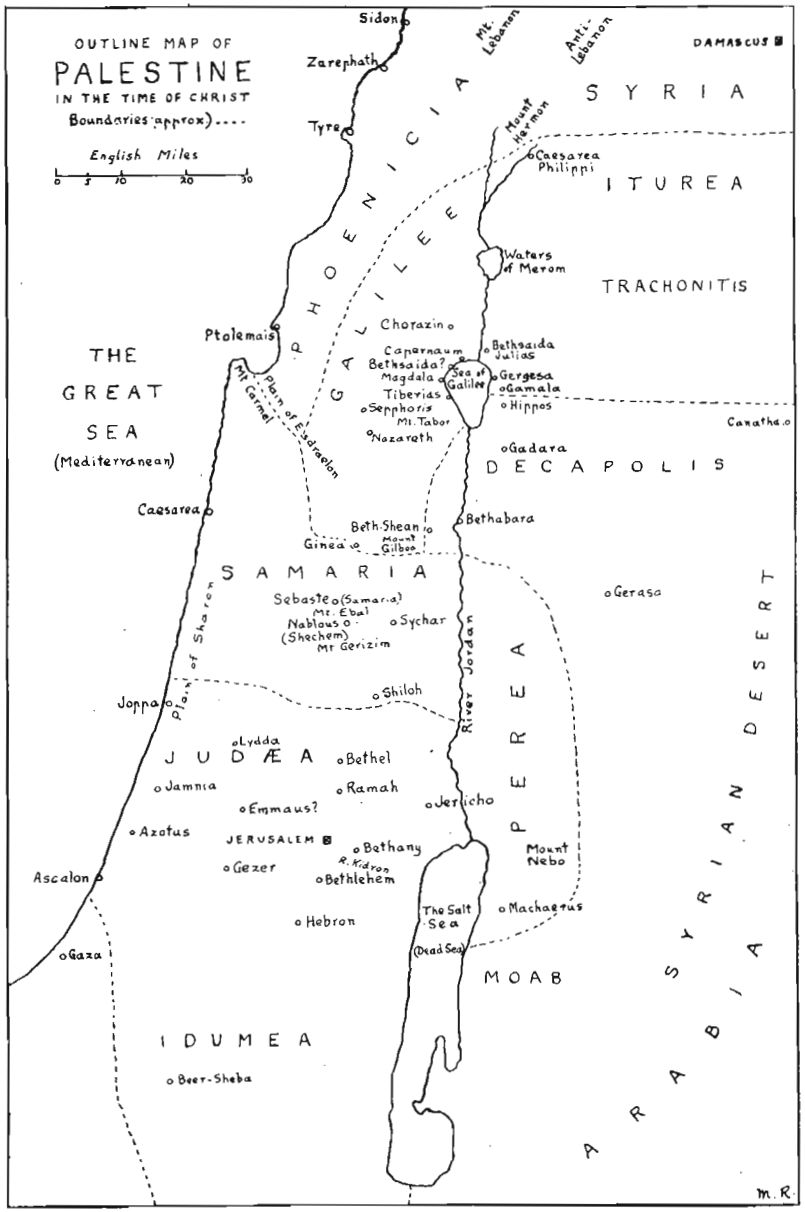
Life in Palestine when Jesus Lived

by

J. Estlin Carpenter



LIFE IN PALESTINE

WHEN JESUS LIVED

A Short Handbook to the First Three Gospels

BY

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PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

THIS little book is intended to illustrate the first three Gospels. Its object is to present in as short a compass as possible such an account of the people from whom Jesus sprang, as shall enable readers of the Gospels, who have not access to larger works, to frame some notion of the society in which he laboured, and the ideas and institutions with which he had to deal. It is, thus, in one sense, an introduction to the study of his life and teachings; but it does not enter on the wide field of Gospel criticism, and aims only at supplying the needful knowledge of the social and religious conditions of the work of Jesus.

The materials amassed by scholars are so ample that my task has been only to weigh and select what seemed most suitable. Reference to the best sources of information available for English readers will enable those who wish to make further inquiry into a field of investigation which can never lose for us its supreme interest as long as Jesus remains to us the leader of our religious thought and life.

J. E. C.

LONDON, *March*, 1884.

NOTE TO THIRD EDITION

THIS edition has been carefully revised in view of the results of recent investigation in many different directions. A list of works most useful for reference will be found on p. 12.

J. E. C.

OXFORD, *September*, 1915.

NOTE TO FIFTH EDITION

IN this edition, the Bibliography has been revised, and a few necessary alterations and additions have been made in order to bring the subject-matter up to date. But Dr. Carpenter's text has been left, as far as possible, intact.

E. W. H.

LONDON, 1935.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER III

The Government

CHAPTER IV

Religion: I—Its Public Institutions

CHAPTER V

Religion: II—Orders, Parties, and Sects

CHAPTER VI

Religion: III—The Messianic Idea

ILLUSTRATIONS
by E. Basil Short

INTRODUCTION

WHAT do we know about the land of Jesus, the people among whom he taught, their way of life, their thoughts and feelings? We learn a great deal, of course, from the Gospels which record for us the sayings and doings of Jesus, and show us the impression which he made on different classes of his countrymen. We know also, from the books of the Old Testament, what was the past history of the nation, and how most of their great ideas grew up. But these would not alone help us to understand what we read of Jesus and his times.

There are, however, other books, some written before his day, some after it, which tell us much about things of which the Bible says little or nothing. Some of these books are books of national and religious hope (see chap. vi., p. 166); some are books of history. Such are the works of a famous Jew, named Josephus, who was born at Jerusalem, a few years after Jesus died, in A.D. 37 or 38. Josephus studied the learning of his time, and afterwards took part in the great war in which his people were at length finally conquered by the Romans. In the histories which he wrote we find a precious store of information about his country, and the events shortly before and during the lifetime of Jesus.

Other knowledge, especially about the religious beliefs and practices of the Jews, comes to us from a great collection of the maxims of their learned men, especially in explanation of their sacred Law. This collection of sayings, handed down from one wise man to another in their

religious Schools, was at last gathered together under the name of the *Talmud*, that is 'the Teaching'; and it is of very great use to us in trying to find out what the Jews thought and how they acted about many things in which the Teaching of Jesus differed from the Teaching common in his time.

Books useful for reference.

Schürer, *Jewish People in the Time of Christ*, 2 vols., 1924. But the fourth German edition is much more valuable.
Hastings, *Dictionary of the Bible*, 5 vols., 1898–1904.
Encyclopædia Biblica, 4 vols., 1899–1903.
Jewish Encyclopædia, 12 vols., 1901–1906.
Hastings, *Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels*, 2 vols., 1906.
Fairweather, *The Background of the Gospels*, 1908.
Moore, *Judaism*, 1920.
Montefiore, *Some Elements of the Religious Teaching of Jesus*, 1910.
Charles, *Religious Development between the Old and New Testaments*, 1914.

The ancient Hebrew divine name, best represented by the English letters Y H W H, ceased to be pronounced by the Jews as being too sacred to be uttered. The vowels of another word meaning 'My Lord,' to be read in its place, were attached to it, and produced the hybrid form which finally passed into the English Bible as 'Jehovah' (*Exodus* vi. 3), the translators following the usage of the Greek and Latin versions, and rendering the name in its ordinary occurrence by 'the LORD.' The true pronunciation is perhaps best indicated by the English spelling 'Yahweh,' with the accent on the second syllable.

CHAPTER I

THE COUNTRY

[G. A. Smith, *Historical Geography of the Holy Land*, 1894; W. Sanday, *Sacred Sites of the Gospels*, 1903; Herbert Rix, *Tent and Testament*, 1907; Baikie, *Lands and Peoples of the Bible*, 1914; Budden and Hastings, *Local Colour of the Bible*, vol. 3, 1925; Guthe, *Bibel Atlas*, 1911; Palestine Exploration Fund's Raised Map of Palestine.]

§ 1. Its Name

THE land of the Jews bore several names in their ancient sacred books. It was called Canaan, a name first given to a strip of lowland territory along its coast, which afterwards spread over the whole country, just as the name England spread from the first settlements of the Angles on our Eastern shores. It was called the Land of Israel, after the people who dwelt in it. The prophets called it by the name of their God, 'Yahweh's land'; as it belonged to him, they spoke of it as the 'holy land'; or they termed it simply 'the land,' as though every one would know which land they meant, and this was a favourite name in later times. As the country of the Jews, it was sometimes called Judæa, in the time of Jesus; though this name more fitly belongs to its southern part (§ 7). The name by which we know it, Palestine, seems to have come into use rather later than the Christian era: the first writer in whose books we now find it is the famous geographer Ptolemy, who

wrote at Alexandria in the middle of the second century A.D. This name, like that of Canaan, denoted first of all a much more limited district: it is the Greek form of the Hebrew *Pelésheth*, or Philistia, and meant originally the small territory in the south-west conquered and occupied by the Philistines. The New Testament speaks of the different divisions of the country, Galilee in the north, Samaria in the centre, Judæa in the south, and the land beyond the Jordan; Luke occasionally uses the name Judæa for the whole of Western Palestine.

§ 2. Position, Boundaries, and Size.

Palestine, though so small a country, had already had a great place in history. It lay on the extreme verge of the continent of Asia, and made a sort of link between east and west. It was the highway from Egypt to the great valley of the Euphrates and Tigris. Much of the trade from Arabia to the cities of the Mediterranean passed across it. The Jews had spread from it in all directions: some were in Babylonia, some in Syria, some in Asia Minor, some in Egypt, some in Greece, some in Italy. Communication was fairly easy by land or sea with all these regions, owing to the central position which Palestine occupied. But it was itself quite a diminutive country, about the size of Wales. From the Lebanon range which bounded it on the north, to the deserts into which its highlands melted on the south, was a length of about 140 miles: the width from the Mediterranean to the Jordan valley ranged from 25 miles at the upper end to nearly 80 at the lower, to which may be added the trans-Jordanic uplands with an average of 20 more. This made it quite easy for the people

to pass from one part to another. From Hebron through Bethlehem to Jerusalem is but a day's ride: Pompey's troops could march in a morning from Jericho to the capital: in two long days the traveller who slept at Nablous (formerly Shechem) could journey from Jerusalem to Nazareth. From the mountain north of Jerusalem which now bears the name of the prophet Samuel (Neby Samwîl), from Gerizim, from above Nazareth, may be seen on the one hand the sea, on the other the long wall of the hills of Moab or Gilead rising above the Jordan valley: and from the southern end of the Dead Sea the snowy cone of Hermon above the sources of the Jordan can be discerned in the clear air.

§ 3. Physical Features

This little country is extremely irregular. Along the coast run narrow strips of lowland, behind which rises a mighty mass of hills like an unbroken wall. These hills are not grouped into one long range like the Lebanon; nor do they generally stand out separate from each other, like the dome of *Tabor* rising from the plain of *Jezreel* (Greek Esdraelon). It is as though the whole country, cities, villages, cornfields, and moors, had been gradually heaved up in the middle to a great height. Central Galilee is not so high as the southern country, but even *Nazareth*, in its quiet valley, stands 800 feet above the sea. The great plain of *Jezreel* interrupts the line for a little while; but it rises again in Samaria, and this rise continues steadily towards the south. *Shechem*, between *Mount Ebal* and *Mount Gerizim*, is 1,900 feet above the sea; *Jerusalem* at 2,610 feet confronts the *Mount of Olives* at 2,724; and *Hebron* lies in a secluded

nook among the surrounding hills at a height of 3,029 feet, just above the top of our Helvellyn. On the west, this great central mass descends by gentle valleys to the lowlands of the coast. But on the east they drop much more rapidly into the great depression which is the chief physical feature of Palestine, the valley of the *Jordan*, and the basin of the *Dead Sea*.

The Jordan is the only real river in the whole land. It is formed by the union of several small streams, some of which burst forth from the foot of a great cliff on the lower slopes of Mount Hermon, and close to the site of the ancient city of Cæsarea Philippi, while others come from still further north. It falls rapidly into the little lake called in old days the 'waters of Merom,' and by Josephus lake Semechonitis (modern Huleh). From there it passes with still greater swiftness into the beautiful *Sea of Galilee*, otherwise known as the *Sea of Tiberias* or *Lake of Gennesaret*. This lake lies in a hollow among the hills, and is itself 682 feet below the level of the sea. From its southern end the Jordan issues on its rapid way. It has cut its course below its ancient banks and winds so much, that in the next 60 miles as the crow flies its actual course is no less than 200. And it continues falling, falling, all the time, till it reaches the Dead Sea, lying in a deep trough 1,300 feet below the Mediterranean. So its name, *Yardén*, 'the descender,' suits it very well. The stream runs so fast that it is not fit for boats: a little below the outlet from the Sea of Galilee it was crossed by a bridge, on the high road from Egypt to Damascus; and further south were two or three fords. On either hand of the greater part of its course is a broad plain, in the upper portion three or four miles wide, in the lower, near the ancient Jericho,

as much as twelve. This plain is now dry and bare; but in ancient times it was carefully watered and richly cultivated. The mountain wall on either hand sheltered it from cold winds, and secured it a climate of extraordinary warmth, so that its produce was abundant and valuable. On the central heights the temperature was not so continuously hot. Snow even fell sometimes in the winter. But it was so warm that the harvest began before the end of March and was all over by June.

§ 4. Galilee

[Edersheim, *Jewish Social Life*, p. 30; Merrill, *Galilee in the time of Christ*.]

This was the most northern part of Palestine, reaching up towards the great mountain groups of the Lebanon and Hermon. The Jews divided it into three parts, Upper Galilee, Lower Galilee, and the Valley.

Upper Galilee extended nearly as far as the northern end of Lake Semechonitis. It was really a continuation of the Lebanon chain, with lofty hills and deep and narrow glens. On the heights here and there stood castles and fortresses to keep the restless inhabitants in order. In the cliffs are caves, once the shelter of bandits, now the haunt of the bear, or the home of countless bats.

Lower Galilee spreads southwards, across the rich plain of Jezreel to the foot of the slopes of the hills of Samaria on the further side. Its hills are less rugged, its valleys wider. Between its wooded ridges lie gentle vales, which still yield the wheat for which Galilee was famous, and forests of oak and olive yet remain to show

with what luxuriant verdure it was once clothed. Its chief town was Sepphoris, a few miles north of Nazareth, which was rebuilt during the childhood of Jesus, with beautiful buildings in the Greek style. Through Sepphoris ran one of the great high roads from the coast to Damascus, along the shore of the Sea of Galilee and across the Jordan. The village of *Nazareth* lies in a little upland dale, on the side of a green hill rising above it two or three hundred feet; here and there the limestone rock breaks through the slope in uneven slabs and rugged bluffs. Below lie gardens and cornfields surrounded with hedges of prickly pear, bright in spring time with the flower of the almond; from the summit is a magnificent view, sweeping from the mountains of Samaria in the south round by the sea to the peaks of Hermon in the north, and the 'high hills' of Bashan in the east. The neighbouring dales all had their own villages, and the whole district was crowded with busy life. Moreover, labour and trade brought wealth.

The Valley included the beautiful region through which the Jordan flowed, from its sources under Mount Hermon as far south as the city of Beth Shean, otherwise called by the Greek name of Scythopolis (modern Beisan). The upper part of it was occupied at the time of Jesus with a numerous population. It still yields rich harvests of wheat and barley; rice, beans, Indian corn, and the grain called sesame, are grown in abundance. In the jungle round Lake Merom, and the forests on the hills, were vast quantities of game, panthers and leopards, bears and wolves, jackals, hyænas, foxes, the wild boar, the gazelle, which Herod was wont to hunt with the members of his court. As it nears the Lake of Galilee the Jordan rolls through low oozy banks of rich alluvial

mud, where herds of buffaloes graze in the meadows on either hand.

The *Lake of Galilee* lies in an oval basin about twelve miles long, and at its greatest width is about six miles broad. Along its eastern side the hills run with scarcely any interruption in an even course from north to south, at an elevation of nearly two thousand feet. But on the west they recede inland with a noble sweep, leaving at their base a strip of land, nearly four miles long, of unsurpassed richness. This was *Gennesaret*, the 'garden' of Galilee. At the northern corner of the plain stood (so many have thought) the village of Capernaum. The high road ran through the meadows stretching down to the lake shore, under clumps of palm, amid orchards of walnut and olive; figs and grapes could be gathered for ten months of the year; and the variety of its products seemed to justify the glowing words of Josephus, who described Gennesaret as 'the ambition of nature.' North of Gennesaret, though not upon the lake, lay *Chorazin*, embowered among the groves which gave it its name, 'the woody place': and farther on, beyond the entry of the Jordan, stood *Bethsaida*, "house of fishing," with its new and beautiful buildings, bearing the name of Julias, in honour of the daughter of the Emperor of Rome. At the south end of Gennesaret stood the tower of *Magdala*. It was famous for its dye-works, and in the meadows round the village the indigo plant was cultivated for the purpose. In later days it was remembered as the home of several noted Rabbis: to us the only trace of its existence is preserved in the name of *Mary Magdalêné*. But the most important place was the city of Tiberias, on the south-western shore of the lake, so called by its founder, Herod Antipas, after the

Emperor Tiberius. There, only a few years before Jesus began to teach, Herod built a splendid palace, with costly furniture and gilded roof, adorned with numerous sculptures—a great offence to the Jews; and there he laid out a race-course for games after the foreign fashion of the Greeks. About a mile south of the city were the warm baths of Emmaus, a great resort of wealthy invalids. Around the outlet of the Jordan was the active fishing village of Taricheæ, where the fish caught in the lake were cured and packed for exportation. Farther round stood the Greek city of Hippos, and half-way up the eastern side was the little town of *Gergesa*.

The general impression about Galilee produced by the Gospel narratives is that of a thriving and active district. Jesus moves through the 'villages, the cities, and the fields.' From his occasional solitudes he passes on to 'the next towns.' Vast crowds of people follow him from the cities round the margin of the lake, and await him when he comes to shore. Large, indeed, must have been the population of the two hundred cities and villages of Galilee. Josephus even tells us that the people numbered three millions. This estimate must be taken with great reserve; but it is certain that, taken all in all, Galilee was the richest and most populous part of Palestine. Elsewhere there may have been cities more wealthy and splendid, such as Jerusalem, Jericho, Cæsarea-upon-the-Sea; nowhere else, except at the capital itself, could Jesus have so easily been brought face to face with the representatives of many lands. There were settlers from the neighbouring cities of Phœnicia, Greek colonists, Roman officers and soldiers; there were wanderers, too, from the wild deserts of the East, or travellers from Syria and Arabia, passing to and fro. Everywhere there

was life, there was stir, there was energy; and Jesus, moving among these mingled elements, found a readier hearing for his word.

§ 5. Samaria

[Montgomery, *The Samaritans*, 1907; Gaster, *The Samaritans*, 1923; G. A. Smith, *Historical Geography of the Holy Land*, pp. 323–364; Palestine Exploration Fund's *Annual*, 1932, 33.]

South of the great plain of Jezreel, the central mass begins to rise again. Small sheltered hollows lie among the hills: the valleys trend gently westwards towards the sea; on the east, ravines descend more abruptly into the Jordan valley. This region, extending from Ginea (En-Gannim, 'gardens-spring') in the north to Akrabbim (near the ancient Shiloh), in the south, a tract some twenty-five miles in length and breadth, was called *Samaria*. Its pastures, shut in by the surrounding heights were exceedingly fertile, and its cattle were famous for the quantity and goodness of their milk. Its chief city, from which the district took its name, had long since perished, but on its site a new and more splendid capital had arisen, adorned by Herod with palaces and colonnades. It stood on a solitary hill, encompassed by others yet more lofty, in whose woods lurked the hyæna and the bear, which the king delighted to hunt. He called it Sebastê, the Greek equivalent of the imperial name Augusta: and there, in the time of Jesus, the Roman officers used to go for cooler airs, when their quarters by the sea were too hot under the summer sun. Right in the heart of the country, in the very middle of Palestine, lay the town of *Shechem*, nestling

between two mountains, *Ebal* on the north and *Gerizim* on the south. It had played an important part in the Jews' history since early days. Though it lay in a valley, it was no less than 1,800 feet above the sea; yet it was —and still is—surrounded with the most beautiful woods. Among the gardens round the town rises here and there a palm, from the midst of little forests of walnut and mulberry, apricot and almond, orange and peach, fig and pomegranate trees. From bough to bough stretch the twining branches of the vine, and clusters of grapes hang down in wreaths and festoons. On every hand is heard the sound of falling water through the trees, mingling with the call of the jackdaw in the poplars, or the song of the nightingale, so that the inhabitants boast that their valley is the most musical in the whole land. Numbers of villages were scattered among the hills, and the country was very populous.

But the people were not of pure Jewish blood. They were of mixed descent: and the Jews were by no means friendly with them. The beginning of differences went back a very long way. In the old days, the city of Samaria had been the capital of the northern kingdom of Israel, which had broken away from the house of David in Jerusalem. For a long time it was rich and powerful; but when the great Assyrian invasions began, it could not permanently hold out against them. At last, in the year 721 B.C., the city fell; and the remnant of the people were carried away into a distant land east of the river Tigris. The king of Assyria settled some other tribes in their places, who brought with them their own language and their own religion. The old Israelite worship of Yahweh, however, did not altogether disappear; indeed, it proved stronger than the worship of

the new-comers. In due course it was the turn of the people of Jerusalem to go into exile. When they regained their freedom, and many of them returned and began to rebuild their ruined temple at Jerusalem, the Samaritans wished to join in with them. But the Jews refused; they would not have anything to do with those who were not of their own race; they were afraid that their religion might be corrupted by the old idolatries. This was the beginning of unfriendliness. Some time after, as the Jews would not let the Samaritans share in the Jerusalem temple, the Samaritans built one for themselves on Mount Gerizim. They got a copy of the sacred Law of the Jews, and tried to establish the same sort of worship. They even altered a passage in the book of Deuteronomy, so as to seem to get support for their own temple from what was thought to be the command of Moses. All this made the Jews very angry. At first they were not strong enough to prevent it: and they had to endure it for more than two hundred years. Then, in a time of unusual prosperity, they made war on the Samaritans, took Shechem, and destroyed the temple on Gerizim. Next, they laid siege to Samaria, which at last surrendered under stress of famine: they razed it to the ground, and kept a special festival in honour of its fall.

Ever after that the feeling between the Jews and the Samaritans was very bitter; and from time to time something was done which made it still more so. Thus, in the year A.D. 10, when Jesus was a boy, a party of Samaritans contrived to enter the temple at Jerusalem at midnight, during the feast of the Passover. Under the cover of the darkness they strewed the sacred courts with human bones, thus making them all unclean. The Jews retorted by excluding the Samaritans for ever even

from the outer courts, which had hitherto been open to them. They were publicly cursed in the synagogues; their evidence was not received in courts of justice. The Samaritans retaliated in their turn. They refused lodging to those who were going up from Galilee through their country to the feasts at the capital. Year by year the Jews of Jerusalem used to communicate to their countrymen in Babylon the exact day and hour of the rising of the Paschal moon by a series of beacon fires which flashed from hill to hill, till the tidings were carried from the Mount of Olives to the banks of the Euphrates. With this the Samaritans would sometimes interfere, confusing the watcher by kindling flames at wrong seasons on their own mountains. All this kept up the hatred between the two nations. The Jews insulted the Samaritans by calling them Cutheans, from the city of Cuthah from which their ancestors had come—a name intended to remind them of their foreign origin. They classed them with the heathen; they declared that to eat their food was no better than eating unclean swine's flesh; they would not allow them to join their religion: they refused them any part in the coming glories of the Messiah's reign (§ 44). Some, however, with a more generous feeling, triumphing over differences of race and ancient wrongs, said 'a Cuthean is an Israelite in all things.'

§ 6. East Jordan Lands

[Merrill, *East of the Jordan*.]

Across the Jordan lay several districts varying in character and people, some of which are named in our Gospels. On the south-eastern slopes of Mount Hermon

lay the small territory of *Iturea;* its rocky ravines were the home of wild and lawless tribes, famous for their skill and courage as archers and horsemen, who lived by plundering raids on the peaceful dwellers in the plains beneath. Further to the south-east, bordering the plain of Damascus and the desert, was *Trachonitis* (the 'rugged land'), a mass of basaltic rock inhabited by people even wilder than the Itureans. They had often no other homes than the caves in which the district abounded where they and their cattle lived together. The capital of this region, however, Canatha, belonged to the group of towns known by the Greek name of *Decapolis* ('ten cities'). Two of these, Scythopolis or Beth Shean, and Hippos, have been already named (pp. 18, 20) in connexion with Galilee and its lake. Another city reckoned in the same circle was *Gadara*, a little south-east of Hippos, above the ravine of the Jarmuk. Like Scythopolis and Hippos, it was chiefly inhabited by Greeks; and its remains show with what splendid buildings it was adorned. In the amphitheatre thousands of people might assemble to witness the combats of wild beasts; while in a smaller theatre, with its tiers of seats carved out of the rocky hill-side, they might enjoy the plays of comic poets of their own city. The warm baths of Amatha in the ravine below were esteemed by the Romans second only to those of Baiæ, on the shores of the Italy they loved. Further south, along the forest-clad highlands which in ancient days bore the name of Gilead, stretched the district of Perea ('the land on the other side,' *i.e.* of the Jordan) far down to the Dead Sea. This, likewise, was very populous, and had its busy cities, such as Gerasa, with splendid public buildings, amphitheatre, colonnades, bridges, aqueducts. Towards its

southern border, on the steep slopes of Attarus, overlooking the Dead Sea, stood the castle of Machaerus, a mighty fortress, counted next to Jerusalem in strength, designed to overawe the neighbouring Arabians. Its massive walls guarded palace and dungeon with equal security. It was the scene of the imprisonment and death of John the Baptist.

§ 7. Judæa

[Edersheim, *Jewish Social Life*, p. 59; G. A. Smith, *Historical Geography of Holy Land*, pp. 259–320.]

The southern division of Palestine was Judæa. The Jews divided it into three parts, the Lowlands, the Hill Country, and the Valley. The Lowlands stretched along the coast upon the west. The Hill Country was reared up on the central mountain mass. The Valley was the deep depression through which the Jordan flowed, ending in the trough of the Dead Sea. The Lowlands were all astir with the trade which passed through their towns to the cities of Phœnicia or the more distant ports of the Mediterranean. But to the true Jew the Hill Country was far dearer. It was more rugged, more barren, than Galilee or Samaria. Its mountains were more lofty, its valleys less beautifully wooded, its pastures more scanty. But all the most venerable places of ancient days were crowded into it. The pilgrim coming up from Galilee to Jerusalem by the shorter road through Samaria passed by *Shiloh*, which had been the religious centre of the tribes after their first conquests: by *Bethel*, where Jacob —so the legend ran—had seen the ladder reaching to heaven: by *Ramah*, the home of Samuel, from which came the first beginnings of monarchy and prophecy.

The caravans coming from the south were greeted by like memories. There was *Hebron*, where tradition said that 'Father Abraham' himself lay buried. There was *Etam*, where Solomon was supposed to have constructed the great reservoirs which still bear his name. There was *Bethlehem*, the village home of the first great race of kings, whose name was for ever associated in the heart of the Jew with all that was splendid in power and tender in piety.

Those who approached Jerusalem from the Valley, likewise came in the footsteps of the past. They crossed the Jordan by a ford which the Israelites of old had trodden. They passed through *Jericho*, the scene of the first conquest of the invading tribes. It lay several miles from the river, on a higher level than the rest of the plain, where streams from the mountains of Judah secured a fertile tract in the hot and barren valley. Around the city were palm-groves and rose-gardens; the roads were bordered with trees; and behind the royal castle was a precious plantation of the shrubs which yielded the fragrant balsam. The trade in this drug was very active and valuable, and the city had become wealthy and important. It had its theatre, its circus, its race-course; and a new palace with extensive gardens was added during the lifetime of Jesus. There was a strange contrast between the luxuriant beauty of Jericho and the wild country behind it. Deep ravines came plunging down towards the valley of the Dead Sea from the central highlands. The caves and fastnesses among the rocks were the haunt of robbers; here and there some earnest spirit withdrawn from his fellow men sought shelter in their solitudes. This whole region was called the Wilderness. It was in these recesses that the

Essenes (§ 39) made their home. It was from here that John came forth to preach the coming kingdom. Hither Jesus may have retired after his baptism to think out the great thoughts quickened within him. The way from Jericho to Jerusalem lay through one of these narrow valleys. A long ascent up a winding glen—opening out in one place where a small spring supported a clump of trees and a little grass—led at length to the eastern slopes of the Mount of Olives. Here stood and still stands the village of *Bethany*, which seems to the traveller who approaches it from below to occupy a commanding position among its olive and almond trees on the hill-side. A little further the brow of the mountain is reached. Beneath runs the vale of Kidron: and on the other side, crowning the hills upon the west, in tier after tier above the massive walls, temple and fortress palace and theatre, market and house, rises the city of Jerusalem.

§ 8. Jerusalem

[Edersheim, *The Temple, its Ministry*, etc., p. 1; G. A. Smith, *Jerusalem*, 2 vols., 1907. For recent excavations on Mount Ophel, see the Palestine Exploration Fund's *Annual*, 1929, 1931.]

The first and most striking feature of the city, especially to a traveller coming from the east, is the group of hills on which it lies. Of these three were occupied at the time of Jesus. The lowest and most easterly, hanging over the vale of Kidron, opposite the Mount of Olives, was *Moriah*, whose summit, was 2,425 feet above the sea. On this stood the Temple, surrounded by its splendid courts and colonnades (§ 29). The southern end of the Temple buildings was built up with massive

masonry across the slope named Ophel, and stretched to the valley on the west, which ran up into the heart of the city, separating Moriah from the Western hills. This was known in the time of Jesus as the *Cheesemakers' Valley*. The sides were crowded with houses rising steeply one above another; a bridge led over it from the Temple-mountain to the busy city; and it was also crossed by an aqueduct constructed by Pilate, conveying waters from the pool of Etam, south of Bethlehem, to the city and Temple. At the end of a long ridge which sloped gently from north to south and out-topped the Temple-mountain by 112 feet, lay the *Upper City*: northwards, on Akra, beyond the head of the Cheesemakers' Valley was the *Lower City*. Altogether, Jerusalem was not much more than about three miles round. The whole of this great irregular mass was carefully guarded with walls and towers, so that to foreigners it looked at first sight like an immense mountain fortress.

But soon the several groups of buildings began to stand out more clearly. There was, first of all, the Temple, with its holy house rising above the wide area of its sacred precincts. The pure white marble of which it was built glowed in the sunshine, which was flashed again and again from the golden spikes studding the roof. One of its gates was of dazzling Corinthian brass; others were overlaid with gold and silver. At its north-west corner stood the great pile known as the castle of Antonia; it had been enlarged by Herod, and was afterwards occupied by the Romans. Here were the governor's palace, and barracks for the garrison. In the Cheesemakers' Valley, west of the Temple, near the bridge, was a great gymnasium, or place of exercise; there, too, it would seem, a market-place, a race-course, a theatre.

The city business was transacted in the Council House, and the records were laid up in the depository of the Archives. The slopes on the west were partly covered with the gardens, courts, and halls of a new palace of Herod, protected with towers of unusual strength, and shut off from the busy city by a high wall. Over the hills beyond stretched gardens and orchards: and the sides of the upper end of the ravine of *Hinnom*, which swept past the west and south sides of the city hills on its way to the valley of the Kidron, were green with olive trees.

The streets of the city—East Street, Baker Street, Fish Street, ran their names—were close and narrow: and within its limited area a considerable population must have been crowded together. There are no means of determining the actual number of permanent residents; guesses run from 50,000 to five times that number. The city had, indeed, no special trade; but it was the centre of Israel's religion, the centre of its learning, and the centre of its government. Troops of Priests and Levites were gathered round the Temple; and there, too, were the great schools, in which the famous Professors taught; for the Temple was Cathedral and University in one. Crowds of students flocked hither from all parts of the world. Multitudes of artisans and mechanics, masons, carpenters, workers in gold and silver, musical instrument makers—as many, indeed, it is said, as 18,000—were employed by the Herods in the works connected with the Temple, from 20 B.C. onwards. All these must have lived in or near the city. Then there were the lodging-house keepers, who provided accommodation for the bands of pilgrims and visitors thronging Jerusalem at all seasons, and especially at the feasts. All

sorts of trades were carried on to meet their wants, as the names of the Bazaars show: there was the Timber Bazaar, the Tailors' Bazaar, the Wool Bazaar, the Braziers' Bazaar. There were the purveyors of the different kinds of animals needed in the Temple offerings, of oil, and wine, and wood; provision dealers, with fish from the Lake of Galilee or Tyre, grapes from Hebron, lentils from Egypt, whose booths were ranged along both sides of the street; tailors, sandal-makers, jewellers (who even sold false teeth mounted in gold), armourers, all working in the open air; donkey drivers with a stand at the corner of two thoroughfares, where the patient animals stood ready to be mounted, or to be loaded with burdens. What a variety of peoples met in the streets—Jews from every part of the known world, Phœnicians, Arabs, Greeks, Romans! How many languages were spoken, what differences of colour, look, habit, manner, dress, must have been seen! We can form some little notion of the multitude, and the far-off lands from which they came, from this one circumstance, that Jerusalem was said to contain no less than 480 synagogues. This number is no doubt exaggerated; it may possibly have had some symbolic meaning now lost to us; but it shows us the variety of the people whose chief concern was with religion. The people loved their capital for its ancient fame; but still more because it was, as they phrased it, the place which their God had chosen to set his name there. Of all the cities of Israel, this was pre-eminently the 'Holy City.' It was the seat of their faith on earth, the counterpart of one more glorious beyond the sky, reserved above till the hour should come for it to descend, and fling wide its gates for those whose names were inscribed in the book of life to enter in.

CHAPTER II

THE PEOPLE

§ 9. The Jewish Stock

[R. A. S. Macalister, *History of Civilisation in Palestine*, 1921; P. S. P. Handcock, *Archæology of the Holy Land*, 1916; Driver, *Modern Research as Illustrating the Bible*, 1909; *Cambridge Ancient History*, vol. ix. 'The Jews,' by E. R. Bevan.]

THE inhabitants of Palestine were really of very mixed origin. The Jews themselves belonged, like the Canaanites whom their forefathers found in the country when the tribes of Israel entered it, to the great Semitic race. This name is derived from Shem, the eldest son of the hero of the great Flood. The table of Noah's descendants in *Genesis* x is in reality a survey of the nations of the world as they were known to the authors of the documents out of which the book of Genesis was compiled. They are distributed under the three names of Shem, Ham, and Japheth. The classification is by no means scientific. It depends rather on geographical and political relations; some nations are included under Shem which belonged to quite different stocks; and others are omitted which are unquestionably akin. Modern students reckon language as one of the chief tests of racial connexion, though it must be taken with some qualifications, as conquering nations sometimes impose their speech upon the peoples which they subdue, and

elements of various origins may thus become intermixed. The group of languages to which the Hebrew of the Old Testament belongs is called Semitic, and includes the Babylonian and Assyrian of the valleys of the Euphrates and the Tigris, the Moabite to the south-east of Palestine, the Syriac to the north-east, as well as the Arabic of the desert tribes, and the Ethiopic of Abyssinia on the other side of the Red Sea.

How long the Canaanites had occupied the country before the Israelites began their conquests we do not know. There are no great historic monuments in Palestine like those of Egypt or Babylonia. But the spade which has been used with such effect beside the Nile and the Euphrates, at the sites of Troy or Mycenæ, has been recently employed by skilled investigators (English, American, and Continental) on some of the mounds of Palestine with remarkable results. For instance, at Gezer, 19 miles W.S.W. of Jerusalem, important discoveries have been made. It had been a Canaanite city under the suzerainty of the Egyptian kings. It was still a strong fortress in the days of the Maccabees, a century and a half before the time of Christ. It stood near the end of a ridge of hills, looking over the lowlands, as far as Joppa and the sea. It had suffered siege after siege; it had seen the armies of Egypt, of Assyria, of Greece, and Rome, pass along the plain below. When the contents of the great mound were laid bare, it was found (as in other cases in Palestine itself, in Babylonia, in Asia Minor) that layers of dwellings could be traced one below another, showing that there had been a succession of cities on the same spot. No less than seven could be thus distinguished; and the two lowest belonged to an earlier occupation than the Canaanite. The people were

smaller in stature; they lived in cave-dwellings; they used the weapons of the later Stone-age. They made rude pottery; they had learned how to domesticate animals; they could even draw cows and buffaloes. Whence they came and how long they had been there, it is impossible to tell.

But probably by the middle of the third millennium, about 2500 B.C., the Canaanites were in possession. They used bronze and copper, but had not yet learned to work in iron. Their arts were connected with Phœnicia farther north, and with Egypt in the south. Their culture and language spread through the country; they built cities, they established their sanctuaries, they developed trade; and the wealth and fertility of the land attracted the attention of the great powers of Babylonia and Egypt. Historic detail is wanting, though an inscription of Thothmes III describing his conquests (1480 B.C.) had long been known—he mentions 119 places within or near the borders of Canaan—but one significant fact came to light nearly thirty years ago. At Tell-el-Amarna on the Nile, 190 miles by river south of Cairo, some 300 clay tablets were discovered, inscribed not in Egyptian but in the cuneiform (or wedge-shaped) writing used in the valley of the Euphrates. They contained the correspondence of Egyptian governors in cities of Canaan, and foreign kings between Cyprus and Assyria, who communicated (about 1400–1350 B.C.) with the Egyptian sovereigns Amenhotep III and Amenhotep IV in the Babylonian language and character (Handcock, *Selections from Tell-el-Amarna Letters*, 1920). The Canaanite peoples must have been long under Babylonian sway for this usage to become established. The Canaanites who spread through the country,

themselves spoke a language closely allied with the Hebrew of the tribes of Israel.[1]

Entering the country between the fifteenth and the thirteenth centuries—whether in one body or in successive waves of migration is immaterial—[Garstang, basing his conclusions on his discoveries at Jericho, prefers the earlier date—see Palestine Exploration Fund's *Annual*, 1930], the Israelites gradually won their way by conquest, and by peaceful extension; and in the course of time they spread over the whole land. But as when the Normans conquered England, the Normans were really much fewer than the English already in the country, so the invading Hebrews were at first far outnumbered by the Canaanites; and it was not till after several hundred years that they were thoroughly blended into one nation. Then came the great disasters which befell the Hebrew State. First, the Northern kingdom of the Ten Tribes was overwhelmed by the Assyrian power; and the great bulk of the wealthier people were carried away never to return. By and by a similar fate overtook the Southern kingdom of Judah. Its nobles, its priests, all the richer classes and persons of importance, were transported to Babylonia. But the country was never left altogether desolate. The poor tillers of the soil, the descendants of the old Canaanites, remained. They continued as they were before; they kept up the same names for the old hills and plains, the old towns and villages; and they practised many of the religious customs which they had never abandoned from the earliest times. After a time many of the Jews of the old Southern families returned from their captivity, they gradually reoccupied their

[1] Cp. Driver, *Modern Research as Illustrating the Bible*, 1909.

ancient homes, and the same process of amalgamation with the rest of the people of the land went on as before.

In the North, however, the situation was somewhat different. When the Assyrians made their first descents upon Galilee, the usual practice of deporting the population was carried out by Tiglath-Pileser in 738 B.C. Their places were supplied by colonists brought from the east, some of whom were not of Semitic race at all (cp. p. 22). Very few Jews were to be found in the country when the Maccabean leaders overthrew the Syrian tyranny, and these were transferred to Jerusalem in 164 B.C. It was not till sixty years later that Aristobulus (105–104), the first among the Maccabean princes to take the title king, succeeded in once more settling Jews in Galilee. Many elements thus mingled in the population.

In particular these affected the common speech of the people. The old language, Hebrew, in which the ancient Law, the discourses of the prophets, the Temple-psalms, and the traditions of the nation, were written, ceased to be commonly spoken except in the sacred Schools. It was still the language of religion; hymns were written in it; national chronicles were composed in it; but it was not understood by everybody; and even in the synagogue service it was necessary, when the Scriptures were read, for them to be translated verse by verse into the popular dialect. We call this Aramaic from *Arâm*, the Old Testament name for Syria. [Syriac was but a dialect chiefly used at Edessa.] Several words still remain in our Gospels which show us, even through their Greek spelling, that this was the language actually spoken by Jesus and his followers. Thus *Raca* (*Matt.* v. 22) 'empty fellow,' *mammon* (*Matt.* vi. 24) 'wealth,'

Talitha cumi (*Mk.* v. 41), 'maiden, arise,' *Abba* (*Mk.* xiv. 36) 'Father,' are all regular Aramaic words. So are the words spoken by Jesus on the cross, *Eli, Eli, lama sabachthâni?* (*Matt.* xxvii. 46), 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?' Many names present the same Aramaic forms, such as those beginning with *Bar*, 'son,' *Bar-Jonah* (*Matt.* xvi. 17), 'Son of Jonah,' *Barabbas*, *Bartholomew*.

But though the language had thus to some extent changed, the Jewish people clung with great firmness to the thought that they were still the same nation: they, like their forefathers, were the descendants of Abraham, whom they loved to call 'Father'; they were the children of the men who had come out of Egypt, had wandered in the wilderness, had conquered Canaan, and once, at least, under David and Solomon, had risen as a State to power and eminence. They earnestly cherished the idea which they found in their ancient books, that they had been chosen by God out of the other nations of the world, to be a peculiar people to him. They could not forget the incidents of their past; they felt they had a special claim to the land in which they lived, and they looked down upon all other peoples who could not show the same evidences of divine favour. We shall see hereafter how this sense of being a nation blended with their religion and affected their whole life (see chapter iv). They might be carried away as slaves to Rome, they might be merchants or teachers in Alexandria, they might be poor handicraftsmen away in Babylonia; but they were still one people, with one law, one faith, because they were all of one parentage. Every Jew was proud to belong to the 'seed of Abraham.'

§ 10. Foreign Elements and Influences

[Edersheim, *Jewish Social Life*, p. 14; E. R. Bevan, *Jerusalem under the High Priests*, 1924; S. A. Cook, *The Religion of Ancient Palestine*, 1925; Fairweather, *Jesus and the Greeks*, 1924.]

The Jews at the time of Jesus, it has been said, felt themselves one nation; they had one religion, one God. But it had not always been so. In the earlier days of their history they had been constantly in contact with other nations, from whom they had adopted other beliefs and other kinds of worship. Some of these they learned from the old Canaanites, some from the Phœnicians, some from the peoples of Mesopotamia. Against these their prophets were constantly contending. After the captivity they made a great effort to put away everything that could tempt them to their former idolatries; they wished to protect themselves as carefully as they could against whatever might draw them away from being faithful to their religion. The truths of this religion they had only won by long struggle and bitter suffering, and they could not bear to see them again endangered. Hence they sought as far as possible to hedge themselves round with sheltering safeguards. They avoided intermarriage with people not of their race; they would not accept the proffered aid of the Samaritans in rebuilding their Temple (§ 5).

But they could not long keep entirely to themselves. The position of their country was such (§ 2) as to expose them, in spite of themselves, to constant influences from without. Even if they could escape any more influence from the peoples of the great Mesopotamian valley in the East, they could not shut out the culture of the

Western lands of the Mediterranean. It was by the conquests of Alexander the Great, the famous king of Macedon, that the way was opened from the West to the East. His victories over Tyre and Gaza in 332 involved the downfall of the Persian supremacy in Palestine, and Jerusalem passed under Greek rule. Greek cities began to spring up within the limits of the Holy Land. Greeks occupied the old Philistine towns along the South-West coasts; Greeks colonized the upper valley of the Jordan and the heights upon the East. Greek gods, Zeus, Apollo, Athênê, Artemis, Pan, were worshipped in the temples; their names and images appeared upon the city coins. On the borders of Galilee, touching the lake at Hippos, lay the district of the Ten Cities, whose Greek name, Decapolis, betrays their origin (§ 6). The restless activity of Herod must have considerably increased the importance of the Greek element in Palestine. They formed the majority of the inhabitants of his beautiful city of Cæsarea-upon-the-Sea; their language gave its name to Sebastê, the Greek form of the Latin Augusta; and their religion found a new home in its temples. It was the same with the new cities of Galilee, Cæsarea Philippi, Julias, Tiberias; everywhere Greeks were settled, carrying with them their language, their manners, and their deities. Beside the temples stood their baths, the theatre, and the race-course; and games were established after the model of the famous contests of their fatherland.

The Jews could not remain wholly unaffected by all this, for good or for bad. On the one hand, the Greek culture had about it a freedom and variety unlike anything which the Jews had ever possessed. On the other it might prove very dangerous to the purity and

simplicity of their virtue, and the strictness of their faith. Some, therefore, were much attracted towards it; others were vehemently opposed to it. It became fashionable among the rich, who were often indifferent to religion; it drew to it for a long time some of the noblest families even in the priesthood. Men gave up the ancient names of their forefathers to call themselves by Greek names. Thus the high priest Joshua changed his name to Jason; in 174 B.C. he erected a gymnasium at Jerusalem, where Greek teachers instructed Jewish youths in the arts of wrestling, running, leaping, and similar exercises practised in Greece. The Jews could never forget what followed. Their Syrian overlord, Antiochus Epiphanes, was resolved to force the people to abandon their religion; in 168 he seized Jerusalem, and did his best to convert it into a heathen city. The worship of Yahweh was stopped in the temple. Over the great altar of burnt sacrifice was constructed a smaller one, dedicated to Olympian Zeus; and King Antiochus boasted that he had made an end of the deity of the Jews. This was more than the Jews could bear. A terrible struggle began; the persecution was severe; the resistance stubborn. It was the martyr age of Judaism, and left deep traces on the national thought and feeling. The heroic courage of the Maccabees at length restored liberty of worship to the people, and from that time onward no similar attempt was made again.

The more rigid Jews endeavoured to avoid all contact with everything heathen. They aimed at complete separation. All heathen houses were unclean, and entrance into them involved pollution. So they would have as little to do as they could help with the products of heathen industry. They would use no milk or oil or

wine in private from a Gentile farm or vineyard; still less would they employ it in sacrifice; though they did not object to buy it for trading purposes to sell again. In spite of these efforts, however, there was a large infusion of Greek ways in Jewish society during the age before Jesus. Greek personal names, such as Andrew and Philip among the disciples of Jesus, were freely used. That the porch and colonnade of the Temple should be designated by Greek terms, *Stoa* and *Exedra*, is not altogether surprising, as foreign architects or workmen may have introduced them. But even the supreme council of the Jews bore a Greek name; the term Sanhedrin being the equivalent of the Greek *synedrion*, an assembly. The names of some of the musical instruments supposed in the book of *Daniel* to be employed at the court of Nebuchadrezzar in Babylon are Greek; this is a clear sign of the presence of one mode of Greek art. But the book of Daniel was really written ir Palestine, and belongs to the time of Antiochus and the Maccabees. Many words for industrial processes such as spinning, weaving, fish-curing, and writing were Greek; so were the terms of travel, inn, harbour, and navigation. Foreign objects of commerce, luxury, and manners—the games, the bath—bore Greek names.

With Greek words came also something of Greek philosophy. One book in the Old Testament, *Ecclesiastes*, written perhaps a hundred years or thereabout before Jesus, shows many marks of acquaintance with some of the chief Schools of Western thought. The Jews who settled abroad necessarily felt this more than those who remained in Palestine; they had to live among the Greeks in their own cities; and in Alexandria, in particular, Judaism took quite a special form of its own.

This was due very much to the desire to harmonize the teachings of the old religion with the new thoughts of Greek wisdom. But many who remained in Palestine distrusted this tendency. When the sacred books were translated into Greek for the benefit of the Greek-speaking Jews at Alexandria, who had lost the knowledge of Hebrew, there was great grief in Jerusalem. The strict national party would have nothing to do with Greek literature. They wished to keep out all ways of thinking that might weaken their own religion. Nothing was to be studied but that—no science, no poetry, save what was in their own books. 'When may Greek learning be taught?' it was asked. 'When it is neither day nor night,' was the reply, 'for it is written concerning the Law, "Thou shalt study it day and night."' They declared those who followed it unfit to share the glories of the coming age to which they looked forward; just as well-nigh a century ago good orthodox people in this country did all they could to discourage the study of German. 'Cursed is the man who rears pigs,' they cried; 'Cursed is the man who teaches his son the Greek learning.'

Perhaps in Galilee Jesus would know little of these philosophical tendencies, and the opposition which they provoked. It is doubtful whether he could speak Greek; it is not at all likely that he read any Greek books.[1] But it was different in Jerusalem. Among the number of synagogues there (§ 8), were some for the Greek-speaking Jews from Egypt and elsewhere; and some of the more liberal teachers in the great schools of the capital had

[[1] But see *The History of Christianity in the Light of Modern Knowledge*, 1929, part 1, chapter 6, by D. C. Simpson, "Judaism, the Religion in which Christ was educated."]

penetrated deeply into the foreign learning. Had it not been for one of these Greek-speaking Jews, trained at the feet of a Rabbi, specially renowned for his liberal sympathies and his knowledge of Greek wisdom—had it not been for Paul, the disciple of Gamaliel—the whole story of early Christianity might have run a different course. The 'new teaching' (*Mark* i. 27) might never have been set free from the restrictions of the Mosaic law; the barriers between Jew and Greek might have remained unbroken; and 'the spirit of life which was in Jesus Christ' might have failed to escape from the limits of nationality, and have faded away instead of setting out to win the world.

§ 11. Occupations

[F. Delitzsch, *Jewish Artisan Life*; Edersheim, *Jewish Social Life*, p. 182.]

From early days the land of Canaan had been the scene of a busy active life. Even before Moses its hills were crowded with little towns: sheep browsed on its highland pastures; fields of grain covered the plains; the vine, the olive, and the palm were carefully cultivated. The Egyptian monuments as early as 1700 B.C. show us how important was the trade with Canaan. Corn, wine, oil, honey, and dates were all exported to the south. Wool from the downs beyond the Jordan was woven into rich stuffs in the looms of Phœnicia; the linen manufacture could compete with that of the valley of the Nile; and balsam for embalming the dead, and the fragrant storax for incense in the temples, were likewise favourite articles of traffic. Thus, when the Hebrews entered Canaan, they found a people already

there in possession of the arts of life; and they learned from them how to till the soil and grow the vine, the olive, and the fig. Large flocks and herds roamed over the uplands, for they never gave up their pastoral occupation; but they became by their settlement an agricultural people, and the hymns in which they sing of the richness and fertility of their land and thank God for his good gifts, show us how dearly they loved this mode of life. But they acquired by degrees a knowledge of all kinds of trades as well; they opened mines for iron and copper; with the help of the Phœnicians they learned the arts of building; they were carpenters, smiths, masons; they made beautiful furniture, costly vessels, embroidered robes, fine jewels, musical instruments. So they recognized the place which labour must fill in society, and they counted it honourable. 'There is no trade,' said their wise men, 'which the world can spare.' 'When a man teaches his son no trade, it is as if he taught him highway robbery.' 'Without these'—so run the words of one of their sages—'cannot a city be inhabited . . . they maintain the state of the world' (see the whole passage, *Ecclus.* xxxviii. 24–34).

The different trades in the time of Jesus had formed themselves into guilds, such as carpenters or fullers. In some of them, the men were pledged to mutual help: thus, the waterman and the ass-drivers bound themselves to replace at the cost of the corporation the boat or the ass of any member which had not been lost by mere carelessness. Different parts of the country had their own forms of industry. Galilee was famous for its corn, and on the lake the fishing trade was of great importance. Taricheæ, at its southern end (p. 20), was its chief centre. There the fish were dried, cured, and

packed for exportation. There, too, was a great rendezvous for boats, and Josephus tells us that on one occasion during the great war with the Romans he assembled there as many as 240. The manufacture of nets, tackle, etc., was thus pretty active. Flax was grown of different qualities, some coarse, some fine, and dried in the sun on the flat roofs of the houses; then it was made into ropes, Arbel (near the lake, a little west of Magdala) being specially noted for its rope-walks. The warm climate of the lake of Galilee enabled the indigo plant to be grown on its shores; and Magdala, on the western coast, was well known for its dye-works. The rich pastures of Samaria, as of the uplands east of the Jordan, were renowned for their breed of cattle. At Jericho the groves of palms were very valuable; and still more the gardens devoted to the balsam shrub, precious both as a perfume and for medicinal properties, which were a source of revenue greatly coveted, till at last they fell into the hands of the all-devouring Romans. Judæa was not so well fitted for the growth of corn; but the fine turf of the downs near Hebron was thought to nurture specially fat lambs for sacrifice. Vine culture was general in the south; the steep slopes of the hillsides were cut into terraces carefully banked up with stones to prevent the soil from being washed away. A hedge, perhaps of prickly pear, was planted round, or a wall was built, to keep out the wild boar, the jackal and the fox, or the human thief. In one corner rose a tower for the vine-dressers to live in: out of the solid rock were hewn two vats, one below the other; in the upper one the grapes were crushed under the naked feet of the treaders, and the juice thus pressed out ran off into the lower one. Many of the hills about Jerusalem

were well covered with valuable trees. Bethany, perhaps 'the house of dates,' was embowered in palms. Bethphage, 'the house of figs,' stood by a grove of fig-trees. Olives and fig-trees clothed the slopes of the Mount of Olives, otherwise known as the Mount of Oil, and the name Gethsemane, 'place of oil-presses,' shows that the fruit was crushed upon the spot. Jerusalem was not a manufacturing town; but a great variety of industries clustered round the Temple (§ 8) and as the centre of the whole national life, not for the Jews of Palestine only, but for those of the whole world, all kinds of commodities were brought to its markets. The parables of Jesus reflect something of these different occupations. To Galilee belong the parables of the field and the lake, of the farmer sowing his seed, the fisherman casting his net, the shepherd losing one of his sheep; through Galilee passed the great trading caravans, and here, likewise, we hear the story of the travelling merchant in search of a precious pearl. In the neighbourhood of Jerusalem, on the other hand, the scenery of the parables is taken from the vineyard; a favourite image is that of the fig-tree.

The life of labour was not thought mean or sordid; 'the tradesman at his work need not rise,' they said, 'before the greatest Doctor'; though some kinds of work, such as tanning and mining, ranked low, because they were peculiarly dirty. It was the custom even for famous teachers to work at some handicraft, for no fixed fees were paid: teachers depended on the gratitude of pupils or parents, or sometimes they shared in the distribution of tithes for the poor, or received support from the funds of the Temple. Sometimes they deliberately pledged themselves to the unworldly life. 'Hast

thou all thy life long seen a beast or a bird that hath a trade,' asked a certain Rabbi Simeon: 'still are they nourished and that without anxious care. They are created only to serve me, and shall not I expect to be nourished without anxious care, who am created to serve my Maker?' But the Talmud shows us the Rabbis engaged in all kinds of trades. One is a cooper in the little town of Usha in Galilee; he himself carries to the school-house the cask which serves as his seat. Another is a tailor, a shoemaker, a baker, a physician, a carpenter, a needlemaker, an architect, a cook, a fisherman, a smith, a potter, a dyer, even a grave-digger. It was not so very surprising, then, for a carpenter's son or a weaver of tent-cloth to become a teacher: and we need not imagine that people would think ill of Jesus or Paul because they practised a trade. How healthy was the spirit of the scholars in one of the famous Jewish schools at Jabneh (Jamnia) on the maritime plain, who were taught to say thus: 'I am God's creature, and the equal of my fellow man; I have my calling in the town, and he his in the field; I go early to my work, and he to his. Even as he does not vaunt his work, so neither should I mine; and if thou sayest to thyself, "I produce great things, and he small," yet have we learnt that though one produce great things and another small, yet shall the like reward be to each, so far as his heart is, whilst working, lifted up to God.'

§ 12. Rich and Poor

[Edersheim, *Jewish Social Life*, p. 86; Montefiore, *Synoptic Gospels*, vol. i, pp. 242–7; Abrahams, *Studies in Pharisaism and the Gospels*, 1917 and 1924, on 'Poverty and Wealth.']

Palestine, in the time of Jesus, was certainly a populous country. It was covered with towns and villages, and the people were constantly at work. We know that there must have been a great deal of wealth, but there must have been also a great deal of poverty and distress. For a long time before the days of Jesus, until Herod established himself in power (§ 21), the government was very unsettled. There was frequent war; the Romans from the west, the Parthians from the east, swept through the land. When the wars were over, there were left only desolated fields and ruined villages. Then bands of robbers appeared, especially in Galilee, where they issued from the fastnesses of the glens, and extracted from the unhappy people what little of their substance remained to them. But the fertility of the country was so great, that the wealth thus destroyed was speedily re-created. The strong hand of King Herod restored order; and prosperity soon set in. The immense works which he executed must have required vast resources; and these were all drawn by taxation from his subjects. He collected large sums to pay the Romans: he raised old cities from their ruins, and built new ones. Fortresses and castles, temples and theatres, race-courses, aqueducts, all bore witness to his love of display, and still more to the wealth of the people. And as if this was not enough, he made costly presents to foreign cities, building walls round one, baths in another, porticoes, temples, theatres, in a third. He was only able

to do this by laying most oppressive taxes on the people, even on the most necessary market-wares. In order to strengthen himself in power, he enriched his own friends with moneys and estates wrested from the Jews who were unfortunate enough to displease him, and he very often took away their lives as well as their property. After his death the Jews sent an embassy to Rome, complaining bitterly of his recklessness and cruelty; he had enriched the cities in the neighbourhood, they said, but these were inhabited by foreigners; the Jews themselves he had reduced to the greatest poverty.

Things were not much better during the youth of Jesus, when the Romans finally took possession of the country (§ 22). There was a desperate struggle; soldiers ravaged, robbers and slaves swarmed and plundered, and the most frightful disorder prevailed. Hence it came about that while some were very rich, most of the people were but poorly off. The rich were often foreigners or they might be Jews who had gained their wealth in evil ways, as tax-gatherers (§ 25), by extortion and violence. A few had large properties, but not many such hereditary estates were left; there was no great land-owning class; there were no great manufacturers or large industrial enterprises. Thus it might well seem that the rich was generally the oppressor; and when the Jews passed directly under the Roman yoke this feeling became still stronger. Again and again complaints were lodged at Rome against the conduct of the imperial officers. Their grasping avarice was never satisfied. 'A poor man,' says one of the Roman historians, speaking of Quintilius Varus, governor of Syria during the infancy of Jesus, 'a poor man he entered the rich country, a rich man he left the country poor.' But

there were, of course, other causes of poverty besides social oppression. The Wisdom books (Proverbs, Ecclesiasticus) refer repeatedly to sloth, gluttony, drunkenness, love of pleasure, gossip, want of thoroughness, refusal of correction, bad company.

The Gospels show many traces of these grave inequalities of rich and poor. The rich are always getting richer, and the poor poorer. The wealthy do not know how to employ their accumulating gains (*Luke* xii. 16 sqq.); the needy do not know where to-morrow's bread is to come from. The creditor arrests his debtor in the street (*Matt.* v. 25), and throws him into prison, and there is no release for him till the last farthing is paid. Only in a story is anyone generous enough to remit the debts due to him, whether they be fifty or five hundred pence (*Luke* vii. 41, 42). The administrator of a province owes the prodigious sum of ten thousand talents (*Matt.* xviii. 23, 24), and he and his family are doomed to slavery. Money doubles itself with the utmost rapidity, or even multiplies tenfold (*Matt.* xxv. 16, 17, *Luke* xix. 16). The bankers have a busy time. While beggars are sitting in the streets or lying at the doors of the houses of the rich (*Luke* xvi. 20), the merchant turns all his fortune into a single pearl which he can carry about with him (*Matt.* xiii. 45, 46). Unfinished towers stand in the vineyards as monuments of empty purses (*Luke* xiv. 28, 29). The labourer digs up a treasure in the field he tills, hidden there to be out of reach of thieves or tax-gatherers, and now without an owner (*Matt.* xiii. 44). The destitute too often appeal for help in vain (*Matt.* xxv. 42, 43); from the petitions of the poor who have no security, the wealthy turn contemptuously away (*Luke* vi. 30, 34, *Matt.* v. 42).

So the condition of great numbers of the people was

one of poverty, if not always of actual want. If there was a famine or a plague, whole districts were reduced to beggary. In one of these periods of distress the danger was so imminent, that Herod was actually obliged to sell the costly furniture and plate of his palaces to provide food and clothes for the temporary support of fifty thousand men, and to furnish seed for distribution among the ruined farmers.

Those who had trades and lived in the towns were perhaps a little better off. But the way of life of the poor in the east in the present day shows us something not unlike what existed in the time of Jesus. Their food was often scanty; they ate little meat; their chief subsistence was on different kinds of grain, vegetables, such as lentils, beans, peas, onions, cucumbers, or dried fruits; the traveller was provided with a day's meal if he had a few dates, or a bunch or two of dried grapes, to be washed down with water from some well. If he had no lodging, he slept under an archway, or by such shelter as a bare wall might afford. The wages of a day-labourer might, perhaps, as in one of the stories of Jesus, be a *denarius* a day (commonly reckoned at about ninepence). But it might be less. When Hillel, afterwards the famous head of one of the great schools at Jerusalem during the youth of Jesus (p. 135), first came to Jerusalem, he worked as a journeyman, but only received half a denarius a day, out of which he had to support his family, and bribe the steward of the academy which he desired to attend, to let him in. The smallest coin, the mite, which the poor widow put into the Treasury (*Mark* xii. 42), was a quarter of a farthing. Money was precious; and the poor had little to spend, for comforts or luxuries.

The common village house, occupied by an ordinary artisan's family, could not, therefore, be very large. The rent of a small house varied from about 7s. to 28s. a year; the rent of a larger house is computed at £9. Sometimes it stood in a little court, from which a staircase ran up outside to the roof. There the farmer laid out his figs and raisins to dry, or sunned his wheat or his flax, unhurt by wild animals or thieves. From these, too, perhaps, as in the present day, the public crier announced the orders of the local authorities (cp. *Matt.* x. 27, *Luke* xii. 3). The roof, if necessary, could easily be removed; the marl, or earth, forming its top layer, could be scraped back; the short sticks underneath, laid across the beams, could be taken up; or the tiles and boards, or even the stone slabs, if there were any, could be lifted; and a bundle of grain or straw, or a mattress with a sick man upon it, could be let down between the main beams (cp. *Mark* ii. 4, *Luke* v. 19). The roof was not high; the rooms were low, and the houses had often but one story. Here is a picture of an interior which has perhaps but one room, drawn by Dr. Farrar: 'The mats or carpets are laid loose along the walls; shoes and sandals are taken off at the threshold; from the centre hangs a lamp, which forms the only ornament of the room, in some recess in the wall is placed the wooden chest, painted with bright colours, which contains the books, or other possessions of the family; on a ledge that runs round the wall, within easy reach are neatly rolled up the gay coloured quilts, which serve as beds, and on the same ledge was ranged the earthen vessels for daily use; near the door stand the large common water-jars of red clay with a few twigs and green leaves—often of aromatic shrubs—thrust into their

orifices to keep the water cool. At meal-time a painted wooden stool is placed in the centre of the apartment, a large tray is put upon it, and in the middle of the tray stands the dish of rice and meat or stewed fruits, from which all help themselves in common. Both before and after the meal the servant, or the youngest member of the family, pours water over the hands from a brazen ewer into a brazen bowl.'

The rich, on the other hand, often lived in great luxury. They built splendid houses, where, behind the dull walls which alone were seen from the street, there were spacious courts and lofty rooms, decorated with costly marbles. Here they collected expensive furniture, carpets and curtains beautiful in colour and design, vessels curiously wrought in glass or bronze, and jewelled cups for ornament or for the feast. Silk robes were highly prized, but were very dear; so, too, was the purple wool dyed with the gorgeous Tyrian hue. A lady's cloak in a Jerusalem bazaar might cost as much as £36 of our money; a man's dress could be procured for £3 to £6; a slave's outfit was cheaper, about 18s. Those who were comfortably off, lived well, and often practised a generous hospitality. The western style of serving the meals had been adopted. The guests reclined on sofas or couches placed round three sides of a table, so that the feet lay outstretched behind. Goats, lambs, and calves supplied the favourite food; more rarely beef or fowls; fish was a regular Sabbath dish; the poorer people ate locusts fried in honey, eggs, and soup. In the provision markets at Jerusalem the prices of food sound to us surprisingly low. 'A calf might be had for less than fifteen shillings, a goat for five or six. Sheep were dearer, and fetched from four to fifteen or sixteen

shillings, while a lamb might be had as low as twopence.' An ass, an ox, a cow, cost from £3 to £5, a horse a little more. But though these sums appear exceedingly small and it might seem as if all necessaries must be within reach of every one, yet through all the evidences of wealth and busy industry the cry of the poor is never far away; and in spite of efforts for its alleviation this deep-rooted misery remained one of the constant dangers of Palestinian society.

§ 13. Almsgiving

[Oesterley, *Ecclesiasticus*, 1912.]

The presence of constant poverty necessarily stimulated goodwill, kind feeling, to make some efforts for its relief. There was, of course, no organization, no Poor Law. The simplest way seemed to be to give money. From the old days the Hebrew Prophets had again and again distinguished themselves by upholding the cause of the poor. 'Right the orphan, plead for the widow,' cried Isaiah. The authors of the Deuteronomic Law (*Deut.* xiv. 29) instituted a tithe, to be levied every three years from the produce of the land, for the poor. How far this was then carried out we do not know. But though it seems to have been enforced in later days, and every Israelite was free to pluck and eat grapes, or ears of corn, this was only an occasional help, and after the persecutions and sufferings of the faithful in the second century B.C., there must have been times of great distress. No other method of dealing with it was then known except almsgiving. This came to be so completely adopted as the recognized mode of showing brotherly feeling, that it was technically called by the common

word for righteousness or 'goodness.' 'Alms,' it was said in the book of *Tobit*, iv. 10, 'delivereth from death'; later teachers declared that 'through Alms a man partakes of eternal life,' and it was even supposed that the giver could thus rescue others from the pains of hell. Collections for the poor were made every week in the synagogue, and pious Jews were accustomed to give away large sums in this sort of benevolent charity. It is, as we all know, one of the forms of public display of excellence which Jesus most severely rebukes (*Matt.* vi. 1 sqq.): but, on the other hand, it is not surprising that when he desired to detach people suddenly from the world, and draw them into the circle of his followers, he should bid them sell their property and distribute it among the poor.

§ 14. Slavery

Besides free hired labourers, the Jews, like all other nations of the time, also employed slaves; but the form of slavery which prevailed among them was not nearly so harsh or cruel as that in the Roman empire. The old law allowed a Hebrew reduced to poverty to sell himself as a slave to another Hebrew. But this did not last for life, only for a term of six years; in the seventh year he was entitled to his liberty if he liked, and his master was enjoined to give him a handsome present for his service. If he desired, however, to remain a slave (and this shows that slaves might become strongly attached to their masters, *Exod.* xxi. 5), he could be formally devoted to servitude for the rest of his life. Afterwards another arrangement was introduced by the transfer of the time of liberation to the jubilee, every fifty years; and no

option was given to the bondman under the later law to remain a slave: no member of Yahweh's people could permanently part with his liberty. So the slave-markets of the great cities of the Mediterranean were unknown in Palestine.

The custom of reducing Hebrews to slavery among themselves seems to have fallen gradually into disuse after the exile: the slaves employed in Palestine in the time of Jesus were probably mostly drawn from the descendants of the old Canaanites, or from the surrounding districts: though the case of the unmerciful servant in one of the Parables of Jesus (*Matt.* xviii. 25) appears to imply that even in his time a creditor might seize the person of a debtor. (Some think, however, that this is an instance of Roman rather than Jewish usage.) The slaves seem to have been generally treated with kindness. They worked in the fields, they shared the household occupation, grinding the corn, baking, washing, cooking; they nursed the children; in wealthy families educated male-slaves acted as tutors to the boys. They had no legal power, according to the Rabbis, of holding property for themselves; though they might be charged with the management of estates, and placed in offices of high trust. The old law, it is true, regarded the slave as little more than a piece of goods of more or less value; some provision was made, it is true, to protect him against brutal treatment from his master, but it was not very satisfactory (see *Exod.* xxi. 20, 21, 26, 27, etc.). But nothing like the horrible barbarities frequent among the Romans, who mutilated, tortured, and killed their slaves as they liked, was ever tolerated among the Jews. Nor were the Jews rich enough to rival the Roman nobles, who kept slaves in their palaces by the

hundred and even by the thousand. Something was done to encourage masters in setting their slaves free: a master who had not granted freedom in his lifetime, might give directions for it in his will, or he might make a slave his heir, which implied that he would become a freeman. The Pharisees (§ 38) are said to have been specially opposed to the slave system, and the Essenes (§ 39) rejected it altogether; and the Rabbis did their best at least to secure some generosity and consideration towards the bondman. Thus it is said in the Talmud: 'Beware of eating fine bread thyself and giving thy servant black; or of sleeping thyself on cushions, whilst he lies on straw, especially when he is thy countryman and fellow believer; for he who takes a Hebrew slave sets at the same time a master over himself.'

§ 15. Education

[Edersheim, *Jewish Social Life*, pp. 103, 122; Oesterley and Box, *The Religion and Worship of the Synagogue*, 1907, p. 272; *The History of Christianity in the Light of Modern Knowledge*, part I, chapter 16, by F. G. Kenyon, 'The Bible as Christ knew it.']

The chief concern of the Jews was about their religion. This was what they were most anxious to preserve; and they saw that for this end it was necessary to be very earnest in training the young. Even in the early days of religious reform in ancient times, when the great struggle with idolatry was going on, the prophets had striven to impress this on the people. 'Hear, O Israel,' they cried: 'Yahweh our God, Yahweh is one; and thou shalt love Yahweh thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And

these words which I command thee this day shall be in thine heart: and thou shalt teach them diligently to thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up' (*Deut.* vi. 4–7). So pious parents knew that it was one of their first duties to teach their children religion. But that did not mean what is now commonly called education. Not many in the old days could read and write: but the traditions of the nation were handed down from father to son by repetition from memory. Songs were sung by the shepherds at the wells; and the wisdom in which men summed up their experience of life in short pithy sentences, which we call proverbs, was carefully treasured from the lips of father and mother, to be in turn imparted to the children to come.

When the Jews returned from their captivity in Babylon, the circumstances of the next age were different. They paid more attention to the collection and study of their sacred books. These books were read in public worship at their meeting-houses all over the land. Many of their people went into foreign countries and settled there: and many came from foreign countries to settle in Palestine. Trades arose, and arts developed, and all this made the need of the common elements of learning strongly felt. The first schools grew up in Jerusalem, and were chiefly occupied with the study of the sacred Law. But they were mostly available only for the people who lived near, or for the rich who could send their sons from a distance. A great effort was made accordingly, shortly before the year 70 B.C., to enforce attendance at elementary schools in the larger towns. 'That the children shall go to the House of the Book'

ran the ordinance of the famous scribe, Simon, brother of Queen Alexandra (78–69 B.C.). This, however, was still a very insufficient provision: and in Galilee education was particularly backward. By degrees, it would seem, every synagogue had a school attached to it, taught by the *hazzân* or reader of the synagogue: but it is doubtful how far this system extended in the time of Jesus. In later days, after the fall of Jerusalem, the schools of Galilee, especially at Sepphoris and Tiberias, were very famous.

The Talmud has a great many names for a school, some Jewish and some Greek: thus it was called the 'array,' or the 'vineyard,' where the scholars 'sat in rows as stands the blooming vine.' Some of the Talmudic proverbs show what importance was attached to the school-training: 'Jerusalem was destroyed because the instruction of the young was neglected'; 'the world is only saved by the breath of the school-children'; 'even for the rebuilding of the temple the schools must not be interrupted'; 'study is more meritorious than sacrifice.' The instruction and study here named meant the teaching of the sacred Law in which the truths and duties of religion were contained. To this was added the story of Israel's past history. 'Our chief care,' said Josephus, giving an account of his people and their usages, 'is to educate our children well: and we think it to be the most necessary business of our whole life to observe the laws that have been given us, and to keep those rules of piety that have been handed down to us.' Or again, 'our law commands us to bring our children up in learning, aud to exercise them in the laws, and make them acquainted with the deeds of their forefathers, that they may imitate them': 'ask any

one of our people about our laws, and he will tell them all more readily even than his own name, and this in consequence of our having learned them immediately as soon as ever we became sensible of anything, and of our having them as it were engraven upon our souls.'

Instruction in the Scriptures was commonly begun in the home, where the child learned to repeat short sentences of Scripture. Few families probably possessed an entire copy of the Law; but small portions of it were no doubt frequent, possibly, too, a roll of a prophet, and selections from the Psalms used in public worship. Jesus, it is clear, was well trained according to the method of those days in the laws, the traditions, the prophetic oracles and the poetry of his country. He stands up in the synagogue at Nazareth to read, and the Hebrew scroll with its difficult characters, destitute of vowels, yields its meaning to him at once, though the language is no more that of his daily speech. He is practised in the usual mode of interpreting the sacred text, and can meet the learned scribes from the great schools at Jerusalem on their own ground. He knows something, perhaps, of other books in which the passionate hopes of his people were taking shape (§ 43). The larger culture won by the travelled Jews who studied in the great library at Alexandria, or visited Rome, does not come within his reach. He sees the little principalities around him in their quarrels, confusion, and disorder: but the vast empire of Rome, with its wonderful civilization, appears only in the person of its hated representatives on the governor's seat, or at the tax-gatherer's receiving office: only far off and dimly does he behold the great world-population, north and south, and east and west. Of Greek science, with

its ideas of the fixed order of nature, he hears nothing. But he is thoroughly at home on the hill-side and beside the lake. He has learned to see in nature the expression of the everlasting will; in hours of daily energy and of midnight prayer he has found the world the scene of the presence of the living God. Nor has the wisdom of his race failed him. Of that profound experience of human life in which its traditions are so rich, he had become the master. He understands its lessons; he gives them new force and meaning. He may share the illusions of its antiquated astronomy, its ignorant physiology: but these do not affect the essentials of his thought. It was because these differed so widely from the common style of religious teaching in his day, not because he was without education, or because it was impossible to be at once a teacher and an artisan, that his hearers asked in amazement, 'Is not this the carpenter?' (*Mark* vi. 3).

§ 16. Popular Beliefs: Angels

The Jews had a great many curious beliefs and practices besides those which were specially enjoined in their books of religion. Some of these we can only infer from passing allusions either in the Old Testament or the New: of others we can gain some knowledge by the study of their other books of history and tradition. Among these beliefs, which did not belong to the higher part of their religion, was the belief in *spirits*. This belief is so widespread among all kinds of people in what may be called the pre-scientific stage, that it is practically universal. It may be found now in Africa, Asia, India, China, Australia, America: even in Europe it has not

altogether died out; and we know that it existed among the ancient races of Mesopotamia from whom the old Canaanites and Hebrews borrowed so much. In all the objects of nature they saw the abode of spirits; in all the changes and events of nature they saw the work of spirits. All sorts of charms grew up by which it was sought to control bad spirits and secure the favour of good spirits. The Canaanites and Hebrews certainly shared this way of looking at things to some extent, but it was modified under the higher thoughts of religion, especially among the Hebrews. The good spirits were ranged under the government of their God, Yahweh: they became his servants, his messengers, or as we call them (from the Greek work with the same meaning) *angels*. They made a kind of court or retinue round his throne in heaven; and thence they sped through the world to do his bidding. They served his will in the breeze or the flame; so it was said of them poetically, 'He maketh the winds his messengers, the flaming fire his ministers' (*Ps.* civ. 4). In the *Book of Jubilees* (probably of Pharisaic origin shortly before 100 B.C.) God creates spirits of winds and clouds of hoar-frost, snow, and hail, of thunder and lightning, of cold and heat, and the four seasons. So the Book of Revelation mentions angels of wind, sun, fire, and water. It was their duty sometimes to protect and help the perishing, to provide food for the forlorn and helpless, to guide the wanderer, or again they were charged with more terrible tasks of chastisement and desolation. There were angels or messengers of peace, and there were angels or messengers of destruction and death.

There was something very beautiful about this notion. It was as though the Hebrews felt that man could not

be at the head of all created things through the whole world, whatever he might be on the earth. Between him and God there must be higher and nobler beings: and inasmuch as it was the greatest joy and privilege for man to be the servant of Yahweh, the instrument for carrying out his plans and purposes, so these more glorious creatures, 'Sons of God,' as they were called pre-eminently, must find their constant happiness, the reason of their existence, in fulfilling his designs.

After the Babylonian exile, this belief became still clearer and more definite. During the captivity the Jews were brought under the Persian rule, and thus came to know something of the Persian religion. The Persians had a somewhat similar belief, and its forms are thought to have had a good deal of influence on the belief of the Jews [Moulton, *Early Zoroastrianism*, 1913, Lecture 9, 'Zarathustra and Israel']. From this time onwards some of the higher angels are called by special names, and appear entrusted with great functions in the government of the world. Four of them stood, one on each of the four sides of God's throne, and from thence went forth to the four quarters of the earth. Seventy angels presided over the destinies of the seventy nations into which the human race was supposed to be divided, the Jews being under the peculiar care of Michael and Gabriel. Beneath these were innumerable multitudes of every rank, and fresh ones were constantly being created. They sang of the divine goodness and proclaimed the wonders of his works, and made a community of blessed spirits filled with love and joy and faithfulness. Some of lower rank acted as protectors to individuals: each man had his own guardian angel, or perhaps even two. The saying of Jesus about the angels of little children (*Matt.*

xviii. 10) seems to rest on this belief. They always 'see the face' of the Heavenly Father, i.e., they have immediate access to him, instead of being obliged (as in the court ceremonial of oriental sovereigns) to approach him through intermediaries. So the awful interval between man and his creator was filled up with orders and ranks, one above another, of grander and more splendid beings, who lived only to serve, and gained thereby an abiding gladness that needed for its utterance a whole eternity of praise.

§ 17. Popular Beliefs: Demons

But there was another side to the belief in spirits: there were bad spirits as well as good; not less numerous, and for the time quite as powerful. These spirits were constantly doing all kinds of mischief. Every sort of bodily malady was their work. In the old days it was thought also that they brought blight on the crops, they sent hail, lightning, flood, and every destructive terror. But they might be overcome by the skill of the wise; and so there arose all forms of magic, of enchantment, and witchcraft, by which it was supposed that they might be subdued and disarmed. The Canaanites and the ancient Hebrews were greatly addicted to these practices; and though the prophets were never tired of showing how inconsistent they were with the belief in one God, Yahweh, and severe laws were passed to exterminate them, they were never really rooted out. On the contrary, just as the doctrine of good spirits took a higher form after the captivity, so also the doctrine of bad spirits or demons (as we call them, after a Greek word) became fuller and clearer. Curious conjectures

were made as to their origin: they had arisen out of the soul of Adam after his first disobedience; they were the offspring of the intercourse between the 'Sons of God' and the daughters of men in the days before the Flood (*Gen.* vi. 1–5); they were the spirits of the sinful people who lived at the time of the deluge, or of the impious men who built the Tower of Babel; or they were generated from the shades or the misdeeds of the wicked. The whole world was full of them. They roamed about, some in the morning, some at noon, to seize the sleeper in his midday rest; some at night, when they sent lying dreams; it was well therefore, to avoid saluting anyone in the dark, for fear it might be a demon; and it was perilous to sleep in an empty house, exposed to their attack. A thousand stood on a man's left hand, ten thousand on his right: if his eyes were opened to behold them, he would wonder how he could exist at all. They lurked in certain shrubs: they dwelt under gutters, in ruins, and above all, in the lonely wilderness; so that the desert Arab of the present day, when he throws away a stone or a potsherd, begs the pardon of any spirit whom it may happen to hit. They were divided into orders; some were 'injurers,' 'destroyers,' and the like: they inflicted every kind of disease, from the most trifling headache up to leprosy and death.

But in particular every kind of nervous malady was attributed to them. It was supposed among the Jews, as among so many other races, both then and now, that what we call epilepsy, paralysis, madness, was caused by a demon who had entered the body of the patient, and taken possession of it. Perhaps it prevented him from speaking, and he was dumb; from seeing, and he

was blind; from hearing, and he was deaf; or it made him tear his clothes to rags in frenzy, and drove him out among the tombs outside the city, or into the wild rocky solitudes of the open country. It may be that these forms of madness were more common at some periods than at others, especially after times of public excitement. But, at any rate, they were common in the days of Jesus; and there was a regular class of persons whose business it was to cure these poor patients. They went about carrying with them rare drugs or curious amulets and charms; they employed strange spells, and made mysterious incantations. Many of these magic arts were, no doubt, very old, and had been handed down for many generations. In particular, they invoked the aid of Solomon, famous for his reputed wisdom and wonderful knowledge of all the properties of herb and animal. He was supposed to have great authority over these spirits. Here is a story which Josephus tells of what he had himself witnessed. 'I have seen a certain man of my own country, whose name was Eleazar, releasing people that were demoniacal in the presence of Vespasian, and his sons, and his captains, and the whole multitude of his soldiers. The manner of the cure was this:—he put a ring that had a root of one of those sorts mentioned by Solomon to the nostrils of the demoniac, after which he drew out the demon through his nostrils, and when the man fell down immediately, he adjured him to return into him no more, making still mention of Solomon, and reciting the incantations which he composed. And when Eleazar would persuade and demonstrate to the spectators that he had such a power, he set a little way off a cup or basin full of water, and commanded the demon as he

went out of the man to overturn it, and thereby to let the spectators know that he had left the man; and when this was done, the skill and wisdom of Solomon were shown very manifestly.'

Just as there were supposed to be ranks and grades among the good spirits, so likewise were there among the evil spirits. The chief spirits were known by different names. There was, for instance, Azazel, for whom, on the most solemn day of all the Jewish year, the Day of Atonement, a goat was driven from the Temple into the wilderness, bearing away with it (in symbol) from the holy place the sins of the whole people. There was, again, Asmodeus (Hebrew *Ashmedai*, Persian *Aeshma daeva*), the demon-king (*Tobit* iii. 8, 17, etc.); there was Beelzebub, whose name was apparently softened from Baalzebûb, the old fly-god of the Philistine city of Ekron (2 *Kings* i. 2), better known by the title of 'the *Sâtân*,' which first denoted the 'adversary,' and afterwards became a proper name. It does not occur in any Hebrew book which can be positively dated before the Captivity; and the clear place assigned to Satan in subsequent literature may be partly due to the Persian influence already mentioned. Satan is the head of all the powers of evil: and it is an interesting sign of the way in which Hebrew feeling changed, that the same act which in an early book was attributed to Yahweh (2 *Sam.* xxiv. 1), in a later book is referred to the Sâtân (1 *Chron.* xxi. 1). The word *devil* is a modification of the Greek equivalent of his name, *diabolos*, the 'slanderer,' who accuses men before God day and night. He is pre-eminently 'the Evil One'; all wicked and unclean spirits stand beneath his rule. He is the great enemy, constantly at war with God, seeking in every way to mar his plans, and tempting

even his chosen servants. His sphere is the visible world in its existing age; and the Jews expressed their view of the great strife always going on between good and evil, by saying that his kingdom of wickedness must be overthrown, and in its stead must be set up the kingdom of righteousness, the rule of God (chap. vi). When the Pharisees charged Jesus with casting out demons by the demon-prince Beelzebub (*Matt.* xii. 24), he replied by showing how absurd it was to suppose that the Spirit of Evil would thus work its own undoing; and added 'If I cast out demons by Beelzebub, by whom do your sons cast them out?' His power of control was no exclusive gift; others could expel demons as well as he; let his accusers ask them how they did it !

CHAPTER III

THE GOVERNMENT

§ 18. Native Tribunals: Local

THE government of the Jews was partly in their own hands, partly in the hands of their overlords, belonging to the Herod family (§ 21), and partly in the hands of the Romans. In the old days they had adapted to their settled life in towns and villages the kind of local government which had prevailed in the tribes when they marched together in the desert. In the family, disputes were settled by the head of the family. In the community, they were settled by the heads of the chief families, who were chosen for the purpose. These were often old men, though not always; as a body, therefore, they were called the Elders. This kind of local government still existed in the days of Jesus. The number of the Elders varied: sometimes they were only seven; in larger towns they were twenty-three, the villages and smaller towns being subordinated to the more important. They gave judgment in civil cases, such as suits for recovery of money, and claims for compensation; they also heard criminal cases of theft and bodily injuries. The larger tribunals seem even to have had (at any rate at one time) the right of inflicting the punishment of death for murder. These were not, however, the only local courts. Matters had sometimes to be decided which could not be brought under the civil law, and were

not of the nature of criminal offences. They might be grave transgressions of religious truth and duty, including matters of ceremonial cleanness arising out of contact with the heathen, cp. p. 132, and gross violations of what was recognized as morally right. These were brought before a religious court, composed of the officers of the *synagogue* (§ 32). The investigations were sometimes held in the meeting-house itself (*Luke* xii. 11; xxi. 12). The penalty might take the form of turning the offender out of the synagogue, and refusing him admission for the future, either for a limited time, or for good; a kind of excommunication which doubtless involved great social disgrace. Or actual chastisement, such as flogging, might be administered in the synagogue (*Matt.* x. 17; *Mark* xiii. 9); or, again, in very serious cases, the persons of the accused might be seized, and sent in chains to Jerusalem (*Acts* ix. 2; xxii. 5), the centre of the entire national life.

§ 19. Native Tribunals: the Sanhedrin

[G. A. Smith, *Jerusalem*, i, pp. 411 ff.]

At Jerusalem there were three courts to which appeal could be made in succession, if the inferior courts had been unable to agree on their decision. One of these was the chief court for all Judæa. The most important, however, was the supreme religious and legal assembly, known by the name of the *Sanhedrin*. This institution was not really very old in the time of Jesus, though the Rabbis of later days, who loved to try and find a Mosaic foundation for all their arrangements, used to say that it was the continuation of a council which they imagined to have existed during the wanderings in the wilderness.

Its name, however, is of Greek origin (§ 10); it is the same as *synedrion*, literally 'sitting together.' The term is first used in history after Pompey's capture of Jerusalem in 63 B.C. The Romans in arranging for the government of the people 'continued, or possibly reconstituted, a Senate or Council, with powers of life and death.' This council was called the Sanhedrin.

Its full number of members seems to have been seventy-one, though it was not necessary for them all to be present. A third of the whole body, twenty-three, was required for a judicial vote. These members were drawn from the Priests and Levites and those Jewish families of pure descent which had the right of marriage with the priestly caste. They are described in the New Testament (e.g. *Matt.* xxvi. 3, 57, 59; xxviii. 11, 12; *Mark* xiv. 53; xv. 1; *Luke* xxii. 66) as 'high priests, elders, and scribes,' the term 'high priests' denoting not only the high priest actually in office with his predecessors who had filled the same post, but the representatives of the high-priestly families. The president was the high priest for the time being. He sat in the middle, and the other members were placed on his right and left so as to form a semicircle. At each end was a clerk or secretary; one recorded the votes for acquittal, the other those for condemnation. Ranged in three rows on the floor in front were the disciples who always attended the sittings; they had their places according to precedence, and from their number the council chose the new members needed to fill the vacancies. The meetings were held at one time in a chamber known as the Hall of Hewn-Stone on the south side of the inner court of the Temple; but they might be summoned elsewhere as, for example, at the high priest's house.

The Sanhedrin decided all cases not already determined by the lower courts, and not reserved for the Roman governor. Their civil jurisdiction was limited to Judæa proper: but as their court was composed of the most eminent men of the nation, they enjoyed the respect of the entire people: and distant communities in foreign lands submitted voluntarily to its religious jurisdiction. They heard accusations of transgressions of the law: they dealt with charges of blasphemy: they tried the claims of false prophets. How far they had the right to inflict the punishment of death, at least under the Romans, is not certain: it is most probable that they needed the sanction of the Governor, though there are instances of their usurping this authority in fits of tumultuous excitement.

The general rules of their procedure were intended to secure proper deliberation and avoid undue haste. Any member who had spoken in favour of the accused, in a capital case, was not allowed afterwards to speak against him; though this prohibition does not seem to have been imposed on those who, having first held him guilty, came to regard him as innocent. The disciples present might only speak for the defence, and not for the prosecution. A verdict of acquittal might be given the same day: condemnation must be deferred till the next. For acquittal a bare majority sufficed; for condemnation a majority of at least two was required. These are some of the rules which the later Rabbis delighted to recall. But in cases of violent feeling they could easily be set aside, if they existed at all; and in the wild scenes which accompanied the trial of Jesus they were all swept away in the torrent of wrath and hatred which bore him to his death.

§ 20. The Romans

[Rigg, *History of the Jewish People during the Maccabean and Roman Periods.*]

The people of Israel had never been long left in their country undisturbed. In the earlier times of their history their land had been the highway of the conquering armies of Egypt, of Assyria, of Babylonia. Then followed the Persian supremacy; after that came the Greek. But the Greek power was destined in its turn to give way to a still mightier force. The Romans had slowly been building up their empire over the countries of the Mediterranean; and when the Jews, smarting under the recent oppressions of Antiochus Epiphanes, looked round for an ally, they cast their eyes westward and found help in Rome. It was about the year 161 B.C. that Judas Maccabæus with the consent of the people sent ambassadors to Rome. They were favourably received; a treaty of peace and mutual aid was concluded; and for some time it seemed as if Israel might once more aspire to its old independence. Its rulers even revived the title of king, and regained most of the dominions south of Damascus which had formed the ancient empire of David in the great age of Israel's glory. But this period of freedom did not last long. By successive conquests Rome was absorbing piece by piece the territories of the East. First Greece passed under her sway; then Asia Minor; then Armenia; then Syria; till the Roman troops lay on the borders of Palestine. Was it to be expected that they would long keep out of a land so fair and rich?

Their interference was hastened by a dispute between two of the Jewish princes—brothers—both striving for

the combined powers of the high-priesthood and the throne. The famous Roman general Pompey was at Damascus in the year 63 B.C., and it was not long before he appeared at Jerusalem. One party surrendered the Western Hill with the palace and arsenal; the other party broke down the bridge across the Cheesemakers' Valley to the Temple-hill, and withdrew within the fortress round the sanctuary. The Romans, of course immediately began a siege, which lasted three months, and the Roman troops at length poured into the Temple precincts. Numbers of Jews flung themselves over the high walls, into the ravines on the east and south; others set fire to their houses hanging on the steep slopes of the Cheesemakers' Valley and perished in the flames. Pompey with a large number of his officers entered the sanctuary, and though he did not remove its treasures, he inflicted the severest pang on the hapless survivors by penetrating where only the High Priest might go, and that but once a year, into the Holy of Holies. Numbers of captives were carried to Rome and sold as slaves. The fortifications were destroyed, the walls were razed; and when, nine years later, Crassus arrived at Jerusalem on his way to the far East, he had no difficulty in laying hands on the treasures accumulated in the Temple. He carried off two thousand talents in money (a talent is commonly estimated at a little more than £200), and golden ornaments valued at four times that amount. Such was the first taste which the Jews had of the tender mercies of the Romans.

§ 21. Herod

[Oesterley and Robinson, *History of Israel*, vol. ii, chapters 23 and 24; Hastings, *Dictionary of the Bible*, vol. ii, 'Herod'; Jackson and Lake, *Beginnings of Christianity*, vol. v, p. 487; For Chronology, see Turner's article 'Chronology' in Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible*, vol. i.]

The Romans, however, did not at once take possession of the country. They were engaged in other and larger enterprises. Still, it was plain that no one could rule without their help. This was clearly seen by Antipater, one of the ministers of Hyrcanus, the High Priest, who had been restored to office by Pompey. Antipater was not a Jew; his family came from Edom; and this made it easier for him to deal with a great foreign power like Rome. He contrived to ingratiate himself with Julius Cæsar, now the leader of Roman policy; he secured permission to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem; and gained other concessions which restored the country very much to its old condition, with the exception of an annual tribute to be paid at the Roman quarters in Sidon.

But the unhappy country could not long enjoy its rest. In the year 40 B.C., the great rival power of the East, the Parthians, swept down upon it. Antipater had been assassinated three years before, and his younger son, Herod, driven from Judæa by the Parthian conquest of Jerusalem, made his way to Rome. He landed in Italy as an adventurer; within a week he quitted it as a king. But on his return to Palestine he had to vindicate the title which the Roman Senate had conferred. Galilee soon joined his standard; then Samaria submitted: but Judæa still held out. It was only with

Roman help that he was able to establish himself in power. Again was Jerusalem besieged (37 B.C.): the Roman troops, infuriated with the resistance which they had encountered, rushed through the streets killing without distinction every one whom they met, even the aged and the little children, while Herod rode about vainly endeavouring to stop the massacre. Through such a blood-bath did he wade to the throne.

The Roman support with which he had secured his kingdom enabled him to keep it, and during the next thirty years he raised the prosperity of the country to a height which it had perhaps never before attained (§ 12). His extraordinary energy, his indomitable will, the largeness of his designs, gained for him the name of the Great. His personal character, indeed, by no means deserved that title. He was capable of strong attachments, but there ran through his nature a streak of fierce savagery which led him into appalling crimes. He never felt secure on his throne; the least suspicion begot an almost insane alarm, which in its turn passed into a mad fury, wreaking itself even on those near and dear to him. His beautiful wife Mariamne, her mother Alexandra, her two sons Alexander and Aristobulus, and his eldest son (by another connexion) Antipater, all fell victims to his jealousy and fright: and his treatment of his son gave rise to the saying that 'it was better to be Herod's pig than his son.' Outbreaks of ferocity were followed sometimes by paroxysms of remorse; the violence of his nature was equally terrible in both.

In spite of all this, in spite of the cruelties, the outrages, the executions which marked his reign, it was a period of great importance in the history of Palestine. He was not a Jew, and he had no sympathy with that

strong race-feeling which made the Jews cling together so much, and strive to maintain their national usages unimpaired. Herod wished to break down this exclusiveness, and force upon the country which he ruled the cosmopolitan civilization of the West. Something has been said of this already (§ 10); it must be restated here as the real aim of his policy. So while he lavished large sums on the new temple which he had begun at Jerusalem (§ 29), he placed over its great gate a golden eagle, the symbol of imperial Rome. Within the limits of the city he erected a theatre, which he adorned with inscriptions of Cæsar's achievements, and trophies of his victories in gold and silver. In one of the upland plains outside the walls he built an amphitheatre for gladiatorial combats and contests of wild beasts. Wrestlers and musicians were attracted from all quarters; costly dresses were provided for the actors; and large sums were lavished on the supply of lions and other rarities. Every five years splendid games were celebrated in honour of Cæsar; and their magnificence astonished even the foreigners to whom such spectacles were no novelty.

These innovations excited from time to time the most bitter opposition; but every symptom of discontent was repressed with ruthless severity. The heroic defence of Jerusalem again and again repeated (§ 20) showed that the people could fight if they were free; but the tyranny of Herod ground them down at every point, so that there was no possibility of resistance. His generosities, however, could be on a big scale like his crimes. In the year 20 B.C. he remitted a third of the taxes. Five years before (25 B.C) in time of famine he coined his own plate to import corn from Egypt and provide seed for ruined farmers. A second remission of one-fourth of the taxes

was made in 14 B.C. on his return from a visit to Marcus Agrippa, the Emperor's son-in-law. What he did at Jerusalem he did elsewhere. The principal cities were adorned with all kinds of foreign buildings, which helped to spread the manners of Greece and Italy among the people of Israel. Herod surrounded himself with foreign troops, his court was thronged with foreigners, and his sons were sent to complete their education in Rome. He himself sought to keep up his influence and connexions there by occasional visits, by correspondence, and by costly gifts. In his family troubles he again and again invoked the authority of the Emperor Augustus. When he died, in the year 4 B.C., he left large sums of money and valuable gifts to the Emperor and Empress, their family and freedmen, and placed the confirmation of his will and the settlement of his dominions in Cæsar's hands.

§ 22. Judæa under the Romans

The Romans had thus fresh opportunity of interference in the affairs of the Jews, and this interference was rendered inevitable by the events which immediately followed Herod's death. The king had bequeathed Judæa to his son Archelaus, but before he could take possession of his dominions symptoms of a rebellion began to appear. Order was partially restored—by the massacre of three thousand people, and Archelaus then repaired to Rome to secure from Augustus his establishment upon the throne. Thither likewise went other members of Herod's family with similar intent. Then the long suppressed rage of the nation burst forth. The people rose in revolt. The whole country was aflame; in the collapse of the Government bands of soldiers,

robbers, slaves, shepherds, roamed about, plundering and killing, and aiming vainly at supreme power. This was the opportunity of the Romans. A small detachment of Roman troops had been placed in great danger by the outbreak at Jerusalem. Help was summoned from Syria; and with slow but irresistible steps the Roman general Varus advanced from his headquarters at Antioch through Ptolemais and Samaria. Terrible retribution followed at Jerusalem. Two thousand Jews were crucified.

Meanwhile the members of Herod's family were waiting at Rome for the Emperor's decision on the late king's will. Augustus did not wish to abandon the children of his former friend, nor was it desirable to undertake the additional burden of governing a people so peculiar as the Jews. He accordingly confirmed Herod's distribution of his dominions. Archelaus received Judæa, Samaria, and Edom, with the title of Ethnarch, or National Ruler; the chief cities, Jerusalem, Sebastê, Cæsarea, gave special importance to these territories, which yielded the large revenue of six hundred talents. To Herod Antipas was assigned the rich and busy province of Galilee with Perea, his revenue being estimated at two hundred talents. The wild highland districts in the north-east, which produced only one hundred talents, were allotted to another son, Philip. For a time, the rival princes occupied their possessions undisturbed. Archelaus amused himself with rebuilding the palace which had been burnt down at Jericho, and planting palm gardens. But all his diversions were not as innocent as these. His gross affronts against his Jewish subjects, his odious tyrannies, made his rule unbearable. At length his brothers and the principal personages in

Judæa and Samaria united in sending a joint embassy to Rome, to petition for his removal. Augustus lost no time in useless correspondence. He summoned Archelaus before him, confronted him with his accusers, and after hearing his defence deprived him of his Ethnarchy, and banished him to Gaul. The territories which he had ruled were placed under the government of a Procurator, in connexion with the larger province of Syria: and thus in the year A.D. 6 did Judæa and Samaria pass under the direct supremacy of Rome.

§ 23. Pontius Pilate

The first act of the Roman authorities was to lay fresh burdens on their new subjects. The whole province of Syria was placed under a general taxation and Quirinus was sent to superintend the arrangements. In this taxation the Roman dominions in Palestine must bear their share. But an unexpected resistance was excited. The stricter school of the Pharisees, representing the most uncompromising tendencies of the national party, regarded the payment of tribute to a foreign ruler as treason to their invisible king. From the lecture-rooms of the Rabbis the question passed out to the wider circle of general discussion. It was at once associated with the cry for liberty which arose from the hearts of an oppressed people. The initiative was taken by a man from Gamala named Judas, who was joined by Zaddok, a Pharisee of the most rigid type (§ 40). Their movement aroused considerable enthusiasm, and was with difficulty subdued. The more violent of their followers endeavoured to frighten their countrymen into refusing to pay the obnoxious tax. They broke into their houses, and even set them on fire. But they were no match for the

far-reaching power of Rome. Punishment came at last, and Judas and his men could only prove their final devotion to their principles by the courage with which they submitted to torture and death.

This is one instance only of the way in which the national feeling was continually breaking out in the face of some act of the Roman administrators. Governor after governor came into Palestine, made a fortune by his exactions, and then departed to give place to another who came with fresh greed. At last, about the year A.D. 26, it was the turn of Pontius Pilate. Rough and brutal, he meant to be master, and he ordered the Roman troops up from Cæsarea to Jerusalem. They carried with them their military standards or ensigns, consisting of statues of the Emperor. The Jews, however, had the strongest religious objection to statues or images of any kind; and the predecessors of Pilate had left these ensigns behind them when they made their state entry into the city. Pilate, however, had them conveyed within the walls in secret by night. As soon as it was day they were, of course, discovered. The whole city was agitated by the insult. The news spread all through the country round, and a large concourse of people streamed into the capital in eager wrath. Pilate himself was still at Cæsarea. A deputation of the citizens was at once despatched to entreat that the ensigns might be removed. Pilate harshly refused. But the deputies would not be repulsed. They threw themselves upon the ground, and for five days and five nights never stirred from their attitude of grief and petition. At length, on the sixth day, Pilate sent for them again. He erected his seat of judgment in the market-place, concealed a body of troops in the rear, and summoned the Jews to

appear before him. They again urged their request; this time they found themselves suddenly surrounded by soldiers with drawn swords. Pilate threatened them with instant death unless they would depart quietly and trouble him no more. But the deputies did not hesitate a moment. They flung themselves once more upon the ground, laid bare their necks, and declared that they would willingly lay down their lives on the spot sooner than witness the transgression of their Law. Pilate was beaten; he yielded sullenly; the hated ensigns were conveyed back again to Cæsarea. But this first experience of the heroic stubbornness of the people he had come to govern was not calculated to make him love them.

By and by another conflict arose. One of the features of Roman administration all over the world was the construction of great public works. Every capable governor had an eye to wants of this kind; a road, a harbour, a bridge, an aqueduct. They might no doubt be beneficial when they were executed: but the subject-people who had to pay for them were not consulted before and about their making. Pilate saw that the water supply of Jerusalem was very defective, and he took steps to improve it by either building or repairing an aqueduct from a reservoir at a considerable distance. It was probably the aqueduct which brought water across the Cheesemakers' Valley into the Temple area, where it fed the great cisterns under the sacred rock. To defray the cost he seized on some of the temple treasures. This robbery from the holy funds immediately excited popular anger. When he came to Jerusalem a vast crowd gathered around his judgment-seat with loud abuse. But Pilate was prepared for the outbreak. He disguised

his soldiers as simple citizens. Carrying their weapons under their garments they mingled with the defenceless people; then, at a given signal, they set upon them. Large numbers were wounded, some were slain, and in the confusion many more were trodden to death.

Such were the kind of scenes which arose from the collision of Jewish thought and feeling with Roman sternness or brutality. The tale of Pilate's misdeeds went far and wide among the Jews abroad. 'The receipt of bribes, deeds of violence, robberies, outrages, affronts, successive executions of persons uncondemned, endless and intolerable cruelty'—this is the list of charges made against him by a contemporary at Alexandria. Perhaps the list is exaggerated; but there is reason enough to think that it is true in the main. The Jews had not gained much by passing from the rule of Herod to that of Rome. And they were constantly reminded that they were the subjects of an alien race who cared nothing for their religion. If the question of Greek learning had already agitated the schools (§ 10), the question of Roman taxes affected the whole people, from highest to lowest. How the taxation was managed must now be described.

§ 24. The Roman Empire: Taxation

The Roman Empire, with which Judæa and Samaria had thus been formally incorporated, was maintained by a huge military system. The supreme power rested (as in Tzarist Russia) in the hands of the Emperor alone. To him all the officers, whether of the army or of the civil service, were ultimately responsible. From the governor of the richest or the biggest province down to

the humblest soldier in the ranks, every person engaged, whether in administration or defence, derived his authority from the reigning Cæsar. Following the style of the ancient monarchies of the East, the Greek kings of Egypt and Syria had for some centuries taken the title *theos*, the term applied to the divinities of the national worship. This title was also awarded to the Roman Emperor Augustus. In an inscription in Asia Minor referring to the celebration of the Emperor's birthday (in the year 11 or 9 B.C.) he was described as the Saviour of the human race; he has been sent by Providence to put an end to war; the birthday of the 'god' was the beginning of good news (Greek *Evangelia*, 'gospels') through him to the world. Such was the reverence which he inspired as the impersonation of the imperial power. The Empire stretched from the Straits of Gibraltar to the Persian Gulf; from the English Channel to the cataracts of the Nile. Think how many modern countries this included: Italy with France and Spain in the West; Greece, European and Asiatic Turkey, Egypt, North Africa! What varieties of nationality, language, custom, religion, it contained!

And within this immense area, among this hundred million of people, the Roman Government maintained peace. There was an army, but it was small compared with the armies of modern Europe; it did not exceed four hundred thousand men. There were, of course, some troops permanently posted in Palestine. Their headquarters were at Cæsarea; but a body of guards was kept at Jerusalem in the barracks on the north side of the Temple; and at the great feasts these were increased. In Galilee, also, there was a Roman station at Sepphoris; and small detachments were fixed at populous

centres of taxation, such as Capernaum, and along the great roads. For the Roman administration (like the English in India) was costly, and the tax-gatherer could not long be kept out of sight. Army and navy and civil service must be paid for; fortifications, public works, schools, popular shows and entertainments, cheap or gratuitous distribution of corn to the poor in great cities—of all this the cost must be borne chiefly by the conquered provinces. Then the local governor made special claims for himself and his retinue; and besides there were tolls on bridges and roads, harbour-dues, customs levied at the city-gates or on quays and piers; and there was a tax for the use of public lands which fell to the Imperial treasury when the province was incorporated.

To these last taxes the Jews do not seem to have raised any religious objection. But the principal taxes were much more offensive. These were a land-tax and a tax per head, or poll-tax. The owners of land were assessed from time to time, and a specified sum was levied on them according to the estimated value of their property. Of the annual produce in grain, one-tenth was demanded; of the wine and fruit one-fifth. Those who had no land paid in proportion to the assessment of their personal effects. Other taxes were added upon slaves and houses, which were, of course, paid by their owners. The poll-tax on hired labourers was paid for them by their employers, who took care to deduct it out of their wages. The land-tax and poll-tax were summed up under the name of 'capitation.' Founded on an assessment or census, this tax came to be designated in Judæa by the name of the process upon which it was based. Exacted either directly or indirectly from every

Jew, it was looked upon as the special badge of subjection to the hated dominion of Rome. The lawfulness of paying it was incessantly disputed in the schools: and it supplied one of the test questions which the Pharisees put to Jesus. 'Teacher, is it lawful to pay *census* to Cæsar or not?' (*Matt.* xxii. 16, 17; *Mark* xii. 14).

§ 25. The Tax-Gatherers

For more than two hundred years the collection of the taxes in the countries under the Roman sway had been placed in the hands of a body of men who undertook to pay a specific sum into the public treasury (*in publicum*), and then kept the revenue which the taxes produced. Hence they were called *publicani*. The sums required from the larger provinces were frequently too great for any single individual to raise; and companies were formed to provide the necessary capital with directors residing at Rome, and agents engaged on their behalf in the countries which they had in charge. In Palestine, however, it would seem that the taxes were not collected in this way by contract, but were paid direct to the Roman Government; the tax-gatherers, or 'publicans,' as our Bibles call them, being appointed by the Roman officials. At the entrance to the little town of Capernaum, for instance, sat the tax-gatherer Matthew (*Matt.* ix. 9). On all goods that passed either in or out of the town, it was his duty to place a certain value; on this value a proportionate charge was levied and he had then to write out the receipt and take the money. This opened the way to many unjust exactions (*Luke* iii. 12, 13), and made the tax-gatherers, as a class, exceedingly detested. Those of the lowest grade were

continually guilty of extortion: while the superior officers took advantage of their position to enrich themselves by the most disgraceful devices. They trumped up false charges in order to wring bribes from their unfortunate victims (*Luke* xix. 8). They detained and opened letters on mere suspicion. They were regarded as no better than robbers, the wolves and bears of society—and their shamelessness became a public scandal.

In Palestine there were additional reasons which made their occupation hateful and their character degraded. They were required to take an oath of allegiance to the Emperor, for whom sacrifice was offered twice daily in the Temple. The payment of taxes to a foreign conqueror was something more to the Jews than a mere sign of subjection to a heathen power. In the eyes of the stricter party it was a religious offence. To own any other master was treason to the invisible king. Connivance at the practices of Rome involved, therefore, faithlessness to the only rightful Lord. The actual agents of the oppressor were like traitors who had thrown off their true allegiance. They had thus cut themselves from all social esteem; they were out of the pale of many cherished rites. The Pharisees who so largely guided public opinion threw the whole weight of their influence into the scale against them. The more rigid school denied the lawfulness of paying tribute at all. Another party among them, distinguished for their broader views and likewise for their general integrity, thought all kinds of evasion quite legitimate.

So the tax-gatherers were driven out of respectable society. A promise made to them was declared no more binding than one made to a thief or a murderer. Their

money was polluted; and charitable offerings known to come from them to the synagogue or the temple were not received. They could not act as magistrates, or even give evidence in court. With such persons intercourse was tacitly forbidden. If a Rabbi visited them, and accepted their hospitality, he excited astonishment and scorn. To one another they might be not less kind and courteous than their neighbours (*Matt.* v. 46, 47). Sometimes an honest publican, as is told of the father of a certain Rabbi Zeira, lessened the burdens of his countrymen, instead of increasing them. But these instances were rare. They were commonly ranked with the 'sinners,' people who did not fulfil the usual social and religious conventions, did not keep the Sabbath or go to synagogue, perhaps engaged in unclean occupations like tanning, or consorted with Gentiles; their place was thus outside the true fold, among the heathen (*Matt.* ix. 11; xi. 19; xviii. 17; *Luke* xv. 1). It needed a sublime courage for a teacher to throw himself confidently on their secret longing for a higher life; a sublime love to melt their hardness; sublime humanity to see in them also sons of Abraham—sons of God, likewise. But that which was invisible to most eyes was not hid from the sight of the Master who painted the immortal picture of the Pharisee and the Publican.

CHAPTER IV

RELIGION

PART I.—*Its Public Institutions*

[G. B. Gray, *Critical Introduction to the Old Testament*, 1913; G. F. Moore, *Literature of the Old Testament* (Home University Library); H. J. Wicks, *The Doctrine of God*, 1915.]

§ 26. The Scriptures

THE religious institutions of the Jews in the time of Jesus were not new. They were the results of many centuries of growth. It was the boast of their learned men that their wisdom was older and more venerable than that of any other people. They knew of no nation which had holy books as old as theirs. And this boast was to a great extent true, though not quite in the way in which it was meant. The religion of the Jews was founded chiefly on those sacred books which went under the general name of the 'Writings,' or the 'Books,' or as we call them (using the Latin name) the 'Scriptures.'[1] These books are the remains of a national literature, which must once have been more extensive than it is now, for much seems to have perished in the disasters which from time to time befell the nation. They contain specimens of many kinds of literature. There are

[1] The name 'Old Testament,' or 'Books of the Old Covenant,' came into use only among the Christians to distinguish the Jewish Scriptures from those of the New Covenant.

legend and history; there are ancient myths concerning the origin of the human race; there are the early traditions of the Hebrew people from the time of their march out of Egypt; there are their hymns, and their proverbial wisdom; there is the latest philosophy of despair in the preacher's cry, 'Vanity of vanities'; there is the love poem of the Song of Songs, there is the great drama of Job. Above all, there are the wonderful discourses of the Prophets, and there is the Sacred Law (§ 27).

How these books were gathered together we do not precisely know. Some, like Daniel, some of the Psalms or Ecclesiastes, had not been written very long at the time of Christ: others, or at least parts of them, were many centuries old. But the Jews reckoned three classes among these books. There was, first of all, the Law, arranged in five books, which our Bible (probably following Tyndale and Luther) describes as 'Books of Moses,' though that title is not found in the Hebrew manuscripts. Next came a group of books called the 'Prophets,' which included the historical books of Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings, and the collections of prophetic discourses under the names of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the twelve prophets from Hosea to Malachi. This was the second division. The third set were called especially the 'Writings,' and comprised books of all kinds, such as the Psalms, the Chronicles, Esther, Job. Books of late origin were put into this division, for it was not thought proper to add them to the collections of the Law, and the Prophets. Thus the book of Daniel, which appeared in the middle of the second century B.C., and Ecclesiastes—possibly later still—were placed in the last group. So these books had not originally formed

part of one collection. It seems sometimes a matter of chance that one was preserved while others were lost. But in a larger sense they do form a whole. They tell the story of one people: they show us its thoughts at great crises of its history: they reveal the growth of its religion from rude beginnings to the loftiest truths; they exhibit the long preparation needed for the fuller unfolding of divine life in Jesus of Nazareth.

§ 27. The Law

[Montefiore, *The Synoptic Gospels*, 1927, vol. i, pp. ci–cxvi, vol. ii, pp. 46–76; Kent, *Messages of Israel's Lawgivers*, 1909.]

Among all their sacred books those which the Jews most prized were the books of the Law. These were five in all. We call them by names derived from the Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures; the whole group we designate by another Greek term, the Pentateuch; but the Jews spoke of them together as 'the Law.' The tradition which was universally received in the time of Jesus was that this Law had been instituted by Moses after he led the Israelites out of Egypt; and it was supposed that the books recording it had been drawn up by him. We know now, however, that these books could not all have been written by one person, or at one time. The materials of which they are composed are so different, the circumstances for which they are designed vary so largely, that neither the groups of narrative nor the groups of laws can be attributed to a single author. On the other hand they grew up by degrees. Long before anything was written, the traditions of the national life had gradually taken shape, and had been handed down from father to son, through many generations. So, too,

had the usages of the tribes, their customs, and the decisions of their judges, slowly consolidated into certain accepted rules. These rules constituted the early *torah* or 'teaching,' and out of them came the First Code, on which further legislation was afterwards based.

The First Code, which represents the primitive law of the Hebrews, after their settlement in Canaan, may be found in *Exod.* xxi. 23-xxiii. [for fragments of a Decalogue probably still earlier, see *Exod.* xxxiv.] The second code is contained in the Book of Deuteronomy, and may be dated about the year 620 B.C. It is, of course, based on much older materials, but it reconstructs them under the influence of a passionate devotion to the worship of Yahweh alone. The third and latest code is that known as the Priestly Law, large fragments of which survive in parts of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers. This was slowly elaborated during and after the Babylonian exile; and before the beginning of the fourth century B.C. it had almost certainly assumed its present shape, whether or not through the labours of Ezra is doubtful.

This much at any rate is clear, that the Law as finally adopted represents a religious growth of many centuries. We can follow through its several stages the increasing efforts made to purify religion and guard it from corruption. For it was one of the peculiarities of the Israelites that their national and their religious life was so inseparably blended that their existence as a nation was one side of their religion; and so the Law which dealt with them as a nation was concerned largely with their religion. During the earlier period after the settlement in Canaan the Israelites were involved in all kinds of idolatries. Some they brought with them: others they found practised in the country, and adopted from the inhabitants. Against these the prophets hurled the whole weight of their teaching, as they sought to raise their people to higher and more spiritual notions of God. Now the successive codes of the Law—so far as they dealt with religion—were designed to give practical effect to the teachings of the prophets. The Priestly Law was the last and most elaborate of all, and it succeeded. It was impressed so powerfully upon the people, it so fenced round the whole life, that it bound all the members of the nation into one compact body, pledged to one end, the realization of Yahweh's demand, 'Ye shall be holy, for I, Yahweh, your God, am holy.' This was the common tie that united all Jews everywhere. However they might be scattered, they possessed one Law. Round this Law their affections clung with the most extraordinary tenacity. They might have but a small country; they might be the prey of foreign conquerors; they might be poor, oppressed, despised; it was no matter, they had one proud distinction given to no other people under heaven, neither to the ancient civilization of Egypt or Mesopotamia, nor to the wisdom of Greece, nor to the power of Rome; they, and they only, possessed Yahweh's Law. To its study they devoted themselves with unwearied zeal; they sang of it in their hymns with a rapture greater than they could find words to express (see *Psalms* xix. 7–14; cxix. 1, etc.); they poured out their life-blood like water sooner than violate it; the whole of their existence seemed to have but this one object, the fulfilment of the Law. No new Teacher, therefore, could long escape the necessity of answering the question, 'Moses commanded thus and thus in the Law, what sayest *thou?*'

§ 28. Ritual

In so far as the Law was connected with religion it had to regulate that in which religion expressed itself, viz., worship. Now the worship of all early peoples expresses itself always in one way, viz., by making gifts to God. The ancient Hebrews did not differ from their neighbours in this respect; they brought part of the crop from their fields, the fruit from the orchard, the young of their flocks and herds, to offer on the altar to Yahweh; as the Canaanites did to the Baals. And this traditional way of worshipping God they had not given up in the time of Jesus. Each successive code of their Law had said more about it, about the place and time where it should be performed, the persons who should perform it, and the manner in which the rite should be fulfilled. Every other religion laid stress on it. Palestine itself was full of temples to Greek, Phœnician, Syrian deities, where worship was carried on by means of sacrifices. Costly buildings were reared for the abode of the divinity: magnificent offerings, precious gifts, vast accumulations of treasure, were deposited in them: the ministers of the sacred house, the priests who might have access to the deity, were kept carefully apart from other men, and might not engage in common work.

These were the ideas of every religion: and they were to be found vivid and strong among the Jews. In the old days the whole country had been covered with sanctuaries: on every hill-top might be an altar, beneath the venerable oak a sacred place. But at these local sanctuaries there was a constant danger. They brought religion near the homes of the people, but what kind of religion? A religion infected with idolatry, a religion

which could not be acceptable to Yahweh. So the prophets laboured to wean the people from their attachment to these places of village worship, and set free the service of Yahweh from the idolatries inevitably mingled with them. This aim found legal expression in the Deuteronomic code (§ 27), which required that the local sanctuaries should be abolished, and that all sacrifice should be offered at Jerusalem alone. This principle was not permanently adopted till after the Captivity, but it was assumed in the Priestly code (§ 27), and remained ever afterwards in force. This code thus gave a perpetual sanction to the old custom of worshipping God by sacrifice. It laid down the most rigid rules about the persons who might perform the holy rites; it specified the kinds of sacrifices which should be offered on different occasions; it fixed the order of the feasts; it even sought to regulate the minutest details of the daily existence of a member of the holy community. This, is must always be remembered, was the result of a great effort to save the high truths of Israel's religion, attained by the prophets, from being again dispersed by the corruptions of idolatry. They were hedged round with the strictest ritual, partly because religion could not be conceived without ritual, partly because a definite ritual was then necessary to guard the great conception of the sole deity and spirituality of Yahweh. [See Abrahams, *Some Permanent Values in Judaism*, 1924.]

The ritual of a single Temple, however, could not satisfy all the wants of a people scattered not only through one country but through many; and accordingly we find that long before the time of Jesus, a new sort of worship had sprung up, which sought to do what the old local sanctuaries had in part done, viz., bring the

organization of religion back from the metropolis into the village, and connect it with the home-life of the people. So we have to consider two quite different lines of religious expression, two orders of worship, the Temple with its ritual of sacrifice, and the Synagogue with its teaching and prayer.

§ 29. The Temple

[Edersheim, *The Temple*, p. 19; Waterhouse, in Sanday's *Sacred Sites*, p. 106; G. A. Smith, *Jerusalem*, vol. ii, p. 499; Hollis, *The Archæology of Herod's Temple*, 1934; and article 'The Sun Cult and the Temple at Jerusalem' in *Myth and Ritual*, 1933, ed. Hooke; article 'Temple' in Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible*, vol. iv.]

It has been said that whereas in the old days there had been many sanctuaries to Yahweh, just as there were many sanctuaries to the Canaanite Baals, to the Assyrian Ishtar or Nebo, to the Greek Apollo or Aphroditê, the Jews had settled down at last in the peculiar principle of having only one holy house, and this, of course, was established at Jerusalem. They were thus able to concentrate on this one temple both the wealth and the affection that might otherwise have been divided among many. One of the devices of Herod for winning popularity with the Jews was the restoration of the Temple, which had suffered severely in the visitations of the Romans (§§ 20, 21), and this design was carried out with extraordinary splendour.

The Temple mount, as has been said, was separated from the western quarter of the city by the narrow ravine of the Cheesemakers' Valley. Across this valley ran a bridge, which was broken down in Pompey's siege, and

was now repaired by Herod. It was 354 feet long, and the roadway was 50 feet wide; in the centre, the depth of the valley beneath was 225 feet.[1] The bridge led to the south-western entrance of the Temple enclosure, where the road passed into the nave of the great royal cloister running the whole length of the southern side. This magnificent structure was of the size of a colossal cathedral, far larger than any existing in this country. Its total length was 922 feet; it contained no less than 162 massive pillars; the nave was 45 feet broad, and 100 feet high; the aisles on either hand were each 30 feet in width, and 50 feet in height.[2] It was an additional wonder that this gigantic building was reared up from the slope of the Kidron Valley on massive masonry, itself almost equal in height to the tallest of our church-spires: at the eastern corner the depth from its roof into the vale below was no less than 450 feet.

The Temple area, bounded on the south by this royal cloister, was an irregular square, the shortest side (on the south) being 922 feet, the longest (on the north) 1,150 feet in length. Eight gates, four on the west side two on the south, one each on the east and north, provided entrance. Along the east, north, and west sides ran more cloisters, though not on so grand a scale as the royal cloister on the south: the court within, paved with variegated marble, was the Court of the Gentiles, which was open to all. Here were houses for Levites, and even a synagogue; here, too, the stalls for animals for sacrifice,

[1] The suspension bridge at Clifton, Bristol, is 245 feet above the river Avon.

[2] Compare the following dimensions: *Westminster Abbey*, total length, 513 feet; breadth of nave and aisles together, 75 feet; height of nave, 102 feet.

oxen, sheep, and doves, which must have resembled an immense cattle-market; here, likewise, the booths of the money-changers for the endless visitors alike from the country and from foreign lands, bringing gifts or vows to the sanctuary. Not far, however, could the Gentile penetrate through the throng; a low barrier, four feet high, called the Soreg, pierced by gates, marked the line beyond which he might not pass; suspended against pillars were inscriptions in Greek and Latin (one of which has been found), warning him that further intrusion involved no less a penalty than death.

In the interior of this vast court arose a huge platform, approached on different sides by nine flights of steps. Around it ran a narrow terrace or fortification which enabled the Sanctuary within to be defended. On this platform stood the holy house itself, with the courts for priests and people. A high wall rose from the terrace, bounding the Court of Israel, with a cloister and chambers on the inside. The chief access was through the great Eastern portal, past gates overlaid with gold. Then the worshipper entered the Court of the Women, which was open to both sexes, but formed the limit beyond which women might not advance. [See, however, Hollis, *op. cit.*, who thinks that an exception was made in the case of women bringing offerings.] Here stood the trumpet-shaped receptacles for offerings for the Temple service; here was the place of the believer's ordinary worship. More steps led up to the Men's Court: and at a slight elevation above this was the court of the priests, which the people might not enter. Right and left were groups of chambers for all kinds of purposes connected with the Temple service. In one the priests assembled before the duties of the day began; another was their

dining chamber; in a third the shewbread was prepared; in others, wood or salt was laid up for the altar, the skins of the sacrificial animals were salted, the priests' vestments were deposited, the machinery for supplying the great laver with water was stored up. There were chambers for the High Priest, for the Sanhedrin, sleeping chambers, bathrooms for the indispensable ablutions; in one was a fire always burning for the priests, who must ever walk barefooted over the marble pavements, even in the winter's cold.

In the Priests' Court in front of the Holy House was the Altar. Built in ancient fashion of unhewn stones its base was about 55 feet square.[1] A terrace ran round it near the top, on which the priests walked; it was reached by an inclined plane, always kept well salted, that the barefooted priests, ascending and descending, might not slip, for the blood of the victims which trickled down from above made this precaution necessary. Three fires burned upon the altar, and hard by was a great salt heap from which the sacrifice was salted. Close at hand were all the requisites for dealing with the sacrificial animals, marble tables for laying out the flesh and fat; low columns to which the dismembered parts were hung; rows of hooks and rings for fastening the pieces. In such a system an ample water supply was essential; the mighty laver between the altar and the porch, supported on twelve lions, was emptied every evening, and refilled every morning by special machinery; vast

[1] A good deal of difficulty besets these measurements, which are given in the original authorities (who do not always agree) in cubits. I have followed the figures of Dr. G. A. Smith, who estimates a sacred cubit at 20.67 inches. [But see Hollis, *op. cit.*, p. 349, who takes 18 inches to the cubit.]

cisterns were constructed in the rock beneath, and a complicated system of drainage, which could be flushed at once, carried off the large quantities of blood daily shed down into the vale of Kidron.

Twelve broad steps led up to the Holy House, which consisted of three parts. In front rose a splendid porch, facing the east, 172 feet in length from north to south, and as high as it was long. Within lay the Holy Place, 70 feet by 35 feet, where stood the golden lampstand, the shewbread table, and the incense altar. Most sacred of all, a chamber, a cube of 35 feet, hidden by a veil from all light of day, and entered but once a year by the High Priest, and by him alone, in the most solemn rite of Jewish worship, was the Holy of Holies. There in the darkness—the centre of all these majestic structures—the innermost recess of the divine abode was—*nothing*. It was a noble vindication of the truth for which the Jews had striven so long. 'I dwell in the high and holy place,' said the ancient prophet, in the name of Yahweh, 'with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit.' The Jews had learned the first lesson of all religion, 'God is a spirit'; they had yet to learn the second, 'they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.'

§ 30. Priests and Levites

[On the following §§ much useful information will be found in Edersheim, *The Temple* and *Jewish Social Life*, and in the *Dictionaries of the Bible*; Danby, *The Mishna* (*a translation*), 1933; see 'Pesachim,' 'Yoma,' and the whole section 'Kodashim.']

A temple of such immense size, standing at the centre of the public religious life of a whole nation, naturally

needed a large body of men to conduct its services. This body was divided into two great classes, the Priests and the Levites. The origin of this division was supposed to go back to Moses, but we now know that the arrangement was really of very much later date, and was not clearly fixed until after the middle of the fourth century B.C. From that time onwards the higher clergy, the Priests, claimed the exclusive privilege of performing all the actual rites of sacrifice and ministration in the Holy Place: to the Levites were allotted only the lower duties. The two grades were supposed all to belong to the same sacred tribe, but large numbers of Levites were not really so by descent, but had been incorporated into the guild in consideration of the services which they had been accustomed to render. Each order, however, became very jealous of its rights; and any candidate for admission to the priesthood was obliged to prove his hereditary claim with great minuteness.

Both bodies were numerous. The Priests were divided into twenty-four 'courses,' which took it by turns to serve in the sanctuary for a week at a time. A similar division existed among the Levites. The different departments of the Temple service were under the superintendence of particular officers. One was captain of the guard; another looked after the closing and opening of the gates at the proper times; a third had the care of the birds for the offerings; to a fourth was committed the charge of the water supply, the cisterns, and the drains; others dealt with the shewbread, the incense, the vestments; and one served as physician, for the barefooted Priests, in their thin linen robes, were especially exposed to cold and chills. The immense and elaborate ceremonial made special training necessary; and as the duties of each day

were distributed by lot, each Priest had to be prepared for any function. This kind of traditional learning was naturally kept up among the Priests themselves, but instruction was sometimes sought from teachers outside the order.

The duties of the Levites fell into three great classes; they were the Priests' assistants, they performed the Temple music, they guarded the sacred precincts. In their attendance on the Priests they were required to cleanse the sanctuary, its fore-courts, and many of its vessels; to look after the storehouses and their contents —vestments, spices, wood, and the like; and to prepare the shewbread and the sacrificial food. They furnished the choirs for chanting the Psalms in daily worship, and the bands which accompanied them, as many as thirty-six different instruments being enumerated by the Rabbis. And their ranks supplied the Temple-guard posted day and night at the gates of the great enclosure and the inner courts. Woe to the Levite who was found asleep at his post, when the Captain of the Temple made his rounds. Perhaps he was only beaten—perhaps his clothes were set on fire, and he was wakened by the flames.

The orders of Priests and Levites, though so large and important, did not, however, possess a corresponding influence in the nation. That was the privilege of the learned, who looked down upon ignorant Priests, and scornfully classed them with the rude uncultivated 'people of the land,' the common country-folk. Many of them were very poor, and though the maintenance of the Priests on duty at the Temple was provided from the Temple revenues, those who were dispersed through the country were often very badly off. Their position as

a separate caste made them cling together against outsiders, though there might be rivalries among themselves: but if they were sometimes selfish and exclusive, they were also not without the finer qualities which result from union in a great corporation and devotion to great duties. In times of danger they could behave with heroic courage. During the siege by Pompey (§ 20) they distinguished themselves by their faithfulness through months of peril, and their willing surrender of their lives in the hour of defeat. The Roman general brought up huge engines from Tyre, from which stones were hurled into the Temple precincts. Still twice a day, says Josephus, were the morning and evening sacrifices offered; they were never interrupted, not even for any 'melancholy accident,' when one of the officiating priests fell wounded or killed upon the ground: nay, when the soldiery at last rushed in sword in hand, they calmly continued at the altar, and only stopped to die.

§ 31. The Temple Service

[Singer, *Authorized Jewish Prayer Book*, 1914.]

The original idea of the Sanctuary among the Israelites was that of a place where their God was in some way physically present, and made himself known by some manifestation to their senses. In the tradition of their wanderings, they loved to tell how Moses took a tent and pitched it outside the camp, as the Sacred tent, and Yahweh came down in a pillar of cloud and stood at the entrance, and talked with him (*Exodus* xxxiii. 7–11). This tent they called the Tent of Meeting. When the Temple was built by Solomon at Jerusalem it was said that this was the place which Yahweh had chosen to set

his name there. The city of Jerusalem became, in a special sense, the city of Yahweh; the Temple was his dwelling; and in the story of its dedication they said that the glory of Yahweh filled the house with a shining cloud, so that there was no place for the priests to minister (1 *Kings* viii. 10, 11). So the authors of the Priestly code gave to the sanctuary a special new name, and called it 'The Dwelling.' Thus there gathered about Jerusalem the most exalted notions of its beauty and holiness, as the seat or earthly throne of the Divine Lord. It was the 'City of the great King' (*Matt.* v. 35): men looked to it from afar with longing; they trod its streets with rapture; it was the one place on earth where all that they most loved in their religion was made real to them.

The great instrument of this was the Temple service. This was still conducted along the ancient lines. It was no doubt much more elaborate; increased wealth gave it greater splendour; new feasts, new ceremonies, were added. But the idea beneath it was the old idea. The chief acts of devotion were the old acts of sacrifice: the essential thought was that Israel came to pay homage to the Heavenly King. The daily worship was intended as a national act: and whereas the whole people could not be present at each service, they were represented by a body of laymen appointed for the purpose. Like the Priests, these were divided into twenty-four courses, each of which had its head and sent certain members to Jerusalem to serve for the week appointed for their course. They were known as the 'Standing Men,' and they stood for all their countrymen and fellow-subjects in the earthly house of their sovereign God. Let us see how this principle was worked out in the daily service.

Before the dawn the Priests gather in the Hall of

Polished Stones to draw lots for the various duties of the morning sacrifice. The great Altar had to be cleansed; the lamps of the golden lampstand in the Holy Place had to be trimmed; the ashes from the altar of incense had to be removed: the sacrifice had to be burned on the altar of the fore-court, the incense offered in the sanctuary. These and their associated duties were assigned by lots, which were drawn amid solemn prayers and devout recitations. Then the necessary preparations were made; the gold and silver vessels were brought forth; and at last the chief officiating Priest was left alone within the Holy Place. There he waited for the signal that the time was come to kindle the incense. Meanwhile the congregation had gathered without. There were the regular 'Standing Men' and pious residents in the holy city, with some of the pilgrims who had come from abroad. When the president gave the word of command, there was a deep stillness, for all the people fell on their faces with outspread hands in silent prayer. Then as the smoke of the incense rose, the voices of the Priests were heard reciting the collects of blessing to Yahweh: here are the first two:

'True it is that Thou art the Lord our God, and the God of our fathers: our King and the King of our fathers; our Redeemer and the Redeemer of our fathers; our Maker and the rock of our salvation: our Liberator and our Deliverer. Thy name is from everlasting, and there is no God beside Thee. A new song did they that were redeemed sing to Thy name by the sea-shore; together did all praise and own Thee as King, and say, "Yahweh shall reign who saveth Israel."'

'Be graciously pleased, Yahweh our God, with thy people Israel, and with their prayer. Restore the service

to the oracle of Thy House; and the burnt-offerings of Israel and their prayers in love graciously accept: and let the service of Thy people Israel be acceptable unto Thee continually.'

Then the pieces of the lamb that had been slain in sacrifice were laid on the great altar; the priestly blessing was pronounced; and the meat and drink offerings were presented. On the right hand and the left stood the Priests with their silver trumpets, and now they moved forward, for the Psalm for the day was to begin.[1] The choir of Levites raised the chant, supported by the band of musicians; and at each pause the trumpets were blown three times, and the people prostrated themselves in worship. This was the last act of the service: when it was over the congregation dispersed, to assemble again, some of them, for another service at the evening sacrifice. On Sabbaths and at the great feasts (§ 33) the service was much more elaborate. But the central idea was always the same: the worship was rendered by the entire nation in the persons of their accredited representatives in the Priests and the Congregation.

The same conception that the people and their land belonged to Yahweh, ran through the touching practice of offering the first fruits to God in his Holy Place. The whole country was divided into twenty-four districts. In each district the farmers went into their fields while the corn was ripening, and marked off the best portion of the wheat and the barley for Yahweh. The finest

[1] The Psalms selected were, 1st day of the week (Sunday), Psalm xxiv; 2nd day, Psalm xlviii; 3rd day, Psalm lxxxii; 4th day, Psalm xciv; 5th day, Psalm lxxxi; 6th day, Psalm xciii; 7th day (Sabbath), Psalm xcii.

clusters of grapes were indicated on the vines by a rush round the stem; the best bunches of dates on the palm, the pomegranates, the olives, the figs, were all chosen in the same way. Then they were all carefully gathered when the time came, and carried to the local centre, where deputies were appointed to take them up to Jerusalem under the leadership of one of the 'Standing Men' of the district. They met overnight so as to make an early start: and lest they should be in any way defiled, they lodged in no house, but camped beneath the open sky. As soon as the dawn spread over the hills, the leader called them together with the ancient words, 'Arise ye, and let us go up to Zion and to Yahweh our God' (*Jeremiah* xxxi. 6); and they answered, as they formed into rank, 'I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of Yahweh' (*Psalm* cxxii. 1). Slowly the procession advanced to the sound of the flute; the offerings were borne in wicker baskets, or in costly vessels of silver and gold. As they marched, the people chanted the Psalms known as 'Songs of Ascents,' A.V. 'Songs of degrees' (*Psalms* cxx.-cxxxiv.), a little collection of hymns to be sung by pilgrims on the way up to Jerusalem, full of joy in the holy city, of longing for it, of delight in the temple, of trust in Yahweh. When they neared the sacred hill a messenger was sent forwards, and a band of Priests and Levites came out from the Sanctuary to bid them welcome, and greet them with peace. Up the slope to the Temple mount they sang 'Praise ye Yahweh, praise God in his sanctuary, praise him in the firmament of his power' (*Psalm* cl.); and when they passed within the gates, the Levites burst into the triumphant strain, 'I will extol thee, O Yahweh, for thou hast lifted me up, and hast not made my foes to

rejoice over me.'—By such ceremonies as these the whole national and religious life of Israel was linked with the Temple and its services. How great, then, must have been the courage of a Teacher who could calmly proclaim a time when the Temple should fall, and they should be no more.

§ 32. The Synagogue

[Oesterley and Box, *Religion and Worship of the Synagogue*, 1911; Oesterley, *Psalms in the Jewish Church*, 1910.]

The worship of the Temple could only be attended by a small number of the whole Jewish people. The residents in Jerusalem might be present often; perhaps some who were very devout went every day. The visitors in the Holy City who had come on pilgrimage, we may be sure, went as often as they could during their stay. But some other arrangement was needed to help the people in their ordinary life in their own homes. It was much to know that every morning and evening sacrifice was offered and prayers were said upon the sacred hill, for the whole nation; but for support and strength in daily work much more was wanted. Indeed, the want had long been felt. When the people were carried away into their Babylonian captivity, there was no temple at all, no ritual, no altar, no sacrifice. Everything that they had cherished as the public service of religion suddenly passed out of their reach. Hence it was inevitable that new forms of worship should grow up, if worship was to be continued with any living power. The people began to gather round those most eminent among them for wisdom or piety. They met in each other's houses. They read aloud their sacred

books; they gathered up the discourses preached by the prophets; and they listened while some voice still touched with prophetic power addressed to them such glowing words of hope and trust as we read for example in the last twenty-seven chapters of the book of Isaiah.

When they returned to their own land they took immediate steps to rebuild the Temple and restore the ritual, but they did not give up the meeting for prayer and praise. By degrees special buildings—'meeting-houses' they called them—were reared for the purpose, and long before the end of the Greek supremacy these were generally established throughout the land, and we know them by their Greek name, *synagogues*. The synagogue, and the institutions connected with it, played a great part in the village life. It had to do both with religion and with secular affairs; it was a place of worship, and a place for the administration of justice. The authorities responsible for the latter consisted of the Elders or Rulers, with a President at their head, who were elected by the Congregation, after having given sufficient proof that they possessed the necessary knowledge. In the larger towns this local Sanhedrin or council consisted of twenty-three members; in smaller places seven sufficed. These formed the local court, and they made all the arrangements for the worship. There was besides a *hazzân* or 'minister,' ('attendant,' *Luke* iv. 20, R.V.) who was the schoolmaster as well; he did not, however, preach like a modern minister, but he had charge of the sacred books; his office was one highly respected, and he might be sometimes called upon to conduct the service. There were short services every day; on Mondays and Thursdays, the usual market-days, when the country people flocked into the towns, they were a little longer;

the principal services, however, fell on the Sabbath. These were all under the regulation of the Ruler of the synagogue (not necessarily identical with the President of the Elders), who chose the persons who should take part in them. There was no select body of men whose function it was to pray or teach; all might do so who were fitted for it by natural gifts or by training; and several of the Congregation generally assisted in each Sabbath service. There were also officials for the collection and distribution of alms.

The building was usually of stone, square or oblong in shape, perhaps divided by pillars into aisles, three or even five in number. At one end—in Galilee generally at the south, looking towards Jerusalem—was the ark, a chest or cupboard in which the sacred books were kept, veiled by a curtain before it. In front of the ark were ranged the Elders, facing the Congregation. In the middle was a platform for those who were to pray, read, or preach. The person who was selected to conduct the chief devotions of the day, was called the Messenger, the Deputy, or Delegate of the Congregation. He mounted the platform, stood by the reading-desk, and recited two prayers, of which the following are believed to be the oldest forms, probably in use in the time of Jesus.

'Blessed be Thou, O Lord, King of the world, who formest the light and createst the darkness, who makest peace and createst everything; who in mercy givest light to the earth, and to those who dwell upon it, and in thy goodness day by day and every day renewest the works of creation. Blessed be the Lord our God for the glory of his handiwork, and for the light-giving lights which he has made for his praise. Blessed be the Lord our God, who has formed the lights.'

'With great love hast Thou loved us, O Lord our God, and with much overflowing pity hast Thou pitied us, our Father and our King. For the sake of our fathers who trusted in Thee, and to whom Thou taughtest the statues of life, have mercy upon us and teach us—[Enlighten our eyes in thy law; cause our hearts to cleave to thy commandments; unite our hearts to love and fear thy name, that we may never be put to shame, world without end. For Thou art God who workest salvation, and us hast Thou chosen from among all nations and tongues, and hast in truth brought us near to thy great name]—that we may give thanks to Thee, and declare thy unity in love. Blessed be the Lord, who in love chose his people Israel.'

Then followed the recitation of the famous passages from the Law, *Deut.* vi. 4-9; xi. 13-21; *Numbers* xv. 37-41, known by the first Hebrew word *Shemá*, '*Hear*, O Israel.' This was the great profession of Jewish faith. From the platform the 'Messenger of the Congregation' then passed to the front of the ark, and there a long series of collects, technically called 'Benedictions,' were repeated. Some were always the same; some varied with the day; there were commemorations of the mercies of God, prayers for peace, for insight and knowledge, for forgiveness of sins, for deliverance from every kind of need, for general redemption from bondage. To these the Rabbis sometimes added prayers of their own, either in special forms, or free. Next came the reading of a passage from the Law, which might be distributed among as many as seven readers, beginning with a descendant of Aaron, if any claimant to priestly rank was present, and passing in turn to a Levite. The roll was carefully taken from the ark by the Minister;

the linen coverings enveloping it were removed; it was placed on the reading-desk on the platform open at the appointed lesson, and the reader stood up and commenced. He was not, however, alone; and he did not go very far. By his side stood an interpreter to translate what he read in Hebrew into the common speech of the people (§ 9). The Law was held in such great reverence that the reader might not read more than one verse at a time, so that there should be no danger of failure to render the sense correctly. When the lesson from the Law was over, a lesson from the Prophetical books was next read. Whether these were in a fixed order, like those from the Law, is not known. This likewise was translated, three verses at a time, into the popular Aramaic; the interpreter contenting himself with giving the general meaning, without heed to the exact words.

As soon as this concluded, the reader sat down, and began his sermon. Sometimes his discourse was addressed only to a 'speaker' by his side, who repeated aloud the thoughts thus privately whispered to his ear. A very great Rabbi would not even communicate with the speaker, but confided his ideas first of all to some favourite pupil. How all these conventional artifices for maintaining the teacher's dignity before the unlettered people of the land were brushed aside by the simplicity of Jesus! At the close of the sermon a doxology was pronounced, the service ended, and the congregation dispersed.

We have all heard something like this nearer home. It is not difficult to see, in spite of the vast differences of time, place, language, manners, how the Synagogue worship, with its prayers, Scripture readings, and sermon, supplied the type on which Christian worship was first based, and which it still employs for the expression and maintenance of spiritual religion.

§ 33. The Feasts

[See the Tractates, 'Yoma,' 'Pesachim,' 'Sukkoth,' in Danby, *op. cit.*; Oesterley, *The Jewish Origin of the Christian Liturgy*, 1925; Buchanan Gray, *Sacrifice in the Old Testament*, 1927, pp. 271–397; James, *Origin of Sacrifice*, 1933, chapters 6–9.]

The daily and weekly services in the Temple and Synagogues did not fill up the whole round of Jewish worship. There were also various special services in the sanctuary at Jerusalem. From very ancient times the appearance of the new moon, marking the beginning of the month, had been celebrated by special sacrifice and ceremony, and this practice was still kept up in the time of Jesus. Various incidents in the history of the Temple and the city were commemorated by different festivals and fasts. In the autumn fell the most solemn day of the whole Jewish year, known as the Day of Atonement, when the chief officer of the nation, the High Priest, entered the Holy of Holies to make confession for the sins of the people, and with the offering of incense and the sprinkling of blood entreated the divine forgiveness. But beside these were three great feasts, which had been kept from very early days, and had now gathered around them a vast mass of traditional interest. These feasts had probably once been connected with primitive usages of old Canaanite religion, and were first concerned with the seasons of the agricultural year. There was the feast of Unleavened Bread, which fell in the spring, in the first month of the Jewish year, when the first sheaf of early barley was brought from the field.

Seven weeks later came the feast of Weeks, when the harvest was over; and in the autumn, after the vintage, the agricultural year was closed by the celebration of the feast of Ingathering, afterwards called the Feast of Booths (Tabernacles). The old Hebrews seem to have adopted these feasts into their own religion, and they tried by degrees to plant them firmly in its midst by associating them with incidents in their own history. Thus to the feast of Unleavened Bread they prefixed the *Pesach* or Passover, in commemoration of their deliverance from Egypt (*Deut.* xvi. 1); and at a later time they explained the meaning of the feast of Booths (Tabernacles) by reference to the booths in which they supposed their ancestors to have been sheltered on the same occasion (*Leviticus* xxiii. 42, 43). The same tendency led them still later to commemorate at the feast of Weeks the giving of the Law on Sinai, and to attach other events in their national traditions to particular sacred days.

The observance of these three feasts was thus a matter of very ancient rule. In the days when the land was covered with local sanctuaries it had been the custom for every full-grown male Israelite to come 'to see Yahweh's face' (as they phrased it) with a proper offering, according to his means. When the Deuteronomic Law was promulgated, and all sacrifice was restricted to the temple at Jerusalem, it was expected that all the worshippers of Yahweh in the little kingdom of Judah would assemble there. The same principle was enforced when the temple was rebuilt after the Captivity; but it was plain that as the people spread over their ancient land, and afterwards settled in other countries, they could not keep up this custom regularly. So it seems only to have been considered obligatory on the men who

lived within fifteen miles of the holy city to attend every time. But the strong national feeling of the Jews made them cling very firmly to these usages; and to the Passover, in particular, which celebrated the birthday of their life as a united people, by their liberation from their Egyptian bondage, they were very deeply attached.

Year by year vast multitudes crowded to Jerusalem, not from Palestine only, but from all cities of the world where Jews had made a home away from their own land. From distant countries came the pilgrim bands speaking many different languages; the city was full, and the slopes outside the walls were crowded with the tents in which the caravan-parties were encamped. Then they were proud to feel that they were a nation; they were proud of their worship, proud of their temple, proud of their God who had chosen them for his own, apart from other men. They counted the paschal lambs that were slain for the Passover supper; it is said that on one occasion there were upwards of a quarter of a million; and they knew then that there could not be much fewer than two and a half million of people assembled.[1] It was to keep this feast that Jesus went up with the Twelve to Jerusalem.

There were special services in the Temple; but the chief feature of the festival was the supper, at which the Passover lamb was eaten. For this purpose families and friends used to unite in little parties, varying from ten to twenty persons. Strangers in the city were freely allowed the use of a room with the necessary furniture, tables, and cushions, in return for which it was customary

[1] Probably there was some great exaggeration in the number of the lambs. The statement is that of Josephus, but it is difficult to believe that so many could be killed in one afternoon.

to leave behind the skin of the lamb and the earthen vessels employed at the supper. Lambs were purchased in the streets or in the temple court, and on the afternoon of the day on which the Passover began (14th Nisan) the people repaired to the temple, where the animals were inspected by the priests and slain. When the festive service was over they broke up into groups, and gathered at the appointed guest-chamber ready for the meal, which might begin as soon as the sun had set, and the trumpets on the temple hill had announced that the 15th of Nisan had commenced. They came in their best clothes; and they had eaten nothing since the afternoon service, that they might have good appetites, for it was an occasion of joy. The guests lay down on mats and cushions spread upon the floor, so that all could reach the dishes on a low table in the middle. The head of the family, or the president of the little company, first took a cup of wine mingled with water, and gave thanks over it. Here are a few words of a very old prayer which tradition associates with this act. 'Blessed art thou, O Lord our God, who hast created the fruit of the vine. Blessed art thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who hast chosen us from among all peoples, and exalted us from among all languages, and sanctified us with thy commandments. And thou hast given us, O Lord, in love, the solemn days for joy, and appointed seasons for gladness: and this the day of the feast of unleavened bread, the season of our freedom, a holy convocation, the memorial of our departure from Egypt.' When the cup had been passed around, and hands had been washed, the paschal table was brought forward; it bore the lamb, roasted whole with unbroken bones, but now cut in pieces, bitter herbs, lettuce, endive, etc.,

with a kind of thick batter called *haroseth*, made of dates, raisins, figs, almonds, vinegar, and spice, and lastly, thin round cakes of unleavened bread. The president dipped some of the herbs in the *haroseth* and distributed them, and it was then customary to sing *Psalms* cxiii. and cxiv., ending with short thanksgivings. The cup was passed round again, and the president next broke the bread with thanksgiving, which was in its turn dipped in the *haroseth*. Then the real meal began, and the lamb was eaten. When this was finished the wine-cup was filled a third time; and a special benediction was pronounced over it, so that it bore the name of the 'cup of blessing.' Finally the cup went round a fourth time; more hymns were sung (*Psalms* cxv.-cxviii.); and with two more collects of praise the supper and the service ended.

§ 34. The Sabbath

[See Danby, *op. cit.*, Tractate 'Shabbath.']

Prominent among the religious observances of the Jews in the time of Jesus was the keeping of the Sabbath. We have spoken already of the Synagogue services which took place upon that day; but why were they fixed on that day? It was because from very ancient times that day had been regarded as especially sacred. It is possible that it was of Babylonian origin, possible also, that it was once connected with the changes of the moon. The evidence is obscure, and all that we can definitely affirm is that it appears in the early books of Israel's history and prophecy in association with the new moon, as a day when common labour was suspended. This may have been a Canaanite custom which the immigrant Israelites adopted into their religion. Their lawgivers tried to

account for it in their own way, first of all by connecting it with the great event at the beginning of their national history, the deliverance from Egypt. 'Remember that thou wast a bondsman in the land of Egypt, and that Yahweh thy God brought thee out thence with a mighty hand and with a stretched out arm, therefore Yahweh thy God commanded thee to keep the Sabbath day' (*Deut.* v. 15). This was how the authors of the Deuteronomic code (620 B.C.) explained the custom in their edition of the famous Ten Words. But there was no real connexion between the deliverance from Egypt and keeping the seventh day; so a later editor of the Ten Words did not hesitate to alter this explanation, and substitute what he thought a better one: 'In six days Yahweh made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore Yahweh blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it' (*Exodus* xx. 11). This is, of course, a reference to the grand story of the Creation with which the book of Genesis opens; and it does give a much better reason for observing the Sabbath, if it were a true one. But we now know that this story is of much later origin than the practice which it is invoked to sanction. The process of creation has been arranged in six days, followed by a rest day, because the Sabbath was already an ancient and sacred institution. So it gradually came to be one of the usages most clearly separating them from other nations; all their devotion to their God and their Law gathered with peculiar strength round this one observance.

The great principle which regulated it was that no work might be done. So all business was stopped; no one worked in the fields, or the vineyards; the shops were closed; no craft might be carried on in the house;

and all household labour was, as far as possible, suspended. No fires were lighted, and no food was cooked. If a man got his clothes wet, and it was necessary to kindle a fire to dry them, he must take great care that his neighbours did not see. The most minute rules were laid down in the later books of Rabbinical Law to secure abstinence from everything that might seem like work; and many of these must have been discussed again and again in the time of Jesus. Thus it was gravely asked whether a father might carry his child in his arms. A tailor might not go out with a needle on Friday afternoon, lest the Sabbath should come on, and he should be guilty of carrying the needle. No loose ribbon might be worn—that was carrying something, but it might be sewn on to the dress. False hair might be worn in the house, but not in the street. An old man, however, must go without his false teeth on the Sabbath, for they might fall out, and he might pick them up, and carry them. A wooden-legged man might put on his wooden leg on the Sabbath, and a cripple might walk on crutches, but it was not lawful to cross a river on stilts. One important dispute gathered round the question whether it was lawful to eat an egg laid on the Sabbath. It was decided to be unlawful if the hen was kept for the purpose of laying; because then the egg would be the result of a week-day occupation continued on the Sabbath. But if the hen was kept for fattening, it was another matter; then the egg might be regarded as part of the hen that had just dropped off, and so it might be eaten.

There were, however, many duties which could not be altogether avoided; for instance, the cattle must be watered. Hence a whole series of regulations was devised to secure them from carrying anything when

they were taken to the well: the water might be drawn and poured into the trough, but it must not be carried and set before them, the animals must come to it and drink of their own accord. Another set of works referred to the treatment of the sick. It was said in the prophecies of Ezekiel (xx. 11) that Yahweh had given statutes and judgments through the fulfilment of which men should *live*. It was argued, therefore, that no law could be binding which involved danger to life. Here was a fruitful theme for debate and minute distinctions. What classes of cases could be brought under the head of danger to life? Some were in favour of strict interpretation, some of lax. Some laid down broadly that all medical applications to the outside of the body ought to be forbidden; if a man had lumbago he must bear it till the Sabbath was over, and not have a hot fomentation. On the other hand, certain internal remedies were allowed—provided they were taken for food as pleasure, and not as medicine. Some said that broken bones must not be set; others said that if a man had swallowed a piece of glass a doctor might be fetched, a splinter might be taken out of the eye, or a thorn from the flesh. If an animal fell into a pit Rabbinic Law ordered food and drink to be lowered, or some means furnished by which it might be kept up in the pit; nay, the Talmud even discusses cases when it was lawful to lift an animal out! The liberal teachers said, in a language that closely resembles the words of Jesus, 'The Sabbath is given to you, not you to the Sabbath.'

These strict rules had one very great drawback. They were so strict that only a few zealous and determined persons could possibly keep them. Consequently all sorts of evasions were allowed. For example, a farmer

wanted to move a sheaf in his field. That was carrying —labour; but if he laid on it a spoon in common use, then, as he might move the spoon, he might move the sheaf in order to transport the spoon! A regular set of arrangements (of relatively late date) was devised under the name of *Erûbh*, 'mixture' or 'connexion.' The house was the centre where many things might be done which were unlawful elsewhere. But the limits of the house might be extended through several courts or alleys by stretching a rope or a wire along them, or by putting up a beam at the entrance. Then everything which could be done in the house could be done in all parts of the area thus connected. Friends who lived more than a Sabbath day's journey from each other (2,000 cubits, about three quarters of a mile), and wished to meet at each other's houses, used to go on Friday to some spots at the proper distances, and bury some little bits of food, representing two meals. 'Where a man's food is,' they said, 'there is his home,' and so they were free to start on another two thousand paces; and places beyond the prescribed distance were thus connected within legal limits. But this was only allowed for serious objects, such as paying a visit of condolence, attending a wedding banquet, or meeting a master or friend.

All these rules, one might suppose, would make the keeping of the Sabbath almost unbearably irksome. But it was supposed to be a day of delight. The best dress must be worn, the choicest food made ready. The rich gathered their friends round them at dinner; even the poor must have three meals. So strong was this feeling that one school (followers of Shammai, p. 135) declared it improper to disturb the gladness of the day

by visiting those who were in any sorrow, or trying to comfort the sick, for this involved a painful excitement of the sympathies! The disciples of another famous teacher, Hillel, however, pronounced these acts quite lawful.

Thus the discussion of what might be done and what might not be done on the Sabbath was a very important feature in Jewish religious life. It was the same in every country where the Jews were settled. They were ridiculed and abused by their heathen neighbours, but they did not mind that: they must be faithful to their Law as they understood it. Again and again in war they were taken at terrible disadvantage. In the first Maccabean rising they chose to be massacred without attempting to defend themselves, rather than fight on the Sabbath. When Pompey besieged Jerusalem (§ 20), they would do nothing on the Sabbath to prevent the erection of earthworks, or the advance of battering engines; they would rather perish than violate God's command. We find it hard to understand how the observance of the Sabbath could gather round it this devotion. It must be remembered that every part of the Law seemed to be connected with every other part. It was all blended into one whole; and that whole was inextricably joined with the religion and nationality of the entire people. Every Sabbath the Jews knew that they were in fellowship with all their countrymen, however scattered they might be, through this observance. All their pride of race and religion was wrapped up in it. No good Jew, therefore, could think lightly of anything which seemed to involve its desecration or to bring it into disrepute.

§ 35. Personal Observances

Besides the duties of public worship, whether in the Temple or the Synagogue, the celebration of the feasts, and the keeping of the Sabbath, there were many other religious duties either directly or indirectly founded upon the Law. Some of these were designed to keep the great truths of the Law constantly in the mind of the Israelite. Thus there were certain memorial signs by which the house or the person of a pious Jew could be known at once. The first was the *tsîtsîth* or tassel, of blue or white wool, worn at each of the four corners of the outer robe (*Deut.* xxii. 12; *Numbers* xv. 37, sqq.), 'that ye may look upon them, and remember all the commandments of Yahweh to do them,' said the Law. Then, secondly, there was the *mezuzah*, a little case fixed to the right door-post of house or room, containing a parchment-roll, on which were inscribed in twenty-two lines the two great passages, *Deut.* vi. 4-9; xi. 13-21. Thirdly, there were the *Tephillîn*, literally, the 'Prayers,' or as they are called in the Gospels, *Phylacteries*, a Greek name meaning 'guards,' which implies that they were looked on as charms or amulets, endowed with a magical protecting power. They were small leather cases, to which leathern thongs were attached. One shape, intended to be bound on the left arm, held a single scroll containing four extracts from the Law, *Exodus* xiii. 1-10; xiii. 11-16; *Deut.* vi. 4-9; xi. 13-21. Another sort had four divisions, in each of which was a copy of one of the sacred passages; this was to be fastened on the forehead, just beneath the hair.

These phylacteries were to be put on at prayer-time. As in other cases, so also the personal devotion of the

Jews had been carefully reduced to rule. We do not find in the age just before Jesus any of those wonderful Psalms being composed which realize for us so fully the spirit of true religion. Everything is becoming systematized. It is true that some of the Rabbis recommended what we will call free prayer; but many of their discussions about prayer show that they had come to look on it as a formal duty, and that it did not always spring fresh from the heart. Twice every day, once in the morning, and once in the evening, was the *Shemá* to be repeated (p. 111), with the prescribed thanksgivings at the beginning and the end; though this duty was only imposed on adult males, and was not obligatory on women, children, or slaves. Thrice a day, morning, afternoon, and evening, must everyone, men and women, old and young, free and slave, repeat 'the Eighteen,' or 'the Prayer' [Singer, *op. cit.* p. 44 ff.]. These were eighteen collects of thanksgiving and supplication: here are two of them:

'Praised be Thou, Lord, our God, and the God of our Fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, the great, the mighty, the terrible God, the Most High, thou who bestowest abundant grace and createst all things, and rememberest the promises to the fathers, and bringest a redeemer to their children's children, for thy name's sake, out of love. O God, who bringest help and salvation, and art a shield, praised be Thou, O shield of Abraham.'

'Forgive us, O our Father, for we have sinned; pardon us, O our King, for we have transgressed. Thou delightest to forgive and to pardon. Praised be Thou, Lord, most merciful, Thou who abundantly pardonest.'

Besides these prayers there were thanksgivings at

meal-times for food and drink; there were special prayers on the Sabbath, on New Year's Day, and for other peculiar occasions; and free prayers might be offered also. Other religious observances sprang out of the distinction between clean and unclean enforced in the Law (see § 37); and others again were connected with the practice of fasting, which was not, indeed, ordained in the Law, but was of ancient date, ever since the disasters of the fall of Jerusalem and the Captivity. There were public and general fasts commemorating past calamities; or a fast might be proclaimed in a dry autumn when the lands suffered for want of rain. The second and fifth days of the week (Monday and Thursday) were appropriated for this purpose. Pious persons used to fast oftener; some (like the Pharisee, *Luke* xviii. 12) fasted on these two days all the year round. The fasts were kept with different degrees of strictness: in the lowest, the usual washing and anointing was not forbidden; in the more severe, all external expressions of cheerfulness, such as greetings to friends and neighbours, were rigidly suppressed. These are only some general outlines of recognized religious duty; with what minuteness the stricter Jews defined the obligations of the Law we shall see more clearly by and by.

§ 36. Proselytes

[Foakes-Jackson and *Kirsopp* Lake, *Beginnings of Christianity*, vol. 1, p. 164 ff, vol. 5, p. 74 ff.]

Stress has been laid in this chapter on the connexion between the religion of the Jews and their race. Each helped to keep up the feeling of the other. But might

nobody else worship God as the Jews worshipped him? Could not men of other nations adopt the religion of the Jews, attend their synagogues, and take offerings to their Temple? If the Jews thought that they, and they alone, had the true religion, must they not have desired that others would share its blessings with them? The great prophets of old time had taught that a day would come when even the greatest enemies of Israel, those who had fought, as it were, over its prostrate body, would be joined with it in the service of Yahweh. When the Jews were in exile in Babylonia it was hoped that as soon as they were set free the pious and earnest among them would carry forth religion to the ends of the earth, and bring all nations to the truth. But after the return to Palestine and the rebuilding of Jerusalem they had so many troubles close at hand that they had no time or energy to think of spreading their religion in distant lands.

During the two centuries before Christ, however, the Jews had become more and more widely dispersed among the Mediterranean countries; and more and more strangers had come and settled in Palestine. As the Jews mingled with others, their habits and beliefs by degrees became better known, and many persons were inclined to adopt them. It was a time when great discontent was felt with the old idolatries, and people often eagerly welcomed some fresh kind of religion in the hope that it might be more satisfactory than what they had long practised without much faith in it. Especially was this the case with a religion that had been very long established, and could trace back its origin to great antiquity. Then it was thought to deserve peculiar respect. So the Jews seem to have been quite active

in making converts, and though many of the Roman writers made fun of their earnestness, there were not a few persons in almost all ranks who showed a different mind. The Romans were generally ready to be friendly to the religion of the country in which they lived; thus we hear in the Gospels of an officer in the Roman army who built a synagogue at Capernaum (*Luke* vii. 5). [This may or may not have been the synagogue recently excavated at Capernaum (for details, see Sukenik, *Ancient Synagogues in Palestine and Greece*, 1930).] The regular converts are called in the New Testament by a Greek name, proselytes, those who come into, or joined the religious fellowship of the Jews. These were admitted to the full privileges of Judaism by the signs of circumcision, baptism, and sacrifice. There were many others who were attracted by the high spiritual monotheism of the Synagogue, and joined in the Sabbath worship where the Scriptures were read in the Greek. They observed some of the great moral rules, and abstained from such offences as blasphemy, idolatry, murder, unchastity, theft. They were known as the 'God-fearers,' and supplied the Apostle Paul—and no doubt other early missionaries as well—with many a follower. But they did not take on themselves the full obligations of the Law. Curiously enough the Jews never quite reconciled themselves to those who did. Sometimes they used very contemptuous language about them, and even said they were as great a plague as leprosy. After all they cared most to keep their religion to themselves. Only when we have fully understood this can we realize the true grandeur of the teaching of Jesus.

CHAPTER V

RELIGION

PART II.—*Orders, Parties, and Sects*

[Besides authorities named in the Introduction, see R. T. Herford, *Pharisaism*, 1912, and *The Pharisees*, 1924; Oesterley and Box, *Religion and the Worship of the Synagogue*; Jackson and Lake, *Beginnings of Christianity*, vol. I, Appendices A, D and E.]

§ 37. The Scribes

ALL the religious life of the Jews centred in the observance of their sacred Law (§ 27). But the Law was not concerned with religion only. It regulated all the principle duties of ordinary society as well; it set before men the pattern of conduct demanded from those who belonged to the people of Yahweh in a great many things which do not seem to us to have anything—or at least not much—to do with religion at all. One reason for this was that they did not realize that the Law contained elements of various dates and origins, separated from each other by hundreds of years, the products of very different social and religious conditions. These were all grouped under one name, Moses; above Moses stood God as their ultimate author. All, therefore, were equally divine; moral or ceremonial they required the same obedience. Another reason was the danger to which the Jews were constantly exposed, of falling away from their religion into some one of the numerous forms of

idolatry by which they were surrounded. The Levitical Law introduced by Ezra (p. 92), and finally combined with the older codes by his successors, succeeded at last in firmly establishing itself in the community. In order, however, that it might be known, reverenced, obeyed, it was necessary that it should be accessible to all. Not every one could go to consult the rolls at Jerusalem; it must be copied for general use in public worship or in private study. The rise of the synagogues, in whose services the reading of the Law formed a leading part, caused a demand for copies, and produced an order of persons whose business it was to transcribe the sacred books, and guarantee their correctness. Of course it was not a new thing for special persons to write or copy books; but the books of the Law came to have a peculiar importance, and so the men who were entrusted with the duty of preparing them were called pre-eminently the 'Writers' or the 'Scribes.'

This title had been, indeed, already borne by no less a person than Ezra himself; and it passed on to his successors who were engaged in similar tasks of reproducing, studying, explaining, teaching the Law. Here was the rule of life; but it was not always very clear. It did not go into sufficient details; it might lay down a general ordinance to be obeyed in average cases, but then a great many difficulties might arise, owing to circumstances which had never been contemplated when the Law was made. So it happened that the teachers engaged in expounding the Law were often called upon to decide what might be done, and what might not. They were designated by the same name, the 'Scribes,' for they were probably at first the same persons who edited and re-edited, copied and re-copied the holy books; in the

Gospels they are often called the 'Lawyers,' or the 'Teachers of the Law.'

They first come clearly into view soon after the beginning of the Greek period (§ 10), when it was felt that great care must be taken to preserve the true religion. The way in which it was proposed to do this was indicated in the proverbial sayings, attributed to the men who followed Ezra, 'Be circumspect in judgment,' 'train up many scholars,' and *'make a hedge around the Law.'*[1] But it was not till after the great struggle led by the Maccabees (about 164 B.C.) that it was fully realized that the life or death of religion was involved in keeping up the Law. From that time onward—the middle of the second century B.C.—the position of the Scribes, teachers and scholars together, became more and more important. Shortly before the days of Jesus the word *Rabbi* (literally 'my great one') came into use in addressing them; and then, as with the French *monsieur* (shortened from *mon Seigneur*, 'my lord') the meaning of the pronoun dropped, and the term was employed simply as a title. They formed a kind of guild or brotherhood. There was a secular side to the profession; the Rabbi circumcised the babe, instructed the boy, drew up marriage settlements, and prepared the deeds for purchases and sales, for loans and agreements, and such-like public transactions. These involved technical questions of what we should call civil law, and so the Rabbi was a member of the local court of justice connected with the synagogue, or if he was very eminent, he might be elected into the Sanhedrin at Jerusalem

[1] Compare the language of *Psalms* i. 1, 2, xix. 7–14, and cxix. The function of the Scribe and his experience of life are described in *Ecclesiasticus*, xxxix. 1–11.

(§§ 18, 19). In this way it might often happen that a Rabbi was asked to arbitrate in some dispute, when the parties sought a private decision without taking their case before a court (cp. *Luke* xii. 13).

But we have said, and it must be constantly repeated, that the Jews recognized no real distinction between what we call civil law and religious law, between things secular and things religious. Hence it came to pass that the Rabbis were also continually occupied with discussing and applying those rules which had been laid down for maintaining the separateness of the Jews from other people, and the observance of their peculiar usages, as a religious duty. They started from the written Law: but around this there grew up a great body of decisions made by famous teachers in particular cases. These resembled the decisions of our judges in the interpretation of the statutes enacted by Parliament. The decisions of our judges are reported, and from time to time collected: one decision makes a precedent, as it is called, and others follow on the same lines. Something like this happened among the Jews; only the maxims of their great Rabbis were not written down: they were transmitted orally, by the master to his scholars. 'The Teachers say,' he would begin. A great deal of pains was taken in the cultivation of memory; a Rabbi whose head was stored with the sayings of the wise was described as 'a well-plastered cistern, filled with the water of knowledge, out of which nothing could escape.' When any critical point was debated, he was considered the cleverest disputant who could most readily produce the words of some famous predecessor in support of his view. Thus they did not really deal with the principles of the case; they only asked 'what has been said about it already?'

The quotation of a verse from the Scriptures, whether really apposite or not, or the sudden appeal to a traditional authority, was considered conclusive. In this way they gradually filled up all kinds of gaps in their written Law. When any case turned up for which no provision was made, they looked about for that which seemed most like it, and settled the difficulty accordingly. So, all matters of conduct were placed under two heads, what was unlawful and what was lawful, what was forbidden and what was allowed. This sort of arrangement was called 'binding and loosing' (cp. *Matthew* xvi. 19).

We have already seen the kind of questions which had sprung up concerning what might or might not be done on the Sabbath (§ 34). All the rules defining the limits of lawful occupation on the Sabbath were Scribe-made Law; they were the results of centuries of discussion of all sorts of real or imaginary questions. Well did the Rabbis say that the Sabbath-legislation was like a mountain hung by a hair! Another very important set of rules gathered round the ordinances concerned with ceremonial cleanness. This was one of the ways in which the strict Jews strove to keep themselves separate from the Gentiles among them. For instance, they must only eat food which was technically clean. So they must not eat beef bred by a Gentile, nor taste wine from a Gentile vineyard. 'Thou shalt not boil a kid in its mother's milk,' said the Law. 'Then you must not eat flesh and milk together,' said the Rabbis, 'for they might mix and be cooked in your stomach.' But (as Dr. Montefiore has observed) we are apt to exaggerate the trouble which the food-laws caused. It was no more irksome to abstain from eating hares, rabbits, pigs, and lobsters, than to avoid cats, dogs, and horses. When

many people ate little or no meat, and those who did all killed the animals in the same way, the rules for slaughter were not tyrannical, and to refrain from taking milk, butter, or cheese, with meat or poultry was no particular hardship. Still, when a strict Jew went out to dinner, he might be made quite uneasy by the idea that some of the food on the table might somehow be unclean, or might not have been properly tithed (p. 139). Jesus cuts all this away by one stroke, 'Eat such things as are set before you' (*Luke* x. 8). Great attention was also paid to the right mode of washing the hands. Should the whole hand be dipped in the water, they asked, or only part of it? Should the water come up to the wrists, or no further than the fingers? And should the hand be held upwards or downwards on washing? It was the same with the cleansing of all kinds of dishes, pots, and pans. There were metal dishes and earthenware dishes, there were vessels of glass, or, it might be, of leather; for each one of these a fresh set of rules had to be made. Moreover, there were different kinds of water: there was well-water, and river-water, and cistern-water, and so forth; and each of these must be used in the proper way. In fact, there was a proper way of doing everything, and it was the life-business of the Rabbis to find it out.

It might be supposed that all this would have been excessively tiresome to the people. Much of these discussions, however, referred only to ceremonial usage; the rules of ritual purity did not affect the working peasant or artisan. [In connexion with the 'people of the land,' see the article, 'Am ha-areç' by I. Abrahams in Montefiore, *The Synoptic Gospels*, vol. ii.] They were intended for priests in the discharge of their duties, or for laymen visiting the temple; they were not even obligatory

on the ordinary Rabbi. Still there might have been some resistance to their imposition even to this modified extent. Yet it is plain that the Rabbis as a body were held in great respect among the people. They sprang from them, they were not a sacred caste with hereditary rights; whatever position they gained was acquired by their own talents. And they represented the fundamental tendency of the Law. They were the living types of that way of life which had been deliberately impressed on the community as the only guarantee for the preservation of the great truths of religion which the prophets had worked out in old times. Wherever they went, therefore, and they went everywhere, they were sure of a welcome. They were greeted in the streets; they had the front seats in the synagogue. No little home festivity was complete without their presence; at a dinner-party it was part of the entertainment to talk about the Law; and the best places at table were always given to them. To marry a Rabbi's daughter, even to carry a Rabbi's burdens, fetch his water, or load his ass, was a privilege. A man should help a Rabbi in need, feed him, clothe him, redeem him from slavery, sooner than even his own father. But what if his father was a Rabbi too? Why, then, in that case, the duty of a son might be discharged first, because it coincided with the duty of a scholar to his Teacher. Israel was the people of wisdom; and the Rabbis were the wise men of Israel; they were honoured, it was said, by God himself, and their praises were proclaimed by the angels; in heaven each would hold the same rank and distinction as on earth.

This deep reverence could hardly have been paid to the Rabbis had there not been a great deal of real earnestness and genuine religion among them. They had a

large experiences of life, which they summed up in short pithy sentences, some of which were often very striking. 'On three things,' said Simon the Just (probably early in the third century B.C.), 'does the permanence of the world depend; on the Law, on worship, and on works of righteousness.' For a Jew these were the fundamentals; obedience to the divine will, joyous devotion, right conduct, unstained by any participation in heathenism. Works of righteousness, however, might be performed not for their own sake, but for some expected gain, either on earth or in heaven. And in days of national misfortune the gain might not be manifest, and loyalty might waver, as if God were unfaithful. So the wise Antigonus of Socho impressed this lesson on his disciples: 'Be not like servants who serve their master for the sake of a reward, but be like servants who serve their master without thinking of reward, and let the fear of Heaven be upon you.'

At the time of Jesus the Rabbis were very much divided into two parties, one following the lead of Hillel, the other of Shammai. Hillel and Shammai were the acknowledged heads of the whole Jewish schools during the latter part of Herod's reign, and indeed for some time longer. Hillel came from Babylonia to study at Jerusalem. He was very poor, and could not always pay the fee which it had recently been determined to charge for admission. One day, so runs the story, the college porter refused to let him in. So he climbed up outside to the window to catch what he could of the teaching going on within. It was winter, and it began to snow. But Hillel never left his post. It happened to be the eve of the Sabbath; and the discussion went on all night under two famous Rabbis, Shemaiah and Abtalion.

When the light dawned, they could not make out why the lecture-hall was still so dark. Then they noticed that the window was blocked up. It was the Sabbath, but they went to see what was the matter, and Hillel was found buried in the snow and numbed with the cold. They did not hesitate what to do; they brought him in, rubbed him with oil, and laid him before the fire, saying to one another, 'This man is worth breaking the Sabbath for.'

By and by Hillel became the president of the Sanhedrin, and by his side stood Shammai. They were very different men; Hillel was famed for his courtesy and gentleness; Shammai was harsh and rough. Many stories were told to show the different temper of the two men. A Gentile once went to Shammai, and said he wanted to be made a proselyte; 'but you must teach me the whole Law,' he added, 'while I can stand on one leg.' Shammai flew into a rage, lifted a measuring-rod which he had in his hand, and drove the man away. Then he went to Hillel, with the same mocking demand. 'Agreed,' cried Hillel; 'never do to your neighbour what is unpleasant to yourself; this is the whole Law, all the rest is only commentary.' The Gentile was so much struck by these words that he really became a diligent student of the Law, which was just what Hillel wanted. Thus it happened that Hillel generally took a larger and more liberal view of the prescriptions of the Law than Shammai, who was for enforcing the strictest interpretation of every detail of religious observance. We have seen an instance of this already, in connexion with the Sabbath (p. 121); here is another, affecting a very little matter, but quite typical of the excessive formality which Rabbinism produced. Suppose a man

suddenly remembered that he had omitted to say grace after his last meal, what should he do? 'Say it then and there,' answered Hillel's followers. 'No,' said the school of Shammai; 'he must go back to the place where he ate, and *say it on the same spot.*'

So the good and the evil in the system of the Rabbis were always struggling together side by side. No doubt all the Rabbis thought they were working for religion. They did not care to be rich or powerful; they were content with poverty, they could bear suffering. They mostly kept aloof from civil and political questions: they did not share the popular illusions about the speedy coming of the Messiah: Israel was not ready, and so they redoubled their zeal for the strict fulfilment of the Law. Their notions were rooted deep, for they had been sown amid blood and tears in the desperate fight which had been waged again and again with heathenism. It was not wonderful, therefore, that they should believe that their way of religion was the only right way, and that they should regard anyone who contested their traditional maxims by a direct appeal to first principles, with angry horror. It is the danger of all systems that we get to love them better than truth; it is the inevitable result that anyone who attacks the system seems to be attacking the truth. It is easy for us in our day to see the superiority of Jesus to the Rabbis: does it never happen now, however, that we take the side of the Rabbis against the Prophets?

[Alongside the development of Scribes into Rabbis, which has been traced above, another line of development from the Scribes ought also to be noticed—that of the Wisdom-writers. To this school belong the books of Proverbs, Job, and Ecclesiastes, in the Old Testament, and Ecclesiasticus in the Apocrypha.

The Wisdom of Solomon is omitted here, because it was of Alexandrian not Palestinian origin, and was written not long before the time of Christ.

While the writers of Job and Ecclesiastes deal with the deeper problems of life—the reason of suffering, the object of life, the question of a future existence—on the whole the other Wisdom-books are concerned with more homely matters, with the wise man's conduct in everyday affairs. Many of the precepts laid down are full of worldly wisdom, and were congenial to a section of wealthy and cultured men, who were not interested in the *minutiæ* of the Law.]

§ 38. The Pharisees and Sadducees

Side by side with the Scribes in the Gospels we hear again and again of the Pharisees. In contrast with the Pharisees, when they retire defeated after some encounter with Jesus, the Sadducees appear upon the scene. Who were these persons? We shall perhaps gain the clearest ideas of them by briefly describing each group separately, and then comparing them together. Let us deal first with the Pharisees, for they were closely allied with the Rabbis of whom we have already said so much.

The prominence given to the Law by its expounders in the schools and synagogues helped greatly to keep the people faithful to it. But some were more faithful to it than others, observed it more strictly, and embraced its leading principles with more ardour. Such men were naturally noticed by their neighbours; the care they took in avoiding pollution, and keeping away from everything heathen, could not be altogether hidden. First it was said of one, and then of another, 'How pious

he is.' By degrees this epithet came to be attached to all who took special pains to make their life conform to the demands of the Law, and there was a recognized class who went by the name of 'the Pious.' They did not differ from other people in their belief; they held the same doctrines; they obeyed the same ordinances; but they cared much more for their religion, and the only way they had of showing this was by a more rigid fulfilment of the Law.

The great struggle for freedom of religion in the middle of the second century B.C. led by the Maccabees, was largely maintained by these determined men, who readily sacrificed themselves and their families sooner than be false to their faith. The triumph of the Jews against their Syrian oppressors seemed for a time to secure an uninterrupted field for the principles represented by the Pious. But after a time the effect began to wear off; earnestness declined, and many who had at first been zealous grew indifferent and neglectful. Greek influences gained in power, and dangerous tendencies to worldliness threatened the purity of religious observance. The people were often not in a condition to pay proper attention to the distinctions of clean and unclean. During the disturbances many legal duties had been neglected, even by Priests and Levites, and the masses had certainly failed to comply with the full requirements of the Law. This was especially the case in the matter of some of the proper religious taxes on the products of the land. Enquiry was made whether the tithes ordained in the Law for the Priests, the Levites, and the poor, had been duly paid. This was not a mere financial arrangement for raising so much money. It was a religious duty; part of the tax was supposed to be paid to the real owner of

the whole land, God; as such it was holy, and could not be lawfully enjoyed by a layman not belonging to the sacred caste. Anyone who partook of food on which the proper tithe had not been paid was really guilty, therefore, of eating something which ought to have been given to God.

How was this difficulty to be avoided? Some did not mind, they were willing to run the risk. Others resolved that they would only buy food from dealers who could be trusted to have paid the proper tithe. This led to the formation of brotherhoods or companionships of persons who pledged themselves to the strict discharge of this particular religious duty. The members of these groups bought and sold among themselves, and so kept aloof from the rest of their neighbours. They would not take a meal at anyone else's house, because they might unknowingly eat of some untithed food. Thus they came to be known as the people who had separated themselves from the community; and this grew into a name, they were called the *Pherûshîm* (Aramaic *Pharishaia*) or Pharisees, i.e., the Separatists. This name first appears in historical record during the administration of the Maccabean Priest-Prince, John Hyrcanus, 135-105 B.C.

The strictness displayed in one direction naturally spread to others. The principle of separation became of great importance in the general question of the clean and unclean. First one was more precise than the rest of his comrades in the fraternity: then another followed him: by and by a third was discontented because these even were not precise enough, and so he aimed at a still greater austerity. Thus there grew up various grades among the fraternities, representing successive stages in the endeavour to carry out to the utmost the supposed requirements of the Law. Entrance into the brotherhood

was open to all: the candidate for admission declared himself ready to fulfil all religious demands, and took a vow before three members of the guild to keep the rules of the community faithfully. A period of probation preceded his reception into the several grades, lasting from thirty days to a year: and special instruction was imparted to him, in explanation of his new duties.

The fraternities of the Pharisees thus formed plainly stood in close relation with the Rabbis. They were simply the further development of the principles of the Schools: they attempted to give actual form in real life to the ideal demands of the Teachers who spent all their energy on the study of the Law and the determination of right conduct in all kinds of possible or impossible cases. But these brotherhoods, though they were formed out of the people, were not in opposition to the people. On the other hand, they were open to all; they claimed no privileges, they only imposed obligations; they took nothing from the people, they simply set before them a pattern of performance of duties which, in theory at least, every one recognized as binding on himself. The people had no objection to seeing others more pious, more devoted, more self-sacrificing than themselves. On the contrary, they admired them for it: especially as the devotion of the Pharisees to the Law which was the bond of Israel's nationality made them the most zealous patriots. The Pharisees, in short, embodied as far as they could the fundamental notions of Israel's holiness, and so became peculiarly the national party.

It can be readily understood that the impulse represented by the Pharisees could not always work unchecked: and the check came from a source from which we might not have expected it at first, viz., the priestly

families. The piety of the Pharisees was largely independent of the Temple and its services. It did not in any way spring from the ritual: it dealt with a number of questions which had little or no concern with the public institutions and organization of religion. Hence it tended to throw the priesthood rather into the shade: at least it did not in any way promote their interests. Sometimes, indeed, some priest joined a fraternity of the Pharisees; but, in general, the leaders of the priesthood, who jealously maintained hereditary privileges which counted for little beside the personal ascendancy acquired by the extraordinarily devout, stood in distinct rivalry with them. These priestly families made up the party of the Sadducees, whose exact origin is not known. They were wealthy, and they had power in Jerusalem. That power they were not ashamed to maintain, sometimes, by unworthy concessions to their foreign rulers. They come into view in the later Maccabean period, as a conservative opposition over against the Pharisees. They stood for the Temple, the Priesthood, and official piety; while the Pharisees stood for the Synagogue, the School, the Teacher, and personal piety. Neither party could properly be called a sect: both had the same standard of faith; yet their religious ideas differed widely. Let us very briefly examine some of these differences.

The first great difference related to the value of the traditional maxims which had gradually come to be regarded as of such immense importance in the schools. For this difference it is not very easy to account. Ezra was priest as well as scribe, and the early work of the copyists was probably done at Jerusalem under the control of the priests. The priestly party must have had their own scribes, and they must have worked out

a number of rules for the performance of the great ceremonies which also formed part of current practice. But they were not interested in the great moral and theological questions with which the Pharisees concerned themselves. The Teachers gained such weight, the authority of their continuous succession was so powerful, that the body of Scribe-made law was ranked beside the ancient written Law. It was supposed that it must have been communicated to Moses himself and handed on by him to the Elders, and so on through generation after generation. The Pharisees were on the side of the Rabbis and the Schools. But the Sadducees would have nothing but the letter of the Scripture. Hence they rejected the great mass of supplementary precepts which the Teachers had accumulated, and with this they also rejected many important modifications calculated to bring the written Law into more complete harmony with the spirit of a later time. Thus the written Law, founded on the primitive usages of the rude tribes of the desert, laid down the principle of retaliation for personal injuries, 'an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.' The Pharisees were for interpreting this symbolically, and substituting a money compensation. The Sadducees insisted on its literal execution. When the Pharisees were taking all sorts of trouble about minute compliance with the requirements for ceremonial cleanness elaborated in the Schools, the Sadducees only laughed; there was nothing about that in the Law. The Pharisees wanted to have the golden lampstand in the sanctuary cleansed after a great feast, in case it should have received any accidental defilement. The Sadducees refused, with the sarcastic remark, 'Why, they will be wanting to cleanse the sun next.'

The same unwillingness to receive anything in addition to the actual words of Scripture determined the attitude of the Sadducees to the belief in a future life, which was warmly embraced by the Pharisees. The doctrine of another state of rewards and punishments after death played a great part in the teachings of the Pharisees. But it was not mentioned in the written Law, and so the Sadducees would have none of it. It did not really gain a place among the ideas of the Jews until after the Captivity, and was in part due, perhaps, to the influence of Persian beliefs. But it had now been established a long time in Jewish thought, and formed a regular part of the traditions of the Teachers. So it was supposed, like the rest of the oral Law, to have really come from Moses, and to have been in existence all along. We can tell, however, from the language of some of the Prophets about the state of the dead in the underworld, that they knew nothing of it. This is the way in which Josephus (who was himself of noble priestly family, and as a young man had made trial of both Pharisees and Sadducees) describes it:—'The Pharisees also believe that souls have an immortal vigour in them, and that under the earth there will be rewards or punishments, according as they have practised virtue or evil-doing in this life; and that the latter are to be detained in an everlasting prison, but that the former shall have power to revive and live again. On account of these doctrines they have immense influence with the masses of the people, and whatsoever is done about divine worship, prayers, and sacrifices, they do according to the directions of the Pharisees; insomuch that the cities gave great attestations to them on account of their entire virtuous conduct, both in the actions of their lives and their discourses also. But the

doctrine of the Sadducees makes the soul die with the body.' This passage of Josephus shows us that the general teaching of the Pharisees was much more acceptable to the people than that of the Sadducees. And it was particularly so in connexion with this doctrine of the life to come, and the associated belief in the 'kingdom of heaven,' derived from the oracles of the Prophets (see chap. vi).

The Sadducees maintained that the fulfilment of the hopes uttered by the Prophets was not really to be expected as a positive certainty. If men are free to choose, they argued, and can do one thing, or abstain from doing another thing, according as they like, how could anyone foretell what was going to happen? Man had been made at the beginning by God, and then set to do as best he could. God had provided him certain religious help in the Law: let him obey this, and he would be happy and prosperous here; but let him not think there was anything more to come. No, said the Pharisee; God has not left man to himself; he is always working with man; he guides his actions to certain ends; and he will punish the wicked and recompense the righteous. The Sadducees, rich and comfortable in Jerusalem, on good terms with Herod or the Romans, did not care so much for the coming of that 'kingdom' for which so many were longing and toiling and praying. They did not feel the bitterness of oppression; they were not anxious for a change which would make short work of their particular privileges; and they had not that passionate burning faith which could never be content while the people of God were mixed with idolaters, and subject to heathen rule. So they did not share the great national aspirations: though Josephus significantly tells us that when

they came into office 'they had to conform to the notions of the Pharisees, because otherwise the multitude would not endure them.'

[That there was, however, some attempt at reform among the Sadducees is shown in *The Fragments of a Zadokite Work* edited by Charles in the *Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament*, 1913. Charles regards it as a work inculcating the reformation of the Hellenizing Temple priesthood, while Schechter (*Documents of Jewish Sectaries*, 2 vols., 1910) sees in it but the vagaries of an heretical sect. On the former view, the party whose views are represented in these fragments was devoted to the Temple and to the written Law, but was bitterly opposed to the Pharisees and to the oral Law. They differed from the main party of the Sadducees in that they believed in a future life and in angels and spirits, and also attached great importance to the teaching of the Prophets. They wished to see a return to a simpler mode of life, that of the wilderness. When their attempts at reform failed, they withdrew temporarily to Damascus, to await the advent of a 'Teacher of Righteousness,' who was apparently expected to be a forerunner of the Messiah. This party, however, probably formed a very small section of Judaism.]

Thus on the whole, the Pharisees, with all their extravagances, stood much nearer to the real life of the people. While the Sadducees remained at Jerusalem, the former were scattered through the country, mingling in popular movements, and knowing what was going on everywhere. They were not a very large body in number: Josephus only reckons them at about six thousand in the days of Herod. But with the Rabbis, they exercised the most powerful religious influence among the

Jews. They led in the Sanhedrin; and their milder judicial practice helped to make them popular. 'Judge not thy neighbour,' said Hillel, 'till thou art in his place.' Of course, there were among them men of various characters. The Sadducees accused them of doing their works of righteousness to secure recompense hereafter, and professed great admiration of the maxim of Antigonus (p. 135), 'Be not like servants who serve their master for the sake of a reward.' Even the Talmud talks of 'the plague of Pharisaism,' and holds up to scorn 'the dyed ones,' 'those who preach beautifully, but do not act beautifully.' Like the grades among their fraternities, so they were satirically arranged in such classes as these: '(1) The shoulder-Pharisee (explained in different ways, who publicly carried a list of his good deeds upon his shoulder, or who walked with shoulders bent beneath the heavy weight of his virtues). (2) The borrower-Pharisee, who begs the loan of a little time that he may first perform another good work. (3) The calculating-Pharisee who says, "May my few bad deeds be deducted from my many virtues." (4) The thrifty-Pharisee who says, "From my modest means I save something to perform a good work." (5) The Pharisee who says "Would that I knew of a sin that I had committed, that I might perform an act of virtue in atonement." (6) The Pharisee from fear (of God), i.e., Job. (7) The Pharisee from love, i.e., Abraham.

We may be sure from the language of Jesus in the Gospels that he had really much more sympathy with their way of thinking on many subjects than he had with the Sadducees, and that he was all the more grieved therefore, to see among them so much self-righteousness and public display of piety. The Teachers and the Pharisees

were, in fact, at once the Puritans and the forward party in Jewish religion. They were the real promoters of religious progress. Their ideal was that all the people should know and practise the Law; and they endeavoured so to interpret it as to enable it to take up into itself new ideas, which the literal meaning did not always seem to justify. Their doctrine of a Mosaic tradition, independent of the Scripture, provided them with the means of accommodating fresh beliefs into their religious scheme without breaking continuity with the past. So in one sense they were the Liberals of Judaism, and unquestionably prepared the way for some of the teachings of Jesus.

For example, they attached great importance to the idea of repentance, and the divine mercy to the contrite sinner. This is again and again a prominent theme in the Rabbinic teaching. They told a story of King Manasseh who was said to have been carried prisoner to Babylon for his evil-doings (2 *Chron.* xxxiii. 11). He called for help to the strange gods whom he had worshipped, but in vain; they vouchsafed no deliverance. Then he remembered the words 'Return unto the Lord thy God, he is merciful and will not forsake thee,' and prayed earnestly to the Lord. The angels sought to shut up the gate of heaven against him. But the Holy One, blessed be he, said, 'If I do not receive him, I shut the gate in the face of repentance.' The doctrine of the divine forgiveness led to the emphatic demand that men also should forgive. To this one of the books that issued from the Pharisaic teaching gives striking expression. The *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs* comprise twelve discourses supposed to be addressed by the sons of Jacob to their descendants. The work appears to have been

composed shortly before 106 B.C. (50, Dr. R. H. Charles), by a Pharisee of liberal views, who taught that the Law was given to lighten every man, that the Gentiles should be saved, and that man's duty consisted in love to God and his neighbour. Revenge was accordingly forbidden. 'If anyone seeketh to do evil unto you, do well unto him, and pray for him, and ye shall be redeemed of the Lord from all evil.' 'Therefore love one another, and with long-suffering hide ye one another's faults, for God delighteth in the unity of the brethren, and in the purpose of a heart that takes pleasure in love' (*Joseph* xviii. 2; xvii. 2). The immediate sequel of this was the injunction of forgiveness. 'Love ye one another from the heart; and if a man sin against thee, speak peaceably to him, and in thy soul hold not guile; and if he repent and confess, forgive him. . . . But if he be shameless and persisteth in his wrongdoing, even so forgive him from the heart, and leave to God the avenging' (*Gad* vi. 3, 7).

This is very near to the spirit of Jesus. On the other hand, it was from the Pharisees that he met the most determined opposition; and it was by their help that he was brought to death. There is at least this to be said for them, and it is more than can be said for all persecutors—the fate which they inflicted on him they were ready to endure themselves. We have seen an instance already of the steadfastness of the Jews in the face of death under Pilate (pp. 81 f.); here is another. When the Roman Governor, Petronius, was sent to Palestine to erect a statue of the Emperor Caius (known by his nickname Caligula) in the temple at Jerusalem, he was met by a vast multitude of Jews first at Ptolemais, and then at Tiberias, who were prepared to resist to the

uttermost. 'Will you war, then, against the Emperor,' inquired Petronius, 'without considering his great preparations for war, and your own weakness?' 'We will not by any means war with him,' was the reply, 'but we will die before we see our laws transgressed.' The tenacity with which the Jews have maintained their religion through terrible sufferings even in our own day is largely due to the heroic courage with which, again and again, Rabbi and Pharisee laid down their lives in martyrdom.

§ 39. The Essenes

The principle on which the brotherhoods of the Pharisees were founded was that of separation as far as possible from every kind of common uncleanness or defilement, without at the same time giving up their place in society. But it was very difficult to carry this out fully in town and village where all sorts of persons lived together, and Jew and heathen might be brought into close quarters. Those, therefore, who cared most for realizing in their own persons the fullest demands of legal purity, and were less anxious to work upon the people at large, saw no other way than to withdraw from all risk of polluting contact with their fellow men, and live by themselves. Thus there were formed certain communities whose sole aim was to give the utmost possible effect to the fundamental notions of cleanness, even though this might involve the surrender of other ordinances of the Law. These persons were called Essenes. They are not mentioned in the New Testament, but some of the principles of their brotherhood are so like those adopted by the first disciples of Jesus that it seems well to say a few words about them here.

Some of the communities were established in towns; but the more important and striking were planted in the deep ravines plunging from the highland mass of Judæa down towards the Dead Sea (§ 3). Here, in these wild spots, around some spring which secured them an abundant supply of pure water, settlement after settlement grew up. Some consisted only of men: other branches of the order allowed women to belong to it as well, and permitted marriage. The settlement contained dwellings, an eating-hall, where the common meals were served, baths with plenty of cold flowing water, and a synagogue. The members of the order had no separate property: the rich gave up their wealth into the common fund, and all shared alike. They were not allowed to be idle; the rule of life was service: each one did what he was best fitted for, in the cultivation of the land, or in other manual arts. Twice a day, after carefully bathing, they met for meals in the refectory; they ate no meat, they drank no wine; their food consisted only of bread, vegetables, and water, for the Law said, 'Thou shalt not kill,' and they would not take the life even of a beast, and they imitated the abstinence of the priests on duty in the Temple. This meal was a kind of festival; they came to it clad in white garments; they began and ended it with thanksgiving and praise. They were permitted to use the property of the order for the relief of the poor without application for leave from their superiors: but only with this sanction might they make any gifts to their kindred. They had no servants; slavery was altogether unknown among them; they recognized no distinctions except between the clean and the unclean. The public services of the Temple involved too great risk of defilement for them to be present, but they sent gifts

to it. On the other hand, their Sabbath observance was exceedingly strict. Their food was all prepared the day before, and they would not move any vessel out of its place.

But the ceremonial aspects of the Law were not by any means enforced to the exclusion of the moral. At the end of the long probation of three years through which the candidate for admission into the order had to pass, he was solemnly bound by oath to a life of religion and virtue. Josephus, who had lived among the Essenes as well as among the Pharisees and the Sadducees, gives us the following account of what an Essene undertook to do:—'He swore first of all to show piety towards God; next to observe righteousness towards men; to injure no one either of his own accord or by command of others; always to hate the wicked and to help the good; to keep faith with all men, especially towards those in authority for no one has any power except from God; and if he himself should be in power not to use it insolently, nor to try to outshine those subjected to him by any superior dress; always to love the truth, and to aim at convicting liars; to keep his hands from stealing, and his soul pure from unhallowed gains; not to conceal anything from those of his own sect, nor to disclose any of their doctrines to others, not even under compulsion unto death.'

It is plain from this that the Essenes paid great attention to right conduct. But their isolated life prevented them from having much influence on the world at large. They are said by Josephus to have numbered as many as 4,000; but as they did not spread through the country like the Pharisees, mixing with the common life of the people, they did not exercise anything like a proportionate power. Is it not curious that we do not

hear anything of them in the Gospels? Jesus never speaks of them, either to commend them or to blame. We cannot help wondering why. They were the monks of Judaism; perhaps one reason why he is silent—though we must remember what scanty reports we have of his sayings, and he may have spoken about them in words which were never taken into the tradition of his life and teachings—is because he saw that the world can never be mended by those who abandon it. Not one single evil can be cured by 'leaving human wrongs to right themselves.' The method of Jesus was just that which the Essenes, with all their earnestness, could never practise, for it was *'to seek and to save the lost.'*

§ 40. The Zealots

The Essenes, it has been shown, carried out to the furthest extent the religious principles of the Pharisees. But it must never be forgotten that with the Jews religion always had a political side On the one hand the idea of the clean led to separation from the community and retirement from the world. But on the other hand the doctrine of the rule of God over his chosen people begot the most determined hatred of the Roman oppressor. He was a tyrant, and he was a heathen. The struggle with the Greek princes of Syria had intensified the devotion of the people to the national element in their faith, and the subjection to Rome kindled it anew. This principle, also, was dear to the Pharisees: could it receive at their hands its full expression? Its extreme development must plainly mean the endeavour to throw off the Roman supremacy, and establish Israel's

independence as of old. Would the Pharisees dare to attempt this?

The first impulse in this direction, it would seem, came from a man named Judas, of Gamala in Gaulanitis. He was the son of a certain robber chief, Hezekiah, whose plundering bands had carried terror through Galilee, till Herod, then a young man of five-and-twenty, succeeded in suppressing them, and secured and executed their leader. Hezekiah's son, therefore, was brought up in hatred of Herod, and when on his death the whole country was in disorder (§ 22), Judas raised the standard of revolt in Galilee. It was not long before volunteers gathered round him, and he boldly marched on Sepphoris. There the arsenal and the treasury fell into his hands; arms and money were distributed to his men; and he drew to him all who were ready to dispute the rising claims of Rome. But his triumph did not last long. One centre of rebellion after another was reduced by the Roman general Varus, with terrible cruelty. Sepphoris was burned, and its inhabitants were sold into slavery. Judas, however, escaped, and waited silently for another opportunity.

He did not wait alone. Many shared the same feelings of passionate hatred against Rome; and this was especially strong among some of the Pharisees of the school of Shammai, who were more deeply committed to opposition to everything heathen than the followers of Hillel. Among Shammai's disciples was a certain Zaddok, who allied himself with Judas; and from their joint efforts arose a party whose zeal for the Law and against heathenism gained for them the name of *Kannaîm* or Zealots. Obedience to Rome, they taught, was hurtful to God's Law; the yoke must be broken; and for

the restoration of independence, fortune, family, life, must be freely flung away. Let them have but one ruler, God; but one constitution, the Law. The registration arranged by Quirinus for a general taxation (§ 24) was the signal for fresh outbreak, in the year A.D. 6 or 7. Once more Judas called his followers to revolt, but with only slight result. No striking success lifted him into power; the people were persuaded by the high priest to pay the taxes; and Judas disappears from history. But the party to which he had communicated a definite impulse did not disappear; though it did not become prominent again until many years had passed, when it was destined to give its intensest fury to the final struggle with Rome. Among the Apostles is reckoned one 'Simon a Zealot' (*Luke* vi. 15): with what surprise must he have heard Jesus say 'the kingdom of heaven is within you.' But here we approach one of the most difficult of all questions connected with the relation of the teachings of Jesus to the Jews and their religion. What were their notions of 'the kingdom,' and what were his?

CHAPTER VI

RELIGION

PART III.—*The Messianic Idea*

[Abrahams, *Some Permanent Values in Judaism*, 1924; Jackson and Lake, *Beginnings of Christianity*, vol. I, p. 126 ff; for a very modern view (pan-Oriental), see Gressmann, *Der Messias*; Drummond, *The Jewish Messiah*; R. H. Charles, *Eschatology, Hebrew, Jewish and Christian*.]

§ 41. The Name Messiah

WHEN John the Baptist, it is said, had heard in prison what Jesus was doing, he sent to him by his disciples a message of inquiry, 'Art *thou* he that should come, or are we to look for another?' (*Matt.* xi. 2, 3). When Jesus after long labour in Galilee, asked his disciples what they thought of him, Peter at once answered 'Thou are the Christ' (*Mark* viii. 29). What is the meaning of this inquiry, of this answer? They are plainly of great importance for the right understanding of the life of Jesus, the impression he produced upon the people around him, and his true relation to both his own time and to humanity. But we cannot properly interpret them without knowing something of the history of that great Jewish faith and hope commonly summed up by the short name of the Messianic Idea. This expression denotes the complex mass of beliefs and expectations about the ideal future, whether with or without a Messiah. We do not find the name Messiah in the first three Gospels

it is true; but we find everywhere its equivalent, Christ. Christ, as we all know, is a Greek word, the translation of the Hebrew word, *Mashîach*, or, as we write it, *Messiah*. This Hebrew word means 'Anointed'; and so Peter's declaration to Jesus is equivalent to saying 'Thou art the Anointed.' But the anointed *what*? anointed with what? anointed by whom?

These questions take us back a long way to the roots of Jewish usage and thought. In ancient days it was customary to dedicate the king to his high office by anointing him with oil: and inasmuch as the king of Israel reigned in the name of Yahweh, God of Israel, he was called 'Yahweh's Anointed.' Nay, since all the great powers of the world, in the highest prophetic view, were dependent on Yahweh, even though they might not know it, a heathen king, entrusted with a divine purpose by Yahweh, might be designated in the same way; and so we actually find one of the prophets of the Captivity speaking of Cyrus, the Persian king, whom he believed to be Yahweh's chosen instrument for the deliverance of Israel from their Babylonian exile, as his 'Anointed' (*Isaiah* xlv. 1). When Peter, therefore, affirms that Jesus is 'God's Anointed' (Luke ix. 20), he declares his belief that Jesus is the appointed agent of the divine designs for Israel. What were those designs, as the Jews interpreted them? They were concerned with the destiny of the Jewish people: and popular expectation about them had often changed. Before we can understand what men were looking for in the time of Jesus, we must first find out what was the origin of the hope which was to pass through so many forms, and to exercise such great influence over the hearts of the race.

§ 42. The Ideal Future of the Prophets: the Purification of Israel

The beginning of what we describe as the Messianic expectation is to be sought in the oracles of the ancient prophets. These are full of pictures of Israel's ideal future. They do not, indeed, speak of a Messiah, except in the single case already named; but they portray Israel's destiny under Yahweh's controlling providence, and they are the founders of this mighty hope. On what grounds did this hope rest, and in what forms did it take shape?

The Hebrew Prophets rested their expectation of Israel's future on one great thought. Israel was the people of Yahweh. To Yahweh they owed their land, and their existence as a nation. From all the peoples of the earth he had chosen them for his own; from their childhood he had loved them, he had cared for them as a father for his son. They were bound, therefore, to render him true service. He was their king, and had a right to their obedience; no other gods might be worshipped beside him; and idols and images must be swept away. Nay, more; inasmuch as he was righteous, he demanded righteousness in his people; justice and goodwill must prevail among all orders of men, from the king and the priest, the noble and the rich, to the poorest widow and the humblest orphan in the realm. But when this thought was confronted with actual fact, what did the prophets find? Had Israel rendered that service? Had it been obedient, loving, pure? Alas, no: it had been continually false to Yahweh, paying its devotions with equal or greater zeal to Canaanite and foreign deities: it had stained the homage which it did offer to its own Lord with gross idolatry and profane unchastity: it had too often been guilty of the most grievous crimes against righteousness and mercy: its nobles had been violent, grasping, oppressive: its priests had been drunken and corrupt: its judges had taken bribes: its very tradesmen had robbed the poor with false weights and measures. And yet Israel was still the people of Yahweh, and Yahweh was still a God of righteousness. Could he endure that this should go on unchecked?

No, said the Prophets, he cannot endure it. A day must come when he will lay the proud low and deliver the oppressed: when he will punish the ungodly, and if necessary, sweep the offending people from the land. This day was called 'Yahweh's Day.' Woe upon sin, chastisement for all iniquity, this was the first burden of Hebrew prophecy.

By what means the chastisement was to be inflicted was not always so clear as the moral necessity of its infliction. When any great power seemed to threaten Israel, the Prophets naturally pointed to it as the chosen instrument of Yahweh's design. So Amos beheld Assyria in the distance, and Isaiah viewed it close at hand, and both affirmed that its invasion had but one meaning—it was Yahweh's doom on Israel. So, later still, Jeremiah and Ezekiel saw the Babylonian troops close round Jerusalem, and in the fall of the city discerned Yahweh's judgment on its crimes. But was chastisement all? Was there nothing more? Did Yahweh only care to *avenge himself* on Israel? Could he be heedless of that long tie which he had himself created since the ancient days when first the people learned that he had chosen them? Impossible; that tie implied a loving tenderness which could not be alienated

even by repeated sin, and would not abandon the infatuated or wilful nation even in what might seem repeated and hopeless guilt. Yahweh had made Israel, and called them to himself; however, the people might stray, they would be brought back at last; the filthy would be cleansed, the corrupt purified; and when all that was evil had been removed, a remnant would remain, from which a new Israel might arise, and the nation realize Yahweh's high intents. So the prophets looked for a time when the chastisement would have done its terrible work, and Yahweh would quicken the survivors with a fresh and nobler life. If the punishment had taken the shape of exile in a foreign land, then the captives should return and possess their ancient homes once more. From all countries should they assemble, and the old rivalries should cease and all should dwell together in one accord. The days of national glory in the past were the days of David's splendid reign. What better thing could be desired than that a king like David —nay, of his very house—should reign again?

But the prospect of political restoration, and the establishment of a government like the best of ancient time, could not fill up the measure of the prophet's ideal. It was not even complete when it was added that the new Israel should receive the spirit from on high, and thus be enabled to work out with constant faithfulness its true relation to Yahweh. Was not Yahweh the maker of *all* the peoples of the world? Did he not care that they should share the saving truths whose knowledge he had of old conferred on Israel? Could he be content that wickedness should remain anywhere, and that any should be shut out? No; the mountain of Yahweh's house in Jerusalem should rise pre-eminent

above the summits of the earth, so that all nations might see it, and flow thither to learn his ways and walk in his paths (*Isaiah* ii. 2–4). Under the rule of righteousness, nature, by a kind of sympathy with man, would share the general quickening; the moon would be as bright as the sun; the sun would shine with sevenfold light; the very soil would produce with marvellous fertility; the fiercest animals would be fierce no more; all war would cease, and justice and peace would abide for ever. The book of Isaiah contains the classical description of this happy time (xi. 1–9) by a poet of unknown date who looks for the rise of a sovereign from the house of Jesse, David's father. The royal line is like a tree which has been felled to the ground (the monarchy ended in 586 B.C.), but its stump survives, and it may yet send forth a new shoot, and under a reign of justice all violence shall pass away.[1]

Meantime other elements gained new force. The notion of judgment was intensified, and grew into larger scope: all nations were to be gathered to undergo it in the valley east of the Temple mount: and Yahweh's Day was to be ushered in with wonders in the heavens and earth, with blood and fire and pillars of smoke, the sun turned into darkness and the moon into blood (*Joel* ii. 30, 31; iii. 2). By and by prophecy died away. But its eye was still fixed on that which had fascinated it from the beginning. The first of the Prophets had proclaimed that Yahweh's Day was coming. It had not come;

[1] Compare such passages as *Amos* ix. 11-15; *Hosea* xiv.; *Isaiah* ii. 1–4; ix. 2–7; xxx. 18 ff.; xxxii.; xix. 18–25; *Micah* iv. 1–5; v. 1 ff; *Zechariah* ix. 9, 10; *Jeremiah* xxxi., xxxiii. 14–26; *Ezekiel* xxxvii.–xxxix.; *Isaiah* xl.–lxvi., especially xlix., li., liv. lx., lxi., lxiii. 1–6; lxv. 17–25.

but with unconquerable faith men still looked forward to it. For there were still the wicked who must be chastised; there were still the suffering poor who must be righted; and there were the faithful for whom prosperity must be at length in store. And so the last of the Prophets (in the order of our books) has yet the same message; but the great catastrophe will not come without warning; Elijah, the hero-prophet who had fought with spiritual wickedness of old, should reappear, and fathers and children should have one more chance.

'Behold I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of Yahweh's great and dreadful day; and he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the land with utter destruction' (*Malachi* iv. 5, 6).

Thus did prophetic imagination play round the great central ideas of Israel's relationship to Yahweh, of Yahweh's righteousness and sole deity, of the need of purification, of the spread of the true religion. Sometimes one element is more prominent; sometimes another; sometimes attention is concentrated on Israel, sometimes it is widened to take in the heathen; sometimes there is to be a king, and sometimes not; sometimes the nations around will be conquered, sometimes they will make a tremendous attack on the restored Israel and be finally overthrown, sometimes they will spontaneously submit, or joyously receive the true religion. Nothing is fixed, except that Yahweh rules in righteousness; his truth must triumph, his will must be done.

§ 43. Israel and the Persecuting Heathen

[1 Maccabees, ed. in 'Cambridge Bible' by Fairweather and Black, 1908; 2 Maccabees.]

The chief motive of ancient prophecy had been the conversion of Israel from false worship, and its purification from sin. But in the restored Jerusalem, after the great religious revival under Ezra and Nehemiah,[1] this conversion seemed to have been effected. The Jews had at last learned the terrible lesson which the trials of so many centuries had been teaching them. They turned to Yahweh—and found their happiness in obedience to his Law. Under the Persian supremacy and the dominion of the earlier Greek princes the development of the Levitical cultus went on among them with surprising rapidity. They were devoted to their religion, and they had the blessings of peace; and though they were still subject to a foreign power, they were unmolested in the practice of what they held essential in faith and duty.

But near the middle of the second century B.C. a great change took place. In the days of their Syrian overlord, Antiochus Epiphanes, they were involved in a desperate struggle. Antiochus thought he could exterminate the religion of the Jews, and force the people to adopt the worship of his Greek gods. The conflict was not long but it was of fearful severity while it lasted; and it brought out a new phase of Jewish thought. Hitherto, whatever danger the religion of Yahweh had had to

[1 Scholars hold different opinions as to the relative dates of Ezra and Nehemiah; the view accepted formerly was that Ezra preceded Nehemiah, but a number of scholars now hold that Ezra followed Nehemiah, about 397 B.C.]

encounter had arisen through the habits of the people themselves. Their own wilfulness had made them false to it: they could not rise above the customs which they had long practised, or shake themselves free from old Canaanite usage. Their Babylonian conquerors, their Persian masters, had never attempted to interfere with their religion. But now it was directly attacked, and thousands of lives were demanded for its defence. They were given freely, but not without a cry of anguish. The heart of the people was sorely troubled. They had suffered before, and justly, for they had been unfaithful. Now, on the other hand, they suffered for their very faithfulness. Had they been disobedient and neglectful it would not have been so hard to understand. What made it so mysterious was that the trouble came when they had been striving with all their might to fulfil Yahweh's demands. 'If we had forgotten the name of our God,' they said, 'or stretched out our hands to a strange god, would not God search this out? for he knoweth the secrets of the heart.' But they felt that they were innocent: 'nay, but it is for *thy* sake we are being killed all the day long, we are counted as sheep for the slaughter.' This was quite a new thing. Was it surprising, then, that the bitter expostulation rose, 'Awake, why sleepest thou, O Lord? arise, cast us not off for ever!' (*Psalm* xliv. 20–23).

So Israel was plunged into a deadly conflict; and though under the heroic leadership of the Maccabees the national faith triumphed, yet the contrast between the true religion and heathenism was intensified, and their opposition became a powerful new element in the life of the people. This feeling deepened as the Roman power gathered round the helpless nation. It was not

absent even under the splendid reign of Herod; it broke out again with fresh force after his death when the Holy City itself passed into Roman hands; it became more bitter than ever when the city had fallen, the Temple had perished, and the last traces of national power had disappeared.

At such crises what must be the attitude of the believer? When the exiles returned from Babylon, and all the world seemed fair, they had joyously cried 'Yahweh is king.' This great trust had taken deep root in the heart of the people, and now sustained them in the time of their trial. 'Yahweh is king'—but where was his kingdom? It was to be seen in the world above and around, as the Psalmist sang:—

> Yahweh hath established his throne in the heavens,
> And his kingdom ruleth over all,

appealing to the angels who guided the stars and the winds, the ministering spirits and the works of God, all Nature being the scene of his sovereignty. It was to be seen also wherever there was a faithful soul obedient to his will, and every one who repeated the great confession of Jewish faith, 'Hear, O Israel, Yahweh our God is one Yahweh,' the so-called *Shemá* (p. 111), was said to take upon himself the yoke of the kingdom. But this could not be all. There must come a time when the heathen likewise would be taught with irresistible demonstration that God was king, and the sufferings of the true believers would be ended. The kingdom which they confessed in ignominy and suffering must be visibly manifested in the splendour of its might; the long endurance of Israel would be turned into triumph; the divine rule would lift the righteous into power; and

sovereignty and dominion should be given to 'the people of the saints of the Most High; his kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him' (*Daniel* vii. 27).

Such was the thought of the writer of the Book of Daniel, at the time of the great persecution under Antiochus Epiphanes (§ 44, 4). The book in which he poured forth his great hope, and sought to console and encourage his countrymen does not, however, stand alone. All along the line, for more than two hundred years, the same thought keeps bursting out. The 'kingdom of God'—when will it come? how will it be recognized? what will happen first? who will be the agent of its establishment? what will be its nature when it is founded at last?—these were the questions of which men thought and talked. It was not in Palestine only that this hope flourished. We hear of it in Alexandria as well. Quite a number of books are devoted more or less to the delineation of the future age seen in its light.

Some of these books have only recently become known to us. In the following list the dates are those of the chief English scholar in this branch of study, Charles (*Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament*, 2 vols, 1913).

Palestinian

Daniel, between Dec. 15, 168 B.C. and Dec. 25, 165.

Enoch (now preserved in an Ethiopic version) composed of different elements, earlier and later, some probably belonging to the second century B.C. and some to the first (like the Parables, xxxvii.–lxxi.), perhaps 94–79 B.C. (Pharisaic).

The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, originally written under the Priest-Prince John Hyrcanus, between 109 and 106 B.C. (Pharisaic).

The Book of Jubilees, under the same reign, 135–105 B.C. (Pharisaic)

Psalms of Solomon, by various authors, 70–40 B.C. (Pharisaic).

The Assumption of Moses, composite, probably A.D. 7–29 (Pharisaic).

Baruch, composite, between A.D. 50 and 90 (School of Hillel).

Fourth Book of Ezra (or 2 Esdras in the *Apocrypha*), composite, A.D. 100–120 (School of Shammai).

Hellenistic (Egyptian)

The Sibylline Oracles, at various dates from 160 B.C. onwards; the oldest verses are found in book III.

The Secrets of Enoch, about the beginning of the Christian era, A.D. 1–50.

Besides these the sayings of the Rabbis contain many speculations about 'the kingdom,' though we cannot so easily tell what was the age of these, because they were not written down until very much later. Let us try now to find out what were the kind of beliefs and hopes entertained at the time of Jesus about the coming of the kingdom, and about the Messiah.

§ 44. The Messianic Hope in the Days of Jesus

[Carpenter, *First Three Gospels*, chap. ii; H. Latimer Jackson *The Eschatology of Jesus*, 1913.]

Although so many books had been written about this hope, and it had been so much thought of and talked

about, we must not suppose that everybody had the same ideas about it, or even cared for it with equal earnestness. Indeed, as matter of fact, we know that they did not. The pictures of the future vary greatly in detail, and even in some of the more important features; and while the doctrine about it was acceptable to the Pharisees, the Sadducees rejected it altogether (p. 144). We must not expect, then, to find everything clear and consistent, or universally received. We can only indicate the general outlines, and show how the same fundamental principles might receive different poetic expression from different minds.

The great thought of the old hope had been the purification of Israel, and the triumph of the true religion *over idolatry and sin within it.* The great thought of the new hope is the elevation of Israel, and the triumph of the true religion *over heathen opposition in the world.* This would take place when the true kingship of Yahweh should be victoriously displayed, and the 'kingdom of God,' already present in each believing heart, should be publicly erected into universal sovereignty. But the new hope attached itself to the old, which had had its own views of Israel's ultimate supremacy and of the destinies of the heathen; it took up its language, borrowed its images and symbols, and remodelled the ancient prophetic materials under the influence of fresh impulses of faith.

1. *The two Ages.*—The relation of the ideal future to the present in which the believer lived was of necessity incapable of strict determination. The old prophets had said simply 'Days are coming.' So in general, the two periods were known by the designation of 'this age,' and 'the coming age.' 'This age,' said Rabbi Jacob,

'is like a vestibule in comparison with the age to come. Get thyself ready in the vestibule, that thou mayest enter the dining-room.' These two periods are frequently mentioned in the first three Gospels (*Matt.* xii. 32; xiii. 22, 40; *Mark* x. 30; *Luke* xvi. 8; xviii. 30; xx. 34, 35), and evidently constituted the framework into which the future events were to be fitted. One would follow the other, and both would have this world for their scene. How soon 'this age' would end, and 'the coming age' begin, it was difficult to decide. The hope easily attracted round it, as the Book of Daniel shows us, all kinds of speculations as to the date of the great change, but they are without interest for us now. It is sufficient to observe that the time immediately preceding the transition was spoken of as 'the latter days,' and 'the time of the end.'

2. *Signs of the approaching end.*—So great a change, it was thought, could not appear without some outward warning that it was at hand. It was a favourite belief of the older prophecy that there was a kind of correspondence between nature and man. The struggles of humanity must be presaged or accompanied by catastrophes in the outward world, just as the spiritual renovation of society had its counterpart in the wonderful diffusion of light and life and peace in sky and earth. So now it was expected that the final conflict of the powers of the true religion and of heathenism would be indicated by marvellous signs. 'I will tell thee,' says the Sibyl, 'a very clear sign, so that thou mayst perceive when the end of all things is to come upon the earth.' Swords shall be seen at night in the starry heaven towards the west, and towards the east: the sun shall be eclipsed, rocks shall drop blood, and bands of soldiers,

on foot or on horseback, shall chase each other through the clouds. There will be famine and pestilence, fire and earthquake: the bonds of society will be loosened, and deeds of violence and crime will set men against each other. These were the pains attending the Messiah's birth ('travail,' *Matt.* xxiv. 8). Then would appear the forerunner, promised aforetime by Malachi, before the advent of 'Yahweh's great and dreadful day,' the prophet Elijah, caught away of old ere death took him. He should establish peace, heal rivalries, and settle disputes, so that, as they said, money or other property of doubtful ownership, treasure-trove whose possessor was unknown, must wait 'till Elijah came.' (Cp. *Matt.* xvii. 10; xvi. 14; *Mark* ix. 11; vi. 15; viii. 28; *Luke* ix. 8, 19.)

3. *The Coming Kingdom.*—The great feature of 'the coming age' would be the manifestation of the kingdom variously called 'the kingdom of God' or 'the kingdom of heaven.'[1] It was for this that the believer prayed: that prayer, said the Rabbis, which does not make mention of the kingdom, is not a prayer. The kingdom should be a rule of righteousness; and one after another strove to depict its inward blessings. 'For all good order,' said the Sibyl, 'shall come upon men from the starry heaven, and righteous dealing, and with it holy concord, which for mortals excels all things, and love, faith, hospitality. And from them shall flee lawlessness, blame, envy, anger, folly. From men shall flee poverty and need, and murder and pernicious strifes, and mournful quarrels, and thefts by night and every evil in those days.' 'Then will God,' said the Book of Enoch, 'be

[1] In this phrase 'heaven' is a pious equivalent for God, as in the words of the prodigal, 'I have sinned against *heaven*.'

gracious to the righteous, and give him eternal uprightness, and he will give him power so that he shall be (endowed) with goodness and righteousness, and he shall walk in eternal light. And sin shall perish in darkness for ever.' Once more, of the faithful in that glorious day it was written in the Book of Jubilees, 'their souls shall cleave to me and to all my commandments, and I will be their father and they shall be my sons, and they shall all be named sons of the living God.'

4. *The Messiah.*—How would this kingdom be established? Who would found it? How would God make his power visibly manifest? How could the kingdoms of the earth be overthrown save by forces like their own? The answer was difficult. Some of those who looked for the kingdom were content to leave it with God, to bring it about in his own way. Others recalled the pictures of the king who should reign in righteousness, which had been drawn by the old prophets, and had never been realized. This was the more natural because these ancient oracles had long possessed the character of Scripture, as authoritative declarations of the will of Yahweh. Those who looked upon them in this light naturally thought that the promises which they seemed to make would be actually fulfilled. So the hope grew that the 'Anointed of Yahweh' would come forth, as the agent of the wonderful changes which would finally result in the everlasting kingdom of God. Whether he would appear in 'this age,' before 'the end,' or afterwards in 'the coming age,' men could not tell. Some expected one thing, some another.

One form of the great hope was founded on memories of the past. The promised king of old was to be of David's race; and so the Messiah would be of the same

high descent, and was accordingly described as 'Son of David.' David had reigned in Jerusalem, and there, so some thought, the Messiah would be born. But again, others following a hint in an obscure passage in the prophet Micah v. 1 ff., looked for his birth at Bethlehem, the home of David's youth. How he would rise to power they could not tell. Occasionally it was surmised that he would be kept in concealment till the proper time should come for him to be revealed to the world. Then he would step forth in kingly might, and found a realm of righteousness wherein nothing unclean or idolatrous should have any place. God should gird him with strength, it was said in the Psalms of Solomon, to break down unjust rulers. He should purify Jerusalem from the Gentiles who trod it under foot: he should thrust out sinners from the inheritance, and destroy the wicked nations by the word of his mouth. The people of the Gentiles he should make to serve beneath his yoke, and glorify the Lord over all the earth; and there should be no unrighteousness in his days. But all this should be wrought by other means than the people had known of old. For he should not put his trust in horse or bow, or multiply gold and silver for war. The Lord himself was his king, and should set all nations before him in fear. He would be pure from sin, strong in the deeds of the Lord, and mighty in the fear of God, feeding the Lord's flock in faith and righteousness, and leading them in all holiness. This is the picture drawn by a writer whose hope has been nourished on the noble thoughts of ancient poetry and prophecy, and whose language is founded on the recognized images of might or gentleness.

Another type, however, is delineated in one of the documents now included in the Book of Enoch (xxxvii.-lxxi.)

known as the 'Parables,' where the Messiah is depicted as a heavenly being, under the name of 'the Son of Man.'[1] The whole representation rests upon the vision of the judgment in the Book of Daniel (vii.). The scene is vast, dim, and confused; all clear forms have disappeared; the seer is conscious only of the great sea, as if chaos had come again, and the four winds warring upon it. It is the counterpart of the tumultuous ocean of life. Up from the deep come four huge beasts, symbols of the ancient empires which the writer supposed to have followed each other in Western Asia, (1) the Babylonian lion, eagle-winged, (2) the Median bear, voracious and brutal, (3) the Persian leopard, whose wings typified the speed of its marches, and (4) the dreaded Greek, shattering and devouring with great iron teeth. For these tyrannic powers a great trial is prepared. A multitude of unnamed ministering agents erect thrones for the divine judge and the heavenly beings associated with him in this solemn assize. The Ancient of Days, whose white robe and white hair are the emblems of purity and light, takes his seat. Flames issue from the base of his throne, and a river of fire flows in front, barring all access to his awful majesty. The angelic ranks are ranged around in due order of service, and one after another the empires are judged and dismissed, and Antiochus Epiphanes himself is slain. The execution of the judgment occupies an unknown period, and then, sailing through the sky, borne on the clouds (like the Virgin in Raphael's Sistine Madonna), comes a mysterious

[1] This is equivalent in Semitic usage to ' the Man,' perhaps (as we might say) the ideal Man, the type of humanity made ' in the image of God.' ' The Man ' would be as well known as ' the Day,' *e.g.* 1 *Cor.* iii. 13.

figure 'like unto a son of man,' i.e., a human being in contrast to the brutes that rose from the waters below. Nobler in form and celestial in origin, he is escorted by a retinue of angel servitors who bring him into the presence of the Ancient of Days, and to him is then given dominion that shall not pass away. Who is this august being? The author explains his own vision by himself interpreting the figure; he represents 'the people of the saints of the Most High, his kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.'

Here is the undoubted source of the hopes which culminated in the Gospel language which describes 'the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory' (*Matt.* xxiv. 30). But the Gospel prophecies depict the Son of Man as a real person, who will 'sit on the throne of his glory' with the nations gathered before him for judgment (*Matt.* xxv. 31). A change has taken place in the form of the great event, the Ancient of Days has disappeared, and the Son of Man is his appointed representative, endowed with authority over all the world. The 'Parables' of the Book of Enoch show us this change already effected. Written probably a hundred years before the ministry of Jesus (Dr. Charles dates them 94-79 B.C.), they identify the Messiah with Daniel's symbolic Man, under the title of the Son of Man. He is described as God's 'elect' or 'chosen.' He has been created before the sun and stars, and stands before the Lord of Spirits, endowed with the spirit of wisdom, understanding and might, so that he is able to discern all secret things. Thus equipped for the judgment he will sit on the throne of glory, as the Vice-regent of the 'Head of Days' or 'the Eternal.' Angels

and men alike will be brought before him, and with unerring justice he will condemn the evil and establish the good. 'The righteous and elect shall be saved on that day.'

5. *The Resurrection.*—There were thus two markedly contrasted types of the Messiah's nature and function. One was content to conceive him as the descendant of David and the restorer of his empire; the other soared into the heavenly world, and imagined him as the ideal Man, older than creation itself, the destined judge not only of all humanity, but even of angelic powers. Both looked for a kingdom of righteousness, though they differed as to its scene and character, and the persons who should be privileged to share in it. And both have left striking traces in the literature of the New Testament.

The revival of the Davidic power would, of course, take place on earth. It would involve the extension of Israel's sway over Gentile peoples. Was it to be expected that this would be accomplished without opposition? Ezekiel had depicted a mighty gathering of hostile nations upon the mountains of Israel; so it might be anticipated that the enemies of God would assemble against the Holy City for one final onset. But the Messiah, or, if he had not yet arrived, God himself, would appear in its defence, and the invading hosts should be slain. Then, evil would be no more; war and contention, envy and greed, should cease. The scattered Israelites should return to their ancient land. Some even thought that the Gentiles who survived the great overthrow would join of their own accord in worshipping the true God, and would sing his praise. The old Jerusalem, battered with so many sieges, would not be large or beautiful enough to take

the throng, and a new city was expected to descend from on high, suited to a new heaven and a new earth. All good things needful, corn and oil and wine and milk, should issue in boundless store from the all-producing earth. Disease should pass away, and life be prolonged without weariness for a thousand years. But the Messiah's reign would not last for ever, and after a time (represented in the Book of Revelation as a thousand years) the kingdom would be surrendered to the Father, that God (as St. Paul said) might be 'all in all' (1 *Cor.* xv. 24, 28).

Conceived as a king of the house of David, the Messiah would exercise the royal prerogative of judgment. It was the supreme duty of the oriental monarch to preside impartially over the administration of justice. Accordingly it was predicted in the Psalms of Solomon (xvii. 28-31) that he would 'bring together the holy people, whom he shall lead in righteousness, and he shall judge the tribes of the people made holy by the Lord his God. And he shall not suffer iniquity to abide in their midst, nor shall any man dwell with them knowing wickedness. . . . He shall judge peoples and nations by the wisdom of his righteousness.' This is rather a continuous process than a single event, operating on the living under his sovereign sway. But new ideas and hopes had already entered into Jewish thought. The older prophecy had always regarded Israel as a nation, possessing as a people a united, enduring life. Individuals died and their souls went to the gloomy world below, but their places were taken by their children, and the race lived on. But later experience, the vicissitudes of national suffering, perhaps also the influence of a religion like the Persian, which had worked out lofty doctrines of judgment, resurrection,

and life to come, brought a great change in their expectations. After the persecutions in which so many of the faithful had laid down their lives, could it be supposed that they would never see the triumph of the religion for which they had freely died? And those who had purchased their safety by surrendering their principles and abandoning the faith of their fathers—must not they be made to feel their baseness and suffer for their cowardice? So the expectation grew that this life would be followed by recompense for the loyal and retribution for the apostate, and it was boldly predicted that 'Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life and some to shame and everlasting contempt' (*Dan.* xii. 2).

This hope implied some kind of resurrection. With or without a body departed Israelites would emerge from their graves to live again in happiness or pain. How they would receive their allotted destinies, what would be the localities and the conditions of their future being, was still obscure. But conscience and imagination quickly worked on the new thought. The old language of judgment received fresh meanings, and pictures such as the author of Daniel had drawn in vague but magnificent outlines gradually gained more definiteness and precision. Expectation, indeed, varied. The books included under the name of Enoch in the two centuries B.C. already show great diversities of view. If the kingdom of the future was to be of lasting duration upon earth, the judgment would naturally take place at its inauguration, and the new life would unite body and spirit in a resurrection of the flesh. If on the other hand the earthly kingdom was to come to an end and give way to a universal rule of God, the final judgment was to be

postponed. The sinners would be destroyed when the kingdom appeared, and the righteous would enjoy peace and well-being, and see many good days on earth. The 'great judgment' would arrive at the close of the Messianic age, the new heaven would be created, and the righteous dead (hitherto guarded by angels) would be raised as spirits only, the portals of heaven should be opened to them, and they should shine on high like the stars (civ. 2). Yet once again in the Parables (xxxvii.-lxxi.) the righteous will pass into the heavenly world when 'the great judgment' (without any intervening period) breaks in on the existing scene. The earthly bodies will be needed no more, but the saints shall be clothed with 'garments of life from the Lord of Spirits,' which shall never grow old; and the communion of the blessed is presented in the form of table-fellowship in a hallowed meal:—

> The Lord of Spirits will abide over them,
> And with that Son of Man shall they eat
> And lie down and rise up for ever and ever. (lxii. 14)

These expectations are none of them systematically set forth; they are not carefully arranged to answer all questions in advance. They are the impassioned utterances of men who have reflected on the sin and suffering in the world, and have thrown their explanation into the form of schemes of future redress. But what the scope of the resurrection would be, who would take part in it, and how the judgment would be effected, they could only guess. Sometimes it was supposed that only righteous Israelites would rise, sometimes that the whole nation, good and bad alike, living and dead, would be summoned

to the judgment seat. In the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs* (Benjamin x. 7-9) the Israelites will be raised first and judged, and then the Gentiles. Enoch (li. 1) points in the same direction with the declaration that both the earth and Sheol shall give back what has been entrusted to them, though some interpreters still limit this to dead Israelites: and IV *Ezra* (vii. 32, 37) contemplates the resurrection of all the dead, like the great picture of the judgment in *Matt.* xxv. 31-46, when 'all the nations' are gathered before the throne of the Son of Man. The Jewish hope, as was not unnatural, apparently made final acceptance with God conditional on right belief in him. This might seem to involve the exclusion of the Gentiles, but opportunity should be offered to them before the judgment to repent, and the Lord of Spirits would have compassion on them. The unrepentant, like guilty Israelites, would be sent to the grievous lot of the condemned amid flames of fire or regions of darkness where there should be 'a sound of lamentation and weeping and groaning and dreadful pain.' It remained for Jesus to lift the whole question of human destiny above the limits of race and creed, into the universal sphere of conduct and character, and represent the heavenly Man as identifying himself with every form of human need, 'Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.'

§ 45. Influence on the Gospel Tradition

It was no doubt under the influence of ideas more or less resembling these that John the Baptist sent his message to Jesus (§ 41). We can quite well understand

its meaning now. In the same way we can understand how it was, when the apostles had once accepted Jesus as the Messiah, that the two sons of Zebedee should ask for the places of honour at his right and left hand, when he should come in his glory (*Matthew* xx. 20 ff.; *Mark* x. 35 ff.). And a great deal of the language ascribed to Jesus himself—for example, the description of the armies gathering round Jerusalem, of famines and wars, of the appearance of false Christs, of terrible signs in the sky, as the prelude to the appearance of the Son of Man in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory (cp. *Matthew* xxiv.; *Mark* xiii.; *Luke* xxi.), receives its explanation from the symbols and images in which the national hope was expressed. But the student of the Gospels, who desires to know what were the real thoughts and aims of Jesus of Nazareth, finds himself constantly beset by problems that lie behind these pictures. He sees that the Gospels are all constructed on the belief that Jesus was the Messiah for whom so many of his fellow-countrymen were so eagerly looking. Further, he sees that the Evangelists continually represent the Teacher as employing the language and sanctioning the hope which had gathered in the popular mind around the advent of the Deliverer. He sees that they unmistakably attribute to him the claim to be the Christ, and the declaration that he would come again 'in his kingdom' in the lifetime of some of his hearers (*Matthew* xvi. 27, 28; xix. 28; *Mark* xiii. 26, 30; *Luke* xxi. 32; etc.). How, then, can he help asking himself these questions, 'Are such words rightly ascribed to Jesus?' 'Did he, after all, believe that he would reappear after his death descending in clouds of glory from the sky?' 'If he did share this great hope, which after events proved to be so unfounded,

what value is to be attached to his teachings on other subjects?' 'And if he did not, how could the disciples have been so mistaken? How could they have so failed to understand his real words, and have raised pretensions for him which he never made for himself?'

The answer to these questions cannot be given here. They take us into the heart of the criticism of the Gospels; they involve delicate and difficult inquiries; but they can no longer be ignored. We must recognize the plain meaning of the words ascribed to Jesus. We must come to the conclusion either that he did not say them, or that, if he said them, events have shown that he was mistaken. If it should turn out, when they are carefully examined, that they are really inconsistent with other teachings whose originality as sources of thought and impulse at once mark them as his genuine utterances, we shall then have good ground for concluding that they do not represent his own ideas, and were never really put forward by him. We shall see in them rather the thoughts and hopes of his followers about him; and we shall discern that their roots lie not in the language of Jesus himself, so much as in the beliefs and expectations of the time, which the disciples appropriated for their Master, and piously supposed him to have authorized, because they expressed their own notions of what was fitting for him; in this way we may hope to clear away from Jesus the official robes with which his person has been so long invested; What shall we find behind? We shall find the true Gospel, the real 'good news,' the actual word of Jesus to his brother men; and we shall learn that *his* doctrine of 'the kingdom' is not concerned with Jerusalem only, or with the Jews alone, but is good for all times and lands; that the hope of it is the most

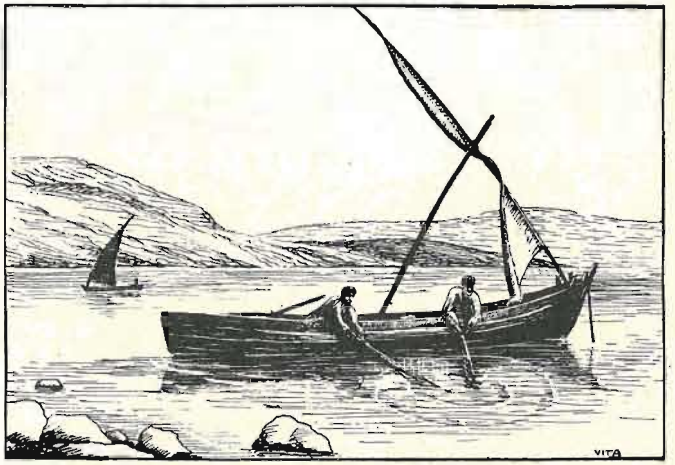
precious treasure of the human heart; that when we pray, as he has taught us, 'thy kingdom come,' we pray for all men everywhere, 'Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.'

THE END

INDEX I.—BIBLICAL PASSAGES: OLD TESTAMENT

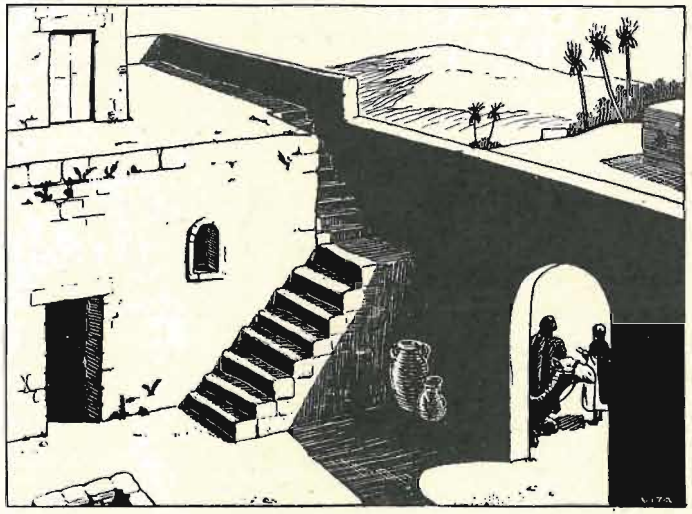
INDEX II.—SUBJECTS

INTERIOR OF ONE-ROOMED HOUSE



FISHING CLOSE INSHORE

COURTYARD OF LARGER HOUSE



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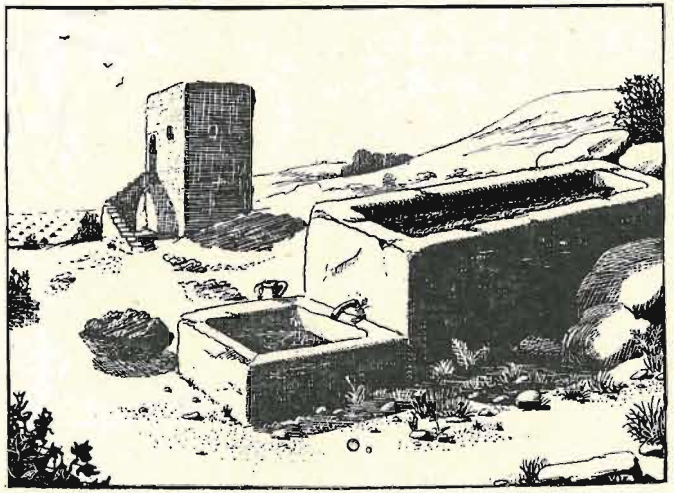

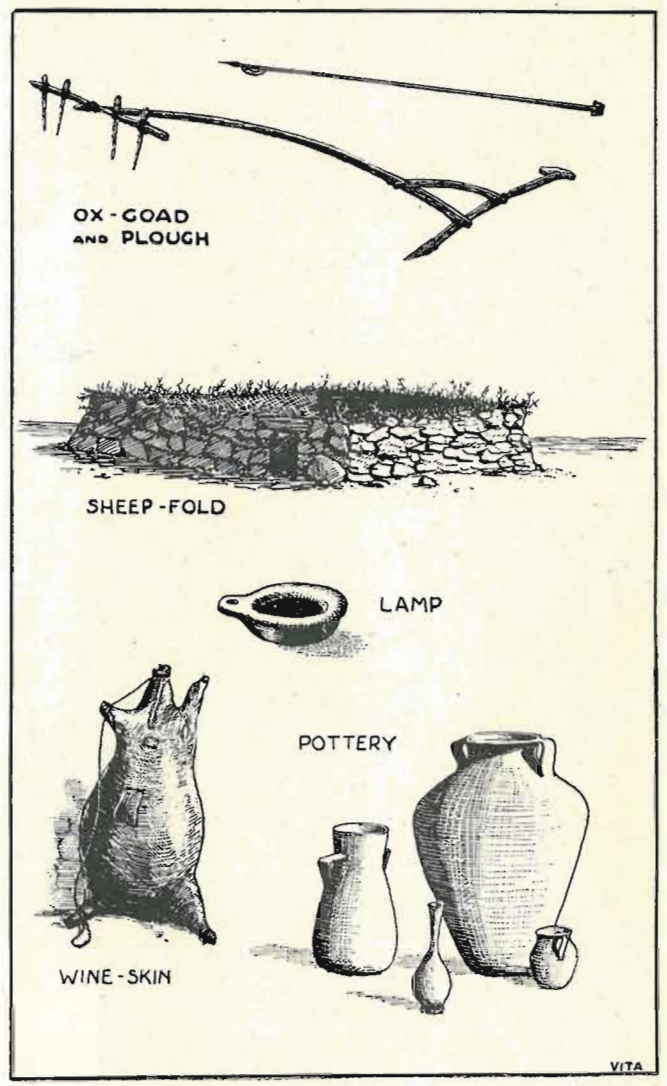
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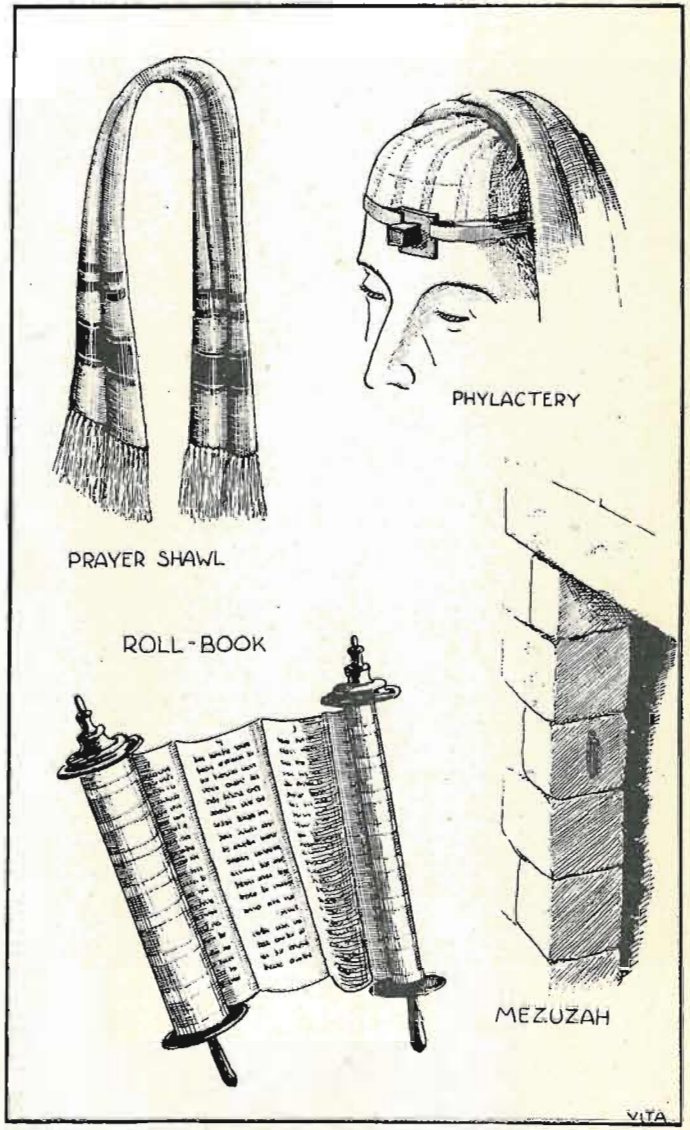
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PRAYER SHAWL
ROLL-BOOK
MEZUZAH
VITA