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-- THE MESSIANIC IDEA --

International Critical Commentary

Dict. of Rel. and Eth. (ed. by Shailer Mathews and G.R. Smith)

Hollinckott & Strong. Bib., Theol., & Eccles. Cyclop.

-- CHARLES FRANKLIN ROBERTS -- Bible

Encyc. of Religion and Ethics

The Expositor's Bible

Blunt - The Future of Islam

Burggronje - Mohammedanism

Attarney - Islam in Africa

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Houlton - Early Christianity

Hills - Jewish Eschatology

Hachmann - Judaism as a Religion

August, 1922.

Saint - Muhammad and his Religion

Reed - Primitive Christianity

Greystone - The Messianic Idea in Jewish History

Moore - History of Religions

Vallis - Messianism: Christian and Pagan

Kent - Makers and Teachers of Judaism

History of the Hebrew People

- Encyclopaedia Biblica
- " Brittanica
- Jewish Encyclopaedia
- Catholic "
- Shaff-Herzog "
- Cyclopaedia of Biblical Literature, *edited by Kittel*
- International Critical Commentary
- Dict. of Rel. and Eth. (ed. by Shailer Mathews and G.B. Smith)
- McClintock & Strong- Bib., Theol., & Eccles. Cyclop.
- Hastings - Dictionary of the Bible
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- Moore - History of Religions
- Wallis - Messiahs: Christian and Pagan
- Kent - Makers and Teachers of Judaism
- " - History of the Hebrew People
- " - " " " Jewish "

Barton - The Religions of the World

Smith - Old Testament History

" - The Religion of Israel

Mathews - A History of New Testament Times in Palestine

Knudson - The Religious Teaching of the Old Testament

Hopkins - The History of Religions

C.H.Moore - Religious Thought of the Greeks

Barton - The Religion of Israel

Peritz - Old Testament History

Charles - Eschatology: Hebrew, Jewish, and Christian

Oesterley - Evolution of the Messianic Idea

Goodspeed - Israel's Messianic Hope

I. General Survey

The idea of the Messiah had a large background. The messianic

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his people from their enemies and make them dominant in the

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II. Judaism and Christianity

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IV. Buddhism

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V. Islam

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I. General Survey

The idea of the Messiah had a large background. The messianic idea has been widely represented among various peoples. It grows from the age-old notion of a deliverer who is to arise and save his people from their troubles and make them dominant in the world. It is a growth from a combination of political and religious ideas. It was most prominent originally in its political phases, but also took a religious turn. Thus the Jewish Messiah was to be a political ruler, but was to rule for the Lord of Hosts. He was to rule the world for God, and give his people first place among the peoples of the world.

The idea of a Messiah has appeared in many religions in the world. Islam awaits a Mahdi, or "Director", who is to rectify the injustice of the world. Many leaders have appeared who claimed to be the Mahdi. The Shiites expect the return of the last Imam, whose advent they await. The reappearance of Hakim, who is the revered founder of the Druses, is expected by that sect. The Isma'ili sect awaits the return of a Mahdi, Mohammed Ibn Ismail, of the family of Ali. There have been various Mahdi in Spain and Africa at different periods among the Muslims in those regions. One of the most noted of these was Mohammed Ahmed Ibn Seyyid Abdullah, who was born in 1848 in Dongalo, in the Sudan. He had a career of revolt religious authority, and finally promulgated new religious and social laws, proclaiming himself the Mahdi. His followers, oppressed by taxes, rose in revolt against the Turks, who were assisted by the English. At the hands of the rebels "Chinese" Gordon met his death at Khartoum, which was stormed by the forces of the Mahdi. The move-

ment was a formidable one and was not quelled till Kitchener came on the scene and suppressed it.

About the middle of the nineteenth century there appeared in Persia a messianic leader. He called himself the Báb or Gate. He was executed but a following grew up. The sect is called after its founder and its doctrine is called Bahaism. The leader is called the Baha and is regarded as the incarnation of God. There has been a succession of these Bahas but the last leader has declared that he shall have no successor.

The Buddhist religion is not one of regeneration. It is one of passive resignation. There is little room for any messianic expectation in it. *There has long been a conception of an ideal king* But the messianic faith is not ~~absent~~ absent. *At the end of our era, Avolokita, the thousandth and last of the Buddhas, who* At the end of our era, Avolokita, the thousandth and last of the Buddhas, is to appear, will come. Also, by some, it is thought that Krishna will return at the end of all time. He will establish an age of perfection. The Japanese seem to have had more messianic hope generated among them than the other Buddhists. Probably this is due to the temperament of the Japanese people. They are more active and less passive and resigned than other Orientals.

Various messianic leaders have risen among the American Indians and the negroes in America. In August, 1831, a body of negroes massacred fifty-five whites in Virginia. Their leader, Nat Turner, declared that he had been commissioned by Jesus Christ and that he was acting under inspired direction. Among the negroes in Africa, a stable government causes the number of Madhis to become fewer. Various leaders have come into view among the aborigines of North America. They purported to be able to restore the buffalo herds to the red man and

to deliver the Indians from the encroachments of the white man.

In Christianity many sects have stressed this idea, among them being the Montanists and some of the Anabaptists. Some of the latter took possession of the city of Münster, in Germany, in 1533 and reduced it to a state of anarchy till they were suppressed. There have been a number of men who claimed to have been reincarnations of Christ. One of these was Savely Kapustin, founder of the Doukhobor sect. The Russelites have been votaries of messianism, believing in the second coming of Christ and ^{the} cataclysmic revolution of the world order of society.

At present there is going on a pre-millennialist movement which is having a profound influence. By many the end of the world is expected in 1925. This agitation is due much to the unsettled conditions of society following the world war. Times of stress and excitement are periods prolific of messianic agitation. When the condition of instability due to war effects passes away there will be a great diminishing of the power and influence of the movement.

The demand for Messiahs is due to the eternal hope for better things that flickers in the human breast. Suffering humanity is always looking for a deliverer. It is noteworthy that messianic beliefs have never flourished in nations which were never under bondage, such as Rome; or, if they did, it was only in sporadic cases and for limited periods. As living conditions grow better in the world there will be less demand for Messiahs. The human spirit will be more contented and people will realize that the kingdom of God comes not merely from a force external to them-

selves, but that its realization depends on their own wholehearted cooperation. They should do their best to bring in the kingdom themselves. The messianic idea shows the desire in the heart of man for a divine kingdom and if Messiah's kingdom would be realized, the desire for a Messiah would by that time have ceased.

II. - Judaism and Christianity -

(3-)

Stoicism was prevalent at the advent of Christianity. Paul was born in Tarsus, a university city which was permeated with Stoic doctrines. The Christian religion was profoundly influenced by Stoicism. The two were much the same with the exception that the latter was a philosophy and the former was a religion, which could be taken up by the masses of the people. Greek thought had reached a tone of high morality. Its viewpoint was ethical. By the native power of the Greek mind, a high point of idealism had been attained. But what the Greeks had been doing in speculative thought, another people had been working out in its own experience. Greek philosophy was confined to a few thinkers but Hebrew religious experience was nation-wide in its scope. It embraced the whole Hebrew people, the Jews both of Palestine and the dispersion. The junction of Greek and Hebrew forms of thought was of wonderful influence in the world.

In a study of Jewish apocalyptic thought we find that many other nations influenced Judaism by their messianic ideas. Other nations had the same line of thought. We find traces of it in Babylonia, Assyria, and Egypt. Aurnasipal's prayer to Ishtar shows belief in the ruler's divine mission. "But thou, O Ishtar,----didst teach me, and didst desire my rule." In Egypt Merneptah is regarded as the protector of Egypt's peace and is accordingly praised: "How magnified is the king among the ^{gods} ~~Gods~~, how fortunate is he, the commanding lord!"

In Zoroastrian religion the idea of a political and moral savior is quite plainly seen. The idea is implied in the Gathas and expressed fully in the nineteenth Yast. The Saoshyant is the Iranian messiah. He is the last and the greatest of three millennial prophets and will bring in the day of judgment for all mankind. His predecessors pave

(6)

-16-

the way. Each of them rules for a thousand years and gives some improvement to the world.

The history of Palestine is one of the most tragic of all national stories. A small country, poor and rugged, it is situated on one of the great highways of civilization, the pathway between Egypt and Mesopotamia. Its career has been one long story of conquest and struggle. It has been beset in all ages by stronger powers. It is out of the agony of her political existence that Judea gave to the world her unrivalled teachings in religion.

The belief in the Messiah grew out of the national misfortunes of Judea. A deliverer was to arise who was to save Judea from her enemies. A new world era was to be ushered in, in which the enemies of Zion were to be put to rout. The Jews would reign supreme and the rest of the world would be subordinate. There were many different views of the Messiah and what he was to be like. The prophet Ezekiel expressed his own idea of the matter as follows: "And my servant David shall be king over them; and they shall all have one shepherd; they shall also walk in mine ordinances, and observe my statutes, and do them." The Messiah was to be a political ruler, and sway the destinies of men. Direct force and compulsory authority were to be the agencies for establishing the kingdom of God on earth. This nationalistic hope is also seen in the appeals of Haggai and in the trumpet-like summons of Zechariah. It grew to wide dimensions in the Maccabean period of Jewish history and persisted in the time of Rome's domination, as is seen in the Psalms of Solomon, which were written near the beginning of the

Roman period. Another proof of this is seen in the number of the followers of the numerous false Messiahs that sprang up from time to time, each claiming to be the savior of the people from the foreign tyrant.

The apocalyptic messianic belief, which was transferred to Christianity, made supernatural intervention the agency for the redemption of the world. There was to be a cataclysm, an upsetting of the world order, and the Son of Man was to issue from heaven and take change of his kingdom, exalting his chosen people and destroying its enemies. His chosen followers should then inherit the eternal kingdom. This is found in Joel, and also in parts of Ezekiel and Zechariah.

Finally, particularly in the great unknown prophet of the Exile, there is the conception of the messianic hope as applied to King Cyrus the Great of Persia who was called Messiah by Deutero Isaiah but in later times the title came to be given to the suffering servant mentioned by the prophet. This was the most spiritual idea of the O. T. Through suffering, Israel was to be brought back to God. It was to be reconciled in its affliction and then would come the good tidings of the new era. Deutero Isaiah is notable for his message of good cheer and encouragement. Good times were coming, and Israel was to be restored in glory.

Just before the Christian era, the Jewish messianic hopes were a curious medley of these conflicting ideas. In the general confusion the higher conceptions were to a large extent lost and the political and apocalyptic theories were the ones most generally accepted. But of what after all, was this messianic hope a manifestation? Can we

say that it was merely the crude form taken by the nationalistic aspirations of the Jewish people? Or shall we say that it was the form of a slowly developing consciousness of a higher life? It was, when seen from the highest viewpoint, the manifestation of the struggle of the Jews toward the most exalted spiritual ideal, which should be the inspiration of all the world, and the breath of life to all humanity. This ideal was realized in Jesus and confirmed by ^{the idea of} his return to earth, and ~~by~~ ^{by} the conception of the Master, as the spiritual power in the hearts of human kind, thus enabling others to press on from character to character, and become in a very real sense, also the sons of God.

The unique quality of Judaism was its concreteness. It was the product of actual experience. It was not a theory, it was a reality. Its full fruition was in Jesus, who embodied its highest ideals so completely that he transcended them and founded a new religion. He gave a concrete concreteness to the new religion that was lacking in the abstract philosophy of the Stoics. Christianity was full of life, with a historical person as its center, while Stoicism was aloof from the common man. Its philosophic ideals, its abstract theory, was accessible only to the learned few, and not many even of these could, by individual and single effort, approximate the self-sufficient wise man of the Stoics. Christianity was full of meaning to the unlearned man. This was due to the innate practical quality of the Hebrew religion, based as it was on actual life and experience. This practical quality was not lost in Christianity, with Jesus as its historic founder. And it was due to the messianic idea that its message could be made effective in the world. Through this one could gain the inspiration and the

contented repose given by the personal allegiance to Jesus of Nazareth

Let us now see what part this messianic idea played in the life of Jesus. We can now ascertain why Jesus was called Messiah and discern his own idea of himself as Messiah. What did Jesus think of this conception which had so dominant an influence in Jewish thought and what was the idea of later generations on earth about the messianic character of the career of Jesus in his life on earth?

Eschatology is a permanent element in religion. The future of man and the world is a topic that cannot be separated from the religious nature of man. It is a subject for speculation in all ages. Not only did the ancients theorize about it but even in present times we find men talking about the end of the world and writing books about it. The Bible predictions set the end of the world more than eighteen centuries ago. Since Biblical times many dates have been set for this momentous event and when the predictions failed of fulfilment a new date would be set. The millennialists are apparently not discouraged by repeated disillusionment.

To the ancient Jew the thing of most importance was the establishment of God's kingdom on earth. How this was to be done was a subsidiary consideration. It was generally supposed, however, that it would be done by some vice-gerent of God and not by God himself as the Almighty himself was too transcendent to take part directly. Messiah, as the agent of God, would come to the earth and transform it. In the mind of Jesus the idea grew up that the Messiah would be heralded by a prophet who would announce the coming of the heavenly messenger. This was really the union of two separate earlier ideas. One party held that God's lieutenant would be a prophet and another

(10)

-11-

believed that his agent would be a delivering Messiah.

This eschatological note, this looking forward to a new time, is found in the Old Testament. It is the very core of the New Testament. It is a leading element in Matthew, Luke, and John. Paul's whole message was permeated by it. He was trying to prepare as many as possible for the coming of the Messiah. It is found in other New Testament literature as well. Revelations is purely apocalyptic and pseudo-Pauline letters such as II Thessalonians are full of messianic doctrine.

There is no doubt that Jesus held the contemporary belief in a coming Messiah. He was a man under the influence of the ideas of his own time and was affected very much by them. He was a thorough Jew and as such was saturated with the ideas of Judaism. But there is no indication that he thought that he was himself the Messiah until the last few months of his mission. It seems that it was a gradual conviction that grew in his mind.

In Mark we see that Jesus did not openly proclaim himself as Messiah. He kept the matter as ^a secret among his disciples. He charged them that they should tell no one. It was not the time to announce it as he would be mocked and persecuted and it could do no good but only cloud the issue. He was not to be Messiah here and now but in the future time when he should come. He felt his own power and knew the influence he exerted. As he pondered what his mission was to be, the belief was borne in upon him that he was Messiah himself. The gospels of Matthew and Luke show the effects of later generations which denoted the life of Jesus on earth as messianic.

Jesus was expected to return soon after his death by the earliest Christians. When it was never realized, since he must be Messiah, they reasoned, his life here must have been messianic. This idea was prevalent when the gospels of Matthew, Luke, and John were written. So all through the first two (Matthew and Luke) we find references to his messianic character. The title is scattered through these gospels. They use it far more freely than does Mark, who seems to have a rather vague conception of Jesus as Messiah; while the whole gospel of John has this idea as its very core. It is the theme of this entire gospel.

As Jesus was a disciple of John the Baptist and was baptized by him it is natural that he should ascribe a high place to his preceptor. It was evident that John ^{was not} himself the Messiah. In fact, John sent to Jesus, demanding if he were the divine vice-gerent. He would not have done this if he had thought himself to be the anointed one. To Jesus he came to personify the prophet who was to appear before Messiah.

The high opinion of John held by Jesus is well attested in the gospels.

The belief in Jesus as the Messiah was at first confined to the circle of the disciples. Peter's confession was a flash of intuitive speculation. Peter, as usual, was the first to jump at a conclusion. With his customary forwardness, when asked the question, "who say ye that I am" Peter was the first to speak out, with an unusual insight, what was in the mind of Jesus.

But Jesus did not believe that he was the Messiah while on earth. His mission here was utterly unlike that of a Messiah, who was the inaugurator of a new world order and was not interested in morality or a new religious revelation to men. He was the Messiah to come and his preparation was his work as a teacher and prophet. His supreme

elevation was to be attained through trial and suffering. In his own mind he accepted the position as one not of pleasure but of supreme responsibility.

It is a mistake to suppose that Jesus offered himself as Messiah to the Jewish people. As the narrative is given in Mark, the most reliable account of the gospel story, the entrance of Jesus into Jerusalem was not that of a Messiah but of a popular prophet. Jesus was not the kind of a man that the Messiah was to be. His mission was quite different. He realized this himself since he placed the coming of the kingdom after his death. The Messiah was to be an executive who would redeem the world by power deliberately used. Jesus was a religious teacher who could deliver people by changing their hearts.

He was put to death because he was a menace to the established priesthood of Judea. His accusation before the tribunals on the charge of blasphemy was merely a pretext. He was not executed because he did not deny himself to be Messiah; organized authority wanted him out of the way, as a menace to their privileges. To do this they used the first convenient excuse.

In his own consciousness Jesus was his own forerunner in his specific work as Messiah. Though John the Baptist was the prophet preceding Messiah, yet the direct preparation for Jesus the Messiah was Jesus the prophet and teacher. He would make the world ready for himself as Messiah by his own work as a teacher. He needed no one to do the work of preparation. He did it himself in his own life mission.

The great work of Jesus lay outside the field of eschatology. It was not his messianic beliefs that made him what he is but his spir-

itual teaching. He did not teach merely "interim" ethics. The moral principles instilled by him into his followers are permanent in their nature. Though the purpose might have been to prepare for a temporary period of waiting for the kingdom of God to arrive, yet the principles he taught are of permanent value. Some of Paul's ethics are purely interim. They would not fit modern needs. But this cannot be said of those taught by Jesus, whose principles are of lasting value.

Jesus taught that the way to gain entrance to the heavenly kingdom is to live as if you were already in it. Jesus was a moral genius and had the vision of the ideal human life. When he talked of the religious and moral life he talked of it not in terms of a kingdom, with a political ruler, but of the family with a loving father as its head. He speaks of God always as a father, never as a king.

The messianic belief probably gave a stimulus and urgency to the work of Jesus which it might otherwise somewhat have lacked. This belief was the framework of his mission though it was not the mission itself. It was the setting for his work. It had the same function as a tool in the hands of a great sculptor, with which he carves out his matchless work of art. Jesus took the messianic belief in its literal form. He made no change in it. In his opinion it was not necessary to change the conception but to fit the conception himself, when he came back as Messiah.

Jesus was mistaken in his apocalyptic messianic views; but he was right in his moral teaching and his ideas on the nature of the kingdom of God. There is a new world order coming into existence.

But it is a gradual evolution, not a catastrophic overturning of the world. Jesus' own teaching had the seeds of this truth in his parables of the mustard seed and the leaven that leavened the whole lump. So he was, in a certain sense, a real turning point in the world's history though his mission is not what he thought it to be.

We must view Jesus in his essential character as the herald of the kingdom of God. He does not paint pictures of it such as we find in apocalyptic literature. He simply tells us how to live so as to enter it. We are to live the spiritual life as God's children. We must live a moral life which is done by the influence of the divine spirit in the soul. This spirit is a leavening influence in human life. By such a life we can prepare for the advent of God's kingdom and partake of its blessedness.

Tendencies toward a synthesis of Greek and Hebrew thought culminated in the system of Philo, an Alexandrian Jew of priestly family. Philo was a contemporary of Jesus. He combined Greek philosophy allegorically with the Hebrew scriptures. In his thought, God is absolutely transcendent. We cannot comprehend or define him, who is higher than the highest good. Philo assumes intermediate powers or agents and combines them into one which he calls the Logos, the divine Reason or Wisdom. The Logos consists of the attributes of God conceived as a being distinct from him. It is a being intermediate between God and the world. By means of the Logos, acting as God's agent, the world of visible things was formed. The Logos as agent corresponded somewhat to the Jewish notion of angels and demons. Later, Jesus came to be regarded as the Logos incarnate, as is seen in the Fourth Gospel. The transformation of the histor-

ical Jesus into the theological Christ, the world Logos, went steadily on and is fully evident long before the council of Nicea in 325 A.D. By that time the personality of Jesus had been obscured in the mazes of theology and philosophy. By some he was regarded as the incarnation of the Logos of philosophy and by others the Messiah expected by the Jews. By most orthodox Christians he is regarded as a kind of combination of the two. He is a personal leader and yet he partakes of the divine spirit. He is the Son of God. He is a kind of individual representation of the Logos. The Logos expresses itself in his individual personality.

In bringing to pass the wonderful and happy future, the obedient will be assisted by seven and fifteen angels. Together they perform a high service, the virtue of which will bring about the redemption and blessing of humanity.

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In the Zoroastrian creed the term Saoshyant is used to denote priest, deliverer, saint. It designates the leader of the company who will aid at the general resurrection in renovating the world. The birth of the Savior, Saoshyant, is miraculous." Zaratrust went near unto his wife Hvov three times, and each time the seed went to the ground; then an angel Neryosang received the brilliance and of that seed, delivered it with care to the angel Anahid, and in time will blend it with a mother. Nine thousand, nine hundred and ninety-nine, and nine myriads of the guardian spirits of the righteous are entrusted with its protection, so that the demons may not injure it. (1) The seed is preserved in lake Kasava, till at the end of the earthly cycle, the maid Eredat-fedhri, bathing in the lake will conceive by that seed and bring forth the Savior, Saoshyant. His two fore-runners, Ukhshyat-ereta and Ukhshyat-Nemah, will be born in the same way of Srutat-fedhri and Vanghu-fedhri.

The victorious Saoshyant with his helpers shall restore the world, which henceforth never will grow old and never die, never decaying and never rotting, ever living and ever increasing, and master of its wish, when the dead will rise, when life and immortality will come, and the world will be restored at its wish; when the prosperous creation of the good spirit will grow deathless, and the evil spirit shall perish, though she may rush on every side to kill the holy beings. She and her brood shall perish, as it is the will of the Lord.

In bringing to pass the wonderful and happy future, Saoshyant will be assisted by fifteen men and fifteen damsels. Together they perform a final sacrifice, the virtue of which will bring about the resurrection and the blessings of immortality.

(1) Ys. 48:9, 46:3

There will be a long conflict with evil but saoshyant will be victorious.

These conceptions are not borrowed from Judaism. In the earliest Iranian literature there is expressed the hope of
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a coming Savior. The idea is certainly Zoroastrian. The worshipping Magi who centuries later came from the East to honor the Babe of Bethlehem were familiar with the conception. There are striking resemblances to the Judaeo-Christian ideas. The conquering Saoshyant is preceded by two personages who prepare the way, he is born of a virgin mother, who conceives him in a miraculous manner. His coming will bring immortality to the righteous, destruction to the powers of evil, and will establish the sole sovereignty of Ahura Mazda.

Parallel conceptions are found in individual prophets, but they do not represent the beliefs of the Jewish people. The earlier Jewish ideas of a Messiah were political and temporal. When in later times, ideal and spiritual conceptions are more frequently found, they do not even displace the hopes of a political and temporal Savior, The expectation about the nation. The deliverer is to be an ideal king and the viceroys of Yahweh. From their rulers they had realized only a partial good. As the years passed the fascination of the messianic hope grew more hallowed and became the deepest passion in the heart of the nation. For a time Cyrus seemed to fulfill the role of a deliverer. Zerubbabel in his turn became the center of messianic hopes. Simon Maccabaeus was made high-priest-king, awaiting the arrival of Messiah.

Feeling themselves to be without any present, the Jewish people

threw themselves on the future. In contrast with this, the Zoroastrian conception of a Messiah, Saoshyant, who will give immortality and blessedness to all the righteous, is a lofty and spiritual hope.

With the Jews, a spiritual interpretation of the messianic hope was confined to the prophets and a few devout children of Yahweh. In following the hope, expression of this hope, truth rather than theological prepossession is to be our guide. the spiritual and universal elements were only slowly recognized. the happy future of the righteous in contrast with the appalling misery of the wicked, through the coming of the Messiah, was a late doctrine with the masses of the people. (1)

It is probable that the Zoroastrian faith may have had influence in bringing this belief into prominence. A striking passage is in the book of ~~Esdras~~ Enoch. It is in answer to the question, who was the son of man. "This is the Son of man, to whom righteous belongs,

with whom righteousness has dwelt; and who will reveal all the treasures of that which is concealed; for the Lord of spirits has chosen Him. This Son of man whom thou beholdest shall raise up kings and the mighty from their couches, and the powerful from their thrones; shall loosen the bridles of the powerful, and break in pieces the teeth of sinners." (2)

The date of this passage has been questioned, yet it probably was written in pre-Christian times.

A Redeemer who would rule in righteousness and bring peace to earth was promised by the Jewish prophets, but he was expected to be a national hero who would deliver Israel first.

(1). 2Esdras II:34, XII:32-34

(2) Enoch XLVI:1-3

The nations were to be blessed through Israel and Israel's Redeemer.

There is considerable connection between the messianic idea and the idea of a future life. According to Zoroastrian belief, when death occurs the soul remains in the vicinity of the body for three days and three nights. This is akin to the belief, found among many primitive peoples, that the soul of the deceased remained near the grave where the body was buried. In Zoroastrianism this period of three days and three nights formed a kind of transitional stage, during which the soul of the good man has a foretaste of the delights of Paradise and that of the evil man the torments of Hell. The body becomes a prey of the demons who rejoice over its death. Impurity was communicated to everything in the house, and to all who stood in any relationship to the dead. There was an elaborate series of ceremonies for purification.

After three days and three nights during which the happy pious soul has been lingering about the body, on the dawn of the fourth day the soul passes over the Chinvat Bridge. The pious soul meets a balmy and sweet-scented wind. There advances to meet him a maiden fair, bright, beautiful, strong, and tall-formed. In response to the soul's question as to who she is, she answers, "O thou youth of good thoughts, good words, and good deeds, of good religion, I am thine own conscience;" and then recounts the good works which the soul accomplished during its earthly career.

Through three steps the faithful soul passes into the paradise of good thoughts, of good words, and of good deeds, and

at the fourth step into the Paradise of Endless Light, the House of Song, where Ahura Mazda, the holy angels, and the pious dead, dwell. In the three days and nights and the three steps we see the influence of the sacred number three, the trinity. Many things go in threes, such as father, mother, and child, or teacher, pupil, and subject. To this was added the coincidence that the earth has a single satellite, thus forming the trinity, earth, sun, and moon. Such influences are represented in the Christian Trinity.

The fate of the impious soul is altogether the opposite of this. In misery the wicked soul wanders about the corpse for three days and three nights. On the morning of the fourth day at the passage of the Chinvat Bridge, it meets a foul, chilly, wind, blowing from the north. In that wind the soul perceives its own conscience in the shape of an ugly hag. This hag declares that she is the embodiment of his evil thoughts, words, and deeds, and recites his wickedness on earth. Through three successive steps the evil soul passes into the place of evil thoughts, words, and deeds, and last of all into the region of eternal darkness, which is most foul and full of suffering, and the abode of Angra Mainyu and his followers.

There is ~~conceived to be~~ a private judgment in which man's conscience, personified as a beautiful maiden or a horrid hag, described above, is the judge. At the Chinvat Bridge, justice is administered to the soul before the three angels Sarosha, Mithra, and Rashnu. The good and evil deeds are weighed against

each other, and decision is rendered in accordance with the turn of the scales. If the good deeds outweigh the evil ones, the soul is assisted by the angels and the beautiful maiden into Paradise. If not, he is assailed by the demons and the ugly hag and is hurried or falls down to Hell. The Bridge becomes broad to the righteous souls and so narrow to the wicked that the lost soul falls from it, and descends through successive stages into the wretched abode of Aingro Mainyu. (1) In the Gathas the idea of a judgment dividing the good and evil is clearly conceived. Throughout the Avesta the future condition of the soul is described as a personal, conscious, experience of happiness or misery. There is in the Iranian faith perfect confidence in Ahura Mazda's justice. If the wicked prosper in this life, it will not always be so. The faithful will be delivered from all suffering and have abundant happiness in the life to come. Ahura Mazda will be absolutely just in his awards to the wicked and to the righteous, and a new order of things will be established. Rewards and punishments are brought on by the individual's own conduct, and this follows from the belief in individual responsibility.

The happiness and misery of the next world is essentially mental and spiritual. A single illustration of the hope of the righteous will indicate this: "And now in these thy dispensations, O Ahura Mazda; do thou wisely act for us, and with abundance with thy bounty and thy tenderness as touching us; and grant that reward which thou hast appointed to our souls, O

Ahura Mazda. Of this do thou thyself bestow upon us for this

world and the spiritual; and now as part thereof do thou grant that we may attain to fellowship with thee, and thy righteousness for all duration."⁽¹⁾

There are hints of a belief in the resurrection of the body in the Gathas, and in all the remaining Iranian literature it is clearly set forth. The resurrection is brought into connection with the regeneration of the world. Sacrifice was made unto the kingly glory, that will cleave unto the victorious Saoshyant and his helpers, when he shall restore the world, which will thenceforth never grow old and never die, never decaying and never rotting, ever living ever increasing; The dead will rise, life and immortality will come, and the world will be restored. At the coming and triumph of Saoshyant, a fragment declares, "Let Angro Mainyu be hid beneath the earth. Let the daevas likewise disappear. Let the dead arise, unhindered by these foes, and let bodily life be sustained in these now lifeless bodies."⁽²⁾

The idea of the resurrection's being connected with the coming of Saoshyant and the regeneration of the world, is parallel to the hopes of the primitive and some present day Christians in the expected return of Christ. But the underlying features of the Zoroastrian eschatology are not late, but belong to the oldest teachings of the system. A mighty conflict precedes the end of the world. The powers of darkness are arrayed against those of light. Saoshyant, the smiter of fiends, will be completely victorious. He will renovate the world, make the living immortal, and cause the dead to rise. This belief is

(1) Ys. XL:1-2

(2). Frag. IV:3

throughout the Avesta.

For detail and vividness of portrayal, and for loftiness of conception, the Zoroastrian ideas of the future condition of the individual, of a judgment, of future rewards and punishments, and of a resurrection, are far in advance of anything to be found in Judaism. Until a late period, Jewish ideas upon the future life were exceedingly shadowy. The conception of Yahveh and nearness to him, may have implied immortality and future blessedness for the faithful. But that does not concern us. The Jews did not see the implication.

In nearly every religion, no matter how rude, there is some suggestion of a belief in immortality, though often vague and materialistic in form. Without such a belief, among primitive peoples, religion is often in a crude state. Yet among the early Jews there is no definite teaching concerning immortality, though and no hopeful view of the future life. Sheol is a rather dismal place. It is the final abode of all good or bad. Existence there is colorless. It is a place of silence and forgetfulness. Faith in Yahveh led to individual surmises of a life after death, but these gropings are only occasional. They do not represent the faith of the people. The earthly life had a strong hold upon the Jewish people. Their hopes of the future related to the enjoyment of Yahveh upon earth and to Israel's glory.

In the Persian period of Jewish writings a belief in immortality has for the first time taken definite form, and this becomes clearer in still later writings. There is a growing

hope in the future life. This present world is not the end. There is promised us an everlasting hope. There will be happy rewards for the righteous and punishments for the wicked. All men will be brought to judgment and Yahveh will be their judge.

The coming of the Messiah will inaugurate a new order of things. There will be new heavens and a new earth. The righteous individual, as well as the righteous nation, will receive blessings in the messianic kingdom, and there will be a resurrection of the dead. "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust; for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead." (1) But ~~But~~ it is Yahveh, not the Messiah, who will raise the dead.

In some of the Psalms there is an intimation that the reward of the righteous will be spiritual, and that there will be mental communion with Yahveh. (2)

The direct and positive teachings concerning the future life that appear in post-Exilic times have been ascribed to Zoroastrian influence. The Zoroastrian ideas of the future life probably date from not later than the fifth century B. C. When the Jews came into contact with the Persians holding with fervor the hope of immortality, they could not but ask themselves whether that hope was to be discovered in their own religion. Some would refuse to acknowledge that it was a part of the faith, as the later Sadducees. But most of the people were eager to accept the new and inspiring hope. Their misfortunes made them all the more ready to believe in the life to come. As soon as the Jews felt that the hope of the future life had been latent in their faith, and could be developed from it, they vied with

(1). Isa. 26:19

(2) Ps. 49:15

Psalm 49:15

the Zoroastrians in their earnestness in maintaining it.

The Zoroastrian religion was very susceptible to such an idea as the Messianic conception. Zoroaster himself believed in taking the sword to propagate his religion. His faith did not prosper until it was taken up by a powerful prince who was able to advance it by force. The spirit of the founder himself was favorable to active, even compulsory, conversion, and hence we expect this spirit in the religion itself; nor are we disappointed. It is a fertile soil for messianic ideas, in which they can grow to a fruitful development. The Zoroastrian spirit of moulding the world made an excellent environment for the messianic idea.

(26)

IV. -BUDDHISM-

The analogy of similar records in the case of other religious founders would lead us to expect that the followers of the great Indian teacher would not be satisfied by looking upon their master as a mere ordinary man; and this expectation is abundantly fulfilled. They endeavored to give expression to their deep feelings of homage and hero-worship, and to their deep sense of inferiority. They wanted to shew the impression made upon them by the personal power of a character quite unequalled among all the men they knew. In doing this they described the glory and the grandeur of their Buddha in poetical and figurative language always liable to be misunderstood, and which hardened too soon into erroneous beliefs.

There was a great similarity in the outward conditions in which Christianity and Buddhism arose, and in many respects the mental qualities of the early Christians were strikingly analogous to those of the early Buddhists. The personal feelings of the first Christian disciples to Jesus resembled closely those of the first Buddhist disciples to Gautama. Therefore we are naturally very strongly interested in learning what was the effect in the case of early Buddhism of causes which must also have operated in the history of early Christianity. But the value of the comparison will be lost unless we bear also in mind the many differences in the two cases, as well as their resemblances. We must no more expect to find that the histories of early Buddhist and early Christian beliefs as to the person of their respective leaders will be, even in the smallest statement, exactly the same, than we expect to find that the growth of Pantheism out of Polytheism, in the valley of the Ganges and on the shores of the

range. His victories and his far-reaching dominion brought home

Mediterranean, was in all respects identical. We have to deal merely with similarities, not with identities.

The early Buddhist ideas of the Buddha were chiefly modified by two ideals dominating the minds of men in those days. Neither of them had any necessary connection with the particular individual whom we know by the name of Gautama. Both might have been equally well applied to any other person in India if he had only excited the same feelings. The one ideal was chiefly due to political experiences, the other to philosophical speculations; the one was the ideal of a King of Righteousness, the other of an all-perfect Wisdom.

Just at the time when the early Buddhist literature regarding Gautama was reaching its canonical form, and the ideas of the Buddhists about him were being developed into what are now the orthodox views, the ancient political framework of Indian society was undergoing an inevitable and important change. The older division into clans, some of them patriarchal, and some of them aristocratic republics, was passing into the more modern division into nations. A new power had arisen and was making itself clearly felt. This was the power of the autocratic king. At the end of the fourth century, B. C., there had already been dynasties of kings in the two most powerful countries on the banks of the Ganges, Kosala, and Magadha. And we then hear of the first great sovereign ---- Chandra-gutta, who possibly met with Alexander. This ruler certainly fought Seleucus Nicator, Alexander's successor, and then entered into a treaty with him. His power extended from the eastern Ganges to beyond the Punjab, and from the Himalaya mountains down to the Vindhya range. His victories and his far-reaching dominion brought home

to the people the idea of a universal monarch.

They combined with this idea a theory which was common to all progressive peoples in ancient times, incorporated into almost all the ancient religions, and derived from a very natural dissatisfaction with existing affairs. This was the theory of a golden age which men used to think must certainly have existed in the past, and which modern belief places in the future. The ideal monarch, the Chakka-vatti, was a king of kings, irresistible and mighty, who ruled in righteousness over a happy people. He is often described in the Buddhist Suttas as a king of kings, a righteous man who ruled in righteousness, lord of the four quarters of the earth, invincible, the protector of his people, possessor of the seven royal treasures. The details of these royal treasures, and of four wonderful gifts, often associated with them as distinguishing marks of a king of kings, are particularly interesting as being compounded of the ancient and half-forgotten poetry of the sun-myth, and of the new and powerful ethics of Buddhism. The stories told of the old gods, of the external spirits supposed to animate the powers of nature, and especially of the sun-god in his battles with the storm, became misunderstood. Then the heroes of these stories were taken to be men, half human, half divine, and the glorious attributes ascribed to them were naturally applied and adapted to the new ideal.

The first of these treasures was the treasure of the Wheel, with its nave, its tire, and all its thousand spokes complete, which appears to the great king, when he has purified himself,

and has gone up into the upper story of his palace to keep the sacred day. The wheel is taken from the Vedic poetry, in which the sun had been described as rolling on in his victorious course across the space of heaven. And like the sun, when the wondrous wheel appears to the great king, it rolls onwards to the very extremities of the world, conquering and to conquer. But the wheel of the ancient sun-worship is now subordinated to the king who has purified himself. It only subjugates the other kings it meets to subject them to the righteous monarch, who lays down the sacred Buddhist laws. And in subjugating them, it brings the conquered ones under no lawless tyranny, for the ideal king then confirms his willing subjects in all their ancient privileges and rights. (1)

Secondly, the king of kings is the possessor of the wonderful White Elephant, which can carry its master across the broad earth to its very ocean boundary, and return home again in time for the morning meal. This is adapted from the mythical elephant Airavata, "the Fertilizer," on which the sun-god Indra rides, the personification of the great, white, fertilizing, rain-cloud, so rapid in its passage before the winds of the monsoon over the vault of heaven.

Thirdly, the king is the possessor of the Treasure of the Horse, all white, with a black head and a dark mane, wonderful in power, flying through the sky, the charger-king whose name was "Thunder-Cloud". The description is sufficient evidence of this figure being also derived from the ancient mythology, and

(1). Comp. Rh. D., Buddhist Suttas from the Pali, p. 253.

from a part of it which has survived down to our own times, through the influence of the Greeks, in the horses of the sun.

Fourthly, the king of kings possesses a marvellous gem, called the Veluria, from which our word "beryl" is probably derived. It is bright, of the purist species, with eight facets, and excellently wrought. It is clear, transparent, and perfect in every way.

Fifthly, the king of kings possesses a lovely Pearl among Women, graceful in figure, lovely in appearance, charming in manner, and beautiful in complexion; surpassing human beauty, she had attained unto the beauty of the gods. The two last treasures are a Treasurer and an Adviser, faithful servants, like the Pearl among women, of the king of kings. These are not apparently or necessarily adopted from the Vedic hymns, and the descriptions of them contain no details of peculiar interest. We can therefore pass on to the four Iddhis or wonderful gifts with which he is said to have been endowed.

These are simply such qualities of body and mind as would naturally be ascribed to the ideal king. He is, in the first place, graceful in figure, handsome in appearance, and pleasing in manner, beyond what other men are. Secondly, he was of long life, and of many years, beyond those of other men. Thirdly, he was more free from disease and bodily suffering than other men. And fourthly, he was beloved and popular with both Brahmans and laymen. As a father is near and dear to his sons, so is he said to have been to them; and as sons are near and dear to their father, so were they to him. Once, it is related, he

was proceeding in royal pomp to his pleasure-ground. The people besought him, saying, "O king, pass slowly by, that we may look upon thee for a longer time." But he, addressing the charioteer, replies, "Drive on the chariot slowly, charioteer, that I may look upon my people for a longer time." Such is the courtesy, and such is the mutual love which reigns in the golden age between the monarch and the people of his realm. Such is the Buddhist picture of the ideal king.

We shall be able better to enter into the feelings which prompted the early Buddhists in their application of this ideal to Gautama, if we call to mind the manner in which the Jewish ideal of a Messiah influenced the minds of the early Christians. The two ideals are of course not the same in detail, for they grew out of very different experiences, and were expressed in words drawn from very different literatures. But they are so remarkably similar, both in the sources, political and spiritual, from which they sprung, and in their most essential features, that the comparison of the two cannot fail to be historically instructive.

In the first place, just as the Messiah whom the Jews expected was very unlike him to whom the word was afterward applied, so the Chakka-vatti was very unlike what Gautama really was. The ideals existed before their supposed fulfillment; and they were only fulfilled by being put to a use so unthought of by those who held them, that they really ceased, as ideals, to exist. The Christian Messiah is as much higher and more noble

than the previous conception of the first-century Jews, as the Buddhist King of Righteousness is higher and nobler than the previous Hindu conception of the King of Kings.

One may say this without detracting from the great beauty of those earlier conceptions. We must sympathize with the natural longing for the great man who shall solve the complicated difficulties of life, and set all things straight. And it strengthens our hope in humanity when we find that peoples as different as the Jews and the Aryan Indians, in imagining what kind of a man this man must be, built up such glorious fancies as the Messiah and the Chakka-vatti. But it was a truer instinct which guided the early Christians and the early Buddhists. When their minds had been opened to the new teaching they put the Teacher in the place of the King, and looked for the ideal kingdom in a kingdom of righteousness in the hearts of men. It was to be a moral kingdom, not one of mere power and compulsory authority. The strength and hope of the new kingdom lay in the change of character in individuals. The idea of an external revolution of the world, after a time, began to be replaced by the hope of the gradual elevation of mankind. Though this idea of gradual elevation did not take place at once, at least the ground was broken for it; and the conception of the divine kingdom did receive at once a higher interpretation.

The idea of gradual elevation escaped the Buddhists; they had only the insight to recognize in their Master the true Chakka-vatti. In expressing their adoration of him they allowed of the position he rendered. He is related to have left his

the ideal of the Chakka-vatti to influence them in two ways. They used it, in the first place, as a type to which their descriptions of the Master, as their King of Righteousness, should conform. His chief disciple, Sariputta, became known as the Prime Minister in that kingdom, and the Arahats were the body-guard of the king. The King of Righteousness shall conquer to the very boundaries of the world, until all the kings of the earth shall have become willing subjects of the mild empire of its lord, and obedient followers of the law of truth.

Secondly, the early Buddhists unfortunately allowed their ideal of the Chakka-vatti to influence their beliefs as to the actual facts of the outward conditions of Gautama's life. The petty chief, his father, became a powerful monarch of wide spread dominions. Yet the geographical details of the legend show to the slightest criticism how limited was the extent of the clan over whom he held only a modified chieftainship. The modest dwelling in which Gautama was born became a palace. The literature of somewhat later times provided him on his marriage with three palaces. And he is supposed to have been brought up amidst every dignity and luxury which the minds of the Buddhist poets can conceive.

There are unmistakable traces in many of these details of the ancient glory of the sun-god. And they also seem to afford undeniable evidence of a desire in the relators of these legends to express the greatness of Gautama's renunciation. This is the motive which leads them to raise to the highest pitch the glories of the position he abandoned. He is related to have left his

father's throne, to which he, the only son, was heir; to have left his young wife and his only child behind him; to have left his home, with all its delights, and to have gone out into the darkness of the night, to become a despised mendicant, and a lonely, homeless wanderer. These gorgeous descriptions of what he had resigned are indications of the fact that the deepest impression he made upon his disciples was the lesson of self-renunciation.

When we catch the tone and spirit of these Buddhist Chakka-vatti legends, and are able to read between the lines of these narratives, we can more fully comprehend their deeper meaning and grasp what they really signify. We can then recognize in them not merely empty falsehoods, the offspring of folly or of fraud, but the only embodiment possible, under those conditions, of some of the noblest feelings and sentiments that have ever moved the world.

The first Bahá'í was apparently Mohammed Ibn al Hanafiyah, who was the son of Ali's daughter Fatima. He was proclaimed by one Mukhtar in the reign of Abd al Malik (685-705 A.D.), after the murder of Hassan, Ali's son. The Persian followers

Paragraph here)

The Mohammedan Mahdi, or "director", will have certain signs by which he may be recognized. He is to be of the line of Fatima and shall be proclaimed Mahdi against his will, not seeking the honor. He should be proclaimed in the mosque of Mecca and should come when there is no Caliph over the Muslims. His coming coincides with that of Anti-Christ, after whom Jesus will descend and join the Mahdi. Most of the Mahdi who have appeared have not had these distinguishing marks, but have been self-proclaimed.

The revolt of the Shiites in the latter part of the eighth century A. D. was a messianic movement. Homage was given, at that time, by the Abbasids, to the eldest son of Al-Mansur, the Caliph of the time, as successor of his father, under the title of al-Mahdi.

When Othman was Caliph (654-5) A. D.) Ibn Saba, a Jew from the south of Arabia, appeared in Al-Basra and expressed a wish to adopt the faith of Islam. The Muslims soon discovered that he was seditious and forced him to leave. He was also expelled successively from Al-Kufa and from Syria though not before he had stirred up the discontented classes there. He found it safer for him in Egypt, where he set forth some startling doctrines. Mohammed was to come again. Meanwhile Ali was his legate. Othman was a usurper. Justice could be restored only by the overthrow of this dynasty.

The first Mahdi was apparently Mohammed Ibn al Hanafiyah, who was the son of Ali but not of Fatima. He was proclaimed by one Mukhtar in the reign of Abd al Malik (685-705 A.D.), after the murder of Hosein, Ali's son. The Persian followers

would not believe him dead, asserting that he would return at the end of seventy years.

In the latter part of the eighth century, Hakim Ibn Allah, or Al Mokama, "the Veiled", was looked upon as divine and was worshipped for centuries although during his lifetime his armies were decisively defeated by Mahdi, the third Abbasid Caliph. He promised to appear at his reincarnation as a gray man riding a gray beast.

An early Moroccan Mahdi was Mudhdhen of Tlemcen. In 851 he refused to allow the cutting of the hair or nails or the wearing of ornaments, this being regarded as a reflection upon the Almighty. He made many converts in Africa and Spain but was eventually captured and crucified by the Ameer of Andalusia.

Early in the tenth century (902) Abn Abdallah (or Obeidallah) gave the call among the Berbers of Africa. He acquired a great influence the dynasty in power, getting possession of the capital of the kingdom. He placed a usurper upon the throne but was himself assassinated by the ungrateful monarch, who, having been placed upon the throne by the Mahdi, was now jealous of the influence of the religious leader.

The Mad Hakim (996-1020), was the most famous of the earlier Egyptian Mahdi. His followers believed that he did not die but that he "disappeared". His reappearance is awaited by the sect which is called the "Druses", in the Lebanon Mountains and the Hauran. This Hakim was noted for his eccentricities. His character

was more in harmony with that of a demon, rather than that of a Messiah, according to authentic reports of him.

Among other Mahdi who have appeared are several who have been conspicuous. One of these was a Berber student of theology who appeared in the twelfth century A.D. His name was Ibn Tumart, and as Mahdi he and his disciple, Abd al-Mu'min, swept the country inhabited by the Berbers. His movement was not merely a Muslim movement but was also an expression of Berber nationalism. Other Mahdi numbered among them Hallaj, executed at Bagdad in 922 A.D. on the charge of pretending to be an incarnation of the Deity; Moktana Baba ud-Din, a defender of Hakim; Khidr, "the green one", a Muslim saint whom Islam believes is still alive; and Rashid-ad-Din Sinan, whose lameness was a great obstacle to his progress among many who expected a Mahdi unblemished both physically and spiritually.

Many superstitions have been connected with the Mahdi movements. The storming of Khartoum by the Mahdi of the African Sudan has already been mentioned. His followers believed themselves to be immune from bullets and this belief spread to the Turks who attacked them. In an effort to overcome this mooted immunity the Turks used silver bullets and bullets which were hollowed out, ^{being then} and then a peg of ebony-wood or copper ~~was~~ firmly fastened in them. The soldiers believed these bullets capable of killing the devil himself and went to the attack with great courage.

A survival of this Mahdism is seen in the modern sect of the Bahaists. Near the middle of the 19th century there arose a teacher in Persia who called himself the Baha, or Bab.

He claimed to be the incarnation of God. He was executed by the Persian government, but a following grew up. There have been several successors to the first Bab, each claiming to be the incarnation of the Deity. But the last one has decreed that he shall have no successor. The first Bab, the founder of the sect, was concerned in an incident which might have led to his sect spreading over a great part of the Orient. While he was being hung, and was suspended in the air, a rifle bullet cut the rope which was holding him, and he dropped to the ground. If he had then proclaimed this occurrence to be an act of God, the superstitious Persians might have rallied to his support. But he started to flee, was recaptured, and was again hung, there being no accident the second time.

The Messianic doctrine of the Mussulman is borrowed from Christianity. Mussulmans, like Christians, believe that when the time has come the Savior will destroy the beast of the Apocalypse, the false prophet of the last hour-- Anti-Christ-- whom they call Deddjal, the impostor; but Islamism could not give the supreme and decisive role to Jesus.

The religion of Islam acknowledges the mission of Jesus but not his divinity. Since the creation, it teaches, five prophets had appeared before the birth of Mohammed. These were Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, and Jesus-- each being greater than his predecessor, and each bringing a higher and fuller revelation than the last. Jesus ranks above all the prophets of the old dispensation, but below those of the new, inaugurated by Mohammed. In the final struggle he will be but the servant of a more august

personage, the Mahdi, and will be but an auxiliary to him.

The literal meaning of the word, Mahdi, is not, as is generally asserted, "he who leads", a meaning more in harmony with European ideas, but "he who is lead." The fundamental idea of Islam is the incapacity of man to guide himself. Ignorant man cannot find the right path, so God sends his prophets, men to whom He has inspired with knowledge and whom He has revealed what ought to be done.

The prophet in himself is as frail and as limited in his powers as the rest of humanity. But God dictates to him and makes him his mouth-piece. And if he leads his fellow-men it is because he is himself the guided one, the chosen of God.

The word, Mahdi, is only an epithet which may be applied to any prophet, or even to any ordinary person. But when used as a proper name it indicates him who is "well guided" beyond all others, the Mahdi, par excellence, who is to end the drama of the world, and of whom Jesus shall only be the vicar.

Jesus is to come and destroy the Anti-Christ, massacre the Jews, and convert Christians and idolaters to Islam. After this is done he will assist the Mahdi in the celebration of the last great service, and will humbly repeat the prayer of the Mahdi, as the faithful in the mosque repeat the words pronounced by the Imam, or leader of prayer. Then the trump of the resurrection will sound, and God will come to judge the living and the dead.

The idea of the Mahdi was plainly influenced by similar ideas in other religions, if not borrowed outright from them. At the time of Mohammed's appearance there were in Arabia, besides the

ancient national paganism, three foreign religions. These were Judaism, Christianity, and Zoroastrianism. The latter had been propagated in northern Arabia by means of commerce, and in the south, in Yemen, by conquest. Mohammed did not take the trouble to be original, but borrowed his doctrines from the Jews and Christians, and his mythology from the Jews, Christians, and Zoroastrians. No other great religion has contained so little that may be termed original.

A belief common to the three parent religions was that in a supernatural being who at the end of time would bring back order and justice which had been banished from the world, and thus precede the kingdom of immortality and endless bliss. The conception sprang up in Judaism, was transferred to Christianity, and received a definite form after it had been subjected to the influence of Persian mythology. Hence, under its three forms--- Jewish, Christian, and Persian--- in spite of a certain variety of detail, there is a strong resemblance in the principal points of the belief.

In all three religions the coming of the Savior was to be preceded by the letting loose of all the powers of evil. These were personified among the Jews by the invasion and ravages of Gog and Magog; among the Christians by the Dragon, or the Beast of Revelation, and by a false prophet, the prophet of Satan, called Antichrist; and among the Zoroastrians, by the serpent, Zohak, the incarnation of Ahriman, the Spirit of Evil.

Also, all three maintained that the Savior was to be a direct, lineal, descendant of the most august personage in the national

tradition of each. Among the Jews and Christians he was called the Messiah, and was to be a ~~prophet and a~~ descendant of the king of Israel, David. Among the Persians he was called Saoshyant, and was to be a descendant of the Persian prophet Zoroaster.

In many cases, the Mahdi, instead of being a moral force, was exactly the reverse. This has been particularly true in Africa. In the Sudan there has been a steady progress in conversion to Islam, but not in civilization. The climax was reached in the corrupting and oppressive rule of the Mahdi. The following gives an idea of conditions: "This vast expanse of country has now fallen into an almost indescribable state of moral and religious decadence. In the Sudan, we have before us a terrible example of a nascent and somewhat crude civilization suddenly shattered by wild, ignorant, and almost savage tribes who have built over the scattered remnants a form of government based, to some extent, on the lines they found existing, but from which they have eradicated almost every symbol of right, justice, and morality, and for which they have substituted a rule of injustice, ruthless barbarity, and immorality. Nor can I recall any other instance in modern times of a country in which a semblance of civilization has existed for upwards of half a century, falling back into a state so little removed from absolute barbarism." (1)

And what can be more startling than the picture which Slatin Pasha presents of the hypocrisy of the Mahdi, and of his successor, the Kalipha? "Openly, he showed himself a most strict observer of his own teachings; but, within their houses, he, his Kalifas,

(1). "Fire and Sword in the Sudan", Slatin Pasha, 622.

and their relatives, entered into the wildest excesses, drunkenness, riotous living, and debauchery of every sort, and they satisfied to their fullest extent the vicious passions which are so prevalent amongst the Sudanese.----- The Kalifa, if his health permits it, attends the five daily prayers most regularly; and yet, at heart, no man could be more irreligious. During all the years in which I have been in the closest communications with him, I have never once seen or heard him say a prayer in his own house."
(1)

It will be a tremendously long while before fanaticism is ever adequately controlled in Islam. When we consider the amount of such superstitious beliefs that still exists in Christian, civilized, countries, we can get an idea of the difficulty of eliminating them in the benighted regions where they are most prevalent.

(1). "Fire and Sword in the Sudan," Slatin Pasha, 375, 547.

of life, acting singly or in combination, tend to make man conscious, early in his experience, of the need of salvation; his conception of the content of salvation naturally varies with his notion of his foes. If he lives in a barren region he longs for a land of plenty. If the struggle for existence is keen, he desires a Utopia, where everybody lives free from distressing circumstances. And if he has soul struggles, yearns for deliverance from sin and guilt. Each lack has its complementary desire, in accordance with the rule that people want what they don't have.

The method of salvation is two-fold: he relies either upon himself or upon some external superhuman forces. By his own efforts

VI. ---An Interpretation of Messianic Movements---

Messianic faith can, in many cases, be traced to an attempt to revive a decadent religion. But this is only part of the story. The counterpart of decaying religious or social life is an active resistance to this decadence. To zealots, the decay of religion is always obvious. If the multitude is not pleased to have this information the zealot's efforts will be in vain. But if it longs to be saved, and no zealot is at hand, a zealous people will stir up one. Reason is helpless against obstinate hope, for obstinate hope is always a refusal to apply reason to the situation. Hope fosters faith, and faith finds something to believe, even if this be only a voice.

If we view human nature in the large, the struggle for salvation may be said to be widespread and persistent. Man lives in a world of competing forces and is overcome by them unless he struggles. He has to struggle with natural phenomena, human foes, and unfavorable social circumstances. The hostile forces of life, acting singly or in combination, tend to make man conscious, early in his experience, of the need of salvation. His conception of the content of salvation naturally varies with his notion of his foes. If he lives in a barren region he longs for a land of plenty. If the struggle for existence is keen, he desires a Utopia, where everybody lives free from distressing circumstances. And if he has soul struggles, yearns for deliverance from sin and guilt. Each lack has its complementary desire, in accordance with the rule that people want what they don't have.

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he corrects social ills by reorganizing society and establishing new forms of government. The soul enveloped in matter struggles through cultivation of its own divine character to realize most truly the divine in itself. In this man is primarily his own savior and salvation is essentially a matter of his own attainment. The other process of salvation is one in which reliance is placed primarily on external assistance. He is delivered through the help of a divine savior who gives him divine assistance in his struggles against the powers of evil. This latter form may be termed redemptive religion, and the former, the religion of attainment. The two types shade into each other but the general distinction is clear. It is the redemptive-religion type, of course, which is the more favorable to Messiahs.

A survey of messianic movements and a correlation of the Messiah's initiative with the prevailing social atmosphere, seems to indicate that the individual is a member of a class and the vehicle of a higher purpose which envelopes his individual and unique efforts. Whether this purpose is imparted to him by the group of which he is a part, and for whose salvation he strives, is another question. The individual is reacting to his environment and that environment may be very different from the environment of the group. Shall we call this individual initiative or social compulsion?

We create an unreal difficulty when we consider individual initiative and social law as mutually exclusive, or as, when referred to the same acts, incompatible concepts. Both concepts

(43-)

are referable to the same act, just as the genius, in his accomplishment, may be both ~~the most~~ the most indebted man and the greatest contributor of his age. In fact, one might almost say that he is the one because he is the other.

We must not forget that instance after instance has shown us, in the social or political conditions of the tribe or nation, needs that call forth the new religion, a divinity that shapes the Messiah's ends, roughhew them how he may. Though the Messiah may initiate, he does so profitably only when there is a certain predisposition on the part of the group, a predisposition fostered by untoward circumstances. In practically all of these messianic manifestations we find the individual responding, as does also the group, to the higher law of self-preservation, a law operative under its own appropriate conditions, and expressive of how society and the individual behave under such compulsions.

Both society and the individual must be treated as distinct and self-complete, though reciprocal, units. The Messiah craves social nourishment but the social, after all, seems merely a polarity or a dimension in which his personality finds expression, ~~or~~ meaning, and by which it is conditioned in its expression. though social influences are largely responsible for the ability of the individual to grasp their meaning, he creates them as truly as they create him. All ships are stirred by whatever wave rolls nearest; but each is wafted according to the way its sails are trimmed and the Messiah may so trim his sails as to make headway against even an adverse wind.