the half millennium of Hebrew kingship the people still retained a close personal relation to the king, and collectively or through their religious or military leaders, they exercised a democratic control that was equivalent to constitutional restraints. As the anointed

or agent of God and as the servant of the people,[1] the king, ideally at least, was not an unrestricted and arbitrary master. And it was no mere counsel of perfection when the Deuteronomist enjoins that the king write a copy of the book of the law and "read therein all the days of his life; that he may learn to fear Jehovah his God, to keep all the words of this law and these statutes, to do them; that his heart be not lifted up above his brethren" (Deut. 17:18–20).

The best ideals of Hebrew monarchy were summed up for the future in the name of David. That by contemporary standards he seemed a man after God's own heart only shows that he was the idol of his people. He entertained in his lifetime the genuine respect and gratitude of his subjects, much as Augustus for similar reasons received the adoration of a wider empire. In his own tribe, at least, his name carried such weight that his family were retained permanently in power, and it was easy to imagine that their throne would be eternal. When foreign conquest destroyed all political independence, the family of David was still the present or future hope. The shoot from the stock of Jesse, the prince from Bethlehem, the lion of the tribe of Judah, express the promise of freedom, righteousness, and happiness in the Hebrew Utopia, whether on earth or in heaven. And even if the king is not named, the

[1] 1 Kings 12:7.

royal institution became a frequent and natural assumption in the national hope. "Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David."[1]

In spite of its ultimate idealization, the institution of monarchy in Israel was not without its critics. To the conservative, to whom all new things were an abomination, it belonged to the condemned category. It was a mark of civilization, and in the conflict of cultures that we have described it shared something of the stigma that, in the eyes of one party, attached to every alien institution. There is little doubt that the old tribal and local independence was still jealously prized by the former bedouin, and that the petty sheiks looked askance upon their loss of sovereignty.

The economic burdens of royalty aroused more general opposition. In Samuel's description of the "manner of the king" (I Sam. 8:11–18), an unknown writer has presented, presumably from experience, the methods of regal expropriation which were current in any developed kingdom. There was confiscation of all kinds of property, including children and servants. A still more detailed description is given in the customs of Solomon, with his conscription for war, his corvée for his royal buildings, and his system of universal taxation for the support of an expensive court and harem. It was the fear of this burden which

[1] Mark 11:10.

at Solomon's death estranged the hearts of Israel from the house of David; and it was this, too, which together, perhaps, with provincial jealousy and the backing of Egyptian support, gave to Jeroboam, Solomon's former superintendent of the forced labor, the majority leadership. The prophets Ahijah and Shemaiah favored this democratic revolt. Later Elijah appears in the same rôle of proletarian spokesman and sympathizer against the tyranny of royalty and its secret crimes, and as the original instigator of another revolt. The same complaints against the luxury and oppression of kings and nobles appear in the sermons of the "writing" prophets. Amos and Isaiah arraign particularly the oppressive extravagance of the women. And in the same spirit the *Book of Deuteronomy* advises sumptuary restrictions for the king.

The same writer, no doubt depending upon some bitter experience, warns equally against the multiplication of wives and the multiplication of horses from Egypt. Here, also, his motive may have been considerations of expense, but more likely his fear was the entangling alliances which threatened Israel through these royal associations. To these two causes the historians of the monarchy attributed much of the idolatrous and denationalizing influence of the kings. The international marriages of Solomon and Ahab seemed serious causes of religious apostasy, while the po-

litical and military alliances, which such marriages usually ratified, were looked upon as acts of infidelity and lack of faith toward Jehovah. It is for such reasons as these that Hosea in the years of anarchy before the fall of Samaria speaks so vigorously against the kings and princes:

> "Where is thy king now? that he may save thee,
> Or all thy princes? that they may rule thee;
> Those of whom thou hast said,
> Give me a king and princes.
> *Aye,* I give thee a king in mine anger,
> And I take him away in my wrath!" [1]

It is also from this point of view that we should understand the opposition to the monarchy expressed in one of the narratives of the election of Saul. Beside the older and more primitive account in I Sam. 9:1–10:16 in which the kingship has the approval of God and of his prophet Samuel, there is in chapter 8 and allied passages the striking view that human royalty is a usurpation of the function of God. To the prophet Jehovah says concerning the people's request for a king, "They have not rejected thee but they have rejected me, that I should not be a king over them," and to the people he says, "Ye have this day rejected your God, who himself saveth you out of all your calamities and your distresses;

[1] Hosea 13:10, 11 (G. A. Smith's translation); *cf.* 8:4; 9:9; 10:9.

and ye have said unto him, *Nay*, but set a king over us . . . when Jehovah your God was your king" (10:19; 12:12). It is the same spirit that inspires Gideon's refusal of a hereditary kingship: "I will not rule over you, neither shall my son rule over you: Jehovah shall rule over you" (Judges 8:23).

The objection as here stated is a really remarkable one. For while it is a common Semitic idea to conceive of gods as kings, as Robertson Smith has shown in his *Religion of the Semites*, it rarely, if ever, elsewhere is thought of as excluding anointed representatives and agents. As Professor Moore has said: "It is one thing to acknowledge Jehovah as the divine king, as Isaiah, for example, does, and quite a different thing to conclude that he cannot endure the existence of a human king in Israel. This is by no means a necessary theological inference; it must have had a definite historical reason, such as the experience of Israel in the eighth century afforded." [1] Possibly it was due to a literalistic interpretation of the common religious metaphor, possibly it was due to an inherent nomadic democracy which long survived in Israel and expressed itself in religious terms, but certainly it reflects the natural pessimism of such periods of alternate despotism and anarchy as the age of Hosea.

To this unusual standpoint is largely due the

[1] *Judges*, p. 230.

common misuse of the convenient term theocracy. As often defined, theocracy is an actual polity of government in which all human kingship is excluded. Thus in Hebrew history it has been applied to either the premonarchic or the postmonarchic era. It was customary, in former times, for example, to assign the term to the age of Moses and the judges. The Mosaic constitution was distinguished, we are told, from all others in being "so arranged that all the organs of government were without any independent powers, and had simply to announce and to execute the will of God as declared by priests and prophets or reduced to writing as a code of Laws." The period from Moses to Samuel, because of the lack of human organization, "was a time of continual and direct dependence on the help of God alone, with no regular means of government, or law, or army, or king." [1] Accordingly the age of Samuel meant a distinct transition not from anarchy to order, but from the theocratic to the human type of government.

Recent scholars, however, do not accept this view as more than the merest romance of later Hebrew thought, and they are more likely to apply the term theocracy to the period following the monarchy. To them theocracy means the

[1] Kautzsch, "Religion of Israel," in Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible*, V. 630a; Stanley, *History of the Jewish Church*, Lect. 18.

supremacy of the church over the state—a hierocracy or control of government by the priesthood—and this consummation certainly can have been achieved only after the exile. The term then is applied to the latest rather than the earliest period of Israel. It is from this later view-point that they explain not only the condemnation of human monarchy in the election of Saul, but also the prominence of divine leadership in the late narratives of the Hexateuch and *Judges*.

But the ideal of divine sovereignty certainly was not limited in Israel to the extreme view which made all human monarchy irreconcilable in principle with the kingship of God. It was a fundamental and permeating influence in all their political life. And so the word theocracy certainly deserves wider scope. Even Josephus, who apparently coined the word, though he contrasts the Hebrew constitution with the various usual forms of government—monarchies, oligarchies, democracies—and declares, "Our lawgiver gave attention to none of these, but ordained our government to be what, by a strained expression, may be termed a theocracy, ascribing the sovereignty and authority to God,"[1] nevertheless does not condemn the monarchy as unconstitutional or incongruous, nor hesitate to refer to his nation, in both Mosaic and postexilic times, as an oligarchy or aristocracy. And while we would not quarrel over terms, yet it may be desirable to

[1] *C. Apion*, ii, 16.

limit theocracy neither to the sacerdotal polity of the later Levitical legislation, nor to the earlier prophetic picture of a more direct divine leadership, but to designate under that name the indubitably historical impression, retained by the Hebrews from their earliest Semitic beginnings through all the changes of internal organization and international relationship, that their national life in all its forms was a supreme concern of Jehovah.

In its simplest sense this theocracy was the personal relationship between the individual citizen and the national God. Religion and government in the primitive society were, both of them, democratic and unofficial. In ritual each man was his own priest, in law each man was his own judge—at least, each minor sheik or local judge. In both religion and government these ideals long persisted, as is shown by the lay character of Hebrew prophecy in its most spontaneous forms, and by the frequent democratic leadership in politics and reform. As an ideal it found expression as "a kingdom of priests and a holy nation," in which no man should need to teach his neighbor, saying, "Know Jehovah," but all should know him, from the least unto the greatest. Even the most developed form of Levitical piety laid the burden of religious duty on each individual. Thus in all his acts the citizen was supremely responsible to "God, the invisible King."

But the visible political or priestly organizations were to few minds in real conflict either with the divine supremacy or with the individual responsibility. Both the king and the priest are the anointed servants and agents of God. They are the interpreters of his will and the representatives of his rule. They do not interfere either with the immediate personal duties, both religious and patriotic, of men to God, or with the direct authority of God himself over national life. Even the kingship as an institution is not the denial but the expression of the theocratic idea: "the kingdom of Jehovah in the hand of the sons of David," a priestly writer still calls it (II Chron. 13:8). The kings do not infringe upon the royal rights of God; they already enjoy, on condition of good behavior at least, a little of the divine right of kings. The real conflict of sovereignties, if any is to be thought of, is between the king and the religious representatives of God. Certainly this is the subject that bulks most large in our records, coming as they do primarily from prophetic or priestly sources. It is not a conflict of church and state in the later sense, but merely the insistence that the religious ideals should be supreme. In the story of Saul's rejection we see something of the theocratic indignation at the disobedience of the king to the commands of the priest-prophet Samuel. And throughout the story of the monarchies there

recurs, as we shall see,[1] the same ideal in which an unofficial prophetic leadership is the effective power behind the throne.

Of all the functions of government none seemed more exclusively divine than law. No provision was ever made in Hebrew society for conscious legislation. Law was custom derived and developed from an unknown past, and this obscurity of origin by a primitive naïveté was equivalent to divinity of origin. Hence the body of law, oral and, later, written, enjoyed a greater sacredness as time went on than either the executive or the judicial branch of the government. Already in *Deuteronomy* kings and judges are only students and interpreters of the law. In *Ezekiel* the king is only a "prince" with somewhat curtailed functions. In the later Levitical movement the supremacy of the law reaches its culmination. Here the priest and scribe largely take the place of the king and judge, or at least take place beside them, as the priestly document adds Aaron to Moses. The transition is, however, only gradual. Possibly a double headship of church and state is contemplated for a time. The two olive-branches of *Zechariah* represent Zerubbabel, the Davidic prince, and Joshua, the high priest. It may be that in the text of *Zechariah* or its corruptions, and in the story of Aaron's apostasy, we see suggestions of unknown rivalries

[1] Chapter XVI.

in this difficult division of authority. But finally the kingship disappears in favor of the hierarchy, whether through preference for the latter, or merely as the making of a virtue out of necessity when loss of independence prevented the titles if not the substance of local self-government. The nation gave place to a church. More and more the priesthood included the real leadership. The insignia of monarchy—the purple and the diadem—became the high priest's prerogative. Even the Maccabees, though they could no more claim descent from Aaron than from David, preferred the priestly to the royal titles, exercising, however, all civil as well as ecclesiastical authority.

With the disappearance of the actual monarchy the royal hopes of the house of David became gradually the expression of a distant and difficult ideal. The illegal assumption of royalty by the later Hasmoneans and the Idumean Herods only made more intense the longing for a true Davidic kingdom. This coming monarch—the real anointed one (that is, Messiah or Christ), gives his name to the whole political idealism of later Judaism. He appears in the royal psalms of the exilic psalter,[1]—the echo of the earlier monarchy, in the Pharisaic *Psalms of Solomon* in the age of Roman conquest, and in the apocalyptic and devotional literature of late Judaism. So, at least in the future, monarchy and theocracy

[1] *E. g.*, Psalms 2, 20, 21, 72, 101, 110.

merge, and without difficulty or distinction men could speak of the kingdom of God and the kingdom of his anointed. Between God and his agent perfect agreement of will and character were to exist. From these political ideals of Judaism there came to Christianity not only the terms "Christ" and "kingdom of God," but the natural identification or confusion of the two royal personages, God and Messiah. From the same fruitful source of political idealism Christianity derived the democracy of direct universal individual responsibility to God and nation, and the theocratic ideal of organized society, expressing perfectly the will of God when "the kingdom of the world is become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ." [1]

[1] Rev. 11:15.

X

RADICALS AND REFORMERS

It is convenient to mention, in connection with the great national institutions with which our last two chapters have dealt, a phenomenon, which, contrary to common opinion, probably exercises more influence on the history of nations than either war or government. I speak of this factor as a phenomenon, for it is impossible to call national reformers an institution. Spontaneity is their chief ear-mark; organization tends to destroy them, or at least while it embodies their ideals, it does not create or foster their progressive spirit. But alongside of any organization there exists often this ferment of correction and reform, the sporadic and yet timely leadership of rebel spirits and idealists.

The phenomenon in Hebrew history which answers this description is prophecy. It is no longer necessary to teach the well-informed Bible student that the prophets of Israel were not primarily theologians nor predicters of the Messiah. They were the stirring social preachers of their age, the watchmen of their people's moral security, the creators of the new ideals of the nation, and

the harbingers of the kingdom of God. It is to them and to the ideals for which they stood that Israel owes all that raised it from the level of its neighbors—whether in religion, morality, or national ideals.

Even prophecy itself, though it was the lever of a noteworthy development, illustrates the developmental character of all elements of national life. It began apparently in those groups of devotees and frantic enthusiasts whom the Bible calls "the sons of the prophets," and whom it reveals by occasional hints in a somewhat lurid and unpromising light. In many different lines one can readily trace the evolution of the great prophets from their cruder beginnings.

In the first place, the "sons of the prophets" were evidently conservatives. They were the champions of the old order and "the old-time religion." Their communism, their dress and appearance, their religion of emotion, all suggest the desert origin like that of the modern dervish. Amos groups them with the Nazirites (2:11), the well-known conservatives. The career of Elijah illustrates this adherence to the nomadic culture. The later prophets inherited many of the same archaic characteristics. The personal asceticism and the weird boldness continue down to John the Baptist. The prophets were rarely the conscious exponents of novelty. On the contrary, their opposition to luxury, to religious syn-

cretism, and even to ritual was largely based on their ideal of the past. They were often the champions of ancient democratic liberties, as the right of peasants to their inheritance, the right of free speech and of fair trial. But they appear to have been the only people in Israel whose conservatism was not of the letter but of the spirit, and who translated the time-honored principles of religion and morality to meet the new circumstances of their day. They lived at a time when the rise of Assyria had brought to the Hebrews a much wider political horizon, and when the development of civilization had produced new and acute problems in the social order. And they met these changes with an insight into underlying principles that was so profound that they appeared to be iconoclasts and radicals. They opposed the *laissez-faire* policy of society and politics, drifting on new and unsuspected currents toward unspiritual crystallization. They were always men before their time, respected in later generations but persecuted in their own. They were always members of that uncomfortable minority which, contrary to the assumption of majority rule, is more often right than wrong. Not infrequently they came into open conflict with the king and court. They were leaders of his Majesty's opposition. To Ahab Elijah was an "enemy" or "troubler of Israel," and Micaiah an object of hate (I Kings 18:17; 21:20; 22:8).

Even where kings avoided violence to the prophets their restraints were more often due to superstitious fear than to motives of agreement or principles of toleration. They were popularly regarded as disturbers of the peace, as the fomenters of revolution, or as scourges by whom God "hewed" the people, and whose words the land could not bear (Hosea 6:5; Amos 7:10). It can hardly be doubted that this estimate had considerable basis. As for domestic policy our records make it clear that the prophets took an active part in the revolutions of Jeroboam and of Jehu, while their constant predictions of doom to kings or dynasties were perhaps rightly construed as threats and agitation that would lead to the overthrow of the reigning monarchs. In their foreign policy the prophets seemed equally injurious to the strength of national life. They were no doctrinaire pacifists, but they so frequently opposed the military ambitions of the aristocracy, not only in wars of aggression but also in wars for reconquest or even defense, that they appeared to have no concern for the political welfare of the state or even for its independence. What has been said of Elijah may in a sense be transferred to them all:

> The work of Elijah foreshadows that of the prophets of Judah, who in like manner had no small part in breaking up the political life of the kingdom. The prophets were never patriots of the common stamp, to

whom national interests stand higher than the absolute claims of religion and morality.

Had Elijah been merely a patriot to whom the state stood above every other consideration, he would have condoned the faults of a king who did so much for the greatness of a nation; but the things for which Elijah contended were of far more worth than the national existence of Israel, and it is a higher wisdom than that of patriotism, which insists that divine truth and civil righteousness are more than all the counsels of statecraft. Judged from a merely political point of view, Elijah's work had no other result than to open a way for the bloody and unscrupulous ambition of Jehu, and lay bare the frontiers of the land to the ravages of the ferocious Hazael.[1]

In the second place, Hebrew prophecy broke with the institutions of religion as well as of politics. But to make this plain one must carefully distinguish between two uses of the term prophecy. On the one hand there are those roving bands that first meet us in the days of Saul—"the sons of the prophets," who became later a regular guild. On the other hand, there are a series of national leaders whom men call "the prophets" *par excellence*. They differed from the guild prophets in their greater spontaneity, and in the extraordinary moral and intellectual power which they displayed. They were by nature too independent to be organized; they spoke in "divers portions and in divers manners"; they were mostly

[1] W. R. Smith, *The Prophets of Israel*, p. 78.

without much conscious fellowship, except with God and with like-minded men of the past. It is difficult, therefore, to fix the time or manner of their origin. It was easy to read the ideal back to Moses and the founding of the nation, as *Deuteronomy* did, or even to the beginnings of the world with the author of *Acts*. If, however, following another suggestion of the same writer,[1] Samuel is chosen as the first prophet, then we shall be able to assign to one and the same era not only the first signs of kingship and of the institution of prophecy, but also the beginning of the uninstitutionalized leadership.

At first the connection between tne two kinds of prophecy was intimate. Samuel himself, though he was brought up as a priest, and was called a seer, as well as the last of the judges, was closely associated with the sons of the prophets, though in the perspective of history he rises above them by his individuality. Like him, also, Elijah and Elisha are represented as leaders of the prophetic guild. But from that time on the gulf between the individual prophet and the prophetic institution was a constantly widening one. Amos carefully differentiated himself from the prophets, and they became one of the chief obstacles of other prophets. Perhaps the divergence was due to changes on both sides. The guilds of the prophets were an organization, and as such nat-

[1] Acts 3:24, contrast 3:21, Luke 1:70.

urally became more and more associated with other organizations. They were from the first aligned with kings and priests. They became an appendage of the court, maintained at royal expense. They were, therefore, no longer independent of popular or official opinion. They were accused of prophesying only for hire and only to suit the wishes of the king or people. They shared the drunkenness, luxury, and immorality of the court. There are several incidents which confirm this impression of their mercenary and servile character. The individual prophet, on the other hand, was, as we have said, essentially spontaneous. He was a layman, especially called for a purpose; he was too independent to be organized. And while a spiritual kinship connects all the prophets of all generations, a kinship which Jesus and even some of the prophets themselves were conscious of sharing, it was not always evident to their contemporaries who persecuted and despitefully used them, while building the tombs of their honored predecessors. In his own day the prophet was the lonely critic of the very institution which should have been his home. When he came to his own his own received him not.

Even more clear was the opposition between prophet and priest—not as though two rival institutions or classes were consciously opposing each other, but because there was between the two groups an inherent unlikeness of tempera-

ment. The difference between the formalist and the mystic, between the ecclesiastic and the spiritual reformer, between the Pharisees and Jesus, is a psychological contrast too familiar to need definition. There is usually an element of misunderstanding on each side. The priest seems too confident of his ritual, and too indifferent to morality and inward religion. The prophet offends him as destructive and iconoclastic. Certain it is that the Hebrew prophets during their prime attacked the formal sacrifices with as much violence as they did the sheerest idolatry and heathenism. From Amos through the Psalter there runs an antisacrificial note, in spite of the apparently mediating work of Ezekiel and *Deuteronomy*. Justice is contrasted with oblations, loving-kindness with sacrifice, moral cleansing with prayers and Sabbaths, charity with formal fasts. By such arraignments and odious comparisons, and even more vigorously by their emphasis on the revolutionary implications of their awakened social conscience, the prophets won in religion as well as in politics the name of radicals and heretics.

But the growth from humble beginnings is shown by the positive as well as the negative elements in prophecy. From its earliest form prophecy was a zeal for the national Jehovah. "I have been very jealous for Jehovah, the God of hosts," was the claim of Elijah. And this religious basis

was never lacking in the true prophets. But the expression of religion was completely transformed. Instead of the mantic and divination of the seer, and instead of the ecstatic frenzy of the sons of the prophets, the word of God came to them in forms of religious insight and moral definiteness that have stood the tests of long time. Of course the primitive and crude were not easily removed. Their treasure was in earthen vessels:

"For every fiery prophet in old times,
And all the sacred madness of the bard,
When God made music through them, could but speak
His music by the framework and the chord."

But the old fire of genuine inspiration was largely refined and enlarged. Religion was translated into social and ethical values. There was in the divine call a more urgent sense of duty to the nation, as of a watchman who must warn his countrymen, whether they will hear or whether they will forbear. There was in it, also, the more moving power of personal relation to God. From this individual religion and this social conscience was born not a patriotism of the vulgar type, but the purest love for a wayward nation, like the love of God. Perhaps even the earliest prophetic movement was kindled by great national devotion at military crises—the raids and invasions of the Philistines in the days of Samuel. But "the

patriotic enthusiasm of the uprising against Philistine domination began to lift the prophets clear of the function and the magical implements of soothsaying. . . . Their predictions henceforth were national in scope and based on fundamental moral laws and convictions. Thus patriotism was the emancipating power which set the feet of the prophetic order on that new and higher path which was destined to lift them far above the soothsayers of other nations with whom they started on a common level. That religious passion which had turned against a foreign invader was equally ready to turn against the domestic oppressors of the people." [1]

This sense of religious conviction is not to be obscured by all we have said of their political and economic and ecclesiastical policy. Fundamentally they had no policy at all. In all these realms they were neither theorists nor executives, but voices of protest and reform. To their opponents they seemed often to be dealing with these subjects on the same plane as their own, to be representatives merely of another party or class or creed. But this was scarcely the case.

The prominence which the prophets assign to social grievances and civil disorders has often led to their being described as politicians, a democratic Opposition in the aristocratic state. This is a total misconception. The prophets of the eighth century have no

[1] Rauschenbusch, *Christianity and the Social Crisis*, pp. 23 *f.*

new theories of government, and propose no practical scheme of political readjustment. They are the friends of the poor because they hate oppression, and they attack the governing classes for their selfishness and injustice; but their cry is not for better institutions but for better men, not for the abolition of aristocratic privileges but for an honest and godly use of them. The work of the prophets is purely religious. . . . But to the prophets the observance of justice and mercy in the State are the first elements of religion.[1]

It was only by resolutely maintaining this adherence to principles rather than to parties or platforms that the prophets were able to retain for so many centuries the spirit of spontaneity and the actual constructive leadership in the nation.

And it is the same quality—a neutrality toward parties and an insistence on principles—that gave the prophets an aloofness even from national partisanship and an almost international view-point. Gradually and incompletely, yet in striking degree, the prophets surpassed even the claims of patriotism. As a god of justice, Jehovah seemed to them superior to national prejudices and partisanship. He was no respecter of persons. His covenant was not a preferential treaty. By their own superpatriotism the prophets contributed to a supernational religion. Frequently, as we have said, this neutrality appeared in the eyes of their

[1] W. R. Smith, *The Old Testament in the Jewish Church*, second ed., p. 348.

opponents as nothing less than rank treason, but as a higher loyalty it created in the prophets the highest ideals of national allegiance and service. It also made them more impartial judges of the nations round about. It was difficult for them not to share some of the racial prejudices long instilled in their Hebrew blood and fanned by wars and foreign oppression. They are not wholly free from provincial chauvinism. Yet Amos could realize the equivalence of Israel's guilt to that of her foes, Isaiah could recognize the Assyrian empire as God's tool and agent, while to a Jewish contemporary Cyrus the Persian assumed the position of a real though unconscious Messiah.[1]

Indeed, some of the most illuminating sidelights on the national ideals of the prophets are their oracles on foreign nations. The material is abundant. Besides the judgment of Obadiah upon Edom, of Nahum on Nineveh, and of Habakkuk on the Chaldeans, a considerable section in each of the major prophets is a collection of similar prophecies.[2] It is true that in most cases the verdict is unfavorable, but the prophets' reason is not merely Hebrew patriotism or hatred; it is not even religious intolerance; it is the fundamentally immoral and antisocial national vices in their neighbors or masters, like the commercialism of Tyre, or the arrogant militarism of Assyria,

[1] Amos 1, 2; Isaiah 10:5 *ff.*; 45:1.
[2] Isaiah 13–23; Jer. 46–51; Ezek. 25–32.

which, no more and no less than in their own nation, seemed to these Hebrew spectators the sure promise of Divine judgment.

XI

RUTHLESSNESS ABROAD AND AT HOME

PREACHING is so regular a part of modern worship that we are apt to forget that it is a comparative innovation. The earliest religion consisted in prayer and sacrifice and had no place for exhortation. The modern sermon apparently is to be traced back for its origin to the movement called Hebrew prophecy. Out of the obscurity of primitive religion, out of the formalism of ritual worship, there emerged in Israel a series of inspired teachers or preachers, who spoke directly to the men of their day, rebuking them for sin and pointing the way to national reform. They were an early "Mission of National Repentance and Hope." The names of most of them are forgotten and many of their sermons are lost. But in four large volumes their literary remains have been collected and preserved—Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the Twelve.

By general consent the oldest of these so-called "writing prophets" is Amos, the herdsman of Tekoa. He lived in the silver age of Jeroboam's kingdom, under Jeroboam the Second. The land of Palestine—the Belgium of antiquity—though ringed about with enemy nations great and small, was enjoying temporary peace and prosperity

prior to the bursting of the great Assyrian storm. The northern kingdom, through two centuries of independence, had acquired some sense of national pride or at least a strong national antipathy to the inveterate foes that surrounded it. For a hundred years the strong house of Jehu, by successful wars and diplomacy, had not merely avoided civil war and anarchy and held its kingdom intact, but had even enlarged its borders, extended its commerce, and enriched its nobles and merchants.

To Bethel, the religious centre of the kingdom, came the Judean peasant, Amos. His first words were well calculated to win the approval of his hearers. In turn he mentioned the chief foes of Israel, he rehearsed their outrages on justice and international law, and promised for them a terrible destruction.

> Thus saith Jehovah: For three transgressions of Damascus, yea, for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof; because they have threshed Gilead with threshing instruments of iron. But I will send a fire into the house of Hazael, and it shall devour the palaces of Ben-hadad. And I will break the bar of Damascus, and cut off the inhabitant from the valley of Aven, and him that holdeth the sceptre from the house of Eden; and the people of Syria shall go into captivity unto Kir, saith Jehovah (Amos 1:3–5).

One by one with repeated refrain the surrounding nations are condemned. Gaza, the next to be

mentioned, represents the old Philistine alliance that had fought so stubbornly with Saul and David for the control of Canaan. "For three transgressions of Gaza, yea, for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof; because they carried away captive the whole people, to deliver them up to Edom." And so Amos swings around the circle, mentioning the charge against each offender and threatening a suitable doom. Tyre is guilty because it had "remembered not the covenant of brothers"; Edom, "because he did pursue his brother with the sword, and did cast off all pity, and his anger did tear perpetually, and he kept his wrath for ever"; the children of Ammon, "because they have ripped up the women with child of Gilead, that they may enlarge their border."

Very modern is this series of atrocities which Israel had suffered at the hands of its neighbors—the iron flail of Syrian conquest in Gilead, wholesale deportations of the population by Gaza and Tyre, treating as scraps of paper the treaties of peace, relentless, military ruthlessness, gruesome mutilation of non-combatants for the sake of aggressive imperialism, and the blighting of lives unborn. One can readily picture the sympathy and righteous indignation with which the prophet's hearers applauded his pronouncement of the condemnation of God upon the frightfulness of their foes. Even in cases where they were neutrals, as

between Moab and Edom, the Hebrews would share the prophet's horror for the Moabite violators of natural decency and international law who had "burned the bones of the king of Edom into lime."

But suddenly a change comes over the faces of the Bethelite revellers. Unexpectedly the prophet brings the charge home to Israel itself. With the same hammerlike refrain he begins again: "For three transgressions of Israel, yea, for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof." The condemnation that they had so eagerly welcomed when applied to their enemies is now laid upon themselves. Having burned with righteous indignation at the mote in another's eye they had failed to see the beam in their own eye. They, too, were guilty of frightfulness. That is the prophet's swift and hard blow upon them.

There were two specially striking equations in this unexpected arraignment. Such a condemnation of Israel would seem to those who heard not merely unpleasant; it would be both unpatriotic and blasphemous. They believed that they were a people of special privilege and position. They were the chosen of Jehovah and he was on their side. Whatever they did was right and their foes were the foes of God, also. This patriotic assumption Amos boldly challenged. In the sight of Jehovah, he declares, all nations are on

the same level. There is no place before him for special pleading. Twice again Amos reverts to this same theme and each time he attacks squarely one of the favorite bases of national assumption. Two events were evidently considered chief proofs of God's special favor for Israel—one in the past, the deliverance from Egypt, the other in the future, the day of Jehovah. No event in their history was so often cited as a sign of God's choice and care of Israel as the Exodus. It is constantly mentioned in the Hebrew scriptures (*e. g.*, Amos 2:9, 10). Amos does not deny the hand of God in this event; he merely calls attention to parallels in God's favor to their enemies, the Philistines and Syrians:

> Are ye not as the children of the Ethiopians unto me, O children of Israel? saith Jehovah. Have not I brought up Israel out of the land of Egypt, and the Philistines from Caphtor, and the Syrians from Kir? Behold the eyes of the Lord Jehovah are upon the sinful kingdom, and I will destroy it from off the face of the earth (Amos 9:7, 8).

In similar fashion Amos corrects the prevailing view of the final judgment of God. The Hebrews, after the manner of national religionists, had so identified their God with their own interests that they had looked upon his triumph as the day of their own success. They used "the day of Jehovah" much as modern schoolboys use the term

"our day," or the modern jingo uses "*der Tag.*" They did not expect God to be an international neutral. Amos plainly warns them of their mistake.

Woe unto you that desire the day of Jehovah! Wherefore would ye have the day of Jehovah? It is darkness, and not light. As if a man did flee from a lion, and a bear met him; or went into the house and leaned his hand on the wall, and a serpent bit him. Shall not the day of Jehovah be darkness, and not light? even very dark, and no brightness in it (Amos 5:18–20)?

But more novel still was the second equation of Amos's sermon, for it was an equation between two kinds of sin. The same refrain that so boldly condemned Israel to the same punishment as its heathen foes clearly associated with their enemies' crimes, crimes of a different nature. The three or four transgressions of their neighbors had been atrocities in war and ruthless conquest. Israel's past history, too, had been marked by similar acts,[1] but it is not these that the prophet chooses to classify with the crimes of the Syrians and the Philistines. It is sins of the domestic régime, of the industrial and social order at home.

Thus saith Jehovah: For three transgressions of Israel, yea, for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof; because they have sold the righteous for silver and the needy for a pair of shoes—they that

[1] *E. g.*, II Sam. 12:29–31.

pant after the dust of the earth on the head of the poor, and turn aside the way of the meek: and a man and his father go unto the same maiden to profane my holy name: and they lay themselves down beside every altar upon clothes taken in pledge; and in the house of their God they drink the wine of such as have been fined (Amos 2:6–8).

Under the same condemnation as the atrocities of war are the atrocities of peace; in the same category with exploitation of foreign peoples is the exploitation of the lower classes at home. Industrial slavery is on the same level as political slavery, and the ruthlessness of the forum and the market-place is as unpardonable as that of the battle-field. Repeatedly the prophet returns to this theme—bribery, greed, oppressive luxury, violence, perversion of legal justice, monopoly, false measures, adulterated food, and all the other evils of a corrupt industrial order. Even though these crimes are done in the name of religion and under the shadow of the altar, they are none the less crimes. Fair names and ideals, the formal worship of God, and scrupulous observance of certain religious rites, are no real cloak for injustice and crime.

I hate, I despise your feasts, and I will take no delight in your solemn assemblies. Yea, though ye offer me your burnt-offerings and meal-offerings, I will not accept them; neither will I regard the peace-offerings of your fat beasts. Take thou away from

me the noise of thy songs; for I will not hear the melody of thy viols. But let justice roll down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream (Amos 5: 21–24).

The effects of this sermon of Amos are not explicitly recorded, but they are not hard to conjecture. The kingdom of Israel, we know, survived for only a few years. Amos himself, no doubt, met the rebuffs of a true prophet. One illuminating incident is told:

Then Amaziah, the priest of Bethel, sent to Jeroboam, king of Israel, saying, Amos hath conspired against thee in the midst of the house of Israel: the land is not able to bear all his words. For thus Amos saith, Jeroboam shall die by the sword, and Israel shall surely be led away captive out of his land. Also Amaziah said unto Amos, O thou seer, go, flee thou away into the land of Judah, and there eat bread, and prophesy there: but prophesy not again any more at Bethel, for it is the king's sanctuary, and it is a royal house (Amos 7:10–13).

It is significant that the opposition was from the official, not of the state, but of orthodox religion. With zeal characteristic of his class he reported Amos to government headquarters as a disturber of the peace, and converted unpopular propaganda into constructive treason. Typical, too, are his words to the prophet himself. He desires to silence his unpatriotic moral criticism—or, at least, to forbid him the publicity of the

capital and to censor the sentiments which pilgrims to the shrine would be likely to hear and disseminate. Perhaps like many officials of religion since, he felt some responsibility for the sanctuary, that it should harbor nothing "disloyal." As Amaziah was true to his type, so Amos shows himself the true prophet in his simple but genuine reply, when, disclaiming any professional authority, he says: "Jehovah took me from following the flock, and Jehovah said unto me, Go, prophesy unto my people Israel."

Twenty-five centuries have passed by since the days of Amos, and the scale of things has changed. Our political horizon has widened and its units are no longer petty states in a restricted corner of Asia, but great modern nations and alliances embracing large sectors of the world. The guerilla warfare of the toy kingdoms of Jeroboam and the house of Ben-hadad has given place to the Great War, and the outrages have been organized, multiplied, and extended. Air raids and starvation blockades merely enlarge the scope of operations of the iron flails of Syria and the swords of the children of Ammon. Industrial life has also changed its scale, and its abuses also have become organized and extended. Exploitation, graft, economic monopolies and injustice have become wholesale rather than individual, in corporations as well as in men, and in well-defined classes of society.

But many things have not changed with the years and the earliest recorded sermon of history must be preached again to-day. In international affairs the same lust of conquest, the same relentless vengeance to the bitter end, the same cold cruelty in the name of military necessity and national interest, continue, and in the social life—greed, oppression, luxury, and indifference to the interests of the poor. Nations still gladly condemn in other nations what they condone in their own history or in their allies. They forget the two equations of Amos—the equality of moral responsibility for all nations in the sight of God, and the equivalence of economic and industrial injustice to the atrocities of war.

And organized religion is still often merely the ally of the government and of the industrial *status quo*, more concerned to serve Cæsar and Mammon than to render "unto God the things that are God's." It still shelters the self-satisfied, comfortable classes "who are at ease in Zion," but "are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph," while it strives to silence moral criticism or to exile into obscurity as traitors the God-sent prophets who compare injustice within a nation to the universally condemned sins of its foes.

XII

LOYALTY, A NATIONAL MOTIVE

As one studies the prophets of Israel in the light of modern times, two facts seem to emerge more clearly than ever before: First, that these men are speaking to a nation rather than to persons; and, second, that each of them has a distinctive mission and message.

The prophet Hosea illustrates these statements. For Hosea the nation is the object of concern. Ephraim is a unit and can be described as a whole by a single designation. Its social and religious conditions are national problems. Like many other prophets, Hosea deals directly with the political questions of his day—the chaotic government, the inadequate public leadership, the futile chauvinism and fickle diplomacy that marked the decadence of the Hebrew monarchies. On the other hand, in spite of the variety of his accusations and the extreme obscurity of his literary remains Hosea evidently had a special message. Living as he did a few years after Amos, and dealing with conditions but slightly changed, he forms in many ways the most striking contrast with the shepherd of Tekoa. He is also distinct from Judean prophets who followed. It is true that in many elements of his message there is

nothing unique. His themes include all the commonplaces of prophecy. Many of them are more clearly elaborated by others. The distinctive thing about Hosea, among the great national idealists of Israel, is neither in his diagnosis of the nation's faults, nor in his certainty of its doom, nor even, as has been often thought, in his hopefulness of its repentance. It is, rather, the motive to which he appeals in his plea for national reform, and the analogy by which he makes his motive clear.

Why, then, does Hosea challenge the nation to repent? Is it for the fear of just punishment as in Amos? Yes, Hosea threatens punishment, though it is doubtful whether he thought that punishment could be averted. Is it for hope of reward? Yes, but the promises of restoration are no more vivid or authentic in Hosea than in some at least of the other prophets. No, the appeal of Hosea beyond these common and somewhat mercenary motives is the appeal to national loyalty. This is not the loyalty of the citizen to the state, nor of the state to its own self-interest, but the loyalty of the whole nation to what might be expected of it from the highest outside moral view-point. In religious terms Hosea's appeal was for a response to the love of God.

On its religious side the emphasis of Hosea upon love has long been recognized. The fact is familiar to theologians that, as Amos had taught

the impartial justice of God, Hosea manifested his persistent love. Hosea, therefore, anticipates the gracious good news of the greater Galilean. He discloses the sorrow of God's loving heart over the waywardness of his prodigal child, Israel, and his love that "never faileth" nor lets go.

> "How shall I give thee up, Ephraim?
> How shall I cast thee off, Israel?
> How shall I make thee as Admah?
> How shall I set thee as Zeboiim?
> My heart is turned within me,
> My compassions are kindled together.
> I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger,
> I will not return to destroy Ephraim:
> For I am God, and not man;
> The Holy One in the midst of thee;
> And I will not come in wrath (11:8, 9)."

Such love is the superhuman trait of the divine. The distinction between God and man is in loving-kindness and tender mercies.

This love of God for Israel is beautifully portrayed in the poet's memories of Israel's past. History is the gracious story of divine redemption. The nation is the living epistle, the monument of God's care surpassing his care for the birds and the flowers of Galilee. "In a series of lovely images Hosea pictures the beauty of Israel's childhood and youth. As 'grapes in the wilderness' Jehovah had found them; as 'first ripe figs' He saw their fathers. . . . As a flock of

docile sheep He 'tended' her in the desert, 'through a land of burning drought.' Even as a son He loved her, and called her unto Him from Egypt, took her in His arms, and healed her little sores, taught her to walk and drew her on 'with leading-strings of love.'" [1] But Israel had not responded to this love. Like a faithless wife she had followed other lovers, and had forsaken her own God.

But the love of God for Israel was revealed to Hosea even more clearly in a personal experience. His wife, whom he loved, had proved unfaithful to him. Her children were not his children: Loammi, "no kin of mine," he calls one of them. She strayed away from him until she fell into slavery. But Hosea found in himself an impulse, which seemed to him like a call to God, still to love this woman. He redeemed her from slavery, and appealed to her again with the wooing love of their first romance. All this was a lesson of the sorrow and love of God. By a device not uncommon in the Semitic world the nation is personified. It carries a man's name, like Israel, Ephraim, or Jacob. Its history is like a biography. Its relation to God is described, as in all religion, in human analogies. Many personal metaphors are used. God is the nation's king (melek), its uncle, its father, its husband (baal). The nation is his servant, his son, or his bride. All these

[1] Gordon, *The Prophets of Israel*, pp. 70 *f.*

occur in the Old Testament. Hosea, as we have already seen, spoke of Israel as the son of God. But it is the last figure that suits best his own emotion and experience.

The idea of a nation as her god's bride was a natural one among the Semites, but it was a metaphor peculiarly fraught with dangers. For not all human relations are ideal, and only the more spiritual ones are fit expressions of the divine.

> By the neighbors of Israel the marriage of a god to his people was conceived with a grossness of feeling and illustrated by a foulness of ritual which thoroughly demoralized the people, affording, as they did, to licentiousness the example and sanction of religion. So debased had the idea become, and so full of temptation to the Hebrews were the forms in which it was illustrated among their neighbors, that the religion of Israel might justly have been praised for achieving a great moral victory in excluding the figure altogether from its system. But the prophets of Jehovah dared the heavier task of retaining the idea of religious marriage, and won the diviner triumph of purifying and elevating it. It was, indeed, a new creation. Every physical suggestion was banished, and the relation was conceived as purely moral. Yet it was never refined to a mere form or abstraction. The prophets fearlessly expressed it in the warmest and most familiar terms of the love of man and woman.[1]

This assertion applies pre-eminently to Hosea, for the metaphor came from his own heart, with

[1] G. A. Smith, *The Book of Isaiah*, II, p. 399.

its pure, yearning, unsatisfied affection. God's words to Israel are like a love-song:

"Therefore, lo! I will allure her,
And will lead her to the desert, and will speak to her heart;
And I will give her back her vineyards,
And will make the valley of Achor a door of hope.
And she shall respond to me there as in the days of her youth,
Even the day that I brought her up from the land of Egypt;
And I will betroth her to me in love and compassion,
And I will betroth her to me in truth and the knowledge of Jehovah (2:14–17, Gordon).

Such is Hosea's message that "God is love." And yet his purpose is not simply the revelation of God, and our interest in the Godlike sufferings of Hosea or in the nature of God must not obscure the fact that Hosea's purpose was an appeal to the nation. The question is not, How does God feel? but, What is the nation's response? The *Book of Hosea* is a supreme challenge to the higher ideals of his people in the light of the love of God. It is to awaken them to the moral implications of their history and to the compelling power of noble ideals which are comparable to the pursuant love of a true lover. And here, as elsewhere, the comparison with Amos is obvious. Amos had spoken of God's justice, and had demanded jus-

tice among men and nations. Hosea declared God's love—"leal love" is the Scotch translation of the characteristic word of Hosea—and aroused the nation to the response of loyalty. Amos appealed to the reason, Hosea to the heart; Amos to the law of cause and effect, Hosea to the sentiment of gratitude. Both attributes of God are true, both appeals to men are important. But as a motive for national action, as a demand for sheer loyalty and gratitude, for fidelity to that which is neither selfish gain nor fear, but the highest ideals with their persistent and wooing influence, Hosea's message is the more unusual. It is a kind of national "noblesse oblige," the duty of a state to do what is expected of it, not by mere justice, or law, or self-interest, but by the highest standards within or without; it is the irresistible urge, like the moral impulse, which thrills the heart that is the object of the most spiritual love —call it God, or national conscience, or humanity, or "loyalty to loyalty," whichever you like.

So interpreted, Hosea has surely a significant message for to-day. Both his analogy and his motive are needed by the modern nations. "We are at the beginning of an age," President Wilson is reported to have said, "in which it will be insisted that the same standards of conduct and responsibility for wrong done shall be observed among nations that are observed among individuals of civilized states." At least as a standard

of law the personal analogy is coming to have a place in statecraft. Political and military acts will be viewed in the light of reason and equity, like the acts of individuals. But many of us are limiting the analogy to cold reason and blind justice. A further step must follow as Hosea followed Amos. Justice must be supplemented by mercy, law by love, reason by affection. In the new international relationships the analogy not merely of the law court but of the family must be adopted, and all the highest sentiments of loyalty, gratitude, and leal love must supplant the adulterous and idolatrous waywardness in the nations' hearts. Loyalty as a term must be redeemed from that recent abuse of enforced conformity to government policy. It must mean not the loyalty of citizens to the state, nor of the state to its citizens, but the united fidelity of both to the highest national ideals. Like the response of the betrothed to the very love of God, it must shame and allure and inspire nations from self-regarding, ingrate materialism to mutual consideration and service. International law must be transformed into international love, and the familiar twofold summary of personal duty must become the domestic and foreign policy of the state: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, and thy neighbor as thyself."

XIII

THE PROPHET AND POLITICS

THE relation of the early Hebrew prophets to contemporary politics is a subject regarding which Bible students have passed from one extreme view to another. The older idea of prophecy as a merely predictive function, without any relation to current affairs, has been entirely discredited. But any alternative view which makes of these great leaders mere time-servers and politicians, concerned only with the passing political scene, is equally erroneous. They were surely men of their own age, and deeply concerned with everything that affected the welfare of their nation.

But the real significance of the prophets is not in their participation in political life, but their aloofness from it. Like Jesus at a later time, they displayed an indifference to partisan feeling which must have been annoying to their contemporaries. They apparently suffered the usual fate of neutrals in being disliked by both sides. But, in spite of the personal sufferings to which they were thus exposed, their position gave them an opportunity to see life steadily and see it whole. They were aware of the lessons of history while history was in the making, and even

amid the din of battle and confusion of political strife they had faith in the guiding hand at the helm. With the prophet of the beleaguered Samaria their prayer to God and the purpose of their own efforts was to open the eyes that could not see beyond the present and the material to behold the future and the spiritual.

The best illustration of the relation of the prophets to politics is Isaiah ben Amoz. Formerly he was thought of only as the evangelist of the Old Testament; now he is called the statesman among the prophets. Certainly the book that bears his name, in spite of confusions of order and interpolations, gives us a picture of most varied and difficult international problems amid which Isaiah and the kings of Judah lived. Isaiah's words of political import are clustered about a series of national crises covering a period of perhaps forty years, and can best be studied in connection with the events of the time. Brief references to these circumstances must suffice us here.

In the closing part of the eighth century the Assyrian Empire was making itself felt in southwestern Asia as never before. Nominal sovereignty it had for long held over some of the petty states. Israel, for example, had paid tribute to Assyria and sent soldiers to fight in the Assyrian army one hundred years before. In earlier centuries frequent visits of Assyrian

armies to the west are mentioned on the inscriptions. But now Tiglath-pileser, Sargon, and Sennacherib sought to make their rule more permanent and solid. Conquest was made easy by the lack of unity between the petty states, whose mutual jealousies prevented effective combined resistance. But conquests once made were not easily conserved, because of their distance from the seat of military and political control, and because of civil wars or revolts in other quarters which, from time to time, weakened the Assyrian authority in the west. The whole history of Judah and its neighbors during Isaiah's lifetime may be summed up as a series of revolts against Assyria and reconquests by the Assyrian kings.

The earliest political crisis referred to in Isaiah's career is in chapter 7. The date is about 734 B. C. Israel and Syria (Damascus), after a hundred years of war and commercial rivalry, have settled their differences to make a defensive alliance against the common foe, Assyria. Their kings, Pekah and Rezin, appear at the walls of Jerusalem, intending to force their neighbor to break its fealty to Nineveh as a vassal state and to join the anti-Assyrian coalition. If persuasion will not succeed they will fight; if immediate capture is impossible they will lay siege, and when they have entered the city they will replace King Ahaz by an appointee of their own. It is natural that the heart of the king should tremble "and

the heart of his people, as the trees of the forest tremble with the wind." Isaiah finds King Ahaz "at the end of the conduit of the upper pool," no doubt inspecting the water-supply, which was the critical point in the city's preparedness for siege. His words are words of calm:

"Take heed, and be quiet;
Fear not, neither let thy heart be faint,
Because of these two tails of smoking firebrands....
If ye will not believe,
Surely ye shall not be established" (7:4, 9).

This early incident in Isaiah's career is typical of all we know of him. With a play on words that is not translatable he declares that faith is the one requisite of national security. This does not mean that Isaiah was sure of Judah's political or material success. In predicting the speedy downfall of her present foes—a prediction for which he later gives the king a definite sign and a date within sixty-five years, or even less—Isaiah does not promise permanent immunity for his own country; its doom also is threatened. It is becoming increasingly doubtful whether Isaiah ever declared the inviolability of Zion in the sense which has sometimes been ascribed to him. Nor later, when Assyria's power is exalted as the assured victor over all its foes, and the rod of Jehovah's anger in punishing the nations, are we to assume that Isaiah meant to imply permanent

success to Assyria and utter defeat to Judah and Egypt. Assyria, too, shall be brought low; the virgin daughter of Zion shall laugh it to scorn: while Judah shall not perish forever from the earth; a remnant shall return.

The predictions of Isaiah, therefore—his promises of blessing or threats of disaster—must not be understood as mere worldly wisdom, the shrewd conjectures of a skillful forecaster of the stormy political weather of southwestern Asia. They are, rather, the expression of religious standards in national life. Isaiah does not weigh specific policies for special occasions; he expresses the fundamental spirit that policies must embody. When he opposes in Judah the panic for preparedness, the drifting into entangling alliances, or the cowardly fear of capture, quite as much as when he scorns the ruthless imperialism of Assyria or the military impotence of Egyptian allies, Isaiah is not merely giving advice; he is dealing with moral values. The prophet is no political doctrinaire; he is neither an opportunist nor the consistent advocate of a particular political formula. But amid all his words there runs one thread that gives unity transcending politics —the unity of faith in God.

This faith of Isaiah must also be distinguished from fatalism. There is an absolute difference between them. For while Isaiah believes that God controls history, his assurance is not so

much in the details of God's intended acts as in the moral principles of his action. The divine favor is not with the powerful or the prosperous, but with the righteous and the upright. It is moral, not material, preparedness that Isaiah advocates; reliance on God, not alliance with men. God is not with the strongest battalions, but with those who trust in him. He can save by many or by few, and one with God is a majority. Fatalism, in the real sense of the word, Isaiah condemns, the fatalism that believes that character does not count. It may be optimism, as of men who say:

> "We have made a covenant with death,
> And with Sheol are we at agreement;
> When the overflowing scourge shall pass through,
> It shall not come unto us" (28:15).

It may be pessimism of those who cry:

"Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die" (22:13).

But in either case the need is the same—faith, the foundation stone, and righteousness, the builder's plummet.

This principle of faith in God is the basis of all Isaiah's national and international teaching. In the first place, it explains his emphasis on moral character. Even amid serious political and military crises, when general moral teaching seems so out of place, and the insistence on fundamentals of national virtue are ridiculed as the monot-

onous "line upon line, precept upon precept" of the elementary pedagogue, Isaiah asserts that the foundations of national life are a righteous government. Faith in God is neither theology nor ritual, but the practice of social justice. In the opening chapter of our present collection of Isaiah's sermons the prophet declares the hollowness and futility of the sacrifices, feasts, and sabbaths because of the blood-stained hands and sinful hearts of the worshippers. He calls the rulers and people of Judah chieftains of Sodom and people of Gomorrah. And in order to escape the fate of those ill-starred cities he summons them to national repentance and conversion.

> "Cease to do evil; learn to do well;
> Seek justice, relieve the oppressed,
> Judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.
> Come now, and let us reason together, saith Jehovah:
> Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow;
> Though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool" (1:16–18).

In the second place, Isaiah's principle of faith and its moral emphasis explains his attitude to the nationalism of his time. Not so explicitly as other prophets, but with no less reality, Isaiah escapes the particularism of the Jehovah religion. "The Holy One of Israel," as he still calls him, is too pure to behold with favor iniquity even in his own nation. Zion can expect no better fate than has recently befallen Samaria and Damas-

cus, or in the olden time befell the wicked "cities of the plain." Even Assyria and Egypt are in God's hand to exalt and to bring low. Before him are their rising up and their lying down, their going out and their coming in. But God will not only apply to Israel this strict justice which he applies to others: he will grant to the other nations the same favors as to his own. As later a Christian teacher perceived "that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth him and worketh righteousness is acceptable to him," so the earlier prophets looked forward to the time when the knowledge of Jehovah should cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. "In that day," says the Isaianic passage, "shall Israel be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, a blessing in the midst of the earth; for that Jehovah of hosts hath blessed them, saying: Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel mine inheritance."[1]

In the third place, this principle of faith explains Isaiah's attitude toward political machinations of coalition and diplomacy. The clever schemers are ridiculous in the sight of God, for as Isaiah sarcastically remarks, "Jehovah also is wise," and in leaving him out of account and his moral requirements they heap sin upon sin.

In the fourth place, it explains his emphasis upon quietness. "He that believeth shall not

[1] 19:24, 25.

be in haste." For those who trust in God excitement and panic are of no avail; it is only moral qualities that count.

"In returning and rest shall ye be saved;
In quietness and in confidence shall be your strength" (30:15).
"And the work of righteousness shall be peace;
And the effect of righteousness, quietness and confidence forever" (32:17).

In the fifth place, it explains his attitude toward military endeavor and military fear. He rebukes in the most scathing terms the brute violence of the Assyrian lords and their conceit in their conquests; but at the same time he rebukes the little Judah that quails before the powerful military machine. Both nations are wanting in faith in God. Their respective faults, as Professor Smith has finely expressed them, are the atheism of force and the atheism of fear. To the timid, faith in God gives assurance because they fear not him that kills the body. To the arrogant victor, faith is a reminder of the real sovereignty of God.[1] Faith in militarism, on the one hand, and fear of militarism, on the other, are equally condemned when one realizes that only righteousness exalts a nation and that mankind endures or progresses not by military or economic success, but by purely spiritual values.

[1] Contrast 8:12, 13 with 10:15.

XIV

THE LIMITATIONS OF STATECRAFT

At the crisis of the attempted Syro-Ephraimite intervention, described in the preceding chapter, Ahaz rejected the policy of neutrality and "watchful waiting" which Isaiah urged upon him. But Isaiah's words about the two meddling kings proved true. As he had said, in less time than it takes for a child to be born and to grow old enough to cry "my father" or "my mother," or to distinguish the evil from the good, the riches of Damascus and the spoil of Samaria were carried away before the king of Assyria.[1] Damascus was taken and destroyed (732 B. C.); of Israel the large outlying fertile territories were lost even before that year, and with the siege and capture of the city of Samaria in 722–1 and the deportation of its leading citizens, the Kingdom of Israel, or Ephraim, ended. But in other parts of Palestine the same restlessness continued. With every favorable opportunity coalitions were formed to throw off the Assyrian yoke. Once a powerful revolutionary state in Babylon, under Merodach-Baladan, became the leader and hope of local independence. But this uprising was suppressed. More often Egypt was the stalking-horse of Assyr-

[1] Isaiah 8:4; *cf.* 7:14–16.

ian rivalry, a great nation of immense resources, full of promises of help, but a feeble reed to lean upon. How he put down such a coalition in the early part of his reign is vividly described by Sennacherib himself, in his annals. The death of his predecessor was apparently the signal for a general rebellion. Merodach-Baladan reappeared and instigated a successful revolt in Babylonia; in Palestine the states of Tyre, Judah, Edom, Moab, Ammon united in an alliance against Assyria and secured the promise of help from Egypt. One by one the enemies of Sennacherib were defeated or frightened into submission. In 702 B. C. Merodach-Baladan was beaten in battle and put to flight before the forces of the Emperor, who then turned to the West. The towns along the coast surrendered and Luli, King of Tyre, fled. In southern Palestine Sennacherib met and defeated an Egyptian army. Ekron and Lachish were besieged and captured. The kingdoms of Edom, Moab, and Ammon submitted. Judah, remaining defiant, was severely treated. As Sennacherib himself declares:

> Of Hezekiah, the Judean, who had not submitted to my yoke, forty-six strong cities, with walls, the smaller cities without number, by the battering of rams and the assault of engines, the attack of foot soldiers, mines, breaches and axes, I besieged and captured. Two hundred thousand one hundred and fifty men, young, old, male, female, horses, mules, asses, camels, oxen,

and sheep without number I brought out from them and counted as booty. [Hezekiah] himself I shut up like a caged bird within Jerusalem, his royal city.[1]

There are many passages in Isaiah's writings that reveal his reaction to these circumstances. Against the constant tendency to reliance on Egypt he objects by word and symbol.[2]

The dominant note here as elsewhere is the prophet's sense of the limitations of statecraft. Three principal limitations are manifest in the national policies of Hezekiah or those who controlled. One is the tendency to neglect God as a factor in international relationships. It is in Isaiah's opposition to Eygptian alliance that the religious reasons for his political advice most clearly appear. Perhaps Isaiah appreciated more fully than his contemporaries the invincibility of the Assyrian wolf, and the military impotence of Egypt, and of the loose coalition that sought refuge in her shadow. There is something quaint in the Judean's horror of "the land of the rustling of wings," that unknown southland with monsters as fabulous as its wealth.[3] But Isaiah's chief objection to the intriguers is that their political schemes are made without consulting God, in defiance of his will, and without estimating the

[1] The so-called Taylor Cylinder (translation from Rogers, *Cuneiform Parallels to the Old Testament*, pp. 343 *f.*).
[2] Isaiah 20; 30:1–7; 31:1–3.
[3] Isaiah 18:1; 30:6.

comparative importance of his demands. Egypt thus becomes the foil of Jehovah. In a manner characteristic of the religious teachers of Israel Isaiah calls attention to the contrast between material and spiritual reliance. Foreign alliances, large financial supplies, extensive military equipment are listed with crass idolatry.[1] The Egyptian cavalry, both horses and men, are only flesh, not spirit, like God. When security was to be found "in quietness and in confidence," they said,

> "No, for we will flee upon horses . . .
> We will ride upon the swift."

But all those who "trust in chariots because they are many and horsemen because they are strong," "look not unto the Holy One of Israel, neither seek Jehovah." The same forgetfulness had characterized all their preparations for war in the day that men looked "to the armor in the house of the forest." As Isaiah complains:

> "Ye gathered together the waters of the lower pool;
> And ye numbered the houses of Jerusalem,
> And ye brake down the houses to fortify the wall.
> Ye made also a reservoir between the two walls for the water of the old pool:
> But ye looked not unto him that had done this,
> Neither had ye respect unto him that purposed it long ago" (22:9–11).

[1] Isaiah 2:6–8.

Quite as well to the ancient militarists of Judah as to the more extended modern *imperium* could be applied the prayer of Kipling's "Reccessional":

> "For heathen heart that puts her trust
> In reeking tube and iron shard—
> All valiant dust that builds on dust,
> And guarding calls not thee to guard—
> For frantic boast and foolish word,
> Thy mercy on Thy people, Lord!"

Certainly forgetfulness of God is the first limitation of diplomatic or military policy. "Except Jehovah keep the city, the watchman waketh in vain."

The second limitation of politics is in the realm of social justice. As we have said, the faith in God advocated by Isaiah was to show itself in works of righteousness. Parallel with that prophet's attacks on foreign policy are his invectives against the domestic conditions of Judah. Isaiah has much more concern for public morality than for military "morale." The sins he enumerates are those familiar to Amos and Micah, as well as to many other reformers of more recent eras. Monopoly, luxury, bribery, exploitation of the poor and helpless—all these are to Isaiah expressions of the same insensate folly and neglect of Jehovah that he scored in connection with their secret diplomacy and reliance on arms.

"The harp and the lute, the tabret and the pipe, and wine, are in their feasts;
But they regard not the work of Jehovah,
Neither have they considered the operation of his hands" (5:12).

The causes of national disaster are fundamentally to be found in the social order. And here the rulers and leaders are responsible. The people can rise no higher than the priest, the prophet, and the noble. The lower classes cannot be expected to practise restraint, mercy, or piety, when they are led by iniquitous teachers. In the day of social upheaval which Isaiah threatens, when economic want and military weakness bring chaos, and the respectable classes are supplanted by upstart authorities, still "the people shall be oppressed, every one by another, and every one by his neighbor." General greed and need will lead to selfish anarchy and civil war.[1] Only by a complete conversion of rulers and counsellors can Jerusalem become a "citadel of righteousness."

In his own person Isaiah represented the alternative of the politician. The terms statesman, prophet, reformer, only imperfectly name his rôle. But it included both of the elements so woefully lacking in the misleaders of Judah—consideration for God on the one hand, and a sense of responsibility for the common people on the other. In the few autobiographic passages preserved to us

[1] Isaiah 3:1–5; 9:19–21.

we see his sense of divine direction. The simple story of his vision records the commission that came to him to speak God's word to the unreceptive people. His whole opposition to current opinions and emotions is due to the "strong hand" of Jehovah, who instructed him not to walk in the way of the people. He and his children were "for signs and for wonders in Israel from Jehovah of hosts." And while he appealed directly to the rulers, his method was not backstairs interview, but public proclamation. Not only his own captive garb proclaimed the future advance of Assyria, but his son's name and the formal tablet on which it was recorded served to advertise his message of imminent destruction. "The spoil speedeth, the prey hasteth." And the other son, Shear-Jashub, "A-Remnant-Shall-Return," though his name, like his brother's, involved in the end both Judah's weal and woe, was a "living epistle" to declare:

> A remnant shall return, even the remnant of Jacob unto the mighty God. For though thy people, Israel, be as the sand of the sea, only a remnant of them shall return: a destruction is determined, overflowing with righteousness (10:21, 22).

Isaiah's doctrine of the remnant, like his Messianic hope, rests, perhaps, on passages and interpretations too doubtful to warrant the emphasis that has often been given. But in his conscious

opposition to prevailing national standards, and in the group of disciples in whom he bound up God's testimony, he not only preached but created a new social group apart from the conventional national lines. Perhaps we are justified in considering this a third example of Isaiah's apprehension of the limitation of politics, and a new agency in the expression of national ideals—the independent minority. This new departure, if such it was, is of utmost importance for both religion and politics. As has been said:

> The formation of this little community was a new thing in the history of religion. Till then no one had dreamed of a fellowship of faith dissociated from all national forms, maintained without the exercise of ritual services, bound together by faith in the divine word alone. It was the birth of a new era in the Old Testament religion, for it was the birth of the conception of the *Church*, the first step in the emancipation of spiritual religion from the forms of political life—a step not less significant that all its consequences were not seen till centuries had passed away. The community of true religion and the political community of Israel had never before been separated, even in thought; now they stood side by side, conscious of their mutual antagonism, and never again fully to fall back into their old identity.[1]

One is tempted to dwell at greater length on the national significance of Isaiah. But further expansion is not needed here. In the work just

[1] W. Robertson Smith, *The Prophets of Israel*, pp. 274 *f.*

quoted the subject is dealt with by a master hand to the extent of nearly half the volume. Isaiah is, in a sense, typical of all the prophets; *ex uno disce omnes.* He it is who reveals most clearly the national implications of the prophets' religion. "Even to the political historian Isaiah is the most notable figure after David in the whole history of Israel."[1] For his later career we are dependent upon the stories in *Kings* which we shall discuss elsewhere, and on some untrustworthy traditions of martyrdom at an advanced age under Manasseh. His influence is, however, written on more reliable records—the future religion and life of his people. "The whole subsequent history of the Hebrew people bears the impress of Isaiah's activity. It was through him that the word of prophecy, despised and rejected when it was spoken by Amos and Hosea, became a practical power not only in the state but in the whole life of the nation."[2] And if we must select but two elements in his message, one positive and one negative, we would choose for examples, as we have done in these two chapters, the emphasis on faith as the first, and, as the second, the limitations of statecraft.

[1] W. R. Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 208. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 206.

XV

THE PLATFORM OF REFORMATION

It would be difficult to overpraise the service of the prophets of Israel, who simply by their spoken words endeavored to redeem their contemporaries to higher conceptions of both politics and religion. Yet one feels that their influence would have been only transitory unless their words had been recorded and their ideals put into more concrete form. It is our great good fortune that with them, as with the greatest of the prophets, followers, mostly unknown, guaranteed before too late the immortality of the winged words that they spoke. What the four gospels have done for perpetuating the teaching of Jesus, the four volumes of prophetic sermons did for the oracles of the prophets.

It is impossible to tell when this collecting was done. Apparently by the time of Ezekiel the prophet himself made his message sure of written form. Jeremiah twice had a summary of his teaching prepared by Baruch the scribe. And even before these prophets, perhaps in the days of Manasseh, when freedom of speech was forbidden the prophets, some unknown scribes had prepared an extensive programme based on the

standards of the preceding prophets. Whether by intention or by accident, this document came to the hands of King Josiah of Judah in the year 621. But instead of burning it in the fire as his successor did to the roll of Jeremiah, he accepted it as the basis for a national reorganization which is vividly described near the end of *II Kings*. It is this significant document that must here claim our attention.

There is much about the exact origin of the *Book of Deuteronomy* that still is uncertain. But one fact seems fixed, that it embodies and expresses the fundamental principles of Josiah's reform. Parts of it may be of later date, yet the bulk of the book has such unity of view-point and language that for a study of prophetic ideals it may be taken as a whole. And at once its meaning is clear: it is the codification, in a series of definite suggestions, of the spirit and teachings of the great prophets that preceded it. Its purpose was evidently not merely to put the prophetic ideals in writing, but to reduce them from general arraignments or counsels for specific occasions to a definite and permanent platform of reformation.

It would be a mistake to look upon *Deuteronomy* as a complete constitution. It, too, is sporadic in its scope. It is rather a series of suggestions, often based on earlier laws, but revising them so as to express the motive and the method of the prophets. Many of its detailed instructions are

negative—prohibitions against idolatry, against social injustice or lack of consideration. The negative form is an old one in legislation and was a natural sequel to the denunciations of the prophets. But at the same time it would be difficult to find a more constructive expression of the prophets' desires and a better summary of their positive contribution to the nation's ideals.

It is needless to say that *Deuteronomy* is a religious book. Its laws largely concern worship; even its secular laws are inspired by religious motives. The legislator cast his code in the form of a sermon. Of its religious and ritual meaning we shall not here speak. That is the feature about *Deuteronomy* which is most widely known or most readily learned from modern commentators. It is mentioned here only as the first and universal characteristic of all Hebrew national ideals, especially those of the prophets.

The political importance of the Deuteronomic reform is usually overlooked. It is comparable to a revolution rather than to a reformation—a revolution in which the scattered communities of Judah were formed into a centralized city-state, the king was subjected to a popularly ratified constitution, and many new provisions were enacted for the military and judicial branches of the government, for the abolition or reduction of slavery and the extension of popular government. And the same emphasis may be laid upon the

political element in the new law. It was not a new Book of Discipline but a Constitution. As Todd has said: "The primary intention of the Deuteronomic Code is political; there is, indeed, a great deal of religion in it, but it is political religion. The aim sought is not the glory of God, but the safety and welfare of the state."[1] We are justified, therefore, in seeking in the book some guidance in our study of the nation's ideals.

In the first place, it is well to note the patriotism of the author (for convenience we use the singular without excluding at all the possibility of a plurality of "Deuteronomists"). He is proud of his nation and its history, of its "good land" and its wealth, and, above all, of its God and its religion. God has made his nation "high above all nations which he hath made, in praise and in name and in honor." Even other nations recognize this superiority and say: "Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people."

This patriotism of *Deuteronomy* is not merely implicit but explicit. There is a distinct national self-consciousness, which is fostered not only by international comparison but by the retrospect of history. Although the literary form of the book places it at the beginning of national life, its spirit agrees with its real date and presupposes a sense of national continuity. The nation's present is linked with its past in grateful memory, in

[1] *Politics and Religion in Ancient Israel*, p. 218.

stern warning, and in assurance of God's continuing care. The election of Israel was not a mere isolated act of the past. Israel is still a people of God's own possession. The covenant of Sinai is a perpetual covenant, to be observed not merely by the generation that had been present, but by the generations which had not seen and yet had believed. It secures the continuance of a consistent national policy.

It is in this connection that the solidarity of the individual finds expression. Each single Israelite shares the blessings and responsibilities of the whole state. All the deeds of all the citizens must contribute to the nation's welfare. The unity of the nation and the identity of the individual with the nation are so firmly established that it is often difficult to determine whether the singular pronouns in the book refer to the personified state or to the citizen as a corporate part of the nation's life.

These two characteristics are well illustrated by the liturgy of the first-fruits in Chapter XXVI. The worship, as we shall see, is not personal but national, and not merely a present isolated act but a sacrament that binds the men now living with all generations before them. "And so," writes Welch, "when the writer says at the conclusion of his beautiful and expressive ritual, 'Thou hast avouched Jehovah this day to be thy God,' he is filled with the sense of how each

worshipper is the member of a nation that lives under the one eternal covenant. Each act of its organic life in its worship is the act of men who thus take up and serve themselves heirs to their past. Above all, each act in which a man in Israel shows himself conscious of God's mercy to him and of God's will for him is something in which he avouches himself anew the heir of the life that has sustained all his nation's history. A little deed of ritual renews the sense of their organic life and expresses afresh their historic identity and their corporate unity."[1]

Although the Deuteronomist is a firm believer in the elect and peculiar relation of Israel to God, his treatment of this subject is much like that of Amos. The election is not absolutely unique; at least God has settled other nations on their lands, much as he has given Palestine to Israel.[2] Election involves duties rather than privileges, the duties described in this law. It means service, as the great prophet of the exile had yet to point out more clearly, and service as God's witness to the world. Thus the author was able to combine the highest patriotism with humility and freedom from national egoism.

To fulfil such a destiny the essential thing for Judah was not political domination or control, but superiority of civilization. Not victory by

[1] Welch, *Religion of Israel under the Kingdom*, p. 218.
[2] Deut. 2:5, 9, 19; Amos 9:7.

arms but the nobility of its institutions is to secure the admiration of neighboring peoples. It is true the programme calls for the drastic elimination of the Canaanites, but this is not an act of triumph but an act of purification. The author does not seem to contemplate any conquests beyond or to encourage a policy of militarism. Here he follows the trail of Isaiah, with his idea of trust in God. His conception, as Welch says, is "the great conception of a nation which is filled throughout with the sense that it has its own character to preserve and its own work to fulfil, and which is more interested in these things than in asserting its place in the world. The latter concern it leaves to the unseen Providence who governs all our outward fate; the former it turns to consider with its whole heart."[1]

The author's pride is far removed from chauvinism or complacent self-satisfaction. Israel's greatness is not due to her own merit; it is due purely to God's love and election. They were the fewest in number of all peoples. A Syrian ready to perish was their father, but he became a nation, great, mighty, and populous. It was God who brought them through the desert and gave them their land. It was he who defeated their foes before them. Both military and moral conceit is forbidden them: "Beware lest . . . thou say in thy heart, my power and the might of

[1] Welch, *Religion of Israel under the Kingdom*, p. 223.

my hand hath gotten me this wealth." "Speak not thou in thy heart. . . . For my righteousness Jehovah hath brought me in to possess this land." [1] It is not for their own righteousness or for the uprightness of their heart that they possess the land. Nor is their tenure secure. The fate they have inflicted on the Canaanites will be their own if they share their wickedness. Their prosperity is contingent on obedience to this law. That simple rule became the standard of all later history.

But beside the materialistic motive of reward and punishment associated with *Deuteronomy*, more spiritual motives are appealed to in the book. The famous twofold summary of love to God and love to neighbor finds repeated expression in its laws. The whole code is an eloquent appeal for a grateful response to the love of God. History is considered here, as by Hosea, the moving story of God's patient dealing with a forgetful and unappreciative nation. The appeal to memory—"lest ye forget"—is more often used to recall God's goodness and mercy than to recall his severity and justice. The election and the prosperity of Israel are marks of Jehovah's love. Therefore love should flow back to him in return —a love that springs from the whole being.

Man's love for men is closely associated with God's love for them. It is his divine example

[1] Deut. 8:17; 9:4.

that inspires the new social relations. "He doth execute justice for the fatherless and widow, and loveth the sojourner in giving him food and raiment. Love ye, therefore, the sojourner." And here at once a second common argument is added: "For ye were sojourners in the land of Egypt." The past of Israel is a memory that condemns any injustice from superior social standing. Their own exaltation up from slavery made it easy for them to picture the situation of the oppressed and to sympathize with the suffering.

And here again we find ourselves on the same social level as the prophets. It has been sometimes argued that this programme and the revolution that followed it emanated from the upper classes of the state—either the priests or the nobles. This it is difficult to disprove, and certainly, if the account in *Kings* is to be trusted, its ultimate ratification by the king and his officers was secured, though the formal adoption was an act of the whole people gathered in democratic assembly. At any rate the characteristic prophetic concern for the oppressed and unrepresented classes of society betokens at least the influence of the prophets. Many of the specific rulings aim to safeguard and extend the privileges of these helpless classes. The workers are to be provided with holidays, the hungry are to be guaranteed food, men with capital are to lend freely and not to demand interest, nor to take

as pledge things essential to their debtors for food and clothing; wages are to be paid promptly.[1] The perversion of the law courts and the use of false weights—sins so frequently mentioned by the prophets—are here expressly forbidden. And a regular cycle is provided for the remission of debts, the release of slaves, and reversion of land to its original owner. In all these laws the spirit of human brotherhood and co-operation finds full and practical expression.

In spite of its proletarian sympathies and democratic spirit the Deuteronomic revolution appears to have involved few political changes. The king remains, but he is a constitutional monarch only. Like all citizens, he is subject to the law: "It shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the days of his life . . . that his heart be not lifted up above his brethren, and that he turn not aside from the commandment, to the right hand, or to the left."[2] He is to avoid the constant dangers of the Hebrew monarchs,—reliance on Egyptian cavalry, the distraction of the harem, and the accumulation of large treasures of silver and gold. Of course the king, himself, must be a full-blooded Hebrew. There is also the prophet, the authoritative native adviser of the nation's policy, who, like Moses, shall serve as Jehovah's spokesman to the people at each successive time of crisis. As Jehovah had told Moses:

[1] Deut. 24:6–25:4. [2] Deut. 17:14–20.

I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee; and I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him (Deut. 18:18, 19).

This conception of an unofficial but influential series of prophets was also typical of the prophetic ideal, as we shall see in the next chapter.

Many of the individual laws are merely repetitions of older codes. Sometimes the only change is in the motive involved or at least the elaboration of the motive, as in the old Sabbath law, whose purpose in *Deuteronomy* is represented as primarily a provision for the laboring class. Even domestic animals are included in this humanitarian purpose—as, again, in the law against muzzling "the ox when he treadeth out the grain." As far as we can observe, the most radical changes affected chiefly the cultus—the centralization of the worship in Jerusalem, with the consequent provisions needed for the support of disestablished priests, etc. Indirectly, however, this change affected national life. It was really a final act of religious establishment—the nationalization of religion. This momentous act, no doubt, was contrary to the growing individualism in religion which Jeremiah stood for, and even to that independence of political thought and action

which, at least in the prophets, was beginning to emerge, but it prepared the way for the transformation of the state into a church, so that when the national structure was destroyed a few years later, Judaism as a distinctive culture survived. In this way the prophets' insistence upon the superiority of national ideals to national security and autonomy was fully vindicated.

But probably the greatest service of *Deuteronomy* was not in any or all of its provisions, but simply in its written character. As we have said, it contains little that was new, either in spirit or in letter. But by joining the spirit of the prophets with the letter of the law, by reducing principles to practical application, by combining in a single clear and effective programme, not Utopian schemes but some tentative suggestions that were feasible enough to be accepted at least as a basis for the actual revision of Hebrew institutions, it became, when once ratified, a work of surpassing influence upon all later generations. Its concreteness was its merit (as well as its weakness). As the author says: "It is not too hard for thee, neither is it far off. It is not in heaven, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, and make us to hear it, that we may do it? . . . But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it."[1] About it clus-

[1] Deut. 30:12–14.

tered finally the whole Bible—first the Old Testament and then the New, as the written and permanent programme of a new society. *Deuteronomy* made Judaism the religion of a book, and this nucleus, with its later associates, became the constitution of the church—both Jewish and Christian. It is possible that much of its original intention failed of immediate or universal fulfilment. There was much of it that required far more than mere outward conformity, for example, the injunctions to love and the prohibition against coveting. But as an essay toward a better definition of national motives and social standards it should be classed with the most influential charters of history.

XVI

PROPHETIC IDEALS IN ACTION

BESIDES the sermons of the prophets and their codifications of the laws there was a third method by which these propagandists influenced their contemporaries and by which their ideals are known to us. This is the writing of history from the prophetic view-point, a method which is illustrated, among others, by the *Books of Kings.* Not only the editorial outline of this work shows the plain marks of prophetic authorship—the same school of thought that produced *Deuteronomy:* even the earlier and more naïve material which is inserted into this outline consists of stories with a purpose. They are not all of the same date and authorship. There are several cycles. Yet practically all of them have in common the prophetic outlook and the emphasis upon the prophetic function. The stories of Elisha, for example, are probably a single group. They are written in a racy style, with deep veneration for the hero, but with more emphasis upon his wonder-working power than upon his political relations. The other stories are not all so homogeneous as this group about Elisha. In few of them the miraculous element is so prominent,

and they give the prophets a greater political rôle.[1] The authors wished to prove by example the service of prophecy to the people, to show their own standards in action, and to encourage their associates and disciples in fidelity to the prophetic ideals. They represented their own order as the real foundation of the nation. "Beginning with Moses and all the prophets," they expounded their ideal of a theocracy by picturing the actual government of the past in this form. The greatness of the nation, according to their records, was due to the leadership of a series of prophets: "By a prophet Jehovah brought Israel up out of Egypt, and by a prophet was he preserved."[2] As Plato, the philosopher, gave the chief authority in his ideal commonwealth to philosophers, so the prophetic historians, in their idealized history, magnified the contributions of their predecessor prophets.

It would be a long but interesting task to study the prophetic ideals as revealed in the biographies of the *Books of Kings*—to consider in detail the stories of the several prophets, not only of the more familiar figures, but also of Nathan, Ahijah, Shemaiah, Jehu ben Hanani, Micaiah ben Imlah, Jonah, Huldah, and even of many an unnamed "man of God." In all these stories the political

[1] For a vivid description of the style and purpose of these stories see J. C. Todd, *Politics and Religion in Ancient Israel*, pp. 139 *ff.*

[2] Hosea 12:13.

ideals of the prophets appear in action, and particularly there emerges that more intimate problem of the individual prophet's duty to the state. They are a noble series of figures, patriotic and faithful, but yet uncompromising in the allegiance to God and to the higher ideals, which they held out to their people. They are the portraits of prophets by prophets and thus contain in double measure the essence of the prophetic ideal. Here the spirit of the prophets is subject to the prophets and not to the perversions of unsympathetic historians. And the portraits are individual and varied and not all of the same mould. Many of them were prophets of warning, harbingers of disaster—like those unnamed spokesmen of Jehovah who declared:

> Behold, I bring such evil upon Jerusalem and Judah, that whosoever heareth of it, both his ears shall tingle. And I will stretch over Jerusalem the line of Samaria, and the plummet of the house of Ahab; and I will wipe Jerusalem as a man wipeth a dish, wiping it and turning it upside down (II Kings 21:12, 13).

Others were forecasters and instigators of national success. So we are casually told, when Jeroboam II "restored the border of Israel from the entrance of Hamath unto the sea of the Arabah," that this maximum extension of power was "according to the word of Jehovah, the God of Israel, which he spake by his servant Jonah

the son of Amittai, the prophet, who was of Gath-Hepher." It will be necessary to limit ourselves to one example of each of these types.

Elijah of Gilead was a prophet of the sterner mould. There is no reason to doubt his existence or the essential elements of his portrait, but some of the narratives suggest an origin in the days of Manasseh of Judah, when the conflict between Baal and Jehovah was acute, and the prophets of the latter were under the ban of royal displeasure.[1] As pictured by his biographers, Elijah is the illustration of the persecuted but faithful prophet. Courage and thoroughness are the marks of his character. Coming from the desert, clad in the rough garb of the nomad, he represents the simplicity of conservative religion against the background of court luxury. His relations with the king suggest that fearless relation of the later nomads to the court of the caliphs of Damascus or Bagdad. "Into the council of the mighty caliph in his civilized and luxurious capital would stride a rough captain, a wild dervish or preacher, a free son of the desert, asserting a democratic equality strangely in contrast with the apparent autocracy, a simplicity in apparently irreconcilable conflict with the luxury of city and court. To the face of the monarch such a man would utter his word with unhesitating directness,

[1] So Todd, *op. cit.*, pp. 195 *ff.* Many scholars date them earlier.

quite the opposite of the obedience of the official or the flattery of the courtier. . . . So Israel preserved in the midst of increasing luxury and civilization a keen consciousness of its desert origin, its native and democratic simplicity. The heart of the people at large responded to the man who asserted that simplicity and plainness in the face of the king and court."[1]

Elijah's democratic standpoint is best shown in the incident of Naboth. The inalienable rights of private property were assailed by the ambition of the king. In his autocratic methods he was ably inspired and assisted by his foreign wife. Kingship, as Jezebel conceived it, had no limitation of popular rights, or at least it was able to secure by foul means what fair means could not accomplish. She could both kill and take possession. Judicial murder under cover of law, and royal appropriation of the estate of a factitious criminal, were her simple and familiar methods. Here was a concrete instance of those crimes against which Amos and the other prophets inveighed—panting after the dust of the earth on the head of the poor, joining field to field, turning justice to wormwood, turning aside the needy in the gate from their right. Against this high-handed autocracy Elijah raised his voice. He was not deceived by legal subterfuges or cowed by servile fear. It was a royal crime comparable

[1] Peters, *Religion of the Hebrews*, p. 176.

to David's sin, and where such abuse exists protestants like Nathan and Elijah must in due time appear. If these are not heeded national disaster is sure to come. Social injustice is the real cause of proletarian uprising. And the bloody revolt of Jehu was the inevitable punishment upon Jezebel and the house of Ahab for their violation of democratic rights.

At first sight the other conflict between king and prophet seems purely religious—a choice of religious cults, in which Elijah is the champion of the old-time religion against an imported cult. To academic religionists it may seem so, but other issues lay behind it. Foreign gods came from a foreign alliance. They meant foreign political and social institutions—a foreign culture with immoral and undemocratic tendencies. The contest in Israel between Jehovah and the Phœnician Baal was more than a mere conflict of religions. Like the contest of Jehovah and the Canaanite Baals which it followed and for which it gave the historians a new interest and color, it was essentially a conflict of civilizations. Elijah is the defender of a pure nationalism, the uncompromising opponent of foreign customs and worships. The court and its official prophets desired a syncretism of worships and cultures. The people were divided and uncertain—"limping," as Elijah says, between two opinions. The scene at Mt. Carmel is the dramatic presentation

of the choice and the striking vindication of the religion of Jehovah. To the idealist there is no blurring of the issue; no compromise is possible. The alternatives are clear and irreconcilable, and the signal discomfiture of the Baal worshippers means the complete triumph of the prophet's God.

It is easy to understand the interest of prophetic historians in these elements in Elijah's career. But still more consoling to them than this vindication of the prophets must have been the story of Elijah's flight and despondency. From the trying circumstances of his own day the writer has given us a bit of psychological study that for autobiographic interest must rank with the noble confessions of Jeremiah. The circumstances are similar. The prophet is discouraged and hunted to death. His cause seems lost, his life not worth living. And so he lies down to die alone in the wilderness. In the mount of God he has an experience of Jehovah like that which came to Isaiah in the temple. Conscious of the crisis in the nation's life, the universal wickedness and unfaithfulness of his fellow countrymen, conscious also of his own failure to rise above the level by his brave but unavailing efforts, overwhelmed with a sense of loneliness which is the more acute because of his exceeding zeal—in such a mood he is ripe for the divine assurance. God speaks to him in the secret of his heart—by the still small voice—and

sends him forth with courage to a task whose full success cannot be known in the gloom of the present, but only by its indirect but momentous results upon future generations. To the despondent prophet comes the ringing challenge, "What doest thou here, Elijah?" And with new confidence he returns to his work, conscious of God's presence and help, and assured, as Jeremiah says:

Since God is with me, I triumph like a hero.[1]

Our other illustration is an incident in the history of Judah, the famous escape of Jerusalem from Sennacherib. The narrative of *Kings*, though it raises many historical and literary problems, is a telling example of prophetic history.[2] The crisis is one of foreign rather than domestic affairs, but the hero, as in the incident from Ahab's reign, is not the weakling king but a prophet—and no phantom figure, either, but a genuine historical character, Isaiah of Jerusalem. The traits of his message, familiar to us from his sermons, here are put in dramatic setting. Once

[1] Jer. 20:11, Buttenwieser.

[2] II Kings 18:17–19:37, copied thence with other biographical stories of Isaiah in the appendix of I Isaiah. The problems, aside from the question of historicity, are principally (a) whether this incident should be dated at the invasion of Sennacherib in 701 B. C. or on a later campaign about 690, and (b) whether there were two ultimatums or two versions interwoven in the present text. See commentaries for a discussion of these points.

more we have a duel—on the one side Rabshakeh, the diplomat of the proud Assyrian empire, on the other Eliakim, Shebnah, and Joah, the representatives of the helpless Judah. It is a duel not of armies nor of men, but of gods and national ideals. How characteristic of the philosophy of force is the argument of the Assyrian! This clever diplomat knows well the military weakness and internal dissensions in his enemy's position. He understands the pro-Egyptian fallacy of one party and the passive trust-in-God policy which Isaiah opposes to it. He knows even the religious controversies that culminated in Hezekiah's reform, and the advanced international theology of the prophets with its non-partisan God, and he makes capital of all this information. His speech is a masterpiece:

Thus saith the great king, the king of Assyria,

What confidence is this wherein thou trustest? Thou sayest (but they are but vain words), There is counsel and strength for the war. Now on whom dost thou trust, that thou hast rebelled against me? Now, behold, thou trustest upon the staff of this bruised reed, even upon Egypt; whereon if a man lean, it will go into his hand, and pierce it: so is Pharaoh king of Egypt unto all that trust on him.

But if ye say unto me, We trust in Jehovah our God; is not that he, whose high places and whose altars Hezekiah hath taken away, and hath said to Judah and to Jerusalem, Ye shall worship before this altar in Jerusalem?

Now therefore, I pray thee, give pledges to my master the king of Assyria, and I will give thee two thousand horses, if thou be able on thy part to set riders upon them. How then canst thou turn away the face of one captain of the least of my master's servants, and put thy trust on Egypt for chariots and for horsemen?

Am I now come up without Jehovah against this place to destroy it? Jehovah said unto me, Go up against this land and destroy it (II Kings 18:19–25).

Though his words are addressed to the king, they are meant for general consumption. But it was easy for Hebrew nobles to see that such persuasive arguments should not be allowed to reach the ears of the people uncensored. The people who overheard could not be trusted, with all their dissensions and ignorance, to share the confidence of the royal diplomats. Such hostile propaganda was calculated to breed sheer defeatism. Secrecy of negotiation was desirable to preserve the Hebrew morale. Therefore, said Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, and Shebnah and Joah unto Rabshakeh:

Speak, I pray thee, to thy servants in the Syrian language; for we understand it; and speak not with us in the Jews' language, in the ears of the people that are on the wall.

But Rabshakeh knows well the value of open negotiations in undermining the enemy's unity of counsel. He would appeal to the people over

the heads of their representatives, he would estrange them from their government and would offer them favorable terms for disloyalty. He would demand unconditional surrender, not because it is deserved, but because he thinks he can get it. He has an army at his back to enforce his demands, an army that none of the gods of other nations has been able to resist, not even Jehovah himself in the fateful siege of Samaria. For Rabshakeh's diplomatic offensive everything is to be gained by publicity, and so he "cried with a loud voice in the Jews' language" to the very populace that suffered the most from siege. "But the people held their peace, and answered not a word; for the king's commandment was, saying, Answer him not."

In these dire straits the anxious king and court consult the prophet Isaiah. Against this background of general alarm over a calamity that threatened all that they held dear—including the very integrity of the state—Isaiah's wonted "quietness and confidence" are most impressive. His reply to Hezekiah is prompt, brief, and emphatic:

> Thus saith Jehovah, Be not afraid of the words that thou hast heard, wherewith the servants of the king of Assyria have blasphemed me. Behold, I will put a spirit in him, and he shall hear tidings, and shall return to his own land; and I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land.

In an alternative version (unless it be a later incident) the complete inviolability of the city is promised, and in fulfilment "the angel of Jehovah went forth, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians a hundred four-score and five thousand: and when men arose early in the morning, behold, these were all dead bodies." So once more the prophet is vindicated. In time of crisis he becomes the real guide of his people, the true statesman, the national hero. And the victory that overcomes the world is the prophet's faith.

By such stories as these the devout admirers of prophecy drove home powerfully its lessons for the nation, and actually created a better people from the history of its past. Such vindications of the prophets gave authority to their teaching on national righteousness and self-reliance, until these virtues became appropriated as the realized achievement of Judaism. And in these stories many men in successive generations have found the lessons of courage, of faith, and of individual faithfulness to untarnished ideals, which have made of them true patriots and worthy successors to the mantle of Elijah and Isaiah.

XVII

AN UNPOPULAR PATRIOT

THE *Book of Jeremiah*, in spite of its length and some confusion in order, presents a remarkably clear picture of a most dramatic figure. The simplicity of his message, the depth of his reflective lyrics, and the vividness of his experiences combine to make living and modern this ancient patriot of Judah. Jeremiah's lot was cast at the climax of his nation's woes. He saw his people pass from the happy, hopeful days of Josiah to the utter desolation of repeated disasters. Of Josiah's successors only two, Jehoiakim and Zedekiah, ruled more than two or three months, and each of these brought on himself and his people the scourge of punitive conquest and exile.

In many respects the situation of Jeremiah resembles that of Isaiah just a century before him. Instead of Assyria, Babylonia now held sway over all southwestern Asia. But in Judah a restless party, as in the days of Hezekiah, still chafed under foreign dominion. The prophet in each case deplored this political unrest and advised submission to the inevitable, rather than futile revolt and entangling alliances. But Jeremiah maintained this stand further than Isaiah. For

even when war was actually on and the besieging army surrounded the starving city, Jeremiah did not wait for miracles to happen, or foster a desperate hope, but coolly advised the king and people to surrender and make the best terms they could with the enemy rather than await the more disastrous consequences of continued resistance. He explained clearly to the people the alternatives:

> Behold, I set before you the way of life and the way of death. He that abideth in this city shall die by the sword, and by the famine, and by the pestilence; but he that goeth out, and passeth over to the Chaldeans that besiege you, he shall live (21:8).

To men obsessed with a blind absorption in a war to the bitter end such open advocacy of desertion seemed treasonable and thoroughly disastrous. We are not surprised to read that the princes said unto the king:

> Let this man, we pray thee, be put to death; forasmuch as he weakeneth the hands of the men of war that remain in this city, and the hands of the people, in speaking such words unto them; for this man seeketh not the welfare of this people, but the hurt (38:4).

One can follow through many chapters the story of Jeremiah's persistent propaganda and its inevitable consequences to himself. With painful iteration and with constant variety of resource by

speech and by writing he presented his unwelcome message. In many cases the religious authorities were his chief opponents. When Hananiah, the prophet, predicted the speedy breaking of the Babylonian yoke, Jeremiah dramatically answered the false hopes of his countryman in his own figures; the yoke of Babylonia is a yoke of iron and not of wood. When Jeremiah predicted the desolation of the Jerusalem temple the chief of police put him in the stocks. From their exile in distant Babylon the religious leaders and prophets complained of his propaganda of non-resistance and recommended that the temple officers give him condign punishment.

Even at his own home, the priestly town of Anathoth, his life was in danger and he found, like many another prophet, that a man's foes are they of his own household. How his life hung in the balance when again he predicted the downfall of the temple is told in inimitable narrative. The accusers, the defendant, and the judges each speak in turn.

Then spake the priests and the prophets unto the princes and to all the people, saying, This man is worthy of death; for he hath prophesied against this city, as ye have heard with your ears.

Then spake Jeremiah unto all the princes and to all the people, saying, Jehovah sent me to prophesy against this house and against this city all the words that ye have heard. Now therefore amend your ways

and your doings, and obey the voice of Jehovah your God; and Jehovah will repent him of the evil that he hath pronounced against you. But as for me, behold, I am in your hand: do with me as is good and right in your eyes. Only know ye for certain that, if ye put me to death, ye will bring innocent blood upon yourselves, and upon this city, and upon the inhabitants thereof; for of a truth Jehovah hath sent me unto you to speak all these words in your ears.

Then said the princes and all the people unto the priests and to the prophets: This man is not worthy of death; for he hath spoken to us in the name of Jehovah our God (26:11–16).

Only through the influence of Ahikam and the princes, and by the elders' happy recollection of the precedent of Micah, more than a hundred years before, was Jeremiah spared. But such good fortune does not always befall prophets of Jeremiah's mould. As an ominous parallel is told the fate of Uriah, a contemporary prophet who for similar "seditious" utterances was extradited from Egypt and executed by Jehoiakim. Indeed, the same king was prevented from inflicting the same fate on Jeremiah and his scribe only because, as the historian puts it, "Jehovah hid them."

The circumstances of this escape were these: Prevented, perhaps by special interdiction, from speaking in the temple, Jeremiah devised a new method of publicity. He dictated to Baruch, his scribe, the substance of his consistent prophetic

message for many years past, and then had Baruch read the prophecies aloud on a fast-day to the multitudes gathered in the temple. The princes, when informed of this proceeding, first examined the writing themselves and then reported the matter to the king. So the king had the roll brought and read in his presence, but instead of repenting at the threatened destruction of his city, he destroyed the book, cutting off and burning it piece by piece as it was read, and he tried to complete the suppression of its unpopular message by destroying its authors.

That Zedekiah treated Jeremiah more leniently than his predecessor appears to be due rather to the superstitiousness of the king than to any cowardice of the prophet, for now "the princes were wroth with Jeremiah and smote him and put him in prison in the house of Jonathan the scribe," whence he was later transferred to the court of the guard. Once Zedekiah weakly surrendered him to the will of the princes who cast him into a dungeon of mire, only to be rescued by the kindly intercession of an Ethiopian eunuch. Finally Zedekiah promised to save Jeremiah from those who sought his life, and "Jeremiah abode in the court of the guard until the day that Jerusalem was taken."

If the outer experiences of Jeremiah are interesting, still more so are the inner conflicts of his mind. Shy and sensitive in his personal relations,

deeply patriotic and loyal to his country, fundamentally optimistic in his faith, it was laid upon him to be an object of universal scorn, abuse, and indignation and the herald of national disaster. The form of Jeremiah's message was political rather than religious. He was the spokesman of a diminishing and persecuted minority party, who opposed the current international policy of his government, and although the method of his address—the monotonous prediction of doom—is hardly the type of political argument that would be effective to-day, we must recall that to his contemporaries it was more cogent. His message was in accordance with the prevailing theory of his day, that the moral test of any programme is its practical success or failure, and that the clearest proof of God's disapproval of a course is misfortune, predicted or realized as its result. The religious view-point was the basis of his political advice. It was in this that he really differed from the prophets who opposed him. They overlooked the social crimes, the hypocrisy of the formal worship, and based their optimism on a superficial confidence in Jehovah's partisan favor for their nation, whether it was right or whether it was wrong. It was not even long-headed political sagacity that guided Jeremiah. As Davidson says:

> His assurance and announcement that Jerusalem should fall before the Chaldeans was not founded on

his belief that so small a power as Judah could not resist the Babylonian empire. He had no such idea as that. The Babylonian empire was in Jehovah's hands, as all things else were. Jeremiah's assurance was the outcome of his profound conviction of the people's sinfulness, for which Jehovah must bring the state to an end. The optimism of the false prophets was based on their conception of Jehovah's power; the pessimism of the true prophets on their conception of his ethical being.[1]

Indeed, the very pessimism of Jeremiah is one of the grounds of his assurance. He knows too well the subtle pressure of public opinion that tempts the statesman or prophet to accept the popular or optimistic policy. But he feels his solidarity with the prophets before him, who, though time may have vindicated them, seemed to their contemporaries traitors and pessimists. Indeed, the presumption of truth is on the side of such as these. It is to Jeremiah almost the proof of a true prophet that he is a prophet of evil.

And thereby Jeremiah is freed from the charge of wilful pessimism that so easily attaches to men of his position. He did not desire the evil that he predicted and he did not enjoy predicting it. He was not a professional objector nor the temperamental champion of the unpopular side. His love for his country is sincere and heartfelt, though he seemed to others a pro-Chaldean traitor. Sincere, too, was his personal suffering

[1] *Old Testament Prophecy*, p. 305.

at his loneliness and isolation. The occasional outbursts of vengeful desire upon those who persecuted him are easily understood, and though they place him below the highest Christian ideals, they do not invalidate the sincerity and force of his anguish of soul. He knows himself "a man of strife and a man of contention to the whole earth." Yet he cannot do otherwise, he cannot withhold a single word.[1]

Upon Jeremiah there fell that unique sorrow—the sorrow of an unpopular patriot. Sharing all the suffering of his fellow citizens in the ravages of war and siege, even to the extent of voluntary self-denial, he must bear besides the intolerable burden of an outcast, misunderstood and unheeded, maltreated and abused, and, above all, falsely accused of disloyalty and treason. No wonder that he cursed the day that he was born and prayed for vindication. Yet out of the crucible of suffering he developed a strength of character, a certainty of God, and even a new discovery of religion that have made his name immortal.

This discovery was nothing less than a new national ideal. For many generations the men of Israel had thought of religion in ethnic terms: the unit was the state. Jeremiah inherited this ancient conception. He symbolically identified himself with the sufferings of his nation. His whole being was filled with such a passion for cor-

[1] Jer. 20:7–10.

porate righteousness as we to-day, with our training in individualism, have only lately begun to appreciate with the awakened social conscience of our time and the religious vindication of national policies required by a world war. But to a Hebrew prophet the collective outlook was natural, the novelty of Jeremiah's thought—a novelty due, perhaps, to his own unique isolation within his state—was the discovery of the individual in religion.

The climax of the *Book of Jeremiah* and perhaps the climax of all Hebrew religion is the promise of the new covenant. Among the doleful warnings of the prophet—jeremiads, as we call them—occur a few such hopeful strains. It is a new covenant to replace the covenant at Sinai, but expressed in terms of personal knowledge of God and inward authority:

> I will put my law in their inward parts, and in their heart will I write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know Jehovah; for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest (31:33, 34).

Thus the individualism of Jeremiah is at once the successor and the supplement of the old nationalism. The outlook is still national, but out of the burning pangs of his solitary sorrow it

gained a depth and meaning that were unknown before. As Peake has said:

> The religion remains the religion of Israel, a national religion. God and Israel are still the contracting parties to the New Covenant as to the Old. But the individualism which characterized the New made the religion national in a sense unattainable under the Old. For when the religion rested on external guarantees and was expressed in external institutions, while its laws were imposed by an external authority, when, moreover, the people was contemplated as a unit, without reference to the individuals of whom it was composed, then it was national, but in a general and superficial sense. Only when every individual in the mass is renewed in heart and his will brought into harmony with the Divine will, can the nation itself be truly called religious. Through its individualism the religion first became national in the full sense of the term.[1]

Amid the conflicting voices of international and party strife Jeremiah, the prophet of Anathoth, still challenges us by his unwavering fidelity to the voice of conscience. He calls us to advocate without compromise the highest ideals for our nation, even in the face of contumely and misunderstanding. He recalls us from the impersonal concepts of party and race and nation to our own soul and the souls of our neighbors, and, above all, he reminds us that only through the direct

[1] *Century Bible*, "Jeremiah," vol. I, pp. 45 *ff.*

and spontaneous response of individuals to the righteousness which exalteth a nation can the kingdoms of the world become the Kingdom of God.

XVIII

NATIONAL IDEALS IN DISASTER

EXCEPT victory, hopeless disaster is the severest test that can befall a nation's ideals, and this was the test that Judah faced in the opening decades of the sixth century. After two hundred years of more or less nominal vassalage to Assyria and Babylon, the political framework of Judaism was at last destroyed. The flower of the nation was carried into captivity. The city and its walls were levelled to the ground. The native peasantry that remained were at best the offscourings of the people. They lived in a state of disorganization and terror. Many of them, haunted by fear and memories of the siege, fled into the land of Egypt, hoping there to "see no war, nor hear the sound of the trumpet, nor have hunger of bread." The final remnant lived in want, amid the chaos of constant petty intrigues and subject to the terrorism of hostile neighbors, who satisfied their long-standing animosities by preying upon them in their weakness.

The incurable grief of these miserable survivors is vividly portrayed in the *Book of Lamentations*. The horrors of famine and death are not merely past but present, sorrow and tears are still their

portion, the joy of their heart is ceased, their dance is turned into mourning. Yet vivid as are these pictures of contemporary want, and spontaneous as are the outbursts of grief, they are already reduced to permanent liturgy. Four out of five of the elegiac poems of *Lamentations* are cast in the form of alphabetic acrostics, by which device they have been remembered and recited by Jews unto this day. Thus with the fall of Jerusalem a permanent note of sadness entered the literature, the religion, and the national life of the Hebrews:

"O wall of the daughter of Zion,
Let tears run down like a river day and night;
Give thyself no respite; let not the apple of thine eye cease;
Arise, cry out in the night, at the beginning of the watches;
Pour out thy heart like water before the face of the Lord:
Lift up thy hands toward him for the life of thy young children,
That faint for hunger at the head of every street."

"Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by?
Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow." [1]

Another natural reaction from disaster was the desire for revenge. Among all the sorrows of defeat and want none cut the heart to the quick

[1] Lam. 2:18, 19; 1:12.

like the triumph of old foes. The Hebrews were fully conscious of this malicious joy.[1] There was Ammon that cried, "Aha," against Jehovah's "sanctuary, when it was profaned; and against the land of Israel, when it was made desolate; and against the house of Judah, when they went into captivity."[2] There was Edom, Israel's brother, who "stood aloof in the day that strangers carried away his substance" and said of Jerusalem, "Rase it, rase it, even to the foundation thereof."[3] There was Tyre, intent only on commerce, whose first thought about Israel's disaster was, "I shall be replenished, now that she is laid waste."[4] And finally there was Babylon itself—the arch-enemy, and ruthless agent of destruction—proud, boastful, "wanton as a heifer that treadeth out the grain," blasphemous against Jehovah, yet hypocritically justifying its own excesses against the Hebrews by saying, "We are not guilty, because they have sinned against Jehovah."[5]

Both in anticipation and in retrospect the retribution of Babylon filled the Hebrews with vengeful joy. The Psalmist, weeping when he remembered Zion, cries:

"O daughter of Babylon, that art to be destroyed,
Happy shall he be, that rewardeth thee
As thou hast served us.

[1] Lam. 1:21; 2:16.
[2] Obad. 11; Psalms 137:7.
[3] Ezek. 25:3.
[4] Ezek. 26:2.
[5] Jer. 50:7, 11.

Happy shall he be, that taketh and dasheth thy
little ones
Against the rock." [1]

So, also, the prophet, in an ode of triumph, pictures the humiliation of the relentless empire—the welcome to Sheol of the king who thought to make himself like the Most High, and the desolation of the city with a destruction like that of Sodom and Gomorrah.[2] "Fallen, fallen is Babylon," is the exultant cry that rises from hearts once full of anguish and despair, and it has echoed as a cry of "Revanche!" through the ages, until it was caught up in the negro melody of emancipated slaves.[3]

This spirit of revenge is one of the least attractive elements in prophecy and psalm, nor is it much disguised by the excuse of retaliation and even of justice which it claims. "What is sheer hate," says Thackeray, "seems to the individual entertaining the sentiment so like indignant virtue, that he often indulges in the propensity to the full, nay, lauds himself for the exercise of it." So with Israel. No doubt Babylon had played the part of a ruthless conqueror, and retribution seemed a religious necessity, for at least where their enemies were concerned the Hebrews believed that "Jehovah is a God of recompenses, he will surely requite."

[1] Psalms 137:8, 9. [2] Isaiah 13, 14, 21, 47; Jer. 50, 51.
[3] Isaiah 21:9; Revelation 14:8.

It was inevitable that the loss of national life should decrease the national interests of many Israelites and should increase the individualism of their thought and ambitions. It would be impossible to follow all the lines along which the exile stimulated this new emphasis. In Babylon and Egypt especially the new surroundings and the loss of all political opportunity forced the refugees to attend to their immediate personal necessities. Many of them became absorbed in business, or in the commercial life of these wealthy and ancient civilizations. In this respect alone the exile produced a most significant change on the outlook of the Hebrews. For a second time their principal occupation had changed: as the agriculture of Canaan had replaced the pastoral life of the desert, farming was in turn supplanted by the life of trade—which to-day seems instinctive to the Hebrews. Certainly one of the reactions from national disaster is despair of ideals, and selfishness and materialism flourished in the disintegration of the Jewish nation.

To a certain extent religion was the substitute for politics. As is often said, the exile converted a nation into a church. From being both church and state combined, Judaism changed, as the Roman Catholic Church changed in the Middle Ages, to a largely non-political association. The social and political energies of the people found their expression in a religious organization. The

synagogues took the place of the older judicial assemblies. The high priest was the exilic substitute for the king. Debate and religious controversies were the equivalents for war. As the loss of Greek independence stimulated the religious and philosophical club life in Hellenistic Athens, so within Judaism there grew up new local interests and parties like the Pharisees, that were often religious and philosophical rather than political. A greater other-worldliness resulted. Some men deliberately held themselves aloof from politics. They felt no hope or desire for a revived national life, and they watched the rise and fall of empires with an unconcern unparalleled in the pre-exilic prophets. Their concern was with religion alone, and if they desired a change of government, they were willing to wait for the miraculous intervention of God.

It is a common statement that through all antiquity the primary unit was the nation. Though we must admit, with Professor Knudson,[1] the presence of individualism in pre-exilic Israel, we cannot deny the national view-point of the bulk of pre-exilic literature. The fall of Jerusalem is a landmark from which to trace the growth of Hebrew individualism. Heretofore the submerging of the individual in the body politic had been unconscious rather than reasoned. Now it was challenged, explained, or denied. The new

[1] *The Religious Teaching of the Old Testament*, pp. 331 *ff.*

religion already emerging in Ezekiel and Jeremiah is personal. Each man is in direct relation to God. His guilt is his own—apart from the sins of his ancestors or fellow countrymen. Ezekiel denied the proverbial expression of hereditary guilt—"the fathers have eaten sour grapes and the children's teeth are set on edge." Even the fate and hope of the individual were divorced from those of the state. And it may be that from the darkest hours of national despair was born the hope not only for a restored nation but for the survival of the individual life even beyond the gates of death.

There were many Hebrews whose thought concerning the disaster of their nation was not satisfied by these most obvious reactions. Such an event demanded some deeper causal explanation. How could the God of Israel—a just God—permit such a calamity? A very simple explanation was forthcoming. According to the popular philosophy all evil is the punishment for sin, and therefore disaster is the obvious evidence and proof of national guilt. Men who had not been sensible of their guilt before, now accepted this explanation and began to recall and test their past. The prophets had complained of the people's sin all along, and, sharing the popular philosophy, had predicted just such punishment. For them the disaster was no puzzle, it was only the confirmation of their words. And so the prophets

secured greater respect than ever before. Men built the sepulchres of those whom their fathers had killed. The prophets' sermons were recalled and carefully preserved. Their precepts, as embodied in the law of *Deuteronomy*, became the sacred bond of national life, while their philosophy of history was adopted as the framework for the editing of the records of the past. With quickened hindsight it was seen that in the perspective of time the fall of the state was not an isolated or unprepared for calamity. It was the result of repeated and cumulative transgressions, throughout the whole history of the Hebrew monarchy. Even in the oldest period of their national life the same law of moral cause and effect was discovered and the primitive stories of the Judges fell into the simple framework:

> And the children of Israel again did that which was evil in the sight of Jehovah; and Jehovah delivered them into the hand of ——— x years.

Thus there came to the Hebrew people with the exile a benumbing and oppressive sense of guilt. Their punishment was well deserved, and although in time they came to hope that repentance would win pardon, or that a double punishment would be followed by release, the shadow of guilt fell forever across the lights of hope and promise. As Knudson says:

The national humiliation and suffering that followed from the fall of Jerusalem brought home to the people a consciousness of sin such as they had not had before. The book of Lamentations illustrates this, and so does the whole post-exilic priestly system. . . . In ancient Judaism there was a sense of world-weariness. The nation had been defeated in its political aims. Self-assertion, it was now felt, could yield but little. If the hopes of the devout Israelite were to be realized, it could be only by a marvellous divine intervention. The thing to do, consequently, was not to devote oneself to a positive programme of social amelioration, but to remove the obstacles to the coming of the kingdom of God. The ethical life thus took a negative turn. It found its satisfaction in repentance from sin rather than in achievement and self-realization.[1]

Not all Hebrews, however, accepted the simple explanation that their national disaster was a punishment. Not only had it included the innocent with the guilty, but even when the nation was taken as a unit, it was possible to conceive its past more favorably than Jeremiah and Ezekiel were inclined to do. Under Josiah a united effort had been made to purify the religion of Israel according to prophetic standards. In fact, to some of Jeremiah's contemporaries, unfaithfulness to the queen of heaven rather than to Jeho-

[1] *The Religious Teaching of the Old Testament*, pp. 254, 257. While the situation to-day in America is different, and many Christians hold the reverse view-point, the emphasis upon sin, the expectation of a divine *coup d'état*, and the negative attitude toward social religion are well illustrated by certain evangelistic and millenarian schools of thought.

vah seemed the cause of their disaster.[1] And many men of unclouded conscience and prophetic sympathies felt that the nation was relatively innocent. Thus there arose the eternal problem of evil, not only as an individual problem, but as a problem for the nation. Why do the righteous people suffer? In neither the personal nor the national problem did Hebrew thought reach a scientific theodicy, but its struggle with the problem produced the most exalted reaches of Hebrew literature. The personal problem is dealt with in the *Book of Job*, and leads, as we have said, to a faith in the future life. On the national side the answer was suggested principally along the lines of future promise. The sufferings of Israel are not so much the measure of past guilt as of future reward. Return, restoration, and ultimate glory will cancel the present distress. Only be patient. "Though it tarry, wait for it, because it will surely come, it will not delay."[2] What is commonly called "the Messianic Hope" owes its emphasis, if not its origin, to this interpretation of the exile.

The second solution of national distress was even more sublime. To at least one Hebrew of the exile came the idea of its vicarious and redemptive service. He saw that Israel's sufferings were not for its own sins only, but for the sins of many, and thus through the path of sor-

[1] Jer. 44:15–19. [2] Hab. 2:3.

row his nation would bring light and healing to all the world. Thus, while most of the effects of the exile seem, from the view-point of national ideals, negative and unproductive, along these two lines of development it did contribute elements of permanent value. To these two ideals we must return in separate chapters.

XIX

IDEALS OF RECONSTRUCTION

THE Old Testament contains an unexpected amount of what we should call nowadays "literature of reconstruction." The primary occasion of such writings was the fall of Jerusalem in 586 B. C. Though the prevailing reaction from that disaster was at first prostrate hopelessness, there were men in both Judah and Babylon who soon rallied from defeat and turned their thoughts from the past to the future. But their time of waiting was prolonged and the aspirations for new national life, instead of finding fulfilment immediately after disaster, as it is hoped will be the case in modern Belgium and Serbia, were maintained, as was done in Poland and Finland, throughout many years of subjection. For two generations, until the accession of Cyrus, they waited for the first chance to undertake the task of reconstruction. The delay was irksome, but it only strengthened the force of their constructive ideals. It gave them time to consider their programme. It made their memory of past independence and prosperity so remote as to be easily idealized. It made their hope for the future soon transcend the simpler expectations of a return to

the *status quo ante.* It gave them an opportunity to start *de novo,* to avoid the old ruts, and to build more nearly to the heart's desire. There are clear evidences that, in the absolute break with the past provided by the Hebrew exile, certain permanent changes actually occurred in the national life. But "hope deferred" had become a hope glorified beyond any possibility of fulfilment. And so it never died or ceased to grow. Even at their periods of greatest prosperity and achievement the Hebrews were filled with a holy discontent. They had learned once for all to look for a better city. Like the fleeing Italy of the *Æneid,* their aspiration became a permanent attitude of their later history.

For this reason it is impossible to limit the reconstruction literature of Judaism to the round seventy years which Jeremiah promised as the period of Babylonian control. It includes many passages of unquestionably later date. Even such fulfilment of the national hope as was achieved under Zerubbabel in the sixth century, under Nehemiah in the fifth century, and under the Maccabees in the second century before Christ, prolonged the need for cultivating these aspirations and for facing the problems of reconstruction. The Messianic hope of the apocalyptic writers and even of political agitators in the first Christian era shows the persistence of the reconstruction ideal.

There is some evidence, also, that the hope of restoration preceded as well as followed the actual span of the exile. There are many passages in the eighth-century prophets which predict return, revival, or restoration. It is customary with scholars to reject these as later interpolations, and to limit the genuine prophecies of the future to those which foretell doom. Such a wholesale method of criticism can hardly be justified, and even though many of these passages be excluded, there still remain in the pre-exilic prophets some very probable suggestions of a hopeful outlook. There is nothing inconsistent in assigning to the same prophet promises both of blessing and of punishment. It seems, therefore, quite probable that the hopes of the exilic Jews were not a new creation of their disaster, but were based on earlier ideals that can be traced back, if not to Egyptian and Babylonian ideals of the Golden Age, at least to Isaiah's belief in the salvation of a remnant and to other elements inherent in the Hebrew view-point under the monarchy.[1] Certainly those prophets who spoke just before the city's destruction already felt the probability of restoration. Thus Jeremiah, though he vigorously contradicts the optimism of Hananiah, who predicted the immediate destruction of the Babylonian yoke, nevertheless promises at a more dis-

[1] See Knudson, *Religious Teaching of the Old Testament*, Chapter XV, "The Messianic Hope."

tant date return and restoration. The same expectation appears in Ezekiel's famous vision of the Valley of Dry Bones.

For this and for other reasons it was natural that when the crisis had really come the prophets should be the leaders in reviving national hope. They and their predecessors had been vindicated in their prediction of disaster. In the revulsion of feeling that followed the failure of the dominant anti-Babylonian party, they secured the inevitable prestige that comes to the minority party. Formerly Jeremiah and Ezekiel were branded as traitors, now they were respected as the exponents of an alternative policy that might have met with success. They had not been absorbed in the fatal policy of resistance, which had brought the other leaders into disrepute; they had been free to observe events at leisure and to formulate a policy and an attitude to the future. The problem of reconstruction had not found them unprepared. Though they had striven with all their zeal to avert the disaster in the only way that could be effective—the preaching of their unpopular social and international programme, when the disaster was upon them they refrained from mere recriminations of conscious innocence and the futile "I told you so," and devoted themselves to the reconstruction of national morale. So by a natural reaction the disappointed nation turned to the prophets for advice and guidance,

and not to the living prophets only, but to those who were dead. The fragmentary remains of the older sermons were carefully collected and edited and fitted with many interpretations for the new world. From such an epoch of prophetic appreciation arose the hope for a prophetic revival, for the return of the reformer prophet, Elijah, or for one greater than all the prophets.

The vindication of the political programme of the prophets meant the vindication of their moral standards as well. The punishment had come as the prophets expected; it was natural to accept the prophets' explanation of its cause. The renewed sense of guilt that now stirred the nation was the popular confession of the justice of the reformer's earlier demands. Now at last the nation was prepared to give them a trial: "Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to Jehovah." It is of the utmost significance that in the chaos which followed the fall of the Hebrew nation, the constructive leadership came to the prophetic group. This fact gave to the reconstruction ideals that emphasis upon spiritual and moral reconstruction which fills the resultant literature. For the real crisis in the nation's history proved to be not its hour of defeat, but the succeeding formative years when its power of rallying was so severely tested.

The basis of the prophets' hope was religious. It was not a mere forecast of probable political

changes, but an assurance of faith. While other men were lost in despair, the courage and optimism of the prophets were grounded on their trust in God. Nowhere is the theological basis of national optimism more effectively expressed than in *Second Isaiah.* God is the protagonist of history. Israel is only his servant and witness, Cyrus is his tool and agent. The power of God is assured from nature, from prehistoric mythology, from history, and from comparative religion and divination. It is he that cut Rahab to pieces in the days of old, "that measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span," "that bringeth princes to nothing, that maketh the judges of the earth as vanity," "that sitteth above the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers." Before him "the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are accounted as the small dust of the balance." The other gods are mere stocks and stones compared with him, "their molten images are wind and confusion." They are powerless to help their worshippers, or to guide them with mantic forecasts of the future. Jehovah's favor for Israel is shown through its past. He made a great nation from Abraham; he can make a great nation out of the feeble remnant of Judah. He saved Israel out of Egypt, he can also redeem them now from Babylon. Then he dried up the sea and made rivers in a

wilderness; now he "will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert." Though Israel was a transgressor from the womb, though their first father sinned, God will blot out their transgressions and will not remember their sins. He has refined them but not as silver, he has tried them in the furnace of affliction. He has chosen them for his service to bear his salvation to the ends of the earth. All this he will do for his own name's sake, as the expression of his righteous character. He has foretold the things that have come to pass; now he declares a new thing and it also shall be accomplished. These are the themes that repeatedly occur in the exquisite lyric songs of the prophet of the restoration. These are the basis of his assurance and hope.

It is not possible here to review all the forms which the restoration ideals assumed, or to enumerate all the longer and shorter passages in which they were expressed. Beside the poetic masterpiece of the prophet of the restoration, contained in *Isaiah* 40–55, both earlier chapters (as 34, 35) and the whole later part of the book seem to deal with the same general problem. All the preaching of Ezekiel falls after the first disaster of Jerusalem in 597 B. C., and the whole latter part of this volume suggests a date after the final desolation. Of the sermons of Jeremiah, four chapters, 30–33, appear to contain his chief prophesies of restoration. Of the "minor proph-

ets," Zechariah, Haggai, and Malachi deal most directly with the same subject.

To many Jews repatriation seemed the prerequisite of national restoration. It is perhaps for that reason that the general amnesty for exiles offered by Cyrus inspired such enthusiasm in prospect as we find in *Second Isaiah,* and such magnified importance in the retrospect of the Chronicler. For those in Babylon it meant their own return to the land of happy memory, to Jerusalem unforgotten and preferred above their chief joy. For those in Judah it meant the repopulation of the desolate cities and the blossoming of the deserted fields and vineyards with the return of agricultural care. The songs of Zion that could not be sung for sorrow in a foreign land re-echo through the lyric melody of the prophet as he pictures this return:

"The ransomed of Jehovah shall return,
And come with singing unto Zion,
And everlasting joy shall be upon their heads" (51:11).

"Break forth into joy, sing together,
Ye waste places of Jerusalem;
For Jehovah hath comforted his people,
He hath redeemed Jerusalem" (52:9).

"Jehovah hath comforted Zion;
He hath comforted all her waste places,
And hath made her wilderness like Eden,
And her desert like the garden of Jehovah;
Joy and gladness shall be found therein,
Thanksgiving, and the voice of melody" (51:3).

"Lo, these shall come from far;
And, lo, these from the north and from the west;
And these from the land of Sinim. . . .
The children of thy bereavement shall yet say in thine ears,
The place is too strait for me;
Give place to me that I may dwell" (49:12, 20).

Zion is represented as a widow, once desolate and childless, now rejoicing as her children are restored from the four corners of the earth. They will find the circuit of the city too small to contain the teeming population.

Sometimes the hope for the future is expressed in terms of economic prosperity. The soil will bear richly at home; and from abroad will be brought either as imports or as tribute the wealth of the fabled East. All other forms of happiness color the picture. Sorrow and disease shall disappear, the life of men shall be prolonged beyond the three score years and ten. Even nature shall be miraculously changed.

As was natural after years of distress from civil and foreign war, the hope of peace played a prominent part in the thought of Jewish Utopians. Though some were inclined to base their hopes for security on restored defense and the use of the sword, to many had come the dream of universal disarmament and permanent peace.

"They shall beat their swords into ploughshares,
And their spears into pruning-hooks;

Nation shall not lift up sword against nation,
Neither shall they learn war any more."[1]

Of course even the most international ideals are never entirely free from the national bias. In the Golden Age Israel is to have the real sovereignty, Jehovah is to be the international arbitrator, Judaism is to become the universal religion. Nevertheless the nucleus of a more neutral internationalism is to be found in the spirit and method by which such supremacy is anticipated.

There were many persons whose interest in restoration was centred in the domestic political problems. The restoration of the house of David, the proper adjustment of judicial authority, the codification of civil law, were their concerns. They were anxious that the best elements in the earlier government should be carefully preserved and restored.

A similar interest was felt by many persons in the resuscitation of the religious system. The elaborate plans of Ezekiel, the Holiness Code, and the later priestly outline of Levitical duties are an expression of that form of idealism that trusts the machinery of religion as the guarantee of national security. In such a hope the temple holds a central place, and the restoration of this building in the time of Haggai and Zechariah

[1] Isaiah 2:2–4 and Micah 4:1–3. The original date and author are uncertain.

gave an impetus to this conception which descended to the priests and Sadducees. Yet always, as we have suggested, the moral resuscitation is included in the programmes for reconstruction. Absolute reliance could not be placed on the most perfect panaceas of political or ecclesiastical organization. A new heart was required, a new spirit—the spirit of God himself perpetually resident with men—and these were the prerequisite of the new song, the new name, the new heaven and the new earth. The closing chapters of the *Book of Isaiah* show that amid the ideals of religious conformity, of political supremacy, and of economic prosperity the old spiritual ideals and social religion of the prophets were still retained. Here is a soul that is sensitive to the sins of the present as well as the past, of oneself as well as of others, yet fully aware of the possibilities of moral achievement. The crowning element in such an ideal is the awakened civic conscience, the commutation of ceremony into social service, and the universalizing of righteousness. With words reminiscent of the International Servant and prophetic of the beneficent Christ, he cries:

"The Spirit of the Lord Jehovah is upon me;
Because Jehovah hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek,
He hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted,
To proclaim liberty to the captives [of war],

And the opening of prison to them that are bound. . . .
To comfort all that mourn. . . .
That they may be called trees of righteousness,
The planting of Jehovah, that he may be glorified.
And they shall build the old wastes,
They shall raise up the former desolations,
And they shall repair the waste cities,
The desolations of many generations" (61:1–4).

Such a message is the surest evidence of divine inspiration and the surest fulfilment of the eternal divine purpose of reconstruction. Through such passages one can see the roots of an indomitable optimism which has enabled the Jewish race to endure unparalleled persecution and disaster, and having done all to stand. Out of weakness they were made strong, and they dedicated to all men of faith who followed them a perennial and eternal hope in the recreative power of God. In their footsteps Christ walked when he proclaimed at Nazareth his programme, and so do his followers to-day, if with moral insight and prophetic fervor they bend their energies to the urgent tasks of spiritual reconstruction.

XX

ON INTERNATIONAL SERVICE

THE biographical stories and sermons of Isaiah of Jerusalem are followed in the book through which they have come down to us by a series of poems dealing with the reconstruction era of Jewish history. And among these later poems scholars have recognized a group of passages so distinct in subject and manner that, whether they were originally part of their present context or not, they seem to deserve separate consideration. These brief songs, culminating in the familiar fifty-third chapter of *Isaiah*, all deal with the same figure—the servant of Jehovah.[1] They describe his training and his method and the astonishing results of his career. It is easy to imagine in the successive songs a natural development of the thought, or at least a logical progress in presenting it. And while the language is no less poetic and sublime than in the other parts of this prophecy, these sections offer not only a separate literary problem of their own, but an interpretation of national duty and destiny that is almost unique in antiquity, and that possesses considerable interest for modern times.

[1] These passages include at least the following verses: Isaiah 42:1–7; 49:1–6; 50:4–9; 52:13–53:12.

The term "service" is so familiar to us nowadays, in a political sense, as an ideal if not a genuine motive, that we are wont to forget its simpler and suggestive meaning. When slavery was an existent human custom and servant or slave, if applied to religion or politics, was still a conscious metaphor, public or religious service meant a real kind of serving. Among the Hebrews and the other Semites, where men so freely used human relations to describe relations with the gods, the idea of the service of God was soon developed. This conception was embodied in the names of both gods and men. The former were called king and master, the latter servant or slave. Thus the term "servant of Jehovah" was no novelty in the sixth century. The originality of the passages under consideration consists in the scope and nature of the service, and perhaps in the definition of the servant.

For, in the first place, the service contemplated is distinctly international. From the viewpoint of most earlier Hebrew thought this would be an innovation. Except for some slight hints of the prophets, Israel rarely escaped from the old nationalistic view of religion. They were the people of Jehovah and Jehovah was the God of Israel. Hence the service of God naturally found its scope within the nation. National heroes, kings, prophets, warriors, would be Jehovah's servants—or the whole nation collectively. But

their service would be for God and country, two objects of identical interest. Other nations were expected to serve other gods, and other gods to choose other nations. But Jehovah had chosen Israel for himself.

Here, however, the servant of Jehovah is given a wider field. In the Hebrew idiom this broad horizon is expressed by two means—either by such plural terms as "nations" (usually translated "Gentiles"), "kings," and "peoples," or by the mention of the most distant places, "the isles" (perhaps the European coast lands) or "the ends of the earth." These are to be the witnesses of the servant's attention and the objects of his service; to them he is to bring light, justice, salvation. For the God of this poet national service does not suffice; patriotism is too petty. In words that remind us of the famous saying of Edith Cavell, Jehovah is represented as admonishing his servant:

"It is too light a thing to be my servant to raise up
the tribes of Jacob,
And to restore the preserved of Israel;
I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles,
That thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of
the earth" (49:6).

"Patriotism is not enough." Even when the motive is not national aggrandizement, but merely the restoration of a nation in sore distress and

disaster, the servant of God must not be content with national service for the nation's sake. "Jewry for the Jews" is not his type of slogan. Even nationalism must be altruistic.

By this extension of the scope of service the Hebrew prophet enhances the meaning of both service and election. The unique relation between God and his elect is for the selfish advantage of neither. Through them the whole world is benefited. The exilic prophet has quite changed the old ideal of national election. The servant is the chosen of God, but the selection involves duties quite as much as privileges on the servant's part. He is chosen for service—not of himself or of his nation, but of all mankind. The great ideal of foreign missions first finds expression here.[1] It is the transmutation of all the other ideals of selfish satisfaction. God's purpose in history is not an exclusive scheme for reciprocal service between himself and his chosen nation. They are rather co-workers in a great missionary enterprise—the evangelization of the world. Indeed the service is something more than the preaching of the true religion. It is a life and example influencing others in the most effective way. Religion, or judgment, as the Hebrew word is translated, comprehends not merely religion

[1] When a later writer characterizes the great apostle to the Gentiles as a light to the Gentiles, a chosen vessel to bear God's name before nations and kings, he is simply borrowing the expressions of these songs.

but a whole culture in its fullest sense, and involves the highest standards of personal and social life. This is the light and salvation which God, through his servant, sends forth to all the world.

But the method of the servant is quite as noteworthy as the field of his service. Transcending national boundaries was not altogether a new thing in antiquity, but there was only one approved method of doing it—military conquest. The great empires of the East—Assyria, Babylonia, and now Persia—were marked illustrations of international influence, but their method was the sword. The new international servant has another method.

> "He will not cry, nor lift up his voice,
> Nor cause it to be heard in the street.
> A bruised reed will he not break,
> And a dimly burning wick will he not quench:
> He will bring forth justice in truth.
> He will not fail nor be discouraged,
> Till he have set justice in the earth;
> And the isles shall wait for his law" (42:2–4).

Apparently the service contemplated is to follow a quiet, unobtrusive, and pacific method, exercised in patience and in spite of discouragement. It is the way of all effective and permanent conversions. It is persistent and victorious, though distinctly non-resistant. Confident in Jehovah the servant submits to abuse. "I have set my

face," he says, "like a flint, and I know that I shall not be put to shame." Such a method involves misunderstanding and suffering. In the later chapters suffering itself is vindicated as the servant's method, though few can be expected to believe in such an unexpected and unheard-of programme. Only at the end do the witnesses and beneficiaries of his service appreciate the meaning of his suffering. This is the burden of the famous last poem of the series, the mystery of the suffering servant.

> "Surely he hath borne our griefs,
> And carried our sorrows;
> Yet we did esteem him stricken,
> Smitten of God, and afflicted.
> But he was wounded for our transgressions,
> He was bruised for our iniquities;
> The chastisement of our peace was upon him;
> And with his stripes we are healed" (53:4, 5).

In this classic passage vicarious suffering is plainly described, and its ultimate triumph in spite of apparent failure. As Jesus did after him, the poet has substituted, for conventional standards of greatness, the unexpected success of altruistic service. And he has found for innocent suffering not merely a theodical explanation but a positive value. He has anticipated the riddle of the cross.

The novelty of these elements in the poet's

conception only makes more keen our interest in the further question—the identification of the servant. Who is this mysterious figure with the strange mission? Unfortunately the poetic language, and, perhaps, an intentional indirectness of reference, do not make the answer to this question easy. Scholars do not agree here, though on other phases of the poet's meaning they readily reach a common conclusion. The language is certainly personal, and it is natural that it should be understood literally of an individual. In that case there still remains the question that was asked of Philip: "Of whom speaketh the prophet this—of himself, or of some other?" Many elements in the picture suit Jeremiah; many of them are typical of every prophet. Of course, from the earliest days of the Church, Christians have found in the servant a type and prophecy of the sufferings of Christ.[1] No individual more strikingly fulfilled the prophecy than Christ himself. And yet this fulfilment does not prove that the original meaning of the writer was individual. There is much to be said for the view that the author used the common device of personification, and means by the servant not a person but a group—either the better elements in the nation or, ideally, the nation as a whole. Repeatedly, through the surrounding passages and apparently

[1] It is not, however, clear that Jesus himself or the Jews understood even Isaiah 53 messianically.

once or twice in the servant poems, Israel or Jacob is identified with the servant.

Whatever solution is given to this problem—and into the full discussion of it we cannot enter here—the political ideals of this prophet are great and revolutionary. And if following the opinion of many careful students we accept further the identification of the servant with the nation, the national significance of the passages is even greater. Like many before him, the writer is thinking wholly in national terms; Israel is still the unit. He is groping for the meaning of his nation's career. He would explain to his fellow countrymen the sufferings of the past and present in terms that would remove not merely impatience and despair, but selfishness and the exclusive nationalistic spirit. And he finds the justification of God and the glory of Israel in its vicarious suffering for the sins of the world. In modern terms he thinks of his country as a martyr nation, a Christ among nations, redeeming the world not by the sword of triumph nor the self-assertive spirit of human pride, but through the way of the cross.

This sublime conception finds its fullest personal fulfilment in the life, teaching, and death of Jesus of Nazareth. But as the ideal for a nation it is still unfulfilled. To a considerable degree the Jewish people themselves have illustrated its possibilities; they have been a light to the Gen-

tiles, carrying much truth about God and his will to the ends of the earth. We would not underestimate the services of Judaism to mankind. Many a nation, too, has suffered as the servant is pictured as suffering, but certainly no nation with an innocence comparable to that of Christ. What the prophet hoped for was a nation without guilt or guile, a nation free from "violence" and "deceit," a nation consecrated to the service of mankind, which was willing to rely on the patient methods of God's training, so unfamiliar and so scorned in the imperialistic *Realpolitik* of that day.

That hope still remains an alluring ideal. Though, as a personal ideal, it has been highly praised and sometimes even practised, it has scarcely been understood and certainly never fully adopted as a national programme. In these days of reconsidered national ambitions its outlines seem Utopian and unreal. The altruism of international service can scarcely emerge when fear and hate and self-seeking so fully control men's minds. Not only the great and prosperous nations but even the weak and crushed peoples like the Israel of the exile are far more bent on national than international aims. Neither is the prophet's method of service popular. Men still look with scorn on national patience and humility compared with blatant patriotism and bravado. They call military service "the service" and trust to physical force to establish the ideals for which

they stand. Even where the aims of modern nations agree with the ideals of the prophet—for his "light," "salvation," and "judgment" are only ancient names for culture, safety, and justice—their champions apply, as means to those ends, the futile methods of the servants of Bel and Marduk rather than the availing methods of the servant of Jehovah. Yet the world still needs the strange and unpopular ideal of the exilic prophet. It needs, in the first place, that splendid discontent with nationalism for its own sake and the substitution of the common good of all. In the second place, it needs that still more novel reversal of values, that strange method of the true servant of Jehovah, the reliance on spiritual forces of love, patience, and self-sacrifice. In this sign it will conquer, through seeming failure and defeat. Both the mission and the method are needed for complete fulfilment of the prophet's hopes. International service cannot avail unless it is prompted by the spirit of sacrifice, and sacrifice cannot avail unless it means altruistic service. For the nation, as for the individual, this is the supreme ambition—not to be ministered unto but to minister, and, if necessary, to give its life a ransom for many. The nation that will do less than that is not only unchristian, it has not even realized the best ideals of Judaism.

XXI

THE INTENSIFICATION OF NATIONALISM

THE centuries from Zedekiah to Judas Maccabæus are strangely wanting in full political record. The continuous history of *Kings* closes with the exile. The author of *Chronicles* who attempted to continue his revision of that earlier record could discover only a few miscellaneous Jewish sources, which he pieced together in a confusing manner in our books of *Ezra* and *Nehemiah.* Josephus can supplement the Chronicler's information only by selections from Gentile history, and by a few popular Jewish legends. Thus, for our knowledge of political thought in this era we are left largely to the indirect evidence of the late prophets, psalmists, historians, and jurists.

But in spite of the slightness of our information it is evident that these four centuries were times when a single direct course of national evolution was confused by varied and conflicting tendencies. Out of darkness and confusion many partial suggestions of new developments of thought vaguely appear. Our estimate of the ideals in this era must be based largely upon their fruits in later Judaism, as that stage of development is more clearly disclosed to us in the Apocrypha,

the New Testament, and the rabbinic literature. No one or two consecutive lines of development exhaust the national movements that produced these results, yet it may be convenient to speak collectively of two kinds of opposing forces—the centrifugal and the centripetal tendencies of Judaism.

To the former category belong all the spontaneous and natural results of the absorption of a petty nation in a world empire. With the conquest of Jerusalem in 586 B. C. national sovereignty and national government disappeared. Even the visible signs and foci of national adherence—political and religious—vanished with the razing of the city and the temple. And, above all, the scattering of Jews throughout the world—the exile, or dispersion, as it is called henceforth—made national rehabilitation difficult. At home and in foreign lands the cultures and the religions of the victors naturally overshadowed the vanquished Jewish civilization and its God. The new imperialism was usually a great leveller. Conformity was easier than local and racial peculiarity, and cosmopolitanism was safer than ardent nationalism. Even war, the great concomitant of nationalism, was no longer possible for the Jews as an independent enterprise. They were merely subjects or allies of successive empires, helpless pawns in the games of kings, pitiful victims in the cockpit of Asia. Thus their na-

tionality was deprived of the natural forces of cohesion and exposed to all the subtle denationalizing tendencies of a people discouraged, dispersed, and overshadowed by civilizations more catholic and in some ways more cultured than their own provincialism.

The decentralizing influences upon Judaism were chiefly unconscious and unintended. There is little evidence that their Babylonian and Persian masters cared for anything but their political subservience. Indeed, Cyrus adopted the enlightened policy of conserving and stimulating local cultural and religious influences, and of restoring populations and reconstructing business. Nor is there evidence that many Jews for their part became deliberate renegades to their faith and race, preferring the wider outlook to their older inheritance, or cultivating artificially a new internationalism. But the change was none the less effective and powerful for the reason that it was spontaneous and natural. And had it not been for peculiar conditions and conscious resistance, Judaism would have joined the coalescence of petty races that befell all her neighbors.

Of course there were some centripetal forces that were also subconscious. There was the old patriotism that endured by a natural momentum long after its object was to all outward sight destroyed. There was an instinctive conservatism that made the Jews resent and avoid new or alien

habits of speech, behavior, and apparel. But the maintenance of Hebrew nationalism amid the hostile and obscuring influences of the day became a definite, conscious policy of the whole nation or of its leaders, and has come down to us to-day with very little modification.

Indeed, the exile proved to be to a certain extent a new beginning of national self-consciousness. The death of the body seemed to liberate the soul. To be sure, one often hears it said that in Judaism nationalism was giving place to individualism. As a matter of fact, the exile marks neither the end of one nor the beginning of the other, but the coincident development of both. Professor Knudson has recently questioned the usual hypothesis of early national self-consciousness in Israel:

> The general notion of solidarity as applied to the nation is clear enough. Various aspects of it appear in the Old Testament. . . . The ancient Israelites looked upon the nation as a self-identical moral personality, embracing in its unity not only all existing members but also past generations.
>
> The question, however, arises as to whether the idea of national solidarity actually existed in such a definite form as this in the minds of the Hebrews, whether it was not with them rather a vague feeling than a clear concept. It might even be questioned whether we have not here simply a personification rather than a personalization of the nation. . . . It is, consequently, a mistake to attribute to the early Israel-

ites a paramount interest in national affairs and a superior devotion to the common good. Their nationalism was largely of the instinctive or mechanical type. Not until we come to literary prophecy do we have a really serious effort to bring Israelitic nationalism to self-consciousness. Here the blind patriotism of the past and a merely mechanical conformity to rites and customs are set aside as worthless and misleading. The nation has a mission to perform, but it is a moral mission; and this mission can be performed only by resolute devotion to the will of God and the common good as expressed especially in the moral law. To bring this truth home to the minds and consciences of the people was the chief task of the eighth-century prophets. And the work they began was in its essential nature carried on by the Deuteronomists, and the exilic and post-exilic prophets and lawgivers. What we have, therefore, in the history of Israel is not a gradual decline of nationalism, but an increasing consciousness of it.[1]

It was fortunate that the policy adopted to maintain national identity did not follow the usual course of political and military effort. Of course the Hebrews long cherished a hope for political restoration. But, after all, independence is not essential to national greatness, and revolution against their lords would either have been in vain or of temporary and superficial success. Neither was geographical reunion altogether important. Certainly the restoration of Palestine's former population two generations or two mil-

[1] *Religious Teaching of the Old Testament*, pp. 325 *ff.*

lennia after the deportations of Nebuchadnezzar has been over-emphasized by many persons from the Chronicler to the present-day Zionists. The essential thing in nationality for inner unity and for service to mankind, is not its separate government and habitat, but its distinctive genius and culture. The heroes of Judaism were not its military patriots and political liberators, but the creators and champions of a Jewish civilization. And in the transfer of the nation's allegiance from land and government to God and law is one of the great lessons as well as one of the miracles of history. For of all the remaining elements of the old nationalism, religion—the national religion—was the most powerful nucleus. About it all other Hebrew loyalties could rally and develop in spite of heathen rule and foreign land. It focussed the ideals and culture of the race and conserved the national hopes. Of course adjustments were necessary. The destruction of the temple, the one legal centre of worship, according to *Deuteronomy*, may have really strengthened Judaism more than did restoration of the temple some seventy years later. It delocalized religion and, together with the wide dispersion of Jews throughout the world, it transformed religion into a movable institution. The law, also, as the written charter of national custom, gave a new basis for religious allegiance. Obedience to the law was the new patriotism, and this could be practised wherever

the Jew was placed. Knowledge of the law was the new requirement of citizenship, and the synagogue became the universal school of nationalism. No nation with a government and land of its own ever possessed a more effective instrument of nationalization than the educational system of Judaism. And by its curriculum not only the youth but adults were constantly held true to the literature, the language, the culture, as well as the faith of their fathers.

It is difficult for modern Christians to look upon this intensive nationalism of the Jews without some traditional prejudices. It is always natural to regard foreign customs as burdensome; and the burden of the law seems to us to have become grotesque casuistry in the elaborations of the Pharisees. But legalism was only the desperate attempt to maintain national identity. To its advocates the only alternative seemed national annihilation. And whatever we may think of it as religion, we must at least recognize in Jewish legalism the patriotic and successful effort, heroically undertaken in the face of unparalleled obstacles, not simply to secure for Judaism some selfish advancement or place in the sun, but to fulfil the duty and the high destiny which Providence had given it.

Perhaps the chief fault of intensive Judaism was its ingrowing exclusiveness. It is a misfortune that loyalties seem to flourish best by odious

comparisons, and that uniform standards of national culture are most readily observed in contradistinction from others. Within the nation, to be sure, this difficulty is not serious, but in contact with their neighbors the Hebrews were constantly given to the spirit of self-differentiation. This difference had, indeed, been recognized for many generations; the prophets had always been aware of the cultural, especially the religious, unlikeness of their neighbors, and had warned against religious syncretism. Even in *Deuteronomy* the nations are made to recognize the self-sufficiency of Israel's culture—in its religion and its law. "Surely," they say, "this great nation is a wise and understanding people." "For what great nation is there," continues the author, "that hath a god so nigh unto them as Jehovah our God is whensoever we call upon him? And what great nation is there, that hath statutes and ordinances so righteous as all this law?"[1] "Deuteronomy," says a recent commentator, "expresses the soul of Israel, conscious of their distinction, roused to every foreign influence as the threat of their disintegration, and concentrating upon their spiritual heritage and duties, since only by loyalty to these can they preserve their individuality as a people and prove their right to live."[2] In the next code,[3] holiness, the characteristic word, we cannot for-

[1] Deut. 4:6–8. [2] G. A. Smith, *Deuteronomy*, p. xciv.
[3] The so-called "Holiness Code" of Leviticus 17–26.

get, has its force of separateness as well as of purity. And throughout later legalism all efforts at national unity and uniformity seemed to lead to aloofness and peculiarity. It is no accident that of two terms for later zealots for the law, one (Chaber) seems to mean comrade, the other (Pharisee) separatist. Association means dissociation whenever it occurs unless the unit is all-inclusive.

And so it came to pass that Judaism drew further away from the other nations. The very word "nations" gained a sense of distance and disdain that is well felt in our English translations, "Gentile," or "heathen." National egoism expressed itself as clearly in this dichotomy as in the distinction of Greeks against the barbarians. In the book of *Nehemiah* the Samaritan schism and the rigorous abolition of foreign wives show the inevitable results of such ruthless intensification of national purity. Like the wall of China, a strong cultural defense was built up by zealous rabbis and scribes about the chosen people. Circumcision and sabbath-keeping became their distinctive marks throughout the world. The sense of difference became mutual. The Gentiles ridiculed the peculiarities of the Jews and gave them a separate ghetto in their cities and a separate name in their classification of mankind. The peculiarity, which to the Jew meant special devotion to Jehovah, seemed to

his neighbor eccentricity and stubborn superstition. So the way was prepared for persecution and pogrom and the dreary history of anti-Semitic bitterness.

Of course the ingrowing tendencies of Judaism did not wholly prevail. From the earliest times the resident alien had been treated with true nomadic hospitality, and even in the later Jewish particularism he enjoyed far greater consideration than did the stranger without the gates. The intolerant and unsocial attitude did not always pass unchallenged; it was rebuked by the indirect method of fiction—as in *Jonah* and *Ruth*. The former we shall consider in the next chapter; the latter is a beautiful idyl that is most readily understood as a gentle reproach against the wholesale forbidding of mixed marriages. The heroine, though a Moabitess, became a devout worshipper of Jehovah and an ancestor of the great David. Another writer distinctly warns against the discouragement of law-observing proselytes, who speak, saying, "Jehovah will surely separate me from his people." On the contrary God says:

> The foreigners that join themselves to Jehovah, to minister unto him, and to love the name of Jehovah, to be his servants, every one that keepeth the sabbath from profaning it, and holdeth fast my covenant; even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer : their burnt offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine

altar; for my house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples.[1]

Even Hellenism, though it became the arch-enemy of Judaism, was also the object of much Jewish friendship and conciliation. In Philo and more particularly in Christianity the best elements, both Hebraic and Hellenic, of literature, philosophy, and religion were fused amicably and preserved.

[1] Isaiah 56:3, 6, 7.

XXII

A CARTOON OF NATIONALISM

VERY few Christian laymen can give an intelligent reply to the question, What is the message of the *Book of Jonah?* The incident of the "whale" has completely overshadowed the main point of the writer, and having been made the crux of orthodoxy, receives, as is unfortunately the case with many speculative questions raised by the Bible, more emphasis than does the really significant moral teaching. There is a strange agreement between believers and sceptics in rejecting it as a miracle; the former do so by elaborate arguments to prove that it could have happened naturally, the latter by frank disbelief. But even those who accept the story of the *Book of Jonah* as literally true often take it scarcely seriously, but with a smile at the submarine experiences of the ill-starred prophet. And herein is the real misfortune, not that they smile at the story, but that they smile at the wrong place. For there is real humor in the book, but the humor, as we shall see, is the grim humor of absurd human narrow-mindedness.

The *Book of Jonah* receives its place in the Old

Testament canon because of the person of its hero. "Jonah, the son of Amittai, the prophet, who was of Gath-hepher," is mentioned casually by the *Book of Kings* in connection with the extension of the kingdom of Israel under Jeroboam the Second. He was, therefore, a contemporary of Amos and perhaps of the other prophets of the eighth century B. C. His home was in the hills of lower Galilee near the Nazareth of later times. No further record of his preaching is given, and the book that bears his name not only was not written by him but does not even give, as do most of the books of the prophets, the outline of his message. It is, rather, a narrative about Jonah and appears to have been written several centuries later. As in the *Book of Daniel,* and as frequently in the later Jewish and even modern writings, the author has selected not a purely fictitious character but some real person of the past as the basis of his story, and has filled in the setting from his historical imagination. In *Jonah* the setting is far from detailed. Nothing is said of Israel's history or conditions, and concerning Nineveh only its size and its wickedness are mentioned. The story is told with the utmost simplicity and—to our Occidental eyes—with a kind of grotesqueness. The successive stages of the story are mechanically brought on as by a *deus ex machina* without much regard for natural processes. The incident of the gourd is really as

strange as that of the fish. It is to be noted that just as Jehovah sent out the storm and "prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah," and spake to the fish to vomit out Jonah, so he "prepared" in turn a "gourd," "a worm," and a "sultry east wind" to teach a final lesson.

To our modern mind the realism of the psychology of the story contrasts most favorably with this Oriental artificiality of plot. The sailors in the storm are described with real dramatic skill. Their religious fear amid danger and their regard for Jonah and his God, if not entirely according to our ways of thought, are nevertheless fully intelligible. So is the loving-kindness of Jehovah for the great, ignorant masses of Nineveh and his compassion even for cattle. And it is in the character of Jonah, drawn in a few sketchy lines, that the real teaching of the book is to be found.

The narrative is simple: Jonah, the prophet, is commanded to preach against Nineveh. At first he tries to escape this duty by taking ship for Spain (Tarshish), at the opposite end of the earth, but is brought back. The second time he perfunctorily obeys the command and immediately the city repents. But why did Jonah disobey? Stubbornness, laziness, timidity, fear of being discredited, can hardly be the reasons. It is apparently because he really wished Nineveh to be destroyed and was afraid that if he preached the city would repent and be spared by God. This is

shown in the peevish "I-told-you-so" when afterward he says to Jehovah:

> Was not this my saying, when I was yet in my country? Therefore I hasted to flee unto Tarshish; for I knew that thou art a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger, and abundant in loving-kindness, and repentest thee of the evil. Therefore now, O Jehovah, take, I beseech thee, my life from me; for it is better for me to die than to live (4:2, 3).

Jonah is represented as a man of selfish, narrow interests. When he is given a message of doom to a foreign city he refuses to preach it, lest the city should repent and be saved. Finally, compelled against his will to be the instrument of such a truly merciful mission, he is angry and sulks despondently as though life were not worth living. He is disgusted to have become, perforce, himself the savior of those whom he would gladly have seen destroyed. He is chagrined, not because his prediction did not come true, but because his own intolerant ill-will for the Ninevites is discredited by their sincere and ready response to his half-hearted warning. It is an almost ludicrous contrast that is presented, not unlike that of the Pharisee and the publican in the New Testament parable: inside the city the whole population, king and people, and even cattle, repenting with fasting and sackcloth; outside the city the querulous prophet sitting and waiting with mali-

cious hope. Each is thinking of God's possible forbearance, the one imploring it, the other deploring it.

Two other contrasts accentuate the wilfulness of Jonah's hatred of Nineveh. One is this same impartial benignity of Jehovah, which is the hope of penitents but the despair of the self-righteous; the other is Jonah's own concern over the destruction of a simple gourd vine. Both are brought into relief in the closing verses. When the gourd is destroyed Jonah is just as angry as when the city was saved, and again he says: "It is better for me to die than to live."

> And God said to Jonah, Doest thou well to be angry for the gourd? And he said, I do well to be angry, even unto death. And Jehovah said, Thou hast had regard for the gourd, for which thou hast not labored, neither madest it grow; which came up in the night, and perished in a night; and should not I have regard for Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than sixscore thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand; and also much cattle? (4:9–11).

Thus the story of Jonah becomes, like the story of Ruth, a parable, or a tract, to meet the national exclusiveness and racial pride of the author's times. This writer did not outspokenly oppose the current patriotic conceit. To do so is often ineffective, and even dangerous. But he uses two methods of correcting it indirectly.

First, like Amos and other prophets, including Jesus himself, he shows God's own catholic loving-kindness for other nations than the people of his special choice, and implies that a similar catholicity is required of men. He uses theology as the teacher of ethics. His second method is caricature. In Jonah he gives us the current nationalism—in a *reductio ad absurdum*. Nineveh, the capital of an aggressive military despotism, was the classic historical enemy of the chosen people. Jonah represents the acme of national antipathy. That Nineveh is guilty the author freely confesses. God knew its guilt and yet wished to save it. But Jonah is too good a patriot for that. Though God himself commands it, he will take no part in giving aid or comfort to the enemy. He is fully aware of God's broader sympathy. But he condemns it and bends every effort to avoid sharing it. He will defy God rather than be like him. He neither believes nor wishes to believe any good of the Assyrians. He knows they are wrong, and he is glad they are. He would leave them to their deserts. He wants justice, not mercy, and he wants it to the bitter end. He has sympathy enough, where sympathy agrees with his own interests—sympathy even with an ephemeral gourd that might have saved him a headache; but for innocent alien populations of thousands of ignorant and misguided human beings he feels only petulant

rage. In extreme type, Jonah is the natural outcome of the moral pride of Pharisaic Judaism, or of the more modern national prejudices artificially fostered by war.

XXIII

THE LITERATURE OF SUPPRESSION

THE conflict of cultures which we have traced both in the settlement of Canaan and in post-exilic Judaism reached a new stage in the era of the Seleucid control. The prophets and patriots of early Israel were conscious of the difference between Israel's standards and those of the peoples round about, and had repeatedly asserted the need of maintaining their own national standards against the natural incursions of foreign influence, both political and religious. In the exile this need became even more acute, as we have seen in a preceding chapter. Without political unity and independence the distinctive civilization of Israel was threatened with eclipse by the national cultures of their more powerful masters, or absorption in the growing denationalization of the newer cosmopolitanism. Under the Persian empire many Jews had accepted Aramaic, the *lingua franca* of southwestern Asia, in place of their native tongue, and had adopted many of the religious, industrial, and cultural elements of their tolerant and broad-minded masters. It was impossible to resist a culture that was so pervasive and catholic.

Still more was the breakdown of distinctive nationalism inevitable in the era which followed Alexander's conquest when he and the other Macedonian generals who inherited and divided his empire became the conscious and active propagators of Hellenic culture. The natives usually accepted gladly a share in the task of Hellenization. At royal request, we are told, the Jews of Egypt converted their scriptures into a Greek classic or accepted citizenship or responsible offices in the city-states. Not only in foreign lands and Greek cities, like Alexandria and Antioch, were the Jews influenced by Hellenic culture, but even in Palestine the same tendency was making headway. Of course there were rigorists among the Jews—conservatives intolerant of all innovation, religious zealots protesting against alien worships, national patriots of the stamp of Elijah or Nehemiah. But the new element which changed the whole problem of the conflict of cultures was the use of force by the Hellenizers.

The processes of gradual denationalization which preceded the Maccabean era were spontaneous, natural, and often subconscious. Whatever victories the cultures of Persia and Greece had secured had been made by the political prestige of their exponents and their own inherent merits and conveniences, not by the use of the sword. The splendid civilization of Greece in more or less superficial form was already conquer-

ing the East and was destined soon to lead captivity captive in the West. Even Rome yielded to the spell of Greece. Among the Jews the influence was less than perhaps anywhere else, but there, too, Hellenization seemed inevitable. There was, of course, an anti-Hellenic party in Jerusalem, but among the common people the drift toward newer customs was natural and willing, and the leaders of the aristocratic state—the priestly families and the men of education and of wealth—openly espoused the new culture, its athletics, its politics, its language, and its dress. They were proud to be philhellenes. They became scornful of the older ways but not intolerant. Such intolerance as existed was mostly on the other side.

To the hated Antiochus Epiphanes (175–164 B. C.) are attached the odium and the folly of a new policy in international relations—the enforced imposition of an alien culture and the attempted denationalization of Judaism. The story as told by the *Books of Maccabees* may be colored with legend and prejudice, and it is possible that the movement once started had other and more violent sponsors than the ill-fated Antiochus. But whatever its origin and history the effort at enforced Hellenization had momentous consequences.

Politically it was a challenge to the nation, and resulted in the revival of national life. As

often happens, their methods of coercion worked the very reverse of what the Hellenizers desired. The least interference from outside at once crystallized the Jewish people into new national self-consciousness and power. Those who were formerly drifting to Hellenism revolted at the first hint of enforcement and rallied round the nationalists. All new unrest, all old conservatism, was focussed by the definiteness of the issue. The spirit of earlier days was revived, and the hope of national independence was not only aroused but actually realized. In the astonishing early success of the Maccabean revolt one can still see writ large the inevitable consequences of any effort to superimpose a new culture on a foreign nation by the use of force; while in the subsequent secularization of the Hasmonean dynasty one can read the equally ironical destiny that ultimately defeats the very purposes of those who would defend spiritual ideals against such aggressions by the use of force. Both Antiochus and the Maccabees failed. Victory lay chiefly with those who practised passive resistance—a phenomenon which, together with martyrdom and with persecution, secured its first great historical examples at this era. Under the stress of disaster and suppression a new and powerful loyalty was kindled. Men were stirred to defend not merely their homes and persons, but their principles and ideals. And they believed that resolute allegiance to these

objects of devotion could not be quenched by fire or sword. The soul of man could be free and the soul of the nation could be free amid persecution and suppression. The supreme power of reason and of truth was discovered.[1] This new loyalty was often attended with the faith of despair, often with hope, often, also, alas, with violent hatred. But it is this sentiment rather than the martial victories of Judas that left upon the pages of the Old Testament the national ideals of the age.

For the expression of these ideals two new literary forms came into current use—the apocalypse and the historical romance. Both of these forms have roots in the earlier literature—the one in prophecy, the other in history—but both of them became the favorite media of nationalist propaganda. To a certain extent the circumstances determined their form. Both of them were fiction, and both of them thereby escaped the punishment of more direct pamphlets. Like the fiction of autocratic Russia, they were able to instil ideals of political revolution without interference by the strict censorship of secret police or by open suppression.

The novelette or patriotic hero-tale was easily developed from the pragmatic histories of Judaism. Already full and reliable records had been edited in the interests of certain national ideals.

[1] See the philosophic discussions in IV Maccabees and I Esdras 3:1–5 : 6.

Many less authentic traditions still unrecorded lent themselves to similar treatment, and it was possible to create about mere names or memories of the past or customs of the present, edifying tales of ancient patriotism. A historical setting not unlike that present to the author could easily be found and described with a little superficial use of the imagination. Anachronisms and confusions could scarcely be avoided entirely, and can usually be detected in literature of this type. Two themes in particular are characteristic of these romances—the fidelity of Jews to their national and religious customs in the face of persecution, and their signal triumph over their foes. This triumph, as has been said, is not merely the victory in battle. It is often due to the devices of clever men or the miraculous intervention of God. The deaths of the persecutors are often dwelt upon in the spirit of gleeful revenge, and as illustrations of the inevitable nemesis that must ever await the enemy of the Jews. In the *Books of Maccabees,* where this motif appears, notably in the stories of the death of Antiochus Epiphanes[1] and of the death of Nicanor,[2] the situation is largely historical, but in the stories of Judith and of Esther there is a large element of invention. In both the latter a Jewess is the savior of her race from the hands of those who

[1] I Mac. 6:1–17; II Mac. 9:1–29.
[2] II Mac. 15:1–37.

would destroy it, and the agent of divine vengeance upon its foes. In *Judith* the names used by the author are pseudonyms and stand for really historical persons. Thus Nebuchadnezzar represents Antiochus Epiphanes; the Assyrians, the Syrians; Nineveh, Antioch; and Arphaxad, Arsaces of Persia, with whom Antiochus went to war.[1] In *Esther*, on the contrary, the names are mostly Persian, like the setting, but, except Ahasuerus (= Xerxes), appear to be names of gods! The story of *III Maccabees* seems to be a combination of truth and fiction, or, rather, a confusion of several ancient stories, due, perhaps, to its effort "to combine in a single picture as many features as possible, all tending to the glorification of the faithful Jew. We thus have brought together in a single canvas the frustrated attempt to enter the temple, the saving of the king's life by a Jew, the attacks on religion and attempts to Hellenize, affecting both the Jews in Alexandria and in Egypt as a whole, the testimonies to their great influence and unswerving loyalty, the marvels of divine intervention, and the vengeance on renegades."[2] Many of the stories which Josephus tells of this period, for example, that of Joseph, the tax-gatherer, who got the better of the Gentiles both in securing a contract

[1] Charles, *Religious Development between the Old and New Testaments*, p. 193.

[2] Emmet, in Charles, *Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the O. T.*, I, 160 *f.*

from court and in inflicting heavier taxes upon them than upon his fellow countrymen, have at least passed through this spirit of the patriotic tale.[1]

The faithfulness of the Jews to their own customs is also illustrated in some of the books we have mentioned. In *Judith* it is carefully noted that in spite of the difficulties in the way the heroine was faithful to the national customs, especially the observance of the food regulations and of the sacred seasons. In *Esther* Haman's excuse for destroying the Jews was the fact that "their laws are diverse from those of every other people; neither keep they the king's laws: therefore it is not for the king's profit to suffer them." It was, of course, the refusal to sacrifice to foreign gods and to eat forbidden food that produced the martyrs of the Maccabean age. The stories of those faithful who refused to Hellenize are found idealized in the sixth and seventh chapters of *II Maccabees* and in the later version of *IV Maccabees*.

The other new type of literature that belongs to the new patriotism is the apocalypse. The word means revelation and the form of the writing is usually the report of a dream or vision. As the author of the novelette usually selected some historical person as the hero, so in the apocalypse an approved leader of Israel is the authority for

[1] Josephus, *Antiquities*, XII, 4.

the revelation. In fact, since the apocalypse purported to be a prediction of the future, an ancient worthy was essential as a pseudonym. There were two reasons, one the current belief that spontaneous prophecy was extinct, the other the device of giving the predictions credibility by including in the form of prediction the history of many past years. The apocalypse, like the historical romance, aimed to inspire courage and patience among the persecuted. It revealed the hand of God running through history, and it assured the faithful that the final and decisive act was near when they should be rewarded and their persecutors punished. Apocalypse thus inherited the moral standards and the national hope of prophecy. It could scarcely be better summarized than in the prophetic passage:

"Write down the vision and make it plain upon tablets,
That he may run who reads it.
For the vision is still for times yet to be appointed;
Yea, it hastens to fulfilment and shall not fail;
Though it linger, wait for it;
For it shall surely come, it will not tarry.
Behold the wicked—his soul fainteth in him,
But the righteous—he liveth by his faithfulness."[1]

But the written form of apocalypse, its extravagance of symbolism, its angels and dualism, its speculative interests in cosmology and in the future life of the individual, were all new features,

[1] Hab. 2:2–4 (Kent's translation).

due either to the circumstances of the times or to the new interests and influences of the writer's day.

It would be impossible to review in full all the examples of these types of literature. Of the historical romances we have already mentioned several; one of them, *Esther,* is still in our Old Testament canon. Of the apocalyptic literature we have also some representatives in our Bible, but here, again, the bulk of the material belongs to other canons than that which we have inherited. Much of the prophetic writing was already tending to apocalypse. *Ezekiel* and *Zechariah* are filled with its machinery of angels, visions, and symbols. But for apocalypse proper we shall have to turn to the latest additions to *Isaiah* (*e. g.,* 24–27) and *Zechariah* (9–14), and to the great apocalyptic literature which, beginning with the second century, blossomed so profusely in Judaism and was carried over into Christianity to meet the kindred needs of the early church's darkest hours.

There is one volume, however, which, if not the pioneer, is at least an early and excellent example of both these types of literature, and it may be well for us to examine it more closely. The *Book of Daniel,* it is now pretty generally agreed, is a work not of the Persian but of a later period. In authorship it is probably composite, as it is in language. Much if not all of it belongs in date

precisely to the early years of the Maccabean revolt. Its stories, although associated with an ancient figure, Daniel,[1] and furnished with a setting in the days of Nebuchadnezzar and the waning power of Babylon, are nevertheless but a thin disguise for the experiences of the Maccabean martyrs. Daniel and his friends are of the straitest sect of the Jews. They will not eat the king's meat, but confine themselves to a strictly "kosher" diet. Yet they prosper physically and in favor with God and man. Like Esther and Joseph, they receive special favor and recognition from the king. At last they are brought up against the challenge of conscription of conscience. The proscribing of all worship except that of Nebuchadnezzar's golden image, and of all prayer except to Darius the king, are two covert parallels to the Seleucid's plans to enforce Hellenization. But the spirit of resolute fidelity to national institutions, of quiet passive resistance against intolerance and persecution, fortifies and finally justifies the heroes. It is noteworthy, however, that here, as in *Esther* and as possibly under Antiochus Epiphanes himself, the instigators of these difficulties are not the royal persons themselves but their officers and other malicious enemies of the Jews. And here, as there, the faithful Jews are rewarded and see the fate which they have escaped visited upon those who had tried to trap them. Yet

[1] Ezek. 14:14, 20; 28:3.

their courage is mere unflinching obedience, their stand is taken with no assurance of rescue. In the face of almost certain execution as conscientious objectors, they make this defiant reply: "If our God whom we serve be able to deliver us, he will deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and out of thy hand, O king. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up."[1] It was this spirit more than the victories of Judas or the political diplomacy of Jonathan that conserved the national ideals of Judaism in the days of their severest testing.

The apocalyptic passages of *Daniel* are a series of parallel visions in the second and also in the last six chapters of the book. They are symbolic outlines of the world's history from the time of Daniel through the crisis of 165 B. C. Four successive kingdoms are represented by the four materials of the image which the king saw, or by the four beasts of Daniel's vision. The last of them is the divided empire of Alexander, after which "shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed, nor shall the sovereignty thereof be left to another people; but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever." This is symbolized not by a beast but by "one like unto a son of man coming with the clouds of heaven."

[1] Daniel 3:17, 18, margin.

This is the "kingdom of the saints of the Most High." It marks the triumph of the Jewish national hope.

But it is plain that the author's chief interest is not in the future Golden Age but in his own time, the closing period of the fourth kingdom. In Chapter XI, for example, he traces elaborately and fully the succession of Seleucid kings (horns), their wars and alliances with the Ptolemies, and especially the career of Antiochus Epiphanes, and his sacrilege and persecutions in Jerusalem in league with the apostate Hellenizing Jews. These are "the abomination of desolation" and the great tribulation, but they are the prelude to the time of the end. The author ventures an exact prophecy of the duration of this trial—1,290 or 1,335 days. A more general calendar prophecy is the explanation of Jeremiah's seventy weeks—which divide the interval from the fall of Jerusalem to the full end into seventy seven-year periods —seven weeks to the rebuilding of Jerusalem, sixty-two more under the anointed prince until the destruction of city and sanctuary, and a final week or half week (three and one-half years) of unmitigated woe.

But these outlines of culminating sorrow were not intended as threats. They were words of consolation for those who could plainly see that they, themselves, were living in the last days. They were a counsel of patient endurance and

hope. "Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days." The arrogant king that magnifies himself above every god shall come to a miserable end, and they that are wise, though they shall fall by the sword and by flame, by captivity and by spoil many days, shall at last shine as the brightness of the firmament.

Such, in brief, was the Hebrew literature of suppression. In its composite fiction, in its spirit of revenge, in its grotesque symbolism, it has little of attraction in the present day, in either form or contents. The secret hatred of Syria or Rome need no longer be concealed under fictions and analogies, and faith no longer needs the assurance of numerical enigmas or edifying romances. But this literature is still a monument to a deep and admirable national self-consciousness that braved the threats of a forced denationalization and won its permanence through the power of the written word. As compared with the methods of the warriors, these exponents of passive resistance proved afresh that the pen is mightier than the sword. And however one may regret that Hellenism and Judaism, the two great complementary cultures of antiquity, when they first met, met as implacable enemies instead of sympathetic friends, one can still be thankful for the high courage of those Hebrew patriots who out of the darkest experiences of life still held fast to the

national heritage which seemed threatened, and learned to trust in God and in the ultimate triumph of his will in the destiny of both men and nations,—whether by evolution or by miracle, whether in this world or in the world to come.

XXIV

THE MESSIANIC HOPE

THE ideals of Israel, as we have sketched them through the successive centuries of national life, contain a great variety of elements, and at the same time a striking continuity of spirit. The variety is due not only to the different temperaments within the race, but to the different historical experiences through which the people passed. For while in these days, when history is so often misrepresented as the mechanical result of material and economic laws, one cannot stress too emphatically the creative power of ideals on national life, yet one must not overlook the determining effect of historical circumstances upon the ideals of the nation.

But the ideals of Israel, as we have repeatedly declared, long outlived the situation which produced them, and in the later ages of Judaism these accumulations of the past were imperfectly combined in a composite national hope. Although the immediate fulfilment of this hope was always an urgent desire and often a confident expectation, in later Judaism, much more than in the earlier times, it bore little direct relation to the present conditions. It was not merely a next step in national evolution, but the ultimate

ideal. Its immediate fulfilment was possible only by a miracle. And for that reason it was either unconsciously postponed into a vague future or was transferred to another and heavenly world. Such, at least, was the transformation which the Jewish national hope experienced at the hands of its post-canonical exponents, especially the apocalyptic writers. But the Old Testament itself, to which our present study is limited, still retained the more earthly ideal of a perfect state on earth. Throughout the prophetic writings frequent passages embody this expectation. Their date and authorship are often uncertain; they may cover several centuries. Two of the most extensive belong to the period that is called the exile proper: Ezekiel's "constitution of the restored theocracy," and the anonymous prophecy or collection of prophecies concerning Israel's restoration that follow the prophecies of Isaiah.[1] But many shorter passages, including certain poetic sections in the historical books, and even some of the Psalms, belong to this class of writing, whether, as some still maintain, they are of pre-exilic date, or whether they belong to that lengthened exile and subjection of the Jews that continued to the Maccabean era and beyond it.

The chief elements in the Hebrew Utopia are

[1] Ezek. 40–48; Isaiah 40–55 or 40–66. For a convenient collection of the miscellaneous prophetic material on this subject see the closing sections of Kent's *Student's Old Testament*, Vol. 3.

simple and familiar. It will be a nation enjoying all the forms of prosperity that experience and imagination can suggest. Politically the Hebrews will become not only independent but triumphant. They will be the rulers of the world, and Jerusalem will be the centre of a world empire. The lurid features of this programme were expressed by the euphemistic promise that they should see their desire upon their enemies. A crushing victory will be followed by universal and permanent peace. The tribute of all nations will flow into their treasuries, nature itself will yield richer and more frequent harvests. Death will be postponed beyond four-score years of labor and sorrow to the six-score years of the patriarchs, or else will be abolished entirely. Sorrow and sighing, disease and suffering, will disappear.

Moral improvement will correspond to the material advantages, although few passages lay emphasis upon it. It will not be freedom from temptation but a fuller achievement of present standards and a cleansing by suffering and by grace. "A fountain shall be opened . . . for sin and for uncleanness." The remnant which is left shall be thoroughly pure. Only the faithful shall remain—a people humble and poor. Jerusalem's blood stains shall be purged from her midst, "by the breath of judgment and by the breath of burning."[1] Violence, deceit, and idol-

[1] Zech. 13:1; Zeph. 3:12; Isaiah 4:4 (Kent's translation).

atry shall disappear. Justice shall reign in high places.

But upon no feature of this hope for the ideal nation have Christian scholars looked with greater interest than upon the figure of the Messiah, or anointed ruler. From his title the whole expectation is called Messianic, even when, as is often the case, there is no explicit reference to him. In fact, the material in the prophets gives us but few passages that were originally intended as pictures of the expected Messiah. In many prophecies he is omitted entirely, in some he is not an individual but the nation as a whole. In fact, he holds no such central place in the Old Testament as he holds in the early Christian interpretation of it. Even in Judaism he seems to have assumed central importance chiefly with the political effort of the Maccabees and in the three centuries that followed until the revolt of Bar-Cochba (165 B. C.–132 A. D.). And yet in his person is summed up much of the best idealism of the whole national hope.

Most often he is associated with David, the ideal Hebrew monarch. He is either a David *redivivus* or a prince of the Davidic house who shall renew the memories of his ancestor. He comes again from Bethlehem—a branch springing up from the stock of Jesse, like a shoot from the roots of a fallen tree. In familiar passages the supreme qualities and service of this ideal ruler are described:

"The spirit of Jehovah shall rest upon him,
A spirit of wisdom and insight,
A spirit of counsel and might,
A spirit of knowledge and the fear of Jehovah.

He will not judge according to what his eyes see,
Nor decide according to what his ears hear;
But with righteousness will he judge the helpless,
And with equity will he decide for the needy in the land.
He will smite an oppressor with the rod of his mouth,
And with the breath of his lips will he slay the guilty.
Righteousness will be the girdle about his loins,
And faithfulness the band about his waist" (Isaiah 11:2–5, Kent).

"And dominion shall rest upon his shoulder;
And his name will be Wonderful Counsellor,
Godlike Hero, Ever-watchful Father, Prince of Peace.
To the increase of his dominion and to the peace there shall be no end,
On the throne of David and throughout his kingdom,
To establish and uphold it by justice and righteousness
Henceforth and forever. The jealousy of Jehovah will accomplish this" (Isaiah 9:6, 7, Kent).

"Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion!
Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem!
Behold thy king will come to thee;
Vindicated and victorious is he,
Humble, and riding upon an ass,
Upon the foal of an ass.
He shall cut off chariots from Ephraim,
And horses from Jerusalem;
The battle bow shall also be cut off,

And he shall speak peace to the nations;
His rule shall be from sea to sea,
From the river to the ends of the earth" (Zech. 9:9, 10, Kent).

Such, in brief summary, was the scope of the varied predictions of national destiny and of the ideal ruler who should realize them in his own person. But when one turns from an analysis of this hope to a consideration of its effective power, one is impressed by its extraordinary longevity and influence. Through various vicissitudes of a whole millennium there burned constantly this undying optimism. And for a millennium and a half longer it continued in the form of apocalyptic, by which "the courage and persistency of the Jews in their faith, their indomitable hope under persecution, their scorn of death, were all nourished from the time of the Maccabees down to the thirteenth century A. D." [1] The assurance of the nation's destiny grew rather than diminished in the course of time. Neither could success ever entirely fulfil it nor disaster destroy it. Even in the times of severest strain and discouragement the exiles of Israel were "prisoners of hope." [2] Such an idealism was not the unique possession of Israel. "All nations that are worth anything," as an American historian reminds us,

[1] Charles, *Religious Development between the Old and New Testaments*, p. 44.
[2] Zech. 9:12.

"always have had and always will have some ideal of national destiny, and without it would soon disappear, and would deserve their fate." [1] The striking thing about the nationalism of the ancient and of the modern Hebrew is the strength and flexibility of this perennial hope.

The basis for this dauntless optimism was neither national conceit nor blind utopianism, but a religious faith. It was the faith in Jehovah that carried them through the first struggle of their history, and it was the same faith that inspired them until the end. In the words of a recent writer:

> Jehovah was the God of Israel, and Israel the people of Jehovah, from the day of the great deliverance from Egypt. Out of that national faith sprang the hope of the nation, its confidence in Jehovah's ultimate purpose to bless His people. One of the wonderful things in the religion of Israel is the vitality of this hope through changing fortunes, and amid overwhelming disasters, as displayed in its adaptability and recuperative powers, its reinterpretation of the methods of God without forfeiture of faith in His redemptive purpose. That which the New Testament declares of a single generation is not less true of the thousand years of Israel's varied history: "This is the victory that hath overcome the world, even our faith." . . . Because Israel belongs to Jehovah, and can depend on Him, it has a future. The hope in this future, springing from the faith in Jehovah, again and again brings renewed

[1] E. D. Adams, *The Power of Ideals in American History*, p. 68.

strength, and becomes the chief instrument in the maintenance of the "national" existence. It is true that the nationalism which made faith and hope strong sometimes narrowed love to the circle of Israel, or even of faithful Israel. Moreover, the forms in which the hope of the future clothed itself are often to us strangely inadequate to a spiritual religion. Yet it is to Israel's hope that we owe the bringing in of the Christian hope; for that hope is the pulse of Israel's vital strength, the inspiration of its continued life.[1]

And when one goes back a step farther and seeks for the basis of this faith, one meets again a great richness in the Hebrew ideals. It is not that hope really needs an explanation beyond the mere fact of human nature or that an inherent optimism is wont carefully to scrutinize the grounds of its confidence. Faith creates its own foundation by experience. "Faith is the giving substance to things hoped for, a test of things not seen."[2] And yet the Hebrew assurance that Jehovah would bless them was grounded throughout on the nature of God, as with changing emphasis they conceived him. In the first instance, no doubt, their hope in him was because of his national preferences; he would save them because they were his peculiar people. It would be for his own glory. But as the prophets exalted Jehovah above the level of a merely national pa-

[1] H. Wheeler Robinson, *The Religious Ideas of the Old Testament*, pp. 184, 186.

[2] Hebrews 11:1, margin.

tron, their confidence in him was transferred to other grounds. When they declared that his gracious treatment of Israel had been or would be for his name's sake, they meant more than the vindication of his power among the gods of the other nations. They meant that his treatment would demonstrate his character. The prophets appealed also to Jehovah's pride or jealousy, which would not suffer him to live below the highest level that they expected of him. And when they pictured the satisfaction of their hopes they would add, "The zeal of Jehovah will accomplish this." They appealed to his love of Israel, and to his justice in requiting their foes and in rewarding their own faithfulness. They looked back to the beginning of their history as more than an accident or temporary whim of Jehovah. He had separated them from among all the peoples of the earth to be his inheritance.[1] They had come to look upon their reciprocal relations with Jehovah as a covenant in which Jehovah and Israel each voluntarily accepted the other. And God will be faithful to his part of the contract, as faithful as "the laws of nature":

> If ye can break my covenant of the day, and my covenant of the night, so that there shall not be day and night in their season; then may also my covenant be broken with David my servant, that he shall not have a son to reign upon his throne (Jer. 33:20, 21).

[1] I Kings 8:53.

The term covenant to the modern mind suggests a treaty in which each party's undertakings are contingent upon the fidelity of the other, and this feature was frequently present in prophetic predictions of blessing. But many of God's promises were looked upon by the Hebrews as unqualified and absolute. Unfaithfulness might delay them, and faithfulness might bring them near, but nothing could cancel them. God had sworn with an oath and would not repent. His election of Israel was an unalterable relation. His promises were yea and amen forever. Thus as an ultimate destiny the national hope of Israel rested upon nothing less than the promises of God.

But the Hebrew was convinced that God not only wished their triumph, but that he could do whatever he would. They trusted his ability as well as his fidelity. With their enlarging idea of Jehovah's sphere went hand in hand an enlarging conception of his power. Nothing was too hard for him. He could save by many or by few. All the nations were in his hand. He was the creator of things and controlled the course of history. The future would manifest his purposes as the past had manifested them. Thus the Hebrew hope rested upon the lessons of history. History was interpreted spiritually and as the revelation of God's purpose. What God has done, God can do. He saved Israel from Egypt; he can save

them from Babylon. He made a great nation of a little one; he can do it again. All the forces of nature are in his hand. He can transform even defeat into success.

It is this reliance upon God as the basis of the national hope that explains a feature of that hope that we have already alluded to. Though the Old Testament writers consistently confine their expectation to this earth, they lay little emphasis upon the human leader or leaders through whom their hope is fulfilled. The Messiah is not the initiator of reconstruction nor the real creator of the ideal state. He is, after all, only an agent anointed and appointed by God. He is second and subservient to God, exalted, to be sure, among men, yet merely the agent of Jehovah. Frequently, as we have said, the Messiah is conspicuously absent from the outline. His place is more than filled by God. God, himself, is often spoken of as the true king among his people, a conception which continued from an early period even through the New Testament. Whenever men fixed their minds on the immediate political achievement of their national hope they thought chiefly of the agent of liberation, and many of them followed wandering fires of those who cried, "Lo, here!" and, "Lo, there!" It was this false expectation that gave Jesus the most eager and the most embarrassing personal popularity. But whenever men sought to found their hope not on

political machinations but on the more fundamental ideals of faith, then, like Jesus himself, they turned their thoughts away from the programme of a Messiah to confidence in the purpose of God. Therefore, though neither phrase occurs exactly in the Old Testament, its final national ambition and expectation is not so well expressed by the usual term, "the Messianic hope," as it is by the rabbinic and Christian term, "the Kingdom of God."

XXV

NATIONALISM TRANSCENDED

THE ideal of nationalism contains many features that seem hostile to the best interests of mankind. It often fosters hatred, cruelty, and egoism. An Oriental poet, Rabindranath Tagore, has freshly reminded us of the unlovely features of our own western nationalism. And in the World War we have seen the recrudescence of the spirit of predatory patriotism in all its conceit and jealous ugliness. In studying the older nationalism of the Jews we have found many selfish, material, divisive forces which made the race the enemy of all others. The present writer would not be misunderstood as favoring all the national ideals which it has been his duty to record. On the contrary, he would suggest that the value of all such narrow loyalties lies chiefly in their contribution to still higher forms of allegiance. And just such a surpassing of its own frontiers is happily one of the inevitable results of any intensified loyalty. To define limits is at once to transcend them. So the growth of nationalism slowly prepares the way for internationalism.

To trace this transcending of nationalism in

late Judaism and in Christianity is a task that lies beyond the confines of this sketch, which has been limited to the Old Testament. That Christianity became the heir to all the best ideals of Judaism, without the limitations of race and nation, is a familiar fact, and one that explains its superior catholicity and ecumenical power. But it may be proper as a summary of our present study to gather together some of the international suggestions and implications that meet us even before the closing of the canon of Hebrew Scriptures.

In the first place, the experiences of their history brought to the Hebrews a greatly widened political horizon. As the earlier writings tend to confine attention to Palestine and its immediate environs, the later books show the influence of foreign ideas and races. Conquest and exile, travel and trade, trained the Jews to think in imperial terms. Nowhere is this more clearly seen than in the enlargement of their national hope. Modelled originally on their *status quo ante,* or at most upon the zenith of national expansion under David, the restoration hope soon surpassed these bounds.[1] The restoration of the original Israel was not enough; only a far greater empire could suffice. It was natural that this super-state should be conceived primarily along conventional lines—as an empire like those of

[1] Isaiah 49:6; 56:8.

Nineveh or Tyre. The prophets pictured Jerusalem as the capital of a great military despotism, as the metropolis of a huge international commerce. Even religious conformity was assumed as the essential of such an organization, and Zion was to become a house of prayer to all peoples.

But there were other conceptions of international relations than the imperialist ideals. There were many who hoped that Israel's supremacy would be not something imposed on the nations, but their own free choice. They were willing to trust the inherent superiority of their own God and their religion to win for themselves the exalted place that they deserved. By a kind of survival of the fittest they awaited the time when the earth should be filled with the knowledge of Jehovah as the waters cover the sea. "In those days," writes one of these seers, "ten men shall take hold, out of all the languages of the nations, they shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you." [1]

To fulfil such a destiny no great martial enterprises will be needed. Indeed, no great national organization or effort is required. Even active missionary campaigns are not contemplated. God himself will draw the nations unto him. The duty of Israel is personal faithfulness to its ideals. Zerubbabel is to restore the nation, not by

[1] Zech. 8:23.

an army, nor by power, but by God's spirit.[1] To the prophet of the exile, as to the author of *Acts*, the duty of missions is the duty of a "witness." As a missionary nation the Jews are to be God's witnesses—the bearers of his light. In the same prophecy is incorporated that other splendid ideal of international service, and the suggestion is plain that it depends not upon the exercise of authority, like that of the kings of the Gentiles, but upon the humble and patient fidelity of the divinely instructed teacher.

In another way nationalism was transcended by the prophets through their new emphasis upon morality. The transfer is most readily recognized in their new conception of God, who is regarded as more interested in righteousness than in Israel, his own elect people. Such a moral interest runs right across all national lines of prejudice, and draws new lines between the righteous and the wicked, irrespective of race or creed. It is indifferent to the imagined advantages of Levitical ritual. As an anonymous prophet declares, even the Gentiles offer as pure a sacrifice and honor Jehovah's name as greatly as do the Jews.[2] In the books of *Ruth* and *Jonah*, as we have already noted, occurs this same protest against religious particularism. Even the great rivals of Israel are not rejected in God's sight. God will own them, also.

[1] Zech. 4:6, margin. [2] Malachi 1:11.

In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, a blessing in the midst of the earth; for that Jehovah of hosts hath blessed them, saying, Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel mine inheritance (Isaiah 19:24, 25).

The new emphasis upon ethics not only destroyed national boundaries, it suggested new classifications. Within Israel the prophets already are harbingers of a party, if not a class consciousness. The moral line they draw often follows very closely the division between exploiter and exploited, rich and poor, aristocracy and proletariat. Of international class solidarity we see as yet no suggestions. Yet the lawgivers remind the slave owner that his fathers were once serfs in Egypt, and they legislate against partiality in law courts due to the poverty of the defendant or to the multitude of his sympathizers, quite as much as they deprecate bribery by the rich.

In geographical setting, also, the standards of the prophets tended to transcend national limitations. As far as the Old Testament is concerned, the scene for these projected ideals was always thought of as the earth. But it is the whole earth that is to share the blessing and not merely the limited area of Palestine and the familiar environs of Jerusalem. Sometimes a complete transformation of the earth was included, with new laws of longevity and fertility, and even the taming of

wild animals. The poet calls this a new heaven and a new earth.[1] But still it is a real sky and earth and by no means supramundane. One of the characteristics of the later Jewish idealism—found, also, in Christianity—is the transfer of this national and international hope beyond the earthly sphere. In some cases, as in the *Book of Revelation*, the old and the new ideal are combined. There is first a temporary millennium upon earth and later eternal life in heaven. But it is the latter conception that finally prevailed. Zion became a universal symbol.

In accordance with this transcendence of nationalism, apocalyptic relied more and more on the supernatural forces to realize the national hopes. Already in *Daniel* we perceive that battles on earth between nations are really settled by conflicts between their representatives in heaven. God himself by miracle will establish his kingdom rather than through the slow, painful, and erratic efforts of men. It would be interesting to show the manifold effects upon national idealism of this expectation of a miraculous interposition. In the modern premillennial hope we can see something of its various implications. Its shortcomings are well described in a recent essay by Professor Porter of Yale.[2] Though "the faults of materialism and of self-interest which belong to the naïve nationalism of Israel's begin-

[1] Isaiah 65:17–25. [2] *Religion and the War*, p. 44.

nings are still present in the conscious and sophisticated other-worldliness of the apocalyptic hopes," nevertheless the prejudices become political rather than religious, and the agencies are a kind of divine intervention instead of the petty diplomacy and warfare of human relationships.

In still another direction the tendencies in Judaism were breaking the bonds of nationalism. The age was, as we have declared, an era of intensification of nationalism, but that tendency by no means excluded the growth of individualism as well. Indeed, the older view was that in this era individualism was taking the place of nationalism, being characteristic of the post-exilic period as the other was characteristic of the pre-exilic consciousness. This view is well corrected by Professor Knudson in a chapter previously quoted. The exile neither ended nationalism nor created individualism. "Nationalism and individualism in their higher forms, instead of being mutually antithetical, were really mutually complementary." [1]

And yet individualism in religion or politics is naturally the destroyer of the narrower nationalism. When the supreme relation in life is between man and a universal God or a universal empire, other loyalties are wont to sink into abeyance. Humanity, not nationality, is the social group in which intenser individualism finds

[1] Knudson, *Religious Teaching of the Old Testament*, p. 340.

its fellowship and expression. As Judaism and the whole world discovered in the era of the Roman Empire, cosmopolitanism in culture, individualism in philosophy and religion, internationalism in politics, are natural concomitants.

At any rate, the age of which we speak shows strongly in its literature the intensification of individualism. As the national unit was expanding into the larger international conception, at the same time it was also making room for the smaller personal unit. While Ezekiel and Jeremiah differ in their international expectation, the former excluding, the latter including, the Gentiles, they agree upon their emphasis on personal religion. The *Book of Psalms* shows, also, this transformation. It is, no doubt, the national hymn-book and probably many, even of the so-called "I" Psalms, should be understood as the collective expressions of national life. At the same time other psalms have an unmistakably personal sound. And by its intense feeling and by its inevitable applicability to personal religion the lyric rather than the social consciousness came to predominate in the use of the whole psalter.

Jewish legalism, too, was increasingly personal. No doubt the old patriotic motive continued in Pharisaism—the hope that all Israel, by keeping the law for one day even, might secure its corporate redemption. But since the law extended so intimately into personal acts and even motives,

it naturally created a greater personal self-consciousness. The Jew was interested in his own conformity and even in his own reward.

So even eschatology became personal. Personal immortality or resurrection, a doctrine barely suggested in the Old Testament, was no doubt greatly fostered by Persian, Egyptian, and other foreign influences; but it, too, was a natural outcome of forces native to Judaism. When the national hope still burned brightly, personal reward was simply a share in the national glory. But what of those who had fallen asleep? Must their surviving comrades sorrow for them even as the rest who have no hope? Naturally, the only consolation that God could give to the martyrs was a share after death in the national restoration. This is the view-point of the *Book of Daniel.* But as the hope of national restoration grew dim or vague or superterrestrial, the ultimate fate of the individual came into the foreground of interest. This question is also characteristic of the religious movements of the later Jewish era; and, as Professor Charles has shown, the eschatology of the individual merged with and finally overshadowed the eschatology of the nation. "The eternal worth ascribed to the nation was thus also attributed to the individual, and the two were united in a final synthesis." [1]

For the national questions of the new day,

[1] Knudson, *Religious Teaching of the Old Testament*, p. 349.

however, the Old Testament still has a message of permanent value. But that message is not its cruder nationalism, which in popular opinion makes it either a contrast or a supplement to the New Testament. What it shares with the New Testament is its chief glory. "It is the prophetic denial of national claims and hopes, not the older and always prevalent assertion of them, that constitutes the reality and truth of the Old Testament hope. It is hope for Jehovah and his righteousness, not for Israel and its glory." [1] And this transcendent hope is not to be fulfilled either by the dreams of national *Weltmacht* or by visions of a divine cataclysm. It is to be realized by a transformation of national character and ideals. "The prophet's criticism of the national hope and reinterpretation of it as the hope for righteousness really struck at the heart of the materialism and selfishness of the popular national hope, its false pride and its denial of trust and of good-will toward mankind." [2] And the same criticism and reinterpretation of national ideals is needed again to-day. Perhaps a real superstate would help create much of the new spirit required—patriotism giving place to compatriotism, nationalism to supernationalism. Certainly no mere formula or compact can suffice alone. "Organization and new machinery are needed. But to avail much, reconstruction must proceed from within: New

[1] Porter, *op. cit.*, p. 41. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 43.

ideals stretching beyond frontiers; the realizing of new duties; a wider outlook; less idolatry of the State; more regard to society as something larger than the State; an effort to rise nearer to the height of the ancient conception of States as so many mansions of one city." [1]

To such supernationalism the many spiritual hopes of the prophets lead us. But if we cultivate the narrower nationalism, like that of Judaism, with its arrogance and cruelty, we shall be making ourselves unfit for the world society which shall be the Kingdom of God.

[2] Macdonell, in *Contemporary Review*, March, 1918.

CONCLUSION

THE story of Israel's experience, from whatever special angle it be considered, is a tale of romance that has perennial interest. But when it is examined as the development of great ideals, it is a story of distinctly modern meaning. Not only does it afford many parallels to situations in our own national and international life: it supplies as well a kind of perspective and direction for our own study of modern problems. Over against the pessimism that finds in history a mechanical and unyielding process, an alternation between incurable stagnation and irresistible revolution, the career of the Hebrews shows the pliability of the stuff that moulds a people's life. It shows the developmental character of national ideals, and the creative power of mere ideals in shaping a nation's destiny.

In peculiar degree the experience of Israel is a stimulus to the individual. In the courageous leaders of its successive crises it makes manifest the place of personal initiative in the guidance of public opinion and action. And this influence is quite as manifest in the examples of minority patriots, the misunderstood and misused idealists, as in the more prosperous and popular heroes of military success and political orthodoxy. The story of Israel is, as an early Christian writer ob-

served, the story of men of faith, a series of individuals whose power was commensurate to the obstacles which they overcame.

Finally the experience of Israel indicates by its direction, if not by its achievement, something of the goal that still awaits the approach of a slowly perfecting national idealism. There was much in the nationalism of Israel that illustrates, as it has been used to justify, the baser limitations of modern provincial chauvinism, national jealousy, and political immorality. But as the religion of the Old Testament prepared the way for that of the New, so at least in its higher reaches its political idealism contains the germs of the more Christian statecraft and world order toward which Christendom is so tragically groping. Surely, in days of the world's direst need, this message of guidance and hope which the Bible contains should not be hidden under the covering of scholarship or obscured by theology, but should be proclaimed in the market-place and the forum for all men to hear.

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