THE STORY
OF THE . . .
APOCRYPHA

Rev. S. N. Sedgwick, M.A.

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A SERIES OF LECTURES ON THE BOOKS AND TIMES OF THE APOCRYPHA.

BY THE

REV. S. N. SEDGWICK, M.A.

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THESE LECTURES

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PREFACE.

THIS small book lays no possible claim to any originality, except it be in the attempt to place the books of the Apocrypha in a historic setting; otherwise, it is little else than a compilation from the works of well-known scholars, named below.

The Apocrypha is to all intents and purposes an unknown literature to most people, even to those who study their Bibles; but traces of an awakened interest may be found to-day, and the fact that there has sprung into existence actually whilst these lectures were in writing, "An International Society of the Apocrypha," whose president is the Bishop of Winchester, is a sufficient proof of the newer attitude of the Christian World towards this neglected portion of sacred literature.

These papers were read in Lent, 1905, in accordance with an invitation extended to me to give a series of lectures on some subject not generally studied; and the perusal of a sermon by the Bishop

of Winchester on the subject (to which lecture one is indebted), suggested the subject.

To the Bishop I owe a personal debt of gratitude for help given, directing me to the best books upon the subject.

The papers are not other than popular, and only aim at presenting in a concise form results that are otherwise only to be found in scattered and much more voluminous works, and the plan in vogue during their delivery was to read through, before each lecture, the books of the Apocrypha which were to be dealt with.

The following books are those from which the material was derived: Hastings' "Dictionary of the Bible," Edersheim's "Life of Christ," Westcott's "Introduction to the Gospels," Stanley's "Jewish Church," vol. iii, "The Apocrypha" in the "Speaker's Commentary," "The Cambridge Companion to the Bible," The Works of Josephus, "The XXXIX Articles," by Harold Brown, "The Holy Scripture and Criticism," by Bishop Ryle, etc.

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CHRONOLOGY OF THE APOCRYPHA.

(*The dates of the books of the Apocrypha can only be approximate.*)

Jewish Events.	Book.	External History.
B.C.		B.C.
537. First Return of the Jews from Babylon.	Daniel (according to traditional view).	
432. Nehemiah's second mission to Jerusalem.	Malachi's prophecy.	429. Plato born.
1. Period of Silent Growth and Subjection.		
332. Jaddua, high priest, goes out to meet Alexander. [After Alexander's death, very disturbed condition: many Jews emigrate to Egypt, etc.]		323. Alexander the Great dies. (After his death Palestine subject in turns to Egypt and Syria.)
320. "Observance of Sabbath" brings about capture of Jerusalem by Ptolemy Soter.		320. Thousands of Jew captives taken to Alexandria.
300. Simon the Just, high priest.		
280. Ptolemy Philadelphus, King of Egypt, favours the Jewish subjects.	The Septuagint Version of Hebrew Scripture commenced in Alexandria, not completed for a century afterwards.	
180. Aristobulus allegorises the Old Testament.	The Wisdom of Sirach.	
2. The Maccabean Rule.		
175. Antiochus Epiphanes King of Syria. Great attempt to break down Jewish exclusiveness.	170–100. 1st Book of Esdras, Esther, Tobit, Prayer of Manasses written.	
168. The "Abomination of Desolation" in Jerusalem.	"Daniel" (written according to modern view). (The Three Children: Bel and the Dragon.)	

Jewish Events.	Book.	External History.
B.C.		B.C.
167. Mattathias the Maccabee revolts.		
166. Battle of Emmaus, Victory of Judas Maccabæus.		
165. Re-dedication of Temple.		
160. Onias V. builds Temple for Jews at Leontopolis in Egypt.		160. Decree of Rome in favour of Jews.
142. Simon "Prince of the Jews." Jews allowed to coin money.		
135. John Hyrcanus, high priest.		
106. Aristobulus, his Son, first King of the Jews.	100. "Judith." "Susanna."	
62. Queen Alexandra dies.	100–1. Epistle of Jeremy at Alexandria. I. Maccabees in Palestine.	

3. The Herodian Dynasty.

63. Jerusalem taken by Pompey.	1st part of Baruch written.	66. Hillel the Babylonian born.
41. Herod tetrarch of Judæa (with Phasael).	Psalms of Solomon written.	44. Assassination of Julius Cæsar.
37. Herod captures Jerusalem.	2nd part of Baruch written.	
10.	II. Maccabees written in Egypt.	
4. Jesus Christ born.	Wisdom of Solomon written at Alexandria.	
A.D.		
30. Crucifixion.	Psalms of Solomon translated.	
66. Jewish War commences.		
70. Destruction of Jerusalem under Titus.	II. Esdras written in Palestine.	
100. Council of Jamnia. Old Testament Canon closed.		
120.	Baruch edited in present form.	

THE STORY OF THE APOCRYPHA.

LECTURE I.

GENERAL INTRODUCTION.

LET us suppose, for a moment, that the Bible was an unknown book to us, and that having learnt of the gospel through missionaries by word of mouth, we were presented for the first time with copies of the New Testament, which they told us contained the story of the life and work of Christ. Can you imagine the intense, the amazing interest the books would have to us, and with what a real enthusiasm we should read their pages? You will remember how, within the last few years, from time to time certain ancient manuscripts have been discovered, containing writings on Christianity, such as, *e.g.*, the Syriac Gospels, found on Mount Sinai, or "The Gospel of Peter," and "The Words of Christ," found in one of the mounds in Egypt. No sooner are they discovered, than they are scrutinized to find what new light they throw upon the gospel story; the conditions, historical or geographical, of the setting of the gospel at that time; the directions they point to in regard to the

treatment of the Old Testament among the living contemporaries of the author. Even our daily papers print the discovery in large type, and discuss the contents with all the gravity or assurance of theologians.

Now, the study of the Apocrypha has for most of us this peculiar charm. It is for most people a new book—an actual part of the Bible, which has lain hidden from them all their lives, and they open its pages with a feeling that they are plunging into something that has utterly escaped them before, but which is intimately connected with all that we hold best and highest in life—our religion. At any rate, it is that feeling of adventurous expectation that I should like to think would be aroused in us as we open the pages of the Apocrypha; for it is, we must admit, almost an unknown part of our religious literature. When Shylock stands in the Duke's court of justice in Venice, and hears Portia, in her disguise as doctor of laws, say gravely, "There is no power in Venice can alter a decree established," he cries, "A Daniel come to judgment! Yea, a Daniel! O wise young judge, how I do honour thee!" Who can explain Shylock's allusion here? No one to-day sees any particular point in the reference to Daniel, because the reference is to the Story of Susanna, never read nowadays.

Or, again, most people need a commentary to enable them to grasp the meaning of Milton's lines—

> "Asmodeus with the fishy fume
> That drove him, though enamoured, from the spouse
> Of Tobit's son"—

because the Book of Tobit is unknown to them.

Or, once more, when people quote the well-known

Latin tag, "Magna est veritas et prævalet," with some dim idea that it is either in the Bible or in Cicero (!), they little realize that the words come from the First Book of Esdras.

Susan, Toby, Judith, are old-fashioned English Christian names, bearing witness to the influence the books of the Apocrypha once had upon English thought; but these names have little or no connection in our minds with it now, because of its unfamiliarity.

Nevertheless, the English Bible is not complete without the Apocrypha. It is not complete, in the first place, because, between the times of the Old Testament and the New, there is a gap of some four hundred years, and in the pages of the New Testament we come upon completely new conditions of life and thought and doctrine amongst the Jews, whom (in the Old Testament) we left emerging in a broken condition from a captivity which had come upon them as a punishment for idolatry.

In the New Testament we find the people, freed for ever from the temptation to idolatry, rigidly insistent upon a strict monotheism; we find them, no longer in danger of losing their national characteristics by intermarriage with other nations, but living with an open contempt for "Gentiles," and a most rigid exclusiveness. Whence has come such a change as this? We find them, again, worshipping the Law, dealing with it as something so important and so vital, that it is hedged round with minute observances and detailed restrictions, which are said to be derived from "the traditions of the elders"—traditions about which our Lord

does not hesitate to say that the Word of God has been rendered of none effect by them (Mark vii. 13). We find them speaking a language unknown when the Old Testament times closed—Greek; we find them differentiating between "the Grecians and the Hebrews" (Grecians, mind you, meaning Jews, not Gentiles). We find new sects and parties, Pharisees and Sadducees and Essenes, with varying dogmas; we find them poring over the pages of their Law, and Psalms, and Prophets, and looking below the surface of the mere words to a hidden meaning below them. We find them with a definite expectation of a Divine King, a Messiah, who shall rid them of their temporal enemies. We find them with a new system of worship—"Synagogues"—and a new ecclesiastical vocabulary, in which "angels," and "the Son of Man," and "the Judgment," and "the Restoration" have become used as technical terms. Yet, with all these striking novelties, there is little in the pages of the Old and New Testaments to explain how this came about.

You see why. There is this great gap of four hundred years, in which all this wonderful development took place; development in thought and creed, and treatment of the outside nations, and relation to the world. The Apocrypha—at any rate, the chief part of it—is the literature of this gap, and is therefore of great value to us, in seeing how the Jewish race was preparing in its development the ground upon which Christianity could take root and grow. The Apocrypha, then, helps to make the story of the revelation of God to the world through the Jews a complete whole.

Then, secondly, the Apocrypha is a real part of the English Bible, because, speaking generally, until eighty years ago, there were practically no Bibles in England without that section; and by the formularies of the English Church, the Bible consists of three parts—Old Testament, Apocrypha, and New Testament. You will remember, for instance, that when the King was crowned, a Bible was one of the things presented to him, as part of the ceremonial of coronation. The British and Foreign Bible Society had an elaborate edition printed and bound, and presented to him for this purpose; but he refused it on the ground that it was not complete, since it lacked the Apocrypha.

So far back as the year 1571, when the Thirty-nine Articles which are bound up with the Prayer-book were issued in their present form, we read in Article VI., that whilst distinguishing between the Apocrypha and the books of the Old and New Testament, the Church of England agrees that the Apocrypha is to be read "for example of life and instruction of manners, but it doth not apply the books to establish any doctrine." They are regarded, in fact, as being part of the Bible of that time. The Church did indeed use the Apocrypha in this way during the sixteenth century. In the Marriage Service, for instance, in the prayer of Benediction, the words originally ran, "And as Thou didst send Thy angel Raphael to Thobie and Sara, the daughter of Raguel, to their great comfort, so vouchsafe to send Thy blessing upon these Thy servants." The Homilies quote frequently from it. Hugh Latimer in his sermons appeals without

reserve to the examples of "the Lady Judith," and "the Lady Susanna," as he quaintly calls them.

The third part of the Homily on "The Fear of Death," offers proofs of the belief in a future life held by "the holy fathers of the Old Law," but these proofs are taken exclusively not from the Old Testament, but from the Book of Wisdom, I suppose no passage in the Old Testament could express the same belief with anything like the distinctness of the two passages used as the lessons for All Saints' Day (Wisd. iii. to 10, and v. to 17). Why? Because the doctrine of a future life was in its infancy in the Old Testament, and was only developed during the gap of four hundred years; thus we find in the New Testament the two parties, Pharisees and Sadducees, with different theories about the Resurrection, which our Lord Himself is able to use, when enunciating His teaching about it.

Let me read Wisd. iii.—

"The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and there shall no torment touch them. In the sight of the unwise, they seemed to die and their departure is taken for misery. And their going from us to be utter destruction, but they are in peace. For though they be punished in the sight of men, yet is their hope full of immortality. And having been a little chastised, they shall be greatly rewarded. For God proved them, and found them worthy of Himself."

Small wonder that Bishop Andrewes in the beginning of the seventeenth century speaks of men "ever to these writings yeelding the next

place after the Canon of the Scriptures, and preferring them before all forraine writers whatsoever."

It is therefore a real loss to modern Bibles if the Apocrypha is omitted.

Let me digress for a moment to tell you how these books came to be gathered within the covers of the English Bible. Those who have attended my previous lectures will remember that the Old Testament was written in Hebrew originally, and so long as the Jews used the Hebrew language this sufficed. But when, during this very "gap" between Old and New Testaments, Hebrew became a dead language, known only to scholars, and an enormous number of Jews throughout the world, especially in the West, spoke only Greek, it became necessary to translate the Old Testament into Greek. And the LXX VERSION became the People's Bible, probably the Bible our Lord used, and certainly the one the Evangelists followed.

I shall speak more particularly of this translation in the next lecture, but here I may say, briefly, that whilst the pages of the Hebrew Bible were closed to all new authors, it seems that the pages of the LXX were ever open to receive new books which bore on Religion, which served as apologetics for Judaism, or which contained godly instruction. So, as the years passed, the books of the Apocrypha, one at a time, we might say, were added in an appendix to the successive new editions of the LXX, and, finally, the NEW Testament itself came naturally within its covers. But it must be remembered that every edition of the LXX which we have is a Christian one. The oldest manuscripts

of the New Testament, the great Codices Sinaiticus, Alexandrinus, Vaticanus, are no less than editions of the LXX in its last and completest form, Old Testament, Apocrypha, and New Testament.

The Apocrypha, then, formed part of the first Christian Bible, and has been retained ever since. It is true that the famous Latin Version, the Vulgate, did not *at first* contain the whole of the Apocryphal books, owing to St. Jerome's critical work in his translation ; * but as his version gained recognition, such was the strength of Christian usage, that the remaining books found their old place in the Latin Bible.

Thus it came about that when the English translations were made, whether from Greek or Latin (Coverdale was the first to translate the Apocrypha from Greek, 1536), the Apocrypha was naturally included.

I do not say that the action of the translators met with unqualified approval. The extreme Puritan party objected to the Apocrypha being read in Church—(1) In Elizabeth's reign, because they wanted more time for the sermon, and disliked the "waste of time" involved in reading any fixed lessons, outside the passage which the preacher had chosen for his text. (2) Later on, they raised a new objection on the ground that they dreaded lest the people, hearing the Canonical and Apo-

* Jerome first of all revised the existing Latin translation by comparison with the LXX, but then translated the Old Testament anew from the Hebrew. In so doing, the Apocrypha would fall out, and this he demanded, though later on he gave it grudgingly an intermediate position, and revised (under protest) some of the books, such as Judith and Tobit,

cryphal books being read indiscriminately, should fail to distinguish between those on which the Church's doctrines are founded, and the others which (as Art. VI. says) the Church did not apply to establish any doctrine.

There was some reason in their objection, of course, because at the time, the mass of the people was but ill-educated. But the Puritan party imported into the controversy much unnecessary heat. At the famous Hampton Court Conference, James I. exclaimed, "What, trow ye, makes these men so angry with Ecclesiasticus? By my soul I think he was a bishop, or else they would never use him so."

(3) Later on, another objection was raised on the ground that the Roman Church used these books to prove the truth of some of the doctrines which were repugnant to the reformed Church. Prayers for the dead, *e.g.* and the doctrine of Good Works—objections which nowadays have largely lost their point.

The extent to which this prejudice against the Apocrypha was pushed may be gauged from the writings of Broughton, a distinguished scholar of the time—"The wicked of the world," he says, "will bring in the wicked Apocrypha to disturb the glory of both Testaments. . . . That Church that first banisheth the wicked Apocrypha from the Holy Bible will first find true glory from God." And Lightfoot, in a sermon preached before the House of Commons in 1643, said, "Thus sweetly and nearly should the two Testaments join together, and thus divinely would they kiss each

other, but that the wretched Apocrypha doth thrust in between." And he closes with the demand, "Cast out the bondwoman and her son, for the son of the bondwoman may not be heir with the son of the free."

Once more, at the Savoy Conference, it was asked that the Apocrypha should be discontinued from public reading, because the Scriptures of Old and New Testaments contained (again Art. VI.) all things necessary to salvation. But the Bishops replied that the same objection lay against the use of all sermons, whilst it was heartily to be wished that all sermons were as good, and gave as useful instruction as did the chapters selected from the Apocrypha. Thus, the appeal was summarily dismissed.

One more incident illustrating the prejudice of the Puritan opinion may be given from the Autobiography of John Bunyan. In his "Grace Abounding," he thus speaks of the effect a portion of the Apocrypha had upon his mind—

"For several days I was greatly perplexed, and was ready to sink with faintness in my mind; but one day, when I had been so many weeks oppressed, and was giving up all hopes of ever attaining life, that sentence fell with weight upon my spirit, "Look at the generations of old, and see; did ever any trust in the Lord and was confounded." I looked in my Bible and found it not. For above a year I searched in vain. But at last, casting my eye into the Apocryphal books, I found it in Ecclus. ii. 10. This at first did somewhat daunt me; but it troubled me less when I considered

that, though it was not in those texts which we call holy and Canonical, yet, forasmuch as this sentence was the sum and substance of many of the promises, it was my duty to take the comfort of it; and I bless God for that word, for it was of God to me. That word doth still at times shine before my face."

If, then, the Church of England has always maintained the position of the Apocrypha in the English Bible, how comes it that the great majority of English Bibles omit it to-day? *

It dates from a famous dispute amongst the members of the British and Foreign Bible Society, in 1824. Some members questioned whether it was contrary to the society's principles to distribute the Canonical Scriptures together with the Apocrypha. It is interesting to find men like Charles Simeon and Venn, great figures in the Evangelical Revival, maintaining that the volume containing the Old and New Testaments and the Apocrypha was commonly known by the name of the Bible, and that there was no reason why the Society should make such a drastic change.

Finally, a compromise was arrived at, in which, unfortunately, it was resolved not to print the Apocrypha, but to further the circulation of the Scriptures by grants of the canonical books only. Through the influence of the Bible Society, very largely, the printing of the complete Bible has become to-day the exception and not the rule. The Bishop of Lincoln, Bishop Wordsworth, in his

* The S.P.C.K. supplies all the editions of Bibles on its list with an Apocrypha. It offers these as the complete Bible, and only when *asked* for an incomplete one, supplies it.

Lectures on the Canon points out very truly that the retention of the Apocrypha is useful as a means of communion with other churches. "If you carry a Bible without the Apocrypha into Greece or Asia or Palestine, into those very countries whence the Gospel derived its origin and language, you would be told that you have not the Bible, but only a mutilated copy of it. The Greek Church would denounce you as guilty of sectarian error, whilst in Italy or France, the people would say, 'This may be an English Bible, but it is not the Bible of Christendom. It excludes books which the Eastern and Western Churches have never ceased to read, from the earliest times to this hour.'"

But now, setting aside the question of the value of these books for public reading, let me turn to the subject of their value to Christian study. From this point of view, I think we shall agree that the strongest plea may be urged for a revival of interest in them.

They have dropped out of sight most undeservedly. And this is due as much to the name Apocrypha as to anything else. The Apocrypha is popularly supposed to contain writings which are apocryphal; and "apocryphal" means, as you know, pretty nearly "untruthful, or fictitious." Therefore the Apocrypha is considered unworthy of thoughtful study!

It is a verification of the old proverb, "Give a dog a bad name and hang him."

But, as a matter of fact, the term "Apocrypha" is an accidental title, used long ago of books of a particular description.

It comes from a Greek word meaning "hidden away," and it was applied first of all to books which were not commonly known—hidden from the public; (2) to books which might be said to have a hidden meaning, like, *e.g.*, the Book of Daniel, the visions of which have a meaning not visible at first sight; (3) the Jews used a similar word to describe the actual books of the Old Testament which were worn out, and therefore were kept at the back of their cupboards, out of sight; and (4) the term was generally applied later to books of unknown authorship, whose origin was hidden. Finally, from Jerome's day, the term was applied (5) to a miscellaneous group of books that were read in the churches, and called "ecclesiastical books," but were not included in the strict limits of the Hebrew Canon of Scripture.

There is nothing, therefore, in the name to justify the bad meaning associated nowadays with the word "apocryphal."

No one will deny that some books of the Apocrypha are inferior in spiritual force and literary power to the majority of the canonical books. But when you think of this great *gap* in Jewish history, or, to put it in other words, the gap in that gradual preparation of the Jews for the coming of Christ, you cannot exaggerate the importance of this collection of Jewish books drawn from the two centuries preceding the Christian era, and the first century of the Christian era. They illustrate the history of the chosen people during one of the most important of its stages; and they reveal the growth of religious thought among the

Jews of Palestine and Egypt just before, and at the time of the ministry of our Lord.

Their importance is increased when you realize that what is called the Canon of the Old Testament (and the New, for that matter) was only gradually arrived at; that its books were selected from the whole of the religious literature of the nation; and such books as Ecclesiasticus and 1 Maccabees, must at one time have been put forward as claimants for recognition in the Old Testament Canon.

At any rate, modern criticism asserts, whether rightly or wrongly, that such books as Daniel, and Esther, and some of the Psalms were not actually written till after some of the books of the Apocrypha.

Let me give you a rapid sketch of the way in which the books of the Old Testament became incorporated in one volume, and separated from all other Hebrew literature as canonical.

It was, in the first place, not due to any one man's influence nor to the activity of one generation, but was a process of gradual growth, spread over several centuries. In fact, it was so gradual and so automatic, that the student cannot fail to see in it the overruling power of the Holy Spirit. You know how our Lord speaks of the Old Testament as "The Law and the Prophets," and elsewhere, after His resurrection, He referred to (Luke xxiv. 44) a threefold division, "The Law, the Psalms, and the Prophets." Here we have a glimpse of three successive elements in the growth of the Jewish Canon, which is of great help.

Not until the reign of Josiah do we find any

positive evidence of the existence of sacred writing claiming universal recognition. In 2 Kings xxii. we read how "the book of the Law" was discovered in the Temple. This book, judging from the reforms which the king set on foot in consequence of what he read in it, was, if not Deuteronomy, at least the substance of the Deuteronomic Law, and from other references to it in the rest of Kings, we conclude that in the last days of the kingdom of Judah, and during the exile the Deuteronomic Law was treated as sacred Scripture.

Soon there were added to this, the other books of the Law, which we call to-day the "Pentateuch." It seems probable, that during the exile in Babylon, after the Temple was destroyed, these writings were gathered together by the Jewish captives who wished to preserve the story of their Divine origin and call.

At any rate, when Ezra brought the people back, and the new Temple was built on the ruins of the old, "the Book of the Law of Moses" which Ezra read (Neh. viii. 1) was practically the same as the Pentateuch. That is the first stage.

Second came the recognition of the Prophetical books. This would not come about till long after the death of the last of them, Malachi. At any rate, a quotation in Ecclus. xlix. 10, 11, shows by its allusion to "the twelve prophets," that when the author wrote, in 180 B.C., there was an authoritative collection of prophetic writings in existence.

"And of the twelve prophets let the memorial be blessed, and let their bones flourish again out of their place. For they comforted Jacob, and delivered them by assured hope."

The prophets included Joshua, Judges, and 1 and 2 Sam., and 1 and 2 Kings. We may put the date of their inclusion into the sacred Scriptures midway between Nehemiah and the composition of Ecclesiasticus, *i.e.* about the third century B.C.

The third group called "Psalms," or "Writings," or "Hagiographa" by the Jews, belongs to the last stage of the history. It is fairly safe to place it in the reign of John Hyrcanus, 105 B.C. At any rate, in our Lord's time, the Old Testament appears to be complete, although not final, or necessarily fixed, *e.g.* Luke xxiv. 44, "All the things must be fulfilled, written in the Law of Moses, and the Prophets and the Psalms, concerning Me."

Our Lord Himself must have been familiar with some of the books of the Apocrypha. But though He does not quote from them, there are quotations, or allusions to them in the writings of His disciples, as well as to other Jewish books not included in the Apocrypha.

The Epistle to the Hebrews exhibits acquaintance with the Book of Wisdom and 2 Maccabees; St. James shows knowledge of Ecclesiasticus and Wisdom, and so too St. Paul and St. Peter; whilst in the Epistles of Jude and 2 Peter there is seemingly a quotation from the Book of Enoch, a work outside the Apocrypha as we know it to-day.

So that whilst the Old Testament was known and accepted in New Testament times as we know it, yet it was not regarded as finally closed, and it was probably the destruction of Jerusalem and the threatened annihilation of the Jewish race in

A.D. 70, and the rivalry of the great LXX among the Greek-speaking Jews that led the Council of Jamnia (composed of Jewish Rabbis), A.D. 100, to decree officially the limits of Hebrew Scripture. You will see then the interest of the books of the Apocrypha, which were in vogue actually during the latter end of the formation of the Old Testament Canon.

In conclusion, let me point out to you some of the lessons we shall learn as we study the books in detail.

First, there are books which describe one of the most heroic chapters in the world's history. The Swiss War of Liberty and the rise of the Dutch Republic, says Bishop Ryle, are alone comparable for pure patriotism and religious fervour with the great struggle of the Maccabean War. The detailed references to the kings of Syria and Egypt, contained in the Apocalyptic language of Daniel xi., are continued, as it were, in the simple narrative of the First Book of Maccabees. . . . Without some knowledge of that struggle, the triumph of Judaism, the thought and history of the Jews in the following century are unintelligible. In that epoch you see the patriot seeking to lay the foundations of a Davidic kingdom upon victories won at the point of the sword. You see him dying rather than pollute the Sabbath by fighting on that day. Sadducee and Pharisee take their rise in that contest. Or in Ecclesiasticus, you will find the picture of daily life and its social weaknesses, you will see the scribe, a new figure, installed in his place of honour among the people, and importance attached to habits of prayer and almsgiving and purity.

Again, we shall see the progress of religious thought in these books, *e.g.* the doctrine of the Resurrection. This doctrine, which appears so slightly in the Old Testament, is the subject of division between Pharisees and Sadducees in Christ's time. You will see it in 2 Maccabees, or in the Book of Wisdom.

The doctrine of angels is expanded in Tobit and 2 Maccabees in such a way as to prepare us for the speculations about intermediaries between God and man, against which St. Paul so vehemently protests. Even the sillinesses and ineptitudes of such books as "Bel and the Dragon" will serve to reflect one aspect of that Judaism amidst which Christ was born. He compared his nation to the fig tree, with plenty of leaves but no fruit. We shall see that very barrenness in some of the writings of the Apocrypha.

The worst side of Jewish thought, therein displayed, leads down to that lifeless belief in one God, which in its own turn became almost the idolatry of the Jewish race, the best side leads upwards to the spiritual teaching of those men of Israel who were quickened unto a new life by the revelation of the Father's love, through Jesus Christ.

Remember then that the Apocrypha forms part of the literature of the age of Christ—part of the very air, so to say, He deigned to breathe—and therefore it must always have for Christians a deep and permanent value.

LECTURE II.

AFTER THE CAPTIVITY.

THE turning point in all history is the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ. Is not this very year, all over the world known as the year of the Lord 1905? Consciously or unconsciously, every civilized man, of whatever creed, acknowledges this fact. The coming of Christ is the centre of all human history.

This being so, we are accustomed in the books of the Old Testament to see the gradual preparation of the world for this event. We see God choosing out a particular race of men, and training them, setting them apart from all others, giving them by miracle, and judge and prophet, some idea of the great destiny intended for them. Little by little, and line upon line as we read the Old Testament, we see this revelation made clearer, until at the end there comes what seems like a cataclysm—a total wreck of Jewish hope, the destruction of the nation, and its commingling amongst the other nations of the world, in the "Captivity."

But seventy years of exile pass, and the story of the Old Testament tells us how a remnant of the chosen nation emerged from Persia, and returned

to their own land. Broken, and subject, but yet with, who shall say what new lessons taught them by the circumstances through which they passed.

At any rate, Malachi, the last of the prophets, has a distinct message for them—a message of reform and of encouragement. He bids them wake to a new sense of their destiny. Not to grow slack and desponding and forgetful, because their nation is shorn of all its former glories; but to make themselves once more a people of the Lord, and to gather up the broken pieces of their fortunes, to think of their spiritual calling, that all nations may call them blessed, and that from the rising of the sun to the going down of the same, God's name may be great among the Gentiles, for "unto you that fear My name shall the Son of Righteousness arise, with healing in his wings."

Looking over the panorama of their history, as we can to-day, we can see how, so far from being an overthrow of Jewish hopes and aspirations, the captivity, and the Persian dominion which followed, were part of the development of the Jewish race, and a further step in the preparation for the coming of the Christ.

The Persian period lasted for two hundred years after the Jews had returned. Palestine was now no more than a part of a great Persian province, but provided the people paid their appointed taxes, and did nothing to rouse suspicion on political grounds, they enjoyed full social and religious freedom. Prophecy had ceased, and in consequence, the old writings of the law and prophets were looked upon with increasing reverence, and

were slowly collected as Holy Scriptures. Formerly, the nation's hopes had been in the direction of some great earthly kingdom, to which all other empires of the world should be tributary. But now, their national hopes were spiritualized, and they began to dream of a spiritual supremacy, and a spiritual king. In accordance with these new hopes, we find them setting up no new monarchs, but organizing a high priestly caste as the ruling power.

During those two hundred years the story of the Jews is almost without incident, although one great revolt is reported, about 350 B.C., in consequence of which the Persians transported many captives into Hyrcania and Babylonia. At the same time it is obvious that the Jews must have served, *e.g.* in the Persian armies, and have taken a share in the great movements of the world. They must have fought at Cunaxa, Issus, and Arbela. It was part of their education to have been involved in wider interests, and to come in contact with many nations.

Meanwhile, their religious thought was deepened. Enriched, no doubt, by the religion of the Persians, which was monotheistic, they began their life with a deeper sense of the Unity of God (*e.g.* there is no longer any tendency to idolatry), a firmer grasp of Messianic hopes, a distinct belief in the ministry of angels, a fuller recognition of a future life, and of the immortality of the soul.

The gradual development of thought may be traced through the gap of four hundred years which separates the Old from the New Testament, and in sketching for you the history of the period,

I shall try to point this out, and to illustrate it from the Apocrypha.

We may divide the period into three sections: (1) The period of Subjection and Silent Growth; (2) The Maccabean Rule; and (3) the Herodian Dynasty.

1. *The Period of Subjection and Silent Growth.*—It must not be supposed that the Jews, who returned to Palestine under Zerubbabel and Ezra, represented the whole or even the majority of the nation. It was the merest minority—some 50,000 at most. A far greater number, and what is more, the wealthiest and most influential of the Jews remained behind, to found that "Dispersion" as it was called in New Testament times. (Later on, this "Dispersion" extended to the West as well, having its centre at Alexandria; but at present we deal with that in Babylonia and the East.)

Years afterwards, it was said there was "no nation under heaven which had not among them part of the Jewish people; since it was widely dispersed all over the world among its inhabitants, yet nowhere had they found a real home." And, roughly about the time of the final writing of Ecclesiasticus, there comes down to us this pungent epigram, this lament against Israel—

> "Crowding with thy numbers every ocean and country,
> Yet an offence to all around, thy presence and customs."
> (Orac. Sibyll., iii.)

What kept the Jews from being swallowed up through their intercourse and life with and amongst other nations, was the little remnant of national

life left in Palestine. To the Jew, trading in Babylon, or Spain, or India, Jerusalem was an idealized city—Zion was still the home of Jehovah. The Temple, as Edersheim says, was still the only place God had appointed where acceptable sacrifices could be offered to Him; on the great altar of sacrifice the daily offerings still smoked. Around the Temple gathered the sacred memories of the past; to it clung the dearer hopes of the future. Thus history, and patriotism, and religion pointed to Jerusalem and the Temple as the centre of Jewish unity, however widely the Jews might be scattered.

The nation did scatter during those years all over the world, yet its heart beat in Jerusalem. It became no longer a nation specialized and peculiar, but a "world-nation," making its influence felt among the Gentiles—and yet with its centre in the little land on the coast of the Mediterranean.

Was not this, as we regard it, the grand object of the Jewish Dispersion throughout the world?

Would not the minds of the heathen themselves turn with curiosity towards the mystery of Jerusalem and its Temple and all that it betided?

Will you bear in mind, in this connection, that strange assemblage of Jews, to whom St. Peter preached on the Day of Pentecost—"Parthians and Medes and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, etc."? What was their work, think you, on returning to their distant homes, with this new revelation from Jerusalem fresh in their minds? Later on in his Epistle, we find St. Peter writing to some of these very people, now

Christians, "dispersions" in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Phrygia.

According to Josephus and other writers, there were vast numbers of Jews inhabiting the country between the Euphrates and the Tigris, who were afterwards distinguished as "Hebrews" (because they spoke the same language as the Jews of Palestine) from the Jews in the West, who spoke Greek and are called, in the New Testament, Grecians.

The influence of this compact Jewish population in Persia, Syria, and the East must soon have become very great, and history reveals them as a political power. They were held in especial honour by their brethren in the Holy Land itself.* And, later on, the Sanhedrin at Jerusalem used to signal by fire-beacons, from one mountain to another, the first day of each month for the regulation of their calendar, and to despatch messengers into further Syria for the same purpose. In some respects these Jews of the Eastern Dispersion were placed on a higher footing than the mother-country, says Edersheim. Whilst the dust of other countries was said to defile a Jew, the soil of Syria was considered clean. The Eastern Jews guarded the purity of their descent with utmost care—it was said that the genealogies, had they been collected, would have amounted to many camel-loads. But it was not only purity of descent which these Eastern Jews could boast of. They regarded the work of Ezra the Babylonian as a type of the great debt Palestine owed to them. At the time of the return from captivity, the very language of the people

* Edersheim.

was changed. They brought back to Palestine the square (so-called) Hebrew letters, which we know so well in our modern Hebrew Bibles. The universal language in the East and Palestine amongst Jews was "Aramean," that is a later Hebrew, and the result was that a school of scribes and interpreters grew up, scholars whose duty it was to translate into the common tongue the portions read in the original Hebrew, and the sermons of the Rabbis. This was the origin of a new class of books called "The Targums," or paraphrases of Scripture, the canon of which, as we learn from Ecclesiasticus prologue, was completed and closed during this period.

And still another debt was owed by Palestine to Babylonia. The new circumstances under which the Jews found themselves on their return called for a new adaptation of the Mosaic Law. Much greater attention was observed to the *outward* observance and study of it, as witness the New Testament again and again. So a *second* Law was created to explain and guard the first, "The Tradition of the Elders," which dealt with most minute details of observance and ceremonial, and became a burden at last under which the Palestinian Jews groaned. Much of the study connected with the Law was the result of one man's learning in later times, Hillel, the great scribe, who was a Babylonian Jew by birth. So, then, the Eastern Dispersion boasted that twice in the history of Israel, when the Law had fallen into oblivion, it was restored by Babylonians, Ezra and Hillel.

Such were the condition and thought of the

Hebrew Dispersion left in Babylon. And you must imagine the Jews spreading further and further into Eastern lands, carrying an influence that cannot be over-estimated upon the world, yet, wherever they went, still keeping in intimate touch with Jerusalem ; so that in far-away Arabia and Africa we find special legislation for Jews in force, dealt with from Jerusalem, whilst on the Day of Atonement in Palestine we are told that the dress of the high-priest was made of the most costly stuff the Jews in India could supply.

Doubtless, at first, there was poverty amongst the Jews in Babylonia, but ere long, they were extremely well-to-do, a nation of merchant-princes. Their caravans carried the rich carpets and woven stuffs and spices of the East to the West, generally along the great highway through Palestine to the harbours of Phœnicia, where a fleet of vessels, belonging to Jewish bankers and shippers, lay ready to convey them to all parts of the world. Like the great Jews of to-day, these wealthy merchants were keenly alive to all that passed in the financial and political worlds. They were in possession of State secrets, and entrusted with diplomatic commissions. Yet with all this contact with the outer world, this extraordinary community was intensely Hebrew and exclusive.

I have drawn this picture for you because it will help to throw light upon the Book of Ecclesiasticus, when we deal with it in a few minutes. Meanwhile, we must know something of the political events during this first period.

The Persian Empire decayed in its turn, and

was finally overwhelmed about 336–333 B.C. by the conquests of Alexander the Great.

Famous to this day all over the world for his extraordinary genius and youth, he ascended to the throne of Greece at the age of twenty. When twenty-two he crossed the Hellespont with 30,000 foot, and 5000 horse, and began a world-wide campaign. Conquering the Persian rulers of Asia Minor, all the great cities opened the gates to him, and as he passed through Gordium he cut the Gordian knot, which none should loose but the ruler of Asia. A year later, he fought the Persian monarch himself at the famous battle of Issus, 333 B.C., and continued his victorious march Southward through Syria and Phœnicia. Damascus fell, and with it all the cities on the coast of the Mediterranean. Tyre, practically a fortified island, alone withstood him for seven months, till by building a gigantic mole, Alexander was able to storm it successfully after incredible exertions.

Onward again through Palestine to Egypt, and thence into the Lybian Desert to consult a famous oracle, which greeted him as a son of Zeus, and sent him away with the belief firmly fixed in his mind that he was a god. Thence, with more than a million men, back to Persia, where, in a final battle at Arbela, in 331 B.C., he opened the door to Babylon and Susa and the great Persian capital Persepolis. Five years later we find him master of the Punjab in India, establishing Greek colonies there, and thence sailing to the Persian Gulf, and marching inland through Beluchistan back to Babylon, where, still busy with gigantic plans for

the future, he died suddenly after a banquet in 323, at the age of thirty-two.

It was his ambition to build up a great world-empire, and, above all, to permeate it in every part with the spirit and civilization of Greece. And though he was struck down, leaving this design unaccomplished, yet the impulses he set in motion did not cease with his death, and under his successors, the diffusion of Greek culture and manners was steadily maintained, and had a tremendous bearing on the further history of the Jews. You will understand now, perhaps, that reference to him in the Book of Daniel, written many years afterwards, as the mountain goat from the West (viii. 5), bounding so swiftly over the face of the whole earth, so swiftly as not to touch the ground, with one beautiful horn between his eyes, which ran in the fury of his power against the double-horned ram, symbol of the kings of Media and Persia, "and there was no power in the ram to stand before him, but he cast him down to the ground, and stamped upon him, and there was none to deliver the ram out of his hand."

The Jews found favour with him, and his march through Palestine after the conquest of Tyre left them untouched. But there is one fine story which, nodoubt, has its foundation in fact, in which Jaddua, the famous high priest (the last mentioned by name in the Book of Nehemiah x. 2), successfully turned his mind from the assault on Jerusalem.

Alexander found himself at Mizpeh,* above the passes of Beth-horon, with the view of the Holy

* Stanley.

City before him. A deputation of the hated Samaritans had come to him, claiming his protection, offering to be his guides to Jerusalem. Suddenly, as he watched, there streamed out from Jerusalem a long procession, the whole of the inhabitants, in white. The priestly tribe, in their robes, the high priest, the chief authority, in his purple and gold attire, his turban on his head, bearing the golden plate, on which was inscribed the unspeakable name of Jehovah. "Who are these?" said the king, turning to his Samaritan guides, who had won from him the promise of the destruction of the temple. "They are rebels who deny your authority," was the reply. The procession marched all night, in two ranks, preceded by torches, and with the band of priestly musicians, clashing their cymbals at its head.

It was at the sunrise of a winter morning, long afterwards observed as a festival, when they stood at last before the king. To the astonishment of the surrounding chiefs and generals, Alexander descended from his chariot, and bowed himself to the earth before the High Priest. Only one man, Parmenio by name, dared to ask the meaning of this strange conduct. "Why should he, whom all men worship, worship the High Priest of the Jews?" "Not him," said the king, "but the God, whose priest he is, I worship. Long ago, when at Dium, in Macedonia, I saw in my dreams such an one in such attire as this, who urged me to undertake the conquest of Persia, and succeed, and it is the same figure that has appeared to me on the eve of each of my victories."

Hand-in-hand with the high priest, he marched to the temple itself, and offered in person the holy sacrifice, received with pleasure the reading of those passages from the Old Testament, which prophesied the rise of the Grecian power, granted free use of their ancestral laws, and gave them many signs of his special favour.

As for the Samaritan embassy, he delivered them over, as they were, to the ferocity of the Jewish mob, who tore them to pieces, and dragged their bodies over the hated site of Gerizim.*

Full of legendary accretion as this story is, it is not without its bearing on the condition of the Jews, and their exclusiveness and pride. And the fact remains that when, later on, Alexander founded the city of Alexandria, destined to become the capital of the East, and the centre of the three continents of the ancient world, and, above all, the place where Greek philosophy and Hebrew religion were to meet, he settled many of the Jews there as colonists. A fact of vital importance, as we take the after-history of the books of the Apocrypha.

After his untimely death, Alexander's enormous empire was divided up amongst his generals, and there arose in consequence two great kingdoms of Syria and Egypt, between which Palestine lay as a buffer state—the Ptolemies, Kings of Egypt; and the Antiochi, of Syria. Obviously this debateable borderland became the scene of much antagonism between these two kingdoms, and for the hundred and fifty years which followed, Palestine changed

* Adapted from Stanley. See Preface.

hands repeatedly. Owing to the disturbed condition of things many Jews migrated to Alexandria, swelling the numbers of the colony already established there. Frequently throughout this period the land was occupied by foreign armies, and the Jews suffered much hardship. On one occasion, Ptolemy Soter (the Egyptian king) captured Jerusalem itself on the Sabbath day, because the Jews refused to fight upon that day (an incident typical of the attitude of the Jews at this time towards their law). He transported numbers, either as slaves or as compulsory settlers, to Egypt, where, however, recognizing their honesty and fidelity, he employed many in his garrisons, giving them equal rights with his other subjects.

Later on, his successor and son, Ptolemy Philadelphus (the "*friend*," as the Jews called him), was stirred to take a genuine interest in the history and literature of the Jews. He purchased the freedom of 120,000 Jewish slaves. At the same time he took measures to have the Jewish literature added to his famous library. The result of which was the translation of the Hebrew Old Testament into Greek, and the beginning of that LXX, in which, finally, the Apocrypha and the New Testament were included.

His successor, Ptolemy Euergetes, the benefactor (in whose reign the grandson of Jesus Ben-Sirach, see Prologue, went to Alexandria), retained possession of the Holy Land, and captured the port of Antioch, Seleucia, from his northern enemy; and it is said that he even offered sacrifice in the temple as a thanksgiving to the God of the Jews.

On the whole, then, during this period, Palestine was subject to Egypt with the exception of certain short intervals.

And it was not till the year 198 that the land passed into the permanent power of the Syrian monarch, when he, Antiochus the Great, won a final victory over the Egyptian king. In his reign the Romans come on the scene for the first time. For, in a quarrel with Rome, Antiochus was badly beaten at the Battle of Magnesia, 190, and was forced to accept humiliating conditions of peace, and to send his son and others of the nobility to Rome as hostages. Upon this son we shall have our attention fixed when we consider the books of the Maccabees.

There is one more point of view necessary to complete our picture of this period—the condition of the ruling power in Jerusalem itself. I said at the beginning that the authority of Palestine was now centred in a caste of high priests, and no longer in a monarchy.

Under the Persian period few high priests were distinguished, and only too frequently the ambition of the high priests seems to have been the making of colossal fortunes by farming the revenues of the country, of which, as chief magistrate, the high priest was made collector.

Out of this there grew a rival ambition of the head of a powerful clan, which, under the name of the sons of Tobiah, long exercised sway in the Alexandrian court, and in the Temple at Jerusalem.

But from amidst the intrigues and adventures

of these three centuries, there rises one stately figure, the high priest, Simon the Just, towering above all who came before him and after him in that office, and mentioned with high praise in Ecclus. 50. His portrait, there drawn, is the ideal picture of a great high priest, the stately and revered leader of the hierarchical court.

All the traditions about him combine in representing him as closing the better days of Judaism. Down to his time it was always the right hand of the high priest that drew the lot for the consecrated goat on the Day of Atonement. After his time the left and right hand wavered and varied. Down to his time the red thread round the neck of the scapegoat turned white as a sign that the sins of the people were forgiven. Afterwards its change was quite uncertain. The candlestick at the entrance of the Temple burned in his time without fail; afterwards it often went out. The very title of "The Just" expressed the feeling that he stood alone amongst his contemporaries. And the description in Ecclesiasticus, that of an eye-witness, is of a revered personage, who belonged to a nobler age, and would be seen again no more. They remembered his splendid appearance when he came out from behind the sacred curtain of the holy of holies into the midst of the people, as they crowded the temple on the great fast day. It was like the morning star bursting from a cloud, or the moon in her fullness. It was like the sunlight striking the golden pinnacles of the temple or the rainbow in the stormy cloud. It was as the freshly-blown rose, or the lilies clustering by the stream,

the olive laden with fruit, or the fir-tree reaching to the sky, with the fragrance as of frankincense, with the refinement as of a golden vessel set with gems. Every gesture was followed with admiration. To the gorgeous robes of his office he gave additional grace by the way he wore them. When he stood among the priests he towered above them like a cedar in a grove of palms. When he poured out the libations, or offered the offerings, the blast of the silver trumpets, the loud shout of the people, the harmony of the various voices, the profound prostrations were all in keeping, and his final benediction was an event in the memory of those who had received it.*

On the material fabric of the city and Temple, he left his permanent traces in the repairs and fortification and elevation of the walls, in its double cloister, and the brazen plates with which he encased the huge laver of ablutions. The respect he won from Antiochus the Great procured from him the timber and stone for the work. The precept which survived from his teaching was, "There are three foundations of the world—the Law, the Worship, and (here comes his peculiar teaching, emphasized and repeated in Ecclesiasticus) Benevolence.

And there is one other character of this period of Palestine—Jesus the Son of Sirach, a contemporary of Simon's, distinguished as the great student of the sacred Hebrew literature, as the collector of the grave and pithy short sentences of the wise men who went before him, and as

* Stanley.

himself uttering some things of his own, full of understanding and judgment.

In the book of Ecclesiasticus, we have his collection of wise sayings originally written in Hebrew (and, strange to say, within our own time, during the last few years part of the original Hebrew text has been discovered by Mrs. Lewis, whose discoveries in the monastery on Mount Sinai I described to you last year), and translated by his grandson into Greek for the benefit of his countrymen in Alexandria.

The name being "Ecclesiasticus" shows us how highly the book was held in estimation. For it was for the Jews of Alexandria first, and then for the Christians "The Church Book," the favourite book of ecclesiastical edification, "The Whole Duty of Man," "The Imitation," "The Summary of All Virtues," as it was called in its original title, used alike by the Jews and by the Christians for the instruction of their younger pupils.

The permanent and universal interest of the book is to some extent indicated by the circumstance that some of its sayings have become common proverbs, *e.g.* the well-known saying about "He that toucheth pitch," and at least two of our best-known hyms are founded upon passages from the book.

The Jubilee Hymn of St. Bernard—

> "Jesu, the very thought of Thee,
> With sweetness fills the breast."

is drawn in the original from Ecclus. xxiv. 21, 22. "For my memorial is sweeter than honey, and

mine inheritance than the honeycomb. They that eat me shall yet be hungry, and they that drink me shall yet be thirsty."

And the famous German hymn, "Nun danket alle Gott" ("Now thank we all our God") is Ecclus. i. 22–24: "Now, therefore, bless ye the God of all, which only doeth wondrous things everywhere, which exalteth our days from the womb, and dealeth with us according to His mercy. May He grant us joyfulness of heart, and that peace may be in our days in Israel for ever; that He would confirm His mercy with us, and deliver us at his time."

Ecclesiasticus is the most interesting, perhaps, of all the Jewish sacred writings outside the Old Testament, because it exhibits Jewish thought and religion at a period otherwise unknown. It connects the traditions of the past with the questions of the future, and marks the transition from one to the other. If you have read it carefully, you will be able to conjure up for yourselves a picture of the life and customs and environment of a Jew living in Palestine during this (first) period. If we would know what a cultured, liberal, and yet genuine Jew thought and felt in view of the great questions of the day, or if we would gain insight into the state of public opinion, the morals and society, and even manners of the period, we find the materials for it in Ecclesiasticus. It is the oldest of all the Apocrypha. It was written in Palestine originally, though the grandson of Jesus Ben-Sirach, the author, brought the book with him, when he left Palestine for Egypt, and translated it

into Greek, no doubt touching it up here and there, and expanding it, to suit the Greek spirit of the Alexandrian Jews. At any rate, as the book stands to-day, as a glance at the Revised Version will show us, it has evidently been added to very largely since its first composition.

We may regard it as a continuation of the Wisdom-writings of the Old Testament. The original author, the grandfather, must have been an interesting man. Evidently a priest—perhaps a doctor—with broad mind, he had travelled a great deal; sometimes been in danger of his life, had suffered from false accusations, which had brought him under suspicion of the king. But a keenly observant man, with some humour, who seems to have looked on at society about him, and noted whimsically its petty faults and failings. Yet not little in mind, able to view life from a liberal standpoint, able to see in the Gentile nations of the world the tokens of God's guidance and wisdom.

Wisdom in the Old Testament consisted in reconciling the teaching of Divine revelation with the experience of life. We hold that God overrules man's life, yet we find many difficulties in such a creed, and the reconciliation of these difficulties constitutes man's wisdom. Wisdom becomes, in fact, a kind of mediatorial agency between the Almighty, whom no man can know, and his human creatures. We shall see in further lectures, how this idea of wisdom came at last to be personified into a Personal Being who should be the wisdom or word of God, and should

reconcile these differences. But that is a much later development, which prepared the way for the final teaching of the Gospel of St. John, "The Word became flesh, etc."

But in Ecclesiasticus we find wisdom has two aspects, speculative and practical. (1) Seeking to know the ways of God; (2) seeking to place human life in its right relationship to God. You may have thought as you read the book, what an extraordinary medley of subjects was taken, and how incongruous their juxtaposition often was—the conduct of human life, in most matter-of-fact circumstances, side by side with higher philosophical questions of the providence of God. There is only a *seeming* confusion here, for these two aspects of wisdom are only two sides of the great problem set before us by God, which we can only solve by faith and obedience. Heaven and earth are part of one kingdom. Things on earth are therefore to be the counterpart of things in Heaven. God may be seen in Nature, and His voice heard in the streets and busy commerce of men. Therefore the minute advice given by the author here in reference to the ordinary relationships of life, is founded upon the belief that God must have His due, in our conduct and manners, on every occasion. Thus, on every page of the book, God is set down first and foremost. His Fear, His Law, and the Right and True. The great aim of the Book is to vindicate the ways of God with man, and to show the personal and moral responsibility of man toward God.

So even the homeliness of some of its teaching

has its value. The guidance of behaviour at meals (xxxi. 16), "Eat, as it becometh a man, those things which are set before thee; and devour not, lest thou be hated; leave off first, for manner's sake; and be not unsatiable, lest thou offend." The duty of a host, who is to do his best to please his guests, but not to talk whilst music is being played (xxxii.). The common-sense and yet essentially religious chapter about (xxxviii.) the value of a physician, read as the lesson for St. Luke's day, evensong, "Honour a physician with the honour due unto him, for the uses ye may have of him; for the Lord hath created him." Commercial speculations, and social advancement, the treatment of children and servants all find a reasonable place in the inculcation of true wisdom.

The whole book breathes a spirit of broad dignity and sanctified common sense, even if it contains details out of place nowadays. Here, for the first time in sacred books, we find the idea of education, the slow, gradual process, "at first by crooked ways, then will she return the straight way, and comfort him, and show him her secrets" (iv. 17). "At the last thou shalt find her rest, and that shall be turned to thy joy. Then shall her fetters be a strong defence unto thee, and her chains a robe of glory (Ecclus. vi. 28).

Here's a pointed warning about spoiling children: "Cocker thy child, and he shall make thee afraid; play with him, and he will bring thee to heaviness" (xxx. 9). Here is the measure of true nobleness: "It is not meet to despise a poor man that hath understanding, neither is it convenient to magnify

a sinful man. Great men and judges and potentates *shall* be honoured, yet is there none of them greater than he that feareth the Lord. To the *slave* that is *wise*, shall they that are free do service, and he that hath knowledge will not grudge when he is reformed" (x. 23–24).

Here is the backbone of the honest love of truth: "And nowise speak against the truth, but be abashed of the error of thy ignorance. Strive for the truth unto death, and the Lord shall fight for thee" (iv. 25). There is a tender compassion which reaches far into the future religion of mankind: "Let it not grieve thee to bow down thine ear to the poor, and give him a friendly answer with gentleness. Be as a father to the fatherless, and instead of a husband to the widow; so shalt thou be as the Son of the Most High, and He shall love thee more than thy mother doth" (xli. 1).

He must have been a delightful teacher who could thus write of filial affection, and of friendship in all its forms, and so rise above the harshness of his relations with slaves.

Filial affection (iii. 12–15): "My son, help thy father in his age, and grieve him not as long as he liveth. And if his understanding fail, have patience with him, and despise him not when thou art in thy full strength."

Friendship (vi. 14, etc.): "A faithful friend is the medicine of life." ix. 10: "Forsake not an old friend. For the new is not comparable with him. A new friend is as new wine; when it is old, thou shalt drink it with pleasure."

Servants (iv. 20): "Be not a lion in thy house,

nor frantick among thy servants." vii. 21: "Let thy soul love a good servant, and defraud him not of liberty." xxxiii. 30: "If thou have a servant, entreat him as a brother, let him be unto thee as thyself, because thou hast bought him with a price."

Is there not a real touch of true domestic love in the words (xl. 19, etc.): "Children and the building of a city continue a man's name, but a blameless wife is counted above them both. A friend and companion never meet amiss; but above both is a wife with her husband."

But in the midst of these homely and varied experiences, there is a deeper note heard, a voice as of a prophet and psalmist. He would urge moral duty instead of ceremonial. The true atonement for sins is not the dumb sacrifice in the Temple courts, but the honour due to parents, the giving of alms. The trust in oblations, and the reckless reliance on God, as a God of mercy only, are solemnly discouraged. He that requiteth a good *turn* offereth fine flour, and he that giveth *alms* sacrificeth praise. To depart from unrighteousness is propitiation (iii. 3, 4, 30, etc.).

And underneath this there is burning a quiet flame of hope and resignation. "Look at the generations of old and see" (it is the passage that shone before the face of Bunyan), "did ever any trust in the Lord and were confounded? As His majesty is, so is His mercy."

Once more, Ecclesiasticus is the first reflection we possess on the Old Testament Scriptures after the completion of the Canon. The author has read them, and pondered over them. And he

hoped that he had something he could say in his turn. He comes, as he himself says, last of all, as one that gathereth after the grape gatherers ; by the blessing of the Lord he profited and filled his wine-press, labouring not for himself only, but for all who seek learning.

It is interesting to look at the book from this point of view. To trace in it the first-known references, (*e.g.* to the early chapters of Genesis) to see that Jerusalem is still the centre and Palestine the horizon of his thoughts. The priesthood, with their offerings, the most prominent figures in the community. The modern institution of scribes held up to honour. His enemies, the three hostile tribes that encompassed the land, the Edomites on the south, Philistines on the west, and Samaritans on the north.

Meanwhile we notice how the poetry of the Old Testament finds voice at the conclusion of the book in that "Hymn of the Forefathers," as its ancient title stands, which finds no parallel in the Old Testament, but of which the catalogue of worthies in the Hebrews is an obvious imitation. Here, and here only, is a full expression given to that natural instinct of reverence for the mighty dead, which has been heard for hundreds of years on all Founders' and Benefactors' days, and when the heroes of the earth are committed to the grave. "Let us now praise famous men and the fathers that begat us" first, and second, "Handel's Funeral Anthem"—"Their bodies are buried in peace, but their name liveth for evermore."

Finally we must note that in the author's view,

he includes the whole world as being subject to God's mercy. There is no bitter exclusiveness as yet. But wisdom is to be found in all the nations which God has made. But there are few if any traces at present of the hope of immortality or a future life, which is so magnificently dealt with, in the other Book of Wisdom, at the end of the time of the Apocrypha. The dead leave a name behind them, and their children reap their fruit, whether good or evil. But after death, there is no more thanksgiving, no more doing good. The end of the righteous is blessed, they have finished their work and left a good name behind. Yet mingling with this is some idea of a future state of reward and punishment, showing the commencement of the later doctrine of a future life.

There is some very strong assertion of man's free will, together with some trace of the doctrine of original sin, and of death through Eve's transgression. But there is little trace of any Messianic expectation, though the author does look forward rather vaguely to a time of happiness, when all nations of the world shall be blessed through the Jews. We may say in conclusion that there are the seeds of the doctrine of the New Testament, struggling towards the light, and struggling not hopelessly, but with a real and living faith, so that as the author lays his pen down on his last chapter he is able to say—

"Let your soul rejoice in God's mercy, and be not ashamed of His praise. Work your work betimes, and in His time, He will give you your reward."

LECTURE III.

THE WESTERN DISPERSION.

LAST time, we traced the history of the Jews in the East, and in Palestine during the rise of the Grecian Empire under Alexander, and its subsequent division amongst his generals. We saw the Jews, intensely exclusive, intensely proud of their history and their law, united, wherever they might go, by the Temple and the sacrifices in the Holy City. We saw how closely the *Eastern* Dispersion was linked with the Palestinian Jews, and how the Babylonian Jews boasted that it was from them that the great reformers of their nation had arisen. In Ecclesiasticus we traced the picture of Jewish life in the year 180. And, to-day, we have to complete that picture by reference to another of the Apocrypha's books, The Book of Tobit, before we take up the story further.

The book tells the interesting domestic story of a Jew named Tobit. Its influence has been great in the English Church, and formerly it used to be read in the September daily lessons. You will remember the passage in the marriage service which is based upon it—"As Thou didst send

Thine angel to Toby and Sara to their great comfort," etc., and there are other references to it in the book of Common Prayer and the Homilies.

The offertory sentences: (Tob. iv.) "Give alms of thy goods and never turn thy face from any poor man; and then the face of the Lord shall not be turned away from thee."

"Be merciful after thy power. If thou hast much, give plenteously, if thou hast little, do thy diligence, gladly to give of that little; for so gatherest thou thyself a good reward in the day of necessity."

The Homilies speak of certain incidents (iv. 10, xii. 9), as a "lesson which the Holy Ghost doth teach in sundry places of the Scripture;" whilst the preface to the marriage service, "Marriage is not to be enterprised nor taken in hand, lightly or wantonly, to satisfy carnal lusts," is adopted from Tob. vi. 17 in the Vulgate—the angel's advice to Tobit about his marriage. Once more, the words of the Litany, "Remember not Lord our offences, nor . . . forefathers, neither take Thou vengeance of our sins," is almost word for word translated from the Latin of Tob. iii. 3.

Sketch of the Story.—Tobit, an honest and good man, had always tried to walk in the way of truth and justice. Had always been a strict Jew in observing feasts and tithes. An only son is born to him, and during the Exile, at which period the story is laid, his fortunes vary with the favour or disfavour of the ruling king. In good times, he sent money to the relief of poorer

brethren, placing other money for his own use in safe hands. Under misfortune, he loses all his property, and is in danger of his life, through his acts of mercy towards the unburied dead.

He goes blind from cataract, incurred in a curious way, and all efforts to restore his sight fail. His wife has to take in work, and with his poverty there comes some domestic unhappiness, due to this embitterment of his nature. He takes refuge in prayer, and at the same time, as afterwards appears, in another city, a young Jewess, Sara, daughter of Raguel, is on her knees also. She has had a terrible history. Married seven times, her husbands, through the instrumentality of a demon, Asmodeus, have died on the wedding night. She is subjected to taunts and mockery even from her servants, and "the prayers of them both were heard before the majesty of the great God." And Raphael, the angel, is sent to heal them both.

Tobit bids his son Tobias journey to Media to the friend in whose hands he has left his savings, wishing to set his estate in order before his death. The old man gives some beautiful advice to the younger man (iv.). Duty to his mother and duty to God come first. Liberal almsgiving, though he be poor; lawful marriage; readiness to take advice will lead him to an upright and honest life. "Fear not, my son, that we are made poor," he concludes, "for thou hast much wealth, if thou fear God, and depart from sin, and do that which is pleasing in His sight."

The young man finds the angel Raphael, who

in disguise assumes the name of Azarias. The old man satisfies himself of his trustworthiness, and arranges what pay the guide shall receive. So the two men set out with Tobit's dog, followed by the father's blessing and the mother's tears.

On the journey, they come to the Tigris, where Tobias catches a fish, the liver, heart, and gall of which his guide bids him keep—the first two to burn as a charm to drive away evil spirits if they trouble any one, the latter as being good to cure cataract. Shortly after, the angel expresses his intention of staying at Raguel's house, where they will see Sara, who, he says, is the young man's wife by right of inheritance. Her terrible enchantment the young man can cure. The angel's words arouse all his sympathy, and when they arrive, and are received with real oriental hospitality, Tobias refuses to eat, until the betrothal is arranged. With the ardour of love at first sight, he sets aside the father's account of his daughter's trouble, and the scene closes with the mother's prayer for her weeping daughter, as she leads her to the bridal room. Then comes the scene with the demon, in which he is expelled by the "fishy fume," and it is followed by an exquisite marriage prayer by the husband and wife. The marriage festivities are kept up for a fortnight, whilst the angel goes on to fetch Tobit's money. Finally on his return, Tobias takes wife and money back to his own home, with one affectionate counsel from his mother-in-law in his ears, "Behold, I commit my daughter unto thee of special trust; wherefore do not entreat her evil."

Then comes the story of the return. The anxiety of the blind father and mother, at last rewarded by the sight of Tobias and the angel, who had pushed on ahead from the caravan. Tobias carried in his hand the gall of the fish. He greets his weeping mother fondly, then, as his blind father stumbles towards him, he saves him from falling with one hand, whilst he "strake of the gall of the fish on his father's eyes" with the other, saying, "Be of good hope, my father." The father rubs his smarting eyes, the whiteness pills away, he sees once more.

There remains only the payment of the trusted guide. But now the angel reveals himself, "Raphael, one of the seven holy angels, which present the prayers of the saints." He tells Tobit God has given him this blessing because of his prayers, and almsgiving, and offices to the dead.

Tobit in a prayer of thanksgiving, hopes that the history of his own life from sorrow to joy, may be repeated among his countrymen and in Jerusalem. "Praise the everlasting king," he concludes, "that His tabernacle may be built in thee again." . . . For the old man sees in vision the children of the just gathered together in the Holy City, and many nations coming with gifts in their hands. . . . He sees Jerusalem built with precious stones, he hears the very streets singing Alleluia, and men's voices proclaiming "Blessed be the Lord which hath extolled it for ever."

The story is not to be taken as historically true in every detail. In fact it contains some obvious errors in history. But I think the reality of some

of its features cannot fail to strike us, as we read it as a whole, and it is probably founded upon the history of a real Jewish family.

The book presents a delightful picture of Jewish life and feeling for some forty years. The nation had passed through some period of great distress and oppression, the individual Jew is first punished and then mocked at for his devotion to national custom (that of burying the dead, and the rites of purification afterwards). Marriages between God's people and aliens still needed to be discouraged, whilst intercourse between families in exile was comparatively easy and safe. There were ardent hopes animating the nation of a full restoration of the people scattered amongst the Gentiles, a rebuilding of the Temple and Holy City, and a conversion of all the nations.

There are three interesting points that help us to fix the date. The first is the reference to the building of the Temple (xiv. 5): "A temple shall be built, but not like the first." A clear reference to the temple of *Zerubbabel*, showing that the writer lived before the age in which the restoration of the Temple was undertaken with such costly magnificence by *Herod;* and, second, the absence of any allusion to the terrible period of persecution under Antiochus Epiphanes with which we shall have to deal later, but of which it is enough to say now that it was a crisis so fearful, and left such a scar upon the heart of Judaism, that it would have been impossible for a Jew, writing such a book as this, not to have mentioned it, especially in a chapter like xiv., where there is a prediction put

into the mouth of Jonah about the future of Jerusalem. The third is the name of the heroes Tobit and Tobias. These names, remember, were once hateful to every patriotic Jew—because borne by Tobias the Ammonite the adversary of Nehemiah, 445 B.C. It is unlikely that such names would be chosen for the heroes of a story until the memory of the hated Ammonite had died out, and, perhaps, we may say, the name had been raised to reputation by a noble and pious Jew. These three pointers help to fix the date of Tobit (the book), somewhere about 180 B.C., and the following historical incident may have a direct bearing on the book. During the reign of Antiochus the Great (with whom we ended last week), there was a famous Tobias, whose career, and that of his still more famous son Joseph, were contemporaneous with Antiochus's reign. The thirty-six years of this prince's reign, with varying vicissitudes of distress and peace, are parallel to the alternations of sorrow and joy in the Book of Tobit.

And the determination of Tobit to maintain the purity of Jewish marriage finds a striking parallel in the story of Joseph the son of Tobias. He was married to his own niece. Having fallen in love with a heathen actress, and being determined to possess her, he told his brother, who rather than see his family contaminated by a Gentile marriage substituted his own daughter in the actress's place (Jos. Ant., bk. xii., iv.), an act which must have won him, by the self-sacrifice it involved of both father and daughter, the great admiration and

respect of the earnest Jews. It is, I think, a most ingenious and probable suggestion (by Fuller, author of a commentary on Tobit) that this is the reason for the names of hero and father of this book. The author lived at the time when this dramatic incident took place, and in writing a book urging the necessity of Jewish purity of marriage, he felt he could not do better than give to his heroes this honoured name.

It just remains for me to point out one or two interesting features marking the development of religious thought. You'll notice first the detailed belief in demons like Asmodeus, and the angels (seven of them), like Raphael. And you will compare the angels in Daniel, who fight with the "guardian spirit of the nations." In this doctrine of angels, we see the influence of the Persian religion. The very word "Asmodeus" (Aeshmo Daevo), the raging demon, is from the Persian, or Mazdean religion.

According to the Persian religion, God Supreme reigned over all, but entrusted his rule to legions of heavenly beings, governing sun, moon, earth, winds, water, etc. Six genii, or archangels governed these ministering spirits, whilst there was an evil spirit, ever endeavouring to thwart the purposes of God, and under him six arch-demons, and countless inferior beings to work his will. In Tobit, we have traces of this doctrine in a Jewish setting; in Daniel we hear of two other angels out of the "seven" principal ones, Gabriel and Michael, and in the Book of Enoch the rest. Notice how, then, in addition to the revelation of God to the Jews, there

has been also an evolution of religious thought, always advancing nearer truth, in the other religions of the world.

As for the intention of the author of Tobit, we can read a good many moral lessons in it. "All that God does, He does for good," such is the comment of Rabbi Akiba. "The duty of worshipping God amidst the heathen"; "In praise of almsgiving, fasting, and prayer, and the simple life;" "A picture of what family and domestic life should be—duty of parents and children to one another;" "The burial of the dead and the purity of Jewish marriage." "Is it history?" says Luther, "then is it holy history. Is it fiction? then is it a truly beautiful, wholesome and profitable fiction, the performance of a gifted poet."

But now we leave the Dispersion in the East, and the Jews in Palestine, to turn once more towards the Dispersion in the West, especially at Alexandria. Here we shall find an entirely different atmosphere. In spite of the intense love of their nation, and their devotion to the law and the Holy City, the Jews in the West developed a liberality of thought which is astonishing, when compared with the narrow exclusiveness we have been considering. Edersheim puts it epigrammatically thus, "With the Jews of the East rested the future of Judaism; with those of the West, in a sense, rested the future of the world." The former represented the Old Israel with its affections and its conservative love fixed upon the past, the latter was young Israel, looking forward to a new day, and a new era.

You will remember how Alexander first planted the Jewish colony in Egypt, and how that colony was added to from time to time by emigrations of Jews from Palestine during the wars of the rival kings of Egypt and Syria. Before long, there was an enormous Jewish population in the city. And the city itself, placed on an ideal harbour-site, as the keen eye of Alexander had marked it, grew to be the great capital of the Western world—a cosmopolitan city where all nations met and jostled each other on the quays and in the markets, but where the predominant races were Greek and Jew. The Jews spoke Greek—it was the language of commerce all over the world after Alexander's conquests. And you can easily foresee how before long they had imbibed Greek ideas, and Greek liberality—the result of this contact, away from Palestine, with the outer nations. So it comes about that these Jews of the West are known as Hellenists, and are spoken of in the New Testament as Grecians. On the other hand, it is obvious that the Greek world could not remain unaffected by Judaic influence, however it despised the Jew himself. Witness the large numbers of Greek converts (proselytes) and particularly the preparedness of this "Dispersion" for the new doctrine —Christianity—when it came from Judæa, with its glorious message to all the world. To-day, particularly, I would remind you of the gradual preparation of the world for Christ during these centuries; for I think we shall see certain very plain pointers to this, as we go through our subject.

The Jewish colony was close along the sea-shore, directly to the east of Alexandria—this, probably, for the sake of their ceremonies of washing and ablution in the Mediterranean; to this day, the great mounds of buried buildings in that neighbourhood are called "The Mounds of the Jews." They were in such numbers that they were known by the name of the "tribe," and, needless to say, they found here a magnificent outlet for their commercial enterprise.

In its palmiest days Alexandria became a wonderful city. There is a splendid picture in Edersheim's "Life of Christ," which I cannot do better than read. Imagine that we are reaching the city by boat from the sea.

"Quite thirty miles out, the silver sheen of the lighthouse on the island of Pharos, connected with a mole with Alexandria, is burning like a star on the horizon. (This immense lighthouse was square up to the middle, then covered by an octagon, the top being round. It was repaired for the last time in A.D. 1303). Now we catch sight of the palm-groves of Pharos; presently the anchor rattles and grates on the shore, and we land. What a crowd of vessels of all sizes, shapes, and nationalities; what a multitude of busy people; what a very Babel of languages; what a commingling of old- and new-world civilization; and what a variety of wares piled up, loading and unloading!

"Alexandria itself was not an old Egyptian, but a modern city. . . . Built in the form of an open fan, or rather the outspread cloak of a Macedonian horseman. Larger than Rome; but its houses

neither so crowded, nor so many-storied. It had been a large city when Rome was inconsiderable, and to the last held second place in the empire. The five quarters of the city were called by the five letters of the alphabet. One was covered by the royal palaces, with their gardens, including the royal mausoleum, in which the body of Alexander the Great, preserved in honey, was kept in a glass coffin. But these, and the three miles of colonnade along the principal street, were only a few of the magnificent architectural adornments of the city. The population was nearly 1,000,000. Three worlds met in the streets—Africa, Asia, and Europe. It was furnished with a splendid harbour, or rather with five harbours. In Roman times, a special fleet carried, as tribute to Rome, two-tenths of the corn-produce of Egypt, which sufficed to feed the capital for four months. A magnificent fleet it was—and I need hardly add that it was managed by Jewish hands—from the quick light-sailer to those immense corn-ships which hoisted a special flag, and whose early arrival was awaited at the port of Rome (Puteoli) with all the eagerness of any modern ocean-liner. It was a twelve days' run across, and you will remember that St. Paul travelled in the *Castor and Pollux*, a ship of this very fleet. The average size was about 1500 tons, and one such boat brought its owner about £3000 a year, though these were small ships compared with those that carried marble, of which it is said that one, besides conveying an obelisk (like Cleopatra's needle), had 1200 passengers, and a freight of paper, nitre, linen, pepper, and wheat as well.

It was in the days of the Ptolemies that the trade with India began, and it soon grew to extraordinary dimensions. India was a three months' journey up the Nile, thence by caravan, and again by sea. And there was a considerable *local* industry as well. Linen goods to suit the tastes and costumes of all countries. Woollen stuffs of every hue, glass of every shade and shape. Paper from the thinnest sheet to the coarsest packing-paper, essences, perfumeries, these were the native products.

As the Emperor Hadrian put it, "money was the people's god" in Alexandria, and every one was well to do—from the waif in the streets, who could pick up a living easily, sufficient to go to the restaurant, and enjoy a good dinner of fresh or smoked fish with garlic, and his pudding, washed down with his favourite Egyptian beer, up to the millionaire banker who owned a palace in Alexandria, and a villa by the beautiful canal that connected Alexandria with the suburb Canobus. Imagine the crowd in the streets or in the market, where it was said jocularly you could get everything but snow, or at the harbours, or in the superb libraries where the savants of Alexandria taught every branch of learning, and its famous physicians prescribed for the poor consumptive patients sent hither from every part of Italy. Imagine the theatres and music-halls, or the scenes on that long canal to Canobus, lined with luxurious inns, where boats of pleasure-seekers revelled on the banks, or went on to the Canobus, notorious for dissipation and luxury even in those days.

Yet close by, on the shores of Lake Mareotis, a grim contrast, lived the Jewish community of hermits, students of the Old Testament, ascetic and self-denying—the Therapeutæ, as they were called, the progenitors of the Christian hermits and anchorites of later times.

Here, then, were the surroundings of the Jews, whose quarter originally was situated on the eastern harbour and the Canobus canal, but finally spread so vastly that one man in eight throughout the country was a Jew. The export trade came into their hands, and later on the harbour and river police were committed to their charge. They had synagogues all over the town, the chief of which was so large that it needed a signal for those most distant to know the proper moment for the responses. The different trade-guilds sat there together, so that a stranger would at once know where to find Jewish employers or fellow-workmen. In the choir of this Jewish cathedral stood seventy chairs of state, encrusted with precious stones, for the seventy elders who constituted the Jewish Sanhedrin there.

One strange thing is worth notice. The Jews actually built a temple of their own in Egypt, at Leontopolis. During the terrible troubles and persecutions in Palestine, with which we shall deal next time, a certain Onias, whose father, Onias III., high priest, had been cruelly murdered, fled for safety to Egypt. The Egyptian king, Ptolemy Philometor, received him kindly, and gave him a disused heathen temple in the town of Leontopolis for a Jewish sanctuary. It had originally been a

temple to Pasht, or Bubastis, the Cat, and here a new Aaronic priesthood ministered, in a temple that was more like a fortress and a heathen sanctuary than the Temple at Jerusalem. A huge tower flanked by colonnades; an altar, modelled exactly like the one in Jerusalem. But in place of the golden candlestick, an enormous chandelier. It was a bold attempt to form a new centre of Judaism, and at first the Egyptian Jews were very proud of it, and tried to find in it the fulfilment of the ancient prophecy (Isa. xiv. 18) that there should be five nations in the land of Egypt speaking the language of Canaan, and revering the Name of God, and that one of these should be the sacred city of the Sun. (As a matter of fact, On, the Egyptian city of the Sun, was close by.) It lasted for two hundred years, and though it was despised by the Palestinian Jews, yet it had a sort of official connection with the Temple at Jerusalem, being regarded in some sense as an offshoot.

The existence of such a temple shows at least one point. It points to an attempt at an adaptation of the old Jewish forms of worship to meet the demands of altered circumstances, and it is all the more interesting when we compare it with the account given by Herodotus of the festivals held previously in connection with the worship of Bubastis. The heavy-laden barges dropping down the Nile on their way to the city; crowds of devotees embarking on these pilgrimages; music of lotus-pipes and cymbals; the consumption of more wine on this occasion than on any other in the year. Onias tried to preserve some of the old

attractions. And it is more than probable that the story we find in the First Book of Esdras (Apocrypha) of the rebuilding of the Palestine temple was written at this time, in support of this temple at Leontopolis. At any rate, not to delay you too long upon the subject, we find in Esdras points resembling these rites and pleasures attaching to the worship at the new temple. You will perhaps remember that the book contains reference to seven days' carousal, with music and rejoicing, the escort of a thousand horsemen, the setting out with pipes and timbrels, suggestive far more of the Egyptian feasts than of the return of the children of Israel from the Captivity.

At any rate this is the place for a short note upon the Book, 1 Esdras. The book is an instance of the freedom with which the Alexandrian Jews dealt with the Old Testament, a point I have to notice again a little later. With one exception it is a compilation of certain parts of Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah, and deals with the restoration of the Jews from Babylon to their own land, but it has throughout this Egyptian colouring. Esdras, it must be remembered, is simply the Greek for Ezra, and the original title of the book was, therefore, "the Second Book of Ezra." Apart from its probable connection with this temple at Leontopolis, the general aim of the author is to stimulate his countrymen to a more zealous observance of law, and to render the Greek-speaking Jews familiar with the favour which through the Divine Providence was once shown to their nation by foreign kings. The exaggerated acts of the munificence

of Cyrus and Darius lead us to suppose that the author aimed at securing to the Jews the favour of the King of Egypt in like manner. You will have noted also indirectly the great point made of the putting away of heathen wives, and there is one quite unique section (iii.–v. 6) containing the famous proverb, "Magna est veritas, etc.," which I must just delay on for a moment more.

It is a contest of wits. Three young men, guards of the king's chamber while the king sleeps, agree to compose, each one, a sentence on a given thesis, and deposit it, written and sealed, under the king's pillow to be read when he rises in the morning. The proposition of the first is that "Wine is the strongest"; second, that "King is the strongest"; the third, that "Women are the strongest, but the Truth over all." The author of the last, Zerubbabel, wins the debate, and when asked what his reward is, begs for the restoration of the Jews to their own country.

The source of this incident is unknown; it may be purely fiction or founded upon some legend coming down to the Jews from their Babylonian sojourn. But it is finely composed, and the section about "Women and Truth" is a fine piece of literature.

"O ye men, it is not the great king, nor the multitude of men, neither is it wine, that excelleth; who is it then that ruleth them, or hath the lordship over them? are they not women? Women have borne the king and all the people that bear rule by sea and land. . . . without women cannot men be. Yea, and if men have gathered together gold and silver, or any other goodly thing, do

they not love a woman which is comely in favour and beauty? And letting all those things go, do they not gape, and even with open mouth fix their eyes fast on her; and have not all men more desire unto her than unto silver or gold, or any goodly thing whatsoever? A man leaveth his own father that brought him up, and his own country, and cleaveth unto his wife. . . . By this also ye must know that women have dominion over you: do ye not labour and toil, and give and bring all to the woman? Yea, a man taketh his sword, and goeth his way to rob and to steal, to sail upon the sea and upon rivers; and looketh upon a lion, and goeth in the darkness; and when he hath stolen, spoiled, and robbed, he bringeth it to his love. Wherefore a man loveth his wife better than father or mother. Yea, many there be that have run out of their wits for women, and become servants for their sakes. Many also have perished, have erred, and sinned, for women. . . . O ye men, are not women strong? great is the earth, high is the heaven, swift is the sun in his course, for he compasseth the heavens round about, and fetcheth his course again to his own place in one day. Is he not great that maketh these things? therefore great is the truth, and stronger than all things. All the earth calleth upon the truth, and the heaven blesseth it: all works shake and tremble at it, and with it is no unrighteous thing. Wine is wicked, the king is wicked, women are wicked, all the children of men are wicked, and such are all their wicked works; and there is no truth in them; in their unrighteousness also shall they perish. As for the truth it endureth, and is always strong; it liveth and conquereth for evermore."

With this short reference to the historical position of 1 Esdras, we may pass on to another book of the

Apocrypha—"the Rest of the Book of Esther." According to xi. 1, this book purports to have been brought to Egypt during the reign of one of the Ptolemies by a priest named Dositheus. The actual book of Esther in the Old Testament was written to perpetuate the feast of Purim, a national thanksgiving festival marking the deliverance of the people from a wholesale murder.

This feast became very popular, and in 160 B.C., the first day of it was known as "Mordecai's Day," and it was celebrated throughout the world. It is more than probable that the Ptolemy mentioned in the "Rest of the Book," was Ptolemy Philometor, in whose reign this Temple at Leontopolis was built, and that the book was brought to Egypt for use in that Temple. The object of these additions to the Canonical Book was first to show how that it was the LORD who had delivered His people, in marked contrast to the Book of Esther, in which the name of God does not occur at all, and to supply other points lacking in the canonical Book. Finally, among other motives, may have been the desire to vindicate the character of a Jewess like Esther in becoming the consort of a heathen king. At any rate, here again we have an instance of the freedom with which the Alexandrian Jews dealt with their Old Testament.

Now we may go on with the story of the period again.

You can imagine the Jewish population in Alexandria growing wealthier and more powerful, until they were ruled over by a Jewish governor of their own choice, whilst another Jew, called the

Alabarch, ruled over the Arab population of the city. In later times, one celebrated Jew held this post, and his life is typical of the influence which they must have exerted. He was Alexander, brother of the great Alexandrian Jewish philosopher Philo. He was head of a great banking and shipping house, in the time of Tiberius Cæsar, and in fact undertook the management of the affairs of the Emperor's sister Antonia.

It was a small thing for this man to lend King Agrippa £7000 on the guarantee of Agrippa's Jewish wife, Drusilla. Two of his sons married daughters of the king, while a third at the price of apostasy became finally governor of Egypt. Herod's magnificent temple at Jerusalem was enriched by this man with gold and silver coverings to the great gates, a fact that will show the close contact and love still maintained with Jerusalem, the heart of the Jewish world.

Now, having seen the political development of these Jews, let us look at their mental and religious development in Alexandria.

Remember that if they influenced the nations amongst whom they lived, the influence certainly reacted. Greek learning and thought and philosophy were brought to their very doors by the museum and library of Alexandria, where during this interval between Old and New Testaments, Euclid the mathematician, Apelles the painter, and Eratosthenes the grammarian were to be found. The Jew would look with contempt upon the idolatrous practices of the heathen in Alexandria, and no more scathing irony has been written about

idolatry than is to be found in the Apocryphal book of "Bel and the Dragon," which was written at Alexandria during this period. This book, with the other additions to the Book of Daniel, one of which, "The Song of the Three Holy Children," we sing during this time of the year instead of the *Te Deum*, marks the feelings of the Alexandrian Jews towards idolatry. (Notice also the irony of Wisdom, though written much later.)

From the spectacle of heathenism around him, the Grecian Jew would turn with satisfaction to his own community. With some pride, he would pass to his own synagogues, where additional gratification would be his at the sight of many who, heathens by birth, had learned the error of their ways, and humbly stood as "suppliants of the gate"—to give them their technical term—seeking admission into the sanctuary.

And in these synagogues there would be real brotherly love shown, a real union of race and creed, such as makes the Jewish community in England to-day so wonderfully united and kind to its members. Especially, what a welcome would await Jews from other lands, particularly from Palestine. From the Acts of the Apostles we can understand the eagerness with which they would invite the passing Rabbi or teacher to speak, if he had a word of exhortation for the people. Even the Jewish pedlar in his wanderings was always sure of a Sabbath-welcome and a Sabbath-rest.

Yet, as the Jew stepped out of this narrow circle, he was confronted with Greek culture and thought. It was in the forum, the counting-house, the market,

the street. It was refined and elegant, irresistible. What is more, Greek criticism could not be stilled by the authority of a Rabbi. If he would deal with Greek thought, the Jew must give up that principle of authority on which traditionalism, as a system, rested. It might be enough for the Jew in the east or Palestine to say, "You must accept this doctrine on the authority of the Old Testament, or on the wisdom of some dead Rabbi." The Greek would laugh at it. So the Western Jew must meet argument by argument. He must come down to the mental plane of his opponent. And he did not fear to do so for he felt convinced of victory, because of his profound belief in the truth of the revelation God had vouchsafed to his people.

But what *was* this truth? Was it only the substance of Scripture; or was it its very form as well? At any rate, whatever the answer, the Old Testament was directly and wholly from God, and if so, then its letter also must be divine. Therefore, the student must learn to penetrate deeper into it, quickened by Greek criticism. With this theory before them there arose methods of interpretation—(1) the mystical supra-natural meaning of the words; (2) the spiritual bearing of them, to which, *e.g.* St. Paul was fond of directing his disciples; and (3) the intellectual view of the scriptures, *i.e.* the application to them of the results of Greek learning and thought. It was this last which was peculiarly the task of the Hellenist Jew. And as he delved into his Bible, he came to see that portions of the truth that lay there were also enshrined in the Greek philosophies as well. That

all truth was of God. That the heathen sages themselves were in some sense taught of God.

This was a tremendous advance. A great liberal outlook upon the world, a breaking of the narrow bonds of Jewish exclusiveness. Its most important result was the translation of the Jews Bible into Greek, the LXX, to be followed by a great mass of Grecian-Jewish literature, amongst which, as you have seen, the Apocrypha itself is to be placed.

You will remember the story of the LXX. The Jewish legend represents it as having been translated by seventy scribes imported from Palestine by Ptolemy Philadelphus, locked up in separate rooms in a building near the lighthouse, and finally producing seventy identical translations of the Hebrew text. This is but a myth, the underlying truth being that the Egyptian king was immensely interested in the Jews and their religion and wanted to add their literature to his magnificent library. A more probable explanation of the word LXX, "70," is that it stood for the number of the Gentile nations, and represented therefore the Bible which the heathen might read.

At any rate, this became the people's Bible. The first great Authorized Version, used later on all over the world. Hebrew manuscripts were frightfully dear; but the LXX was comparatively cheap, probably as much matter as would cover sixteen pages of modern small print would sell for about sixpence (Edersheim).

At first this translation was regarded by the

old-fashioned Jews in Palestine as a great calamity, equal to the worship of the golden calf. It was a prostituting of the Holy Scriptures before the feet of the uncircumcised. The same feeling that made it a heresy to translate the Bible into English at the Reformation made the Palestinian vituperate this Greek translation. But gradually it won its way. For a hundred to a hundred and fifty years it was gradually built up, till at last the Old Testament was complete. There is one little point of interest, touching on the translation of the book and its birthplace. The father of the Ptolemies was Ptolemy Lagus. Lagus is the usual Greek word for hare. But, when the translators came to the passages in the Law about the hare as an unclean beast, they did not like to use this word Lagus, the title of the King's father, so kind to them, so they have introduced a special word, "dasypus" (hairy foot), in its place.

Thus the religion of the Old Testament was brought near to the Grecian world of thought. Now the latter had to be brought near to Judaism. It was necessary to find some common ground upon which the two might meet. The first attempt in this direction was in the Apocryphal literature.

From this point of view it was twofold in purpose. (1) It was apologetic, intended to fill gaps in Jewish history or thought, and especially to strengthen Jewish mind from attacks from without; (2) it was to show that the deeper and purer thinking of heathenism in its highest philosophy supported, nay, was identical with the fundamental teaching of the Old Testament. This prepared

the way for a reconciliation with Greek philosophy. We shall see it specially when we come to consider 4 Maccabees and Wisdom of Solomon. Even in Ecclesiasticus, we saw the first trace of this thought that Wisdom had as its outcome the acknowledgment of some truth amongst the Gentiles.

The eastern Judaism called this literature "Apocrypha," *hidden* books, but when the prejudice to the LXX had worn down, these newer writings were accepted and eagerly read, though distinguished carefully from the canonical books.

There were two objects in trying to weld Grecian thought with Hebrew revelation. The Jews wanted to show their Greek philosopher friends that beneath the letter of Scripture there was a deeper meaning which would accord with philosophic truth. They therefore tried to find all sorts of allegorical meanings in the Old Testament. Compare St. Paul's Epistles, which, written when this science had been highly developed, contain several such references. "The Spiritual Rock." "This Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia," etc. It was the special work of the Therapeutae to trace this allegorical meaning.* And one famous Alexandrian Jew, whose name I have set down on my synopsis, played a great part in the originating of this science—Aristobulus. A fragment of his work has come down to us, dedicated to Ptolemy Philometor, whose name has already been before us, as encouraging the building of the Temple at Leontopolis. Many of the later Alexandrian scholars were disciples of Plato, but he was a follower of Aristotle. He set himself to find the Hebrew

* The Therapeutae were an ascetic sect, living in cells outside Leontopolis.

religion in the Greek philosophy, and *vice versâ*, and to do this started an extraordinary method for allegorizing the Old Testament. It remained for a later Alexandrian Jew, Philo, to resolve the great mass of floating methods of allegorization into one compact whole. But we must deal with him in a later lecture.

Meanwhile Aristobulus suggested, *e.g.* that Orpheus had met Moses in Egypt, and that all the Greek sages had really learnt from Moses. He, or a contemporary, invented the Sibylline oracles, prophesying the future, on a line with the Sybil of Greece, pretending to be ancient oracles proving indubitably that the Greek philosophy was founded on the teaching of Moses. He produced a number of real and spurious quotations, ostensibly from famous Greek authors, but all Biblical and Jewish in their cast—and all this, remember, with the laudable desire of bringing the Greek heathen to acknowledge the truth of the Jews' religion, and to unite Greek and Jew in a common bond.

Lastly, there arose a great number of books known as Pseudepigraphic writings, which were anti-heathen, missionary, and apocalyptic in tone. As some of them had their bearing on the later books of the Apocrypha I must deal with them briefly in conclusion. They are all attempts to point to the past, the present, and the future in the light of the kingship of the Messiah—to foreshadow the day when the kingdoms of this world should be the Kingdom of God. The Book of Enoch, written in Palestine, is one quoted by Jude, the Psalms of Solomon another. This last

expresses ardent Messianic aspirations, a firm belief in the Resurrection, and in eternal reward and punishments. This is quoted in the apocryphal book of Baruch ; in fact iv. 36 to v. 9 is the eleventh psalm of Solomon.

To sum up, the rise of the Greeks had given a universal language to the world. (Later on, Rome gave a universal Empire.) Now Judaism was preparing a universal religion. The LXX welded Greek language to Hebrew thought, and gave birth to the science of Theology. The way was preparing, in fact, for a common humanity, transcending all the differences of race and time, and for a common Saviour, in whom all the world should be united (Westcott).

LECTURE IV.

THE MACCABÆAN STRUGGLE.

LAST time we saw the influence of Greece and Grecian philosophy upon the Jews in Alexandria and the West. It issued in a liberality of thought, and a wider application of the revelation of God. It found a practical effect in the translation of the Bible into Greek, and thus wedded Greek philosophic diction to Hebrew thought, preparing a theological vocabulary which is in use to this day.

Now we have to-day to turn to Palestine again, and to see there entirely other consequences of this contact with Grecian civilization. It is one of the finest chapters in all history that we shall open, the story of a nation's fight for freedom, not only civil freedom, but that which lies even deeper in the meaning of patriotism, religious freedom as well.

The story of the Maccabæan era which we are about to take is intimately connected with four books of the Bible. The Book of Daniel, in the Old Testament, and the books of Judith and Maccabees, in the Apocrypha. The Book of Daniel, according to modern critical research, was written just after the climax of the story was

reached, and it contains in the romance of Daniel at the court of a heathen king a stirring appeal to the Jewish nation to be true to their faith at all costs, whilst in the second part of the book, the visions, we have, in a kind of apocalyptic cryptogram, the history of years of fierce struggle and tribulation, with the magnificent appeal to God, Jehovah as King of kings and Lord of lords, who has preserved His people in the past, and will, therefore, do so in the present, for all kingdoms and nations are His dominion, and His will is ever done by the movements of the earth's great empires.

In the books of the Maccabees we have the actual history of the time written, in the first case, shortly after, and in the second at a rather later period, when the actual facts could appear in a truer perspective, and the hand of God be traced in their course, whilst in the Book of Judith we have the central teaching, "What Faith has done in the past, faith can do again."

I think it will be well to take a short introduction to these last three works first of all.

The Book of Judith. The story of the book is as follows. Nebuchadnezzar, having summoned all nations to his aid, enters upon a long campaign with the Medes, and finally conquers their capital Ecbatana. Some of the Western nations, however, amongst which are to be reckoned the inhabitants of Palestine, have refused to obey his summons to assist him. The year following, therefore, he determines upon punishing them, and sends a great general—Holofernes by name—with an

enormous army to lay waste their lands. The Jews, fearing lest Jerusalem should be destroyed, after its recent reconsecration at the return of the exiles, resolve upon a stern and bitter resistance. The high priest and the council order the fortification of certain Northern towns commanding the entrance into Palestine from Syria, whilst the people give themselves to prayer and fasting. The town of Bethulia is besieged. Upon the issue of its siege depends the fate of the Jewish land and religion, and the three elders of the city, yielding to the cries of the famished inhabitants, resolve to open the gates to the enemy in five days. But Judith, a rich young widow, confident of the righteousness of her people, believes that God would deliver them by her hand. Prepared by prayer, and by strict observance of legal rites, she makes her way to the tent of Holofernes, captivates him by her beauty and flattery, and beheads him while he is sunk in a drunken stupor after a banquet held in her honour. She escapes with his head to Bethulia.

Confusion and fear fall upon the Assyrian army, and the Jews slaughter them in their flight, and so completely rout them that peace reigns for many years after.

Now, in the first place, the story is probably founded upon actual facts, handed down in traditional form to the Jews of the Maccabæan period. Bethulia has not been identified, but the details of the geography of Judæa are so accurate that there is little doubt that the author was writing of a real town. The book was well known and

eagerly read in later times, and we have one interesting reference to it in an early Christian writing the Epistle of St. Clement to the Corinthians (A.D. 90), where Judith is put before Esther as an example of womanly courage.

"The blessed Judith, when the city was beleaguered, asked of the elders that she might be suffered to go forth into the camp of the aliens. So she exposed herself to peril, and went forth for love of her country and of her people which were beleaguered; and the Lord delivered Holofernes into the hand of a woman. To no less peril did Esther also expose herself . . ."

From internal evidence, the book must have been written towards the close of the Maccabæan era, *c.p.* the appeal to ceremonial obedience (as evidenced in Judith's ablutions), the long cry of oppression, the mention of the Sabbath eve, and the Sanhedrin, whilst Jewish tradition identifies the Judith of the story with a sister of Judas Maccabæus himself. At least one important lesson which the writer would press upon his readers is that since a great deliverance had, in years gone by, been won from Heaven through the strict adhesion to the Mosaic Law, so God could never look with indifference upon a people who were united in prayer and fast. That is to say, that the strict observance of the law, in accordance with the tenets of the Pharisees, was, in the opinion of the author, the "way" by which Israel should walk.

The second great object of the book is to encourage Jewish readers in their heroic resistance

of the foreigner, as well as their strict observance of the law. The heroine's deed, like that of Jael, is an act of savage treachery. But the story of hatred to Israel's foreign foe, combined with a punctilious adherence to the ceremonial requirements of the law faithfully characterizes the spirit of the Maccabæan age.

It is more than probable that under the various names of the personages introduced, there lie references to the prominent persons engaged in the Maccabæan struggle, *e.g.* Judith may simply be "Judas Maccabæus" given a woman's name and dress, Orofernes his arch-enemy Nicanor (see after).

There is to be noticed the Jewish doctrine of determinism, and yet of man's freewill. God rules everything, and salvation is from Him, yet it is through the wisdom and courage of Judith that deliverance is wrought. There is no reference to belief in a future life or the coming of the Messiah.

Meanwhile, you will have noticed that the literary style of the book is very high, whilst the Song of Triumph holds its own with the best products of the Hebrew spirit.

"For God breaketh the battles: for among the camps in the midst of the people He hath delivered me out of the hands of them that persecuted me. Assur came out of the mountains from the north, he came with ten thousands of his army, the multitude whereof stopped the torrents, and their horsemen have covered the hills. He bragged that he would burn up my borders, and kill my young men with the sword, and dash the sucking

children against the ground, and make mine infants as a prey, and my virgins as a spoil. But the Almighty Lord hath disappointed them by the hand of a woman. For the mighty one did not fall by the young men, neither did the sons of the Titans smite him, nor high giants set upon him: but Judith the daughter of Merari weakened him with the beauty of her countenance. For she put off the garment of her widowhood for the exaltation of those that were oppressed in Israel, and anointed her face with ointment, and bound her hair in a tire, and took a linen garment to deceive him. Her sandals ravished his eyes, her beauty took his mind prisoner, and the fauchion passed through his neck. The Persians quaked at her boldness, and the Medes were daunted at her hardiness. Then my afflicted shouted for joy, and my weak ones cried aloud; but they were astonished: these lifted up their voices, but they were overthrown. The sons of the damsels have pierced them through, and wounded them as fugitives' children: they perished by the battle of the Lord. I will sing unto the Lord a new song: O Lord, Thou art great and glorious, wonderful in strength, and invincible.

The Books of the Maccabees are by two entirely different authors, and are written at long intervals from one another. The truth is that the story they tell made such an impression upon the Jewish history that there are no less than *five* books of the Maccabees in existence, all telling the same story with variations. Out of these five, two only found their way permanently into the scriptures.

The first book is a historical treatise, telling us the story of the Jews at a most critical time, their revolt against the tyranny of the Syrian kings, and

the re-establishment of their national independence. It is written by an orthodox Jew in Palestine itself, in a very varied style, some of it quite plain and simple, some of it rising to considerable eloquence and force. There are several poetical passages, the most remarkable of which is the "Lament of Mattathias," ii. 7–13 :—

"He said, Woe is me! wherefore was I born to see this misery of my people, and of the Holy City, and to dwell there, when it was delivered into the hand of the enemy, and the sanctuary into the hand of strangers? Her temple is become as a man without glory. Her glorious vessels are carried away into captivity, her infants are slain in the streets, her young men with the sword of the enemy. What nation hath not had a part in *her* kingdom, and gotten of her spoils? All her ornaments are taken away; of a free woman she is become a bondslave. And, behold, our sanctuary, even our beauty and our glory, is laid waste, and the Gentiles have profaned it. To what end therefore shall we live any longer?"

The whole book may be accepted as authentic, *e.g.* there is an entire absence from it of any miraculous element, and a candid and unsparing exposure of the shortcomings of the people. There is a striking reticence with regard to the treatment of God. The Name of God only occurs once, the word "Heaven" being often used to take its place. This is a characteristic of later Jewish literature. Another noticeable peculiarity is the exactness with regard to dates.

No one knows who the author was, but he was

evidently an earnest patriot and a devout member of the orthodox, *i.e.* the Pharisaic party. He appears to have written (from xvi. 23, 24) at the close of the reign of John Hyrcanus, about B.C. 116–106. The deep religious feeling of the author, and his regard for the Law and the Temple are apparent; but he does not drag his religion into the book unnecessarily. He considers the successes of the Jews to have been won, without miraculous interference, by the ordinary action of those causes and laws which govern the world. His reticence may be the cause of all absence from the book of any clear Messianic hope, though twice, in passages of deep interest we (iv. 46, xiv. 41) notice that he anticipates the coming of a great prophet. Later on, the victories of the Maccabæans did give rise to the very highest Messianic expectations, and we may note here, in the mind of one writing at the immediate close of the period, the dawn of this hope, at present vague and indefinite.

The second Book of Maccabees deals with practically the same period; the author himself says that his work is a condensed version of a notable history by one Jason of Cyrene, his object being to popularize this work, and adorn it with elegant phrases and other literary graces. The author was probably an Alexandrian Jew, and he must have written somewhere about 80 B.C. The whole book is in marked contrast to the First Book of Maccabees. The writer of the Second has no scruple about the use of the name of God. He has a firm belief in the occurrence of actual miracles during the Maccabæan struggle, and he

makes a strong point of religious admonition and teaching. Sometimes he addresses his readers in the form of religious exhortation, *e.g.* vi. 12–17.

"Now I beseech those that read this book, that they be not discouraged for these calamities, but that they judge those punishments not to be for destruction, but for a chastening of our nation. For it is a token of his great goodness, when wicked doers are not suffered any long time, but forthwith punished. For not as with other nations, whom the Lord patiently forbeareth to punish, till they be come to the fulness of their sins, so dealeth he with us. Lest that, being come to the height of sin, afterwards he should take vengeance of us. And therefore he never withdraweth his mercy from us: and though he punish with adversity, yet doth he never forsake his people. But let this that we have spoken be for a warning unto us. And now will we come to the declaring of the matter in a few words.

In fact, the religious aspect of the history is kept constantly before the reader's mind. We are told on every page that impiety and blasphemy receive signal punishment at God's hands; that prayer is heard; that God fights openly for his saints; and that if He suffers them to be afflicted, it is for the purpose of chastening and purifying them; and that if they suffer the worst that can happen to man in this life, they will be rewarded in the Resurrection. Here in this book we find a distinct belief in future rewards and punishments. That God will one day gather His people into Palestine —the nearest approach to the hope of the Messiah, —but, most important of all, we find a clear and

definite belief in the Resurrection, and also in the efficacy of prayers for the dead.

In the Book of Daniel, however, we find the most definite statement of all (even of the Old Testament) on the resurrection—and when we read it, from the modern point of view, as written when the nation was at the climax of its sufferings, we do not wonder at its inclusion in the canon of the Old Testament whilst these other books remained outside.

"And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever" (xii. 23).

Now what is the story which these books tell? It begins with the acquisition of Palestine by the Syrian king Antiochus the Great, 202 B.C. (See Lecture II.) You will remember how after winning Palestine he came into contact with the Romans, and was badly defeated by them at Magnesia, 190 B.C., in consequence of which, he had to pay an indemnity of 1000 talents and send hostages to Rome, amongst whom was his son Antiochus.

Now you must realize that the same Greek culture which affected the Jews in Alexandria had its influence in Palestine. Greek cities had sprung up here and there, and there was a very strong party whom we may call "The Liberal Party," very much attracted by Greek manners and civilization, ready to give up their old-fashioned Jewish

modes and to adopt Greek dress and manners, and even philosophy. But bitterly opposed to them were the Conservatives. The old-fashioned Jews, the men, of whom we have already heard that they were tremendously exclusive, and had such a great and overwhelming love for the Law, and the traditions of their nations, that they regarded any novelties, or innovations as being almost sacrilegious, and profane.

Between these two parties, there was naturally considerable animosity.

The tyranny of the Syrian kings showed itself first of all in the reign of Antiochus' successor Seleucus, 187 B.C. There was a quarrel between rival priests, the High Priest Onias III., and another one of the Liberal leaders known as "the Sons of Tobias" about the control of the treasury attached to the Temple. As the quarrel deepened, appeal was made to King Seleucus, who straightway sent Heliodorus, the royal treasurer to seize it. There was almost a panic in Jerusalem (described in 2 Macc. iii.). The priests in their official robes lay prostrate before the altar, the Temple courts were crowded with supplicants; the matrons with bared breasts running frantically through the streets, the pitiless officer bent on discharging his mission. Then, at the critical moment, a horse with a dread rider in golden mail dashes into the Temple precinct, tramples the proud envoy underfoot, whilst two attendants lash him to the very verge of death. The treasury and the bank which held the widows' and orphans' funds for the city was saved.

This was a natural prelude to what followed. On the death of Seleucus, there comes back from Rome, where he has been hostage for fourteen years, his younger brother Antiochus, and he succeeds in gaining the Syrian throne for himself (175 B.C.).

Epiphanes, as he called himself, being (1) the "Illustrious," and (2) the "Manifest" (cp. Epiphany = manifestation), because he chose to consider himself a visible god, was an extraordinary character. A man of genius and ability, with a taint of madness in his veins; on the one hand, ambitious, determined, and arbitrary; on the other, generous and even kind. During those years in Rome he had been well received, and had moved, as a royal exile, in the best circles of Roman society; the consequence of which was that he contracted a taste for western habits and ideas, and western luxuries.

He was munificent and lavish, showing what Livy calls a truly regal mind in his gifts to Greek cities and temples, whilst he practically rebuilt Antioch and made it a magnificent city, adorning it with copies of the principal masterpieces of Greek sculpture, building superb temples in the town and its suburb—afterwards notorious—Daphne, and introducing gladiatorial shows.

With all this, he was most eccentric and extravagant, courting popularity in any wise. Fantastic and without self-control, he would wander through the streets, discussing questions of art in the goldsmiths' shops, now offering himself as a candidate for some local council, bursting abruptly

upon parties held in private houses, tumbling with the bathers at the public baths; and in the grand procession he organized at Daphne, to outshine the most gorgeous Roman triumph, like a Nero in after-years, he rode in and out on a hack pony, playing the part of chief waiter and mountebank. The people nicknamed him, naturally enough, Epimanes, the Madman, instead of Epiphanes.

Throughout his career he was constantly at war with Egypt, and was only stopped at last by the peremptory order of the Roman legate to leave the country. But it was his policy with the Jews that made him notorious through all history. He had no special antipathy towards their religion, but he conceived a plan of uniting all the peoples of his empire by bringing them under the influence of Greek civilization. He himself was most deeply affected by Greek culture. But when he began to carry out this plan, the result was to emphasize and embitter the parties in Palestine. The Liberal party, with their ostentatious affectation of Greek customs, with their Hebrew names changed into Greek—Joshua into Jason, Eliakim into Alcimos, etc.—were willing to side with him. The Conservatives were bent on preserving the integrity of their national institutions at all costs.

The crisis came about thus.

The high priest's brother, Joshua, or Jason, as he called himself, was the Liberal leader, and by a large bribe he induced Antiochus to depose his brother and confer the vacant office upon himself. At the same time he obtained a ready permission to build a gymnasium in Jerusalem, where the

Jewish youths might imitate the Greeks in athletic contests. There, in defiance of the sensitive feelings of their countrymen, they ran, wrestled, and leaped naked in the public sports, wearing only the Greek hat, representing the headgear of the heathen god Hermes. Even the priests in the temple above, says 2 Maccabees, left their sacrifices to take part in the spectacle as soon as they heard the signal for throwing the weight, in the first event.

Another brother, Menelaus, outbid Jason for the office of high priest. The rightful high priest, Onias, was dragged out from sanctuary and murdered (his son fleeing to Egypt to build the temple there at Heliopolis, of which we heard last time). Jason was expelled after a struggle, and died an exile among the Spartan mountains. "And he that had cast out many unburied," says 2 Maccabees grimly, "had none to mourn for him, nor any solemn funeral at all, nor sepulchre with his fathers."

In the midst of this corruption and dissolution of Jewish society, it is not to be wondered that the imagination of the Jews saw awful portents in the sky. "Horsemen galloping through the air, in cloth of gold, and armed with lances like a band of soldiers, and squadrons of cavalry in array, and charges, and encounters, and shaking of shields, and multitude of pikes. . . ." (Cp. *Julius Cæsar*, Act I., etc.)

Menelaus stole some of the temple vessels to pay his bribe to Antiochus, and his sacrileges occasioned riots in the city. During the consequent

struggles with Jason, before he was finally exiled, Antiochus, thinking Judæa was in revolt, marched to Jerusalem. Menelaus opened the gates to him gladly, and a massacre followed. But far worse than massacre was the sight of the royal profaner, led by the renegade Menelaus, entering the sanctuary itself, and carrying away most of the valuables found there.

Two years later, having left the city in charge of Menelaus and a Phrygian named Philip, the king sent another tax-gatherer, Apollonius, who, pretending that his mission was peaceable, surprised the city on the sabbath day, and a fresh massacre took place. Women and children were sold into slavery, and a Syrian garrison was established in a fort overlooking the Temple court—that very fort into which, in after-years, Paul was taken by the Roman centurion, when set upon in the Temple court.

There was a short cessation of tyranny, during which consternation spread through the country. But the worst was yet to come.

Once clear of entanglements with Egypt, Antiochus determined to carry out his plans of a fixed uniformity throughout the land—"that all should be one people, and every one should bear his laws."

The Jewish people were to be completely hellenized. All practices connected with their religion were to be prohibited. A special commissioner was to be set over this forced conversion. The God who was worshipped at Jerusalem was to be no longer Jehovah, but Jove, father of gods and men. In every town and village were erected

altars at which the inhabitants were to offer heathen sacrifices, and on the king's birthday to join in the sacrificial feast. The sabbath day was not to be kept. Circumcision was to cease. The culminating horror was the deliberate desecration of the Temple—"the abomination of desolation."

December (168 B.C.)—the great gates were burnt; the walls were broken down; the courtyard left to be overgrown with rank vegetation. On December 15 a Greek altar was planted on the old altar platform in honour of Jupiter. On the 25th, a herd of swine was driven in. One huge sow was slaughtered, and her blood poured on the altar and the Holy of Holies. Read Dan. ix., and see how all this is described there.

The Temple became a wilderness. Meanwhile every Jew was forced to conform to the new system. Swine's flesh was forced into the mouths of worshippers, who were compelled to offer the unclean animal on altars erected in every street. The books of the Law were hunted out and burnt. In this general catastrophe some yielded to the oppressor; but others dared the worst rather than submit.

Some concealed themselves in the huge caverns in the neighbouring hills, and were there suffocated by fires lighted at the mouth. Two mothers were hanged on the city wall, with their dead babies at their breasts whom they had circumcised. One venerable scribe (2 Macc. vi.) steadily refused to retain the swine's flesh in his mouth, and walked boldly to the rack on which he was to be scourged to death. "I will show myself such an one as mine age requireth," he said, "and

leave a notable example to such as be young to die willingly and courageously for the honourable and holy laws." Most memorable of all was the martyrdom of a mother and her seven sons, of which you will read in 2 Macc. vii. Small wonder that these heroic souls were, by a fiction of ecclesiastical law, counted by the early Christian Church amongst the ranks of Christian martyrs, and are actually celebrated in the Roman Church on August 1 to this day.

At least two of the Psalms were probably composed at this period (74th and 79th)—

"They break down all the carved work thereof with axes and hammers. They have set fire upon Thy holy places, and defiled the dwelling-place of Thy name even unto the ground. . . . O God, how long shall the adversary do this dishonour? how long shall the enemy blaspheme Thy name for ever? Why withdrawest Thou Thy hand? Why pluckest Thou not Thy right hand out of Thy bosom to consume the enemy?"

And perhaps you can understand the stimulating power of the Book of Daniel launched upon the nation at this time. The narrative of the three children in the fiery furnace, and Daniel in the lion's den is the first glorification, so to speak, of the martyr spirit, whilst, emerging from this terror, there rises a new hope for Israel in a spiritual King, a spiritual Son of Man, who shall come upon the clouds of Heaven and put an end to all blasphemy and tyranny.

But at last what Dan. xi. 34 calls the "little help" came. There was an old priestly family called

"Asmon," the father, Mattathias, advanced in years, but with five stalwart sons. At the beginning of the persecution, they had retired to their country house at a little village, Modin, eighteen miles north-west of Jerusalem. To Modin, as elsewhere, came the king's commissioner, with his altar and Greek sacrifice. The old priest refused to offer the heathen sacrifice. And when an apostate Jew stepped forward to do it, he was so enraged "his reins trembled, neither could he forbear to show his anger according to judgment." He flung himself upon the apostate and killed him, and then followed it up by killing the king's officer as well.*

It was like William Tell in Switzerland. The flame was lighted. Mattathias raised his war cry of "Zeal and the Covenant," and dashed into the mountains with all the men he could get to follow him. The Conservative party joined him, and organized themselves for concerted action. It was a guerilla warfare for some time. Wherever they found a heathen altar they destroyed it. A neglected child they circumcised it. An apostate they executed him. At first, in one case, a party of a thousand was killed without resistance because it was a Sabbath Day, but the old man determined that in future they would break through this strict rule of Sabbath observance for the sake of fighting the Lord's battle.

When at the end of that year the old man died, bequeathing the work to his five sons, then we have an instance almost unparalleled in history, of five men, animated by the same spirit, without

* Stanley.

any mutual jealousy devoting themselves to the same cause. Each of the five sons succeeded to the chieftainship. John the Holy, Simon the Jewel, Judas the Hammerer, Eleazar the Beast-sticker, Jonathan the Cunning.

But of all these Judas's nickname is the only one which has survived and covered the whole clan with glory—"The Maccabee," "The Hammerer," like Charles Martel in later times.

He was made the General of the forces, and he became the Jewish ideal of the "Happy warrior." There was a cheerfulness through the army when he appeared. They loved to remember his sturdy appearance in his coat of mail, with his sword, famous in story and legend long afterwards. There was no roaring cheer like his when he dashed up some narrow valley after Israelitish renegades. There was no chivalry like that with which he received such as were ready to perish. There were three successive victories in the first two years of the campaign. At the first he won the Syrian general's sword, and carried it, as David did Goliath's, through the rest of his life. The third was the battle of Emmaus, the most decisive victory of all. Three generals faced him, together with the governor of the whole Syrian province, and the King's son, the king himself, Antiochus, being absent on an expedition in Persia.

There was no help to be expected in the neighbourhood, for it was Philistine territory, and the Philistine merchants hoped to have a large sale afterwards of Jewish insurgents as slaves. The army was placed under four of the brothers, while

the fifth, Eleazar was commissioned to read the Holy Book, and to proclaim his own name, "Eleazar," as the watchword, "The Help of God." There came a sudden quick march by night and an attack on the Syrian camp. It was successful, and on the eve of the Sabbath, on which the battle ended, the Jewish army sang together the 136th Psalm, the national anthem, we might say, of the Jewish race—

> "Who smote great kings, for His mercy endureth for ever.
> Yea, and slew mighty kings . . .
> Who remembered us when we were in trouble,
> And hath delivered us from our enemies."

There came one more victory in the next year, and then, three years to the day (December 25, 165), the cleansing and re-dedication of the Temple —a feast kept in our Lord's time. Cp. "It was the feast of the dedication, and it was Winter." A week of joy and gladness, bitter-sweet because each heart had been so nigh breaking, and on the hills of Judæa, many a gallant father and husband and son lay quietly sleeping, with his sword in his clay-cold hand.

The Temple was the heart of Judæa, and having regained that, the Maccabees might be said to have won everything. Still, it was surrounded by a circle of enemies. Close at hand was the Syrian fortress, still unsubdued, and in the south and east were their ancient enemies, Edomites, Ammonites, and Philistines. So there followed in the next year a new campaign against these foes. From one battle-ground to another Judas swept

victoriously, dealing, like the great general he was, with all appeals for help, whether from the North, where the Grecian inhabitants rose upon the Galilæan Jews, or across the Jordan among the Bedouin Arabs.

Amidst his triumphant progress came the news that Antiochus Epiphanes was dead, slain in a futile effort to replenish his exchequer by attempting to rob a temple in far-away Persia. But his General, Lysias, determined still to make one last effort to stamp out the rebellion in Judah, and the struggle became complicated again.

There was civil war now. At Jerusalem the corrupt high priest, Eliakim or Alcimus, maintained his position, by the help of the Syrian court, as head of the Liberal party, against the Maccabæan warrior, whilst young Antiochus, the son, had to fight for his crown with his uncle Demetrius, who wanted to seize the Syrian throne. In Jerusalem itself, there was a fierce contest going on between the rival fortresses—the Temple-mount occupied by the insurgents, the citadel of David by the Greeks.

Lysias sent an enormous force to secure this position, and a wild battle took place at Beth-zur, in the Jordan valley. This battle left a deep impression on the Jewish mind. For the first time elephants were used by the enemy. They were distributed among the Syrian army in columns, each surrounded by 1000 infantry and 500 horse. Their advance was terrific. The attendants in chain armour, with shields of brass or gold; huge wooden towers upon the animals' backs; in black

Indian driver, guarded by several soldiers on each creature's neck. For once Judas's men quailed before this array of force, but not before one heroic deed had been done. Eleazar, the fourth brother, singling out one elephant, which, from the handsome howdah it bore, he imagined carried one of the princes, fought his way through the enemy's ranks, and creeping under the beast, by one thrust brought its weight upon him, perishing in the attempt, but winning thereby the perpetual name he desired.

Then comes one romantic chapter. One of the Syrian generals, Nicanor, whose name long survived the memory of the others, had fought through the campaign against Judas, with growing admiration for his gallant foe. He opened friendly communications with Judas, and the two men, under a truce at Jerusalem (2 Macc. xiv. 21). The two warriors sat side by side on chairs of State. The Syrian general "loved the man from his heart," and could not bear to have him out of his sight. He begged Judas to lay aside his wandering course, and take a wife and settle down peaceably. It seems as if, for the time, Judas followed his advice. But treachery broke up this friendship. The high priest, Alcimus, seeing in it the ruin of his and his party's hopes, denounced Nicanor to the new king, and procured an order for Judas's arrest. He was to be sent prisoner to Antioch, and Nicanor must execute the order. Imagine the drama. Nicanor could not break his plighted troth to his friend, yet he could not be disloyal to the king. Judas solved the problem

by escaping, and the two friends parted to meet no more.

It is difficult to see what happened in this deep intrigue of the High Priest's; but at least it appears that each man thinking the other false vowed hostility till death. The flame of war broke out again. There was one more last victory for Judas in the pass of Beth-horon, 161 B.C. Judas felt it was the critical moment of his life The battle would be decisive. On its issue hung again the safety of the Temple. Nicanor's army advanced with trumpets sounding their heathen war-songs. The army of Judas, "fighting with their hands and praying with their hearts," like Cromwell's ironsides. The two generals tried to meet, but Nicanor fell in the first onset, and did not meet his death at his whilom friend's hands. When the battle was over, the victorious Jews returned to Jerusalem, bringing among their spoils Nicanor's hand and head, which were fastened to the walls.

This was the crowning success of Judas. Later on in that year, just as he had completed a treaty with the Romans, which would have proved useful to him, and with which we must deal next time, he was attacked by a new Syrian army, come to avenge the death of Nicanor, and he met his death in the fray at Eleasa, his watchword before the battle, when he saw the odds against which he had to fight being, "God forbid that I should do this thing, and flee away from them; if our time be come, let us die manfully for our brethren, and let us not leave a stain behind upon our honour."

With his death, the first stage in the struggle for

independence ended. Hardly any character in the later days of Judaism fills the imagination as his does. "He had ever been the chief defender of his countrymen, both in body and mind; he had maintained his early love for his people unbroken to the end." And two centuries after, when there came the final overwhelming of the Jewish race in that destruction which Christ himself prophesied, it was to the story of the Maccabees that the Jews turned for stimulus and courage.

Let us in conclusion notice the elevation of spirit which characterizes this period in Jewish history. There was a remarkable fire of spiritual faith which animated these heroes, and the words we hear at the moment of the profanation of the sanctuary are the prelude to a higher and wider thought, "God did not choose the people for the place's sake, but the place for the people's sake" (2 Macc. v. 19). The calamities which had befallen them they were willing to recognize as being the consequences of their sins. They did not throw blame on others. Throughout the histories and devotions of the period, we find the spirit of contrition and self-accusation.

The Maccabean family were the chief representatives of this nobility of spirit, and their followers where known as "Chasidim," or "the pious." This piety found a natural outlet in the growing belief in immortality. Sirach (Ecclesiasticus) could write of death only as follows: "O death how bitter is the remembrance of thee to a man that liveth at rest in his possessions . . ." But in the course of the Maccabean insurrection, the belief in future life,

communicated first of all by Greek philosophy to the Jews at Alexandria, started into a prominence it had never had before. And thus we have the magnificent hope of Daniel, "They that be wise shall shine," and the words of the seven martyred sons, "The King of the World shall raise up those who die for His laws unto everlasting life."

So with this belief came the thought that the dead are not lost to those that survive them, that there is some communion between them. Thence rose the practice of offerings and prayers for the dead, in which our Lord Himself must have taken part in the public services in His day, and which has passed into the practice of the Christian Church to-day. It is in 2 Maccabees for the first time in the Greek Bible that the word ἀνάστασις occurs in the sense of "Resurrection," so that we might say that the great word of the New Testament appears first in the mouth of the Maccabæan saints and heroes.

LECTURE V.

AFTER THE DEATH OF JUDAS.

THE Books of the Maccabees do not end with the death of Judas, and there still remains a large portion of Maccabæan history to relate. But the rest of the campaign that followed was henceforth a war for merely civil independence. The treaty which Lysias signed after the battle of Beth-zur had granted the Jews complete religious freedom. "The uprising of the Maccabees had called forth all the national elements left in Israel, and kindled afresh the smouldering religious feeling. It seemed like a revival of Old Testament times, and when Judas, on the anniversary of its desecration by heathen rites, had set up again the great altar of burnt-offering, it appeared as if a new Theocracy were to be inaugurated. Alas! The Maccabees were not the Messiah; nor was their Kingdom, which their sword would have restored, the Kingdom of Heaven, with its blessings and peace. If ever, Israel might have learnt then what Saviour to look for." *

Even the period of promise was more brief than it might have been. For the fervour and purity of the movement seemed to cease with its success.

* Edersheim.

During the period that followed on the death of Judas, there came upon the scene a new power, that already had appeared on the horizon—Rome. You will remember that in the middle of his campaign, Judas made a treaty with the Romans, in the hope that they would assist his country in her struggle for freedom. Rome had become known in the East as a great military power, only about 190 B.C., by the war she waged with Antiochus the Great, and after her famous victory over him at the battle of Magnesia, by the terms of their treaty, the Roman legates were constantly visiting the different Asian courts, making demands and imposing conditions, their policy being to support all the weak states against the strong ones, in order that no one power might swallow up the rest. 1 Macc. viii. tells us how Judas had heard of their power, their conquest of Spain, their victories over the kings of Greece. In the throes of his warfare, he sent two ambassadors from the insurgents of Palestine, asking for an alliance with the Imperial Commonwealth. They were received in full sitting of the Senate. The treaty, offensive and defensive, was agreed upon, and a copy was sent to Jerusalem. But before it arrived Judas had died on the battlefield. Its results, however, remained, and from henceforth, for good or evil, the fortunes of the Jews were bound up with those of Rome. First of all, friendly equality, then of dependence, and lastly of violent conflict and absorption. The shadow of Rome overhangs the rest of the Jewish story. You will remember that at the death of Judas there were practically three opposing forces in Palestine,

or rather two against one. There was the Syrian army; there was also the Grecian party, under Alcimus, the High Priest siding with them, against the third, the Nationalist insurgents under the Maccabees. On the fall of Judas, the party of Alcimus was in the ascendant, and when Jonathan, the youngest of the Asmonean brothers took the leadership, a confused struggle ensued, and it was not till Alcimus died suddenly, leaving his high priest's office vacant for two years, that there seemed any chance of a settlement. Then the Syrian general made peace with Jonathan, and his party steadily increased. Two rival kings contested the Syrian throne. Both appealed to Jonathan to side with them to support them. With the cunning that earned him his nickname, he threw in his lot with one, Alexander Balas, who in return presented him with the vacant office of high priest, adding to it the title of "King's Friend," with a golden crown and purple robes to mark the adoption into the royal circle.

This was virtually the first *recognition* of the Jewish independence. But it was also a decisive step in the internal history of Israel. It was a break in the succession of the high priests—a complete departure from that hereditary descent which had hitherto marked the series of high priests since the people's return from the captivity. Naturally enough, this radical change was viewed with disfavour and suspicion by the extreme nationalists, who were averse to any foreign interference at all. This is a noteworthy point, for it meant the union of the sacerdotal and political

supremacy in one person, and it prepares us for the worldliness of the high priests a century and a half later, at the time of Christ. Jonathan played his dual part of priest and soldier to the end. Alexander Balas was succeeded by his rival on the Syrian throne, himself to be ousted by another revolution which restored the crown to a son of Alexander Balas again. But through these tumultuous times Jonathan kept his place securely, balancing the various pretenders and usurpers against one another, until at last he was caught by the Syrian general, Trypho, carried off in a deep snowstorm, and killed in an obscure village near Ptolemais beyond the Jordan, 144 B.C.

There remained now the last of the gallant five sons of Mattathias—Simon, the eldest but one. He rose to the occasion, and you can read his fine appeal to his countrymen, and their response, in 1 Macc. xiii.—

"Now when Simon heard that Tryphon had gathered together a great host to invade the land of Judea, and destroy it, and saw that the people was in great trembling and fear, he went up to Jerusalem, and gathered the people together, and gave them exhortation, saying, Ye yourselves know what great things I, and my brethren, and my father's house, have done for the laws and the sanctuary, the battles also and troubles which we have seen, by reason whereof all my brethren are slain for Israel's sake, and I am left alone. Now therefore be it far from me, that I should spare my own life in any time of trouble : for I am no better than my brethren. Doubtless I will avenge my nation, and the sanctuary, and our wives, and our children : for all the heathen are gathered

to destroy us of every malice. Now as soon as the people heard these words, their spirit revived. And they answered with a loud voice, saying, Thou shalt be our leader instead of Judas and Jonathan thy brother. Fight thou our battles, and whatsoever thou commandest us, that we will do."

Simon's first act was to recover his brother's body and to bury it in the ancestral home at Modin. There he built a monument of seven pyramids, for his parents and his four brothers' leaving the last one for himself when his time should come. This monument lasted some five hundred years, and was a well-known landmark for sailors in the Levant, then all trace of it disappeared, and even the site of the village itself, until it was discovered again in 1869. But though many tombs have been found there, the sepulchre of the Maccabees is still unidentified.

Simon followed the policy of his dead brother in turning to good account the disputes about the Syrian throne, and succeeded so well that the royal claimant, when he reached the throne, remitted all taxation from Palestine "for all time to come." This was a great gain, and the Jews perpetuated the anniversary of the day, May 27, in their calendar. But a still more important day had come, when the last of the Syrian garrisons was cleared out of the country. There were three Syrian strongholds remaining when Simon took the reins of government. One was at Gezer, the old Philistine town in the south-west, and this was attacked with a newly invented Macedonian engine of war, an ironclad tower on wheels, and the

terrified inhabitants were glad to surrender at discretion. The second was the rock fortress, already the scene of many a fight, at Beth-Zur. The third was the Syrian citadel that overlooked the sanctuary in Jerusalem itself. "He entered it in the three and twentieth day of the second month, in the hundred seventy and first year, with thanksgiving and branches of palm trees, and with harps and cymbals, and with viols, hymns, and songs, because there was destroyed a great enemy out of Israel." Not only did he dismantle the fortress, but it is said that he actually levelled the top of the hill, so that it should no longer overlook the temple. The mountain was thus to be decapitated for its insolence, and after three years' work this was accomplished.

Simon's exploits roused his people to a white hot enthusiasm, and they spoke of his expulsion of the Syrians as a "purification." The Syrian images were taken out and destroyed, and not only they, but the Greek statues, which were found in the houses of the other party—the Greek party were also looted and broken up. These "vanities" were treated with the contempt which is so well depicted in the book of Wisdom and the Epistle of Jeremy.

This last, which comes at the end of the book of Baruch, must have been written somewhere about this date, and may well be noticed in this place. It is written, probably, by an Alexandrian Jew, at any rate by a Jew living in the midst of heathenism, and possessing a minute acquaintance with the details of idol-worship, and is perhaps the fiercest

and most scathing attack upon idolatry in the Jewish literature.

"As for their tongue, it is polished by the workman, and they themselves are gilded and laid over with silver; yet are they but false, and cannot speak. And taking gold, as it were for a virgin that loveth to go gay, they make crowns for the heads of their gods. Sometimes also the priests convey from their gods gold and silver, and bestow it upon themselves. . . . Yet cannot these gods save themselves from rust and moths, though they be covered with purple raiment. They wipe their faces because of the dust of the temple, when there is much upon them. And he that cannot put to death one that offendeth him holdeth a sceptre, as though he were a judge of the country. He hath also in his right hand a dagger and an axe: but cannot deliver himself from war and thieves. Whereby they are known not to be gods: therefore fear them not. For like as a vessel that a man useth is nothing worth when it is broken; even so it is with their gods: when they be set up in the temple, their eyes be full of dust through the feet of them that come in. And as the doors are made sure on every side upon him that offendeth the king, as being committed to suffer death: even so the priests make fast their temples with doors, with locks, and bars, lest *their gods* be spoiled with robbers. They light them candles, yea, more than for themselves, whereof they cannot see one. They are as one of the beams of the temple, yet they say their hearts are gnawed upon by things creeping out of the earth; and when they eat them and their clothes, they feel it not. Their faces are blacked through the smoke that cometh out of the temple. Upon their bodies and heads sit bats, swallows, and birds, and the cats also. By this ye may know that they are no gods: therefore

fear them not. Notwithstanding the gold that is about them to make them beautiful, except they wipe off the rust, they will not shine: for neither when they were molten did they feel it. The things wherein there is no breath are bought for a most high price. They are borne upon shoulders, having no feet, whereby they declare unto men that they be nothing worth. They also that serve them are ashamed: for if they fall to the ground at any time, they cannot rise up again of themselves: neither, if one set them upright, can they move of themselves: neither, if they be bowed down, can they make themselves straight: but they set gifts before them, as unto dead men. As for the things that are sacrificed unto them, their priests sell and abuse; in like manner their wives lay up part thereof in salt; but unto the poor and impotent they give nothing of it. . . . For how can they be called gods? because women set meat before the gods of silver, gold, and wood. And the priests sit in their temples, having their clothes rent, and their heads and beards shaven, and nothing upon their heads. They roar and cry before their gods, as men do at the feast when one is dead. The priests also take off their garments, and clothe their wives and children. Whether it be evil that one doeth unto them, or good, they are not able to recompense it: they can neither set up a king, nor put him down. In like manner, they can neither give riches nor money: though a man make a vow unto them, and keep it not, they will not require it. They can save no man from death, neither deliver the weak from the mighty. They cannot restore a blind man to his sight, nor help any man in his distress. They can shew no mercy to the widow, nor do good to the fatherless."

Simon's reign was remembered as a peaceful and prosperous time, when every man "sat under

his vine and fig-tree, and there was none to fray them." This golden age, as it seemed to the Jews (cp. its panegyric in 1 Macc. xiv.), began a new era for the Jews, and henceforth the Jewish contracts were dated, "From the first year of Simon the High Priest, and General, and Leader of the Jews." Concurrently with this came the sovereign privilege of coining their own money; but the culminating event which gratified the national vanity and ensured, as they thought, the future safety of the country, was the arrival of a Roman embassy to Judæa to renew the old treaty made first of all by Judas. The Jews, in their excitement and delight, passed a decree and engraved it on plates of brass, making Simon their High Priest and governor for ever, "until there should arise a faithful prophet," in other words appointing him to the twofold office of spiritual and secular chief, and declaring it hereditary. But the significant limitation, "until there should arise a faithful prophet," points to some dissensions among the people, and some opposition to the Asmonean family. This is noteworthy again, because such opposition began on the ground of objection to Simon's occupying the High Priesthood, not to his possessing the secular power. It sprang naturally enough from the "Chasidim" or the "pious"—that party out of which the Pharisees, as we shall see, afterwards developed.

At present, however, owing to the critical state of affairs, their enmity was repressed. Simon was enmeshed again in the net of Syrian politics. A new Syrian king came to the throne, reversed the

policy of his predecessor, demanded a large tax from the Jews and the surrender of these very Syrian fortresses which Simon had won at last. Simon held his own, however, for three years more, then, victim of a son-in-law's ambition, he was entrapped into a castle near Jericho, with two younger sons, and foully murdered.

More than thirty years had passed since Mattathias struck the first blow for liberty. Now, one by one, all his sons had laid down their lives. But they had not shed their blood in vain. Their valour had rehabilitated the Jewish nation. Not only was the old spirit of independence aroused, but, most important of all for the Christian student of the time, there was also developed a new consciousness of the worth of their revealed religion, which helped to shape the last phases of the Jewish belief before the advent of Jesus Christ.

Simon's assassin had hoped to kill all his family at one blow, and claim the supreme power himself. But his plan miscarried in one case, and John, the third son, governor of Gadara, escaped to avenge his father's and brothers' murders. His enemy, however, escaped, and in a typical Jewish way, John's old mother was held prisoner in the enemy's hand, and was exposed and scourged on the walls of the fortress, with the threat that unless the blockade was raised she would be put to death. John could not endure the sight of his mother stripped and beaten before the eyes of his men, and in spite of her entreaties to disregard her, he raised the siege. This threw the besiegers into the Sabbatical year, that year in which, you

may remember, no war was to be carried on. The murderer took advantage of this to murder the mother first and then to escape beyond the Jordan.

Thus John Hyrcanus came to the throne, the survivor of his family, to begin a reign of the utmost importance in our history. No records of it are to be found in the priestly archives, nor in the books of our Apocrypha, though there are a few isolated references to him, but most of its detail comes to us from Josephus.

As the rest of our story to-day and next week is drawn from the latter's writings, and his name, at least, is familiar, take this short personal note about him. He was a brilliant Jewish scholar and politician, born about A.D. 37. As a young man, he was appointed delegate to Nero, and later became Governor of Galilee. The final war of the Jews found him besieged in one of his own towns, but on his capture he turned renegade and went over to the Romans. He was present in the Roman army at the siege of Jerusalem, and managed to save the lives of some of his enemies, posing as an injured martyr when they denounced him as a traitor. Finally he took up his residence in Rome, and devoted himself to a history of the Jewish Antiquities and of the Jewish War. These books, which are, on the whole, trustworthy and valuable, are of very great interest, and are the groundwork of the Jewish story for the century before and after Christ.

For thirty-one years, Josephus tells us, did John Hyrcanus carry on the vigour of his father's government. Three events of some importance are

specially to be noted. He rebuilt the fortress on the Temple area, for use as a treasure-house to the Temple, though in after years it became the residence of the Roman governor and troops. He subdued the people of Edom, or Idumæa, and the hated Samaritans, razing their temple on Mount Gerizim to the ground, and renewed the treaty with Rome.

On the whole, his reign was good and prosperous, but it was marked by intrigue and crime. Above all, John Hyrcanus was at heart far more like a Syrian monarch than a Jewish priest, and he sided strongly with the radical or Grecian party. So completely had the Hellenizing customs entered into the heart of the Asmonean family, that the three sons of Hyrcanus were respectively known by Greek names—Aristobulus, Antigonus, Alexander Jannæus. Of these, Aristobulus, who succeeded his father 107 B.C., assumed the title, for the first time, of "King of the Jews," a title that was afterwards to attain to a solemn and enduring significance. His second brother, Antigonus, was admitted to a partnership in the kingdom; but by a cruel intrigue the jealousy of Aristobulus was aroused, and Antigonus was slain by the royal guards, in an underground passage leading to the Temple fortress. Swift remorse followed the crime, and Aristobulus's death, it is said, was hastened by it. So the third brother, Alexander Jannæus, came to the throne, marrying his brother's widow, Salome Alexandra, a clever and astute woman. His coins bear alternate inscriptions: sometimes "Jannæus, *i.e.* Jonathan the

High Priest," in Hebrew, sometimes "Alexander the King" in Greek. To him there fell a long and adventurous reign, disturbed by war and revolt. Reverses in war, the employment of foreign mercenaries, and the opposition of the Pharisees—I use the name for the first time in its technical New Testament sense—made him unpopular, but as his brother had added Iturea to the domain of Israel, so he seized the maritime territory on the west, and extended her bounds to the "map" of Palestine pretty nearly as it is known in the time of our Lord.

On his death he was succeeded by a queen, for the first time in Jewish history, his widow Alexandra, 79 B.C., the mother of two sons, the last independent princes of the Asmonean dynasty.

Such is a sketch of the story of the Royal High Priesthood of Judæa, during nearly a hundred years, of alternate war and peace, but on the whole of independence and fame. Now it is important that we should learn something of the *internal* life of the Jews during this period.

First of all, what of the literature of this century? First there is the First Book of Maccabees, compiled somewhere in the reign of Hyrcanus; and second, the history of Jason of Cyrene, upon which 2 Maccabees is founded. Outside these, there is one remarkable book, to which I have once or twice referred already, "The Book of Enoch," a work which was soon lost sight of by the Jewish Church, but was afterwards looked upon by the Christian Church with great respect, quoted by the writers of the New Testament as Holy Scripture,

and placed by the early Church on a level with the later books of the Old Testament. The book is so important as throwing light upon the growth of Jewish religious thought during this period, that it is worth considering in fuller detail.

The book consists of five parts, each probably compilations from other authors, and in consequence rather disjointed. But yet, as a whole, the book has a grandeur of conception which places it in a unique position in Jewish literature. It is a sort of "Dante"; its hero "Enoch, who walked with God, and was not, for God took him." In the book, he is summoned to hold converse with the angels, and in a series of visions, he sees the history of the world, starting with the fall of the angels, with their names in full array—Michael, Gabriel, Raphael, Uriel the good, and Satan and Azazel amongst the evil. From the sight of their intermingling with the daughters of men, the Enoch-Dante moves, and Palestine opens out before him, every hill and stream and valley. But, above all, he is struck by the deep ravine that lies east of Jerusalem—the ash-pit, as it was, of the city refuse—the "Valley of Hinnom," Gehenna. For what purpose, he asks, is this reserved; and with imagery drawn from the ceaseless fires that burnt, in the valley, the offscourings of the city, his guide tells him "that it is the vale reserved for the damned, where the judgment shall be held, and the just separated from the evil, whilst, underground, until that day should come, in subterranean passages, reaching below the Dead Sea, the accursed languish in a pit of fire. (You will be

struck by the likeness here to certain parts of the Revelation.) Again, the traveller passes on towards the Eastern hills, and here once more he sees a vision of the judgment. The Ancient of Days, Lord of Spirits, convenes mankind before Him, and by His side, mark you, sits the "Chosen," the Son of Man. There is a new Jerusalem, with a river of righteousness in it that never fails, and here the righteous, eating of the tree of life, live for ever.

Here in this book, we get the Messiah, the Judgment, the future Life, and Heaven and Hell. Besides these, we get an author trying to solve some of the eternal problems of the world, the problem of sin and freewill, the problem of suffering and pain. This last he solves by the thought of the Messiah, pre-existing in the mind of God from all eternity, who shall come and sit on the throne of God, and pass judgment, and in that judgment all problems shall be solved. This picture of the Messiah is absolutely unique in all previous Jewish literature.

Such is the book which has played some part in the making of our own New Testament. It is quoted directly in Jude 14, 15: "Enoch the seventh from Adam, prophesied, saying, behold the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them, of all their ungodly deeds which they have committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him."

"The spirits in prison," in 1 Pet. iii.; "The

chains of darkness in which God confined the fallen angels," in 2 Pet. ii., are a few out of a large number of quotations or allusions in the New Testament writers, whilst the Enoch doctrines of the Messianic kingdom, of Hell, and the Resurrection have had a large influence in moulding the New Testament doctrine, *e.g.* the four titles of the Saviour, viz. "Christ," "The Righteous One," "The Elect One," and "The Son of Man" are here applied for the first time in Jewish literature to the Messiah, and some of the statements in Enoch passed almost direct to the Gospels, *e.g.* John v. 22, 27: "He hath committed all judgment unto the Son, because He is the Son of Man." Matt. xix. 28: "When the Son of Man shall sit on the throne in His glory," are almost actual quotations from the Book of Enoch.

This book, then, which shows what was the contemporary Jewish doctrine in Palestine during the first century, marks a most important step in the preparation of the world for the teaching of the Christ.

But now, during this period, there was another development going on of the utmost importance in after history. The development of the Conservative and Radical parties, *i.e.* the Nationalist and Grecian parties, into three, under the names of "Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes." They first appear under Jonathan the Maccabee, their first public contest comes under Hyrcanus, and their civil war comes under Alexander Jannæus. We can put their rise in a few words. The Nationalists had been called the "Chasidim," or "pious," and

had followed Judas Maccabæus with enthusiasm, because of his determined attitude towards the tyranny of Syria. But the later bearing of the Maccabees alienated the Nationalists. Their political diplomacy savoured too much of worldliness. So the "Chasidim" sink out of view, and we have two parties instead in the synagogue, Pharisees and Sadducees, in the reign of Judas' successor, Jonathan. Remember that limiting clause in the honour the people accorded to him on his treaty with Rome, "till a faithful prophet should arise." Here is the explanation of it. The extreme party, the Pharisees, did not like to think of the priesthood passing out of the hereditary succession. It was contrary to their views and doctrines. The Pharisees then became the extreme men, the Sadducees the moderate men, who sympathized with the later tendencies of the Maccabees. As for the Essenes, they were the ascetics of the time of Christ, and lived a secluded life on the shores of the Dead Sea.

The Pharisees, you will remember, had a distinct belief in the Resurrection and immortality, and the existence of angels and spirits. As for freewill they inclined to fatalism, whilst the Sadducees, who were open to foreign influences in a way denied by the Pharisees, refused to accept belief in immortality or resurrection, whilst they held the doctrine of complete freedom of the will in all moral action.

One more development comes from this period, viz. the rise of the Sanhedrin. The earlier Maccabees surrounded themselves with a council of

"elders," with some share in the government. In this aristocratic government the High Priest was chief of a representative ecclesiastical sort of cabinet. This continued until the reign of Hyrcanus, when there was a quarrel between him and the Pharisaic party. They wanted him to resign the high priesthood, and keep only the secular power. He refused, and in consequence, persecuted the Pharisees, and removed them from power. Henceforth the "elders" disappeared, and the Sanhedrin took their place. When you read of the "tradition of the elders" in the New Testament, you are going back to these "elders" who formed the first government under the Maccabees. On their being dissolved, they turned their attention to "traditionalism and ceremonial, and observance of the law," and their pupils became known as teachers or rabbis of the law. By "traditions," was meant an "oral" law, which they insisted was binding upon men as much as the written law. This "oral" law, they said, had been handed down by word of mouth, side by side with the written law, by Moses to Ezra, and thence to them. And it was made the basis of observances so minute, so overwhelming in number, so terrible to remember, that our Lord denounced them again and again. It was this oral tradition which forbade a man to carry his bed on the Sabbath, to heal on that day, while it allowed a man to save his own cattle from drowning on that day. It referred to washing of pots and pans, tithing even of mint and cummin—details which the stricter Pharisees were eager to keep—"straining at gnats," whilst to the poor and

uneducated, they were burdens grievous to be borne, to relieve which, Christ said, the Pharisees would not raise one of their fingers.

You notice how close we come in this chapter of Jewish history to the times of Christ.

So you will imagine this external law growing stronger through the years that follow, until the religion as well as the grand hopes of the Jews had become outward and external as well, until the spirit of the law was crushed under a load of worthless observances, until the Pharisees themselves had degenerated into formalists, and "darkness covered the earth and gross darkness the people." Until, in fact, in God's marvellous way, the time was ripe for the New Light to come, for the New Covenant to be introduced, and the New Law of Love to be promulgated in the Person of the Christ.

Now we can take up the history again. Queen Alexandra, before her husband's death, seems to have managed the internal affairs of the country, while her husband was engaged in foreign wars. She was devoted to the Pharisee party, and one of their leaders, Simeon ben Shetach, is said to have been her brother. Her husband, on his return, objected to their arrogancy and joined the Sadducees, and Simeon ben Shetach had to seek safety in flight. Others of his party met a worse fate. At the feast of Tabernacles, the king, in his *rôle* of High Priest, poured the sacred water upon the ground, instead of upon the sacrifice, as the ritual demanded. The worshippers, enraged at this breach of the sacred rite, pelted him with citrons,

and hurled upon him an insulting charge with regard to his descent, which angered him. Calling in his mercenaries, he killed 6000 of the rioters, and a civil war ensued. When it ceased at last, Alexandra had gone cynically over to the Pharisee party again, and on his death-bed advised his wife to keep in with them, and encourage all who were not hypocrites. "Be not afraid of the Pharisees," he said, "nor of those who are not Pharisees, but beware of the painted ones, whose deeds are like those of Zimri, and who seek the reward of Phinehas."

The nine years of Queen Alexandra's rule were the golden age of the Pharisees, when Heaven smiled on a land that was wholly subject to their religious sway. Queen Salome had appointed a son, Hyrcanus II., a weak young man, to be high priest, but he was a mere figure-head. The country was ruled by the Pharisee party, who administered it with harshness, recklessness, and insolence. The Sadducees were persecuted. The law was rigidly observed. The Pharisees carried their principles to such length that Simeon ben Shetach actually had his own son executed for the sake of logical consistency. There was so much discontent that at last the Queen remonstrated, and in consequence, civil war once more darkened the land during the last years of her reign.

It is probably in connection with the story of Simeon ben Shetach that the book of the History of Susanna was written. The book deals, you will remember, with the false accusation brought by two "elders" against a pure woman. This

accusation is examined by Daniel, a brilliant young judge, who, by his careful cross-examination of the two witnesses, is able to prove the woman innocent, and her accusers guilty. The author's aim is to portray certain deplorable defects inherent in the administration of justice in his time, and to suggest a radical cure—"Be careful about your cross-examination." One of Simeon ben Shetach's sayings was, "Examine the witnesses carefully, and be cautious in thy words, lest they learn from them to give false answers." This saying appears to have been the fruit of bitter experience. Simeon's own son was condemned to death on the testimony of witnesses suborned by his enemies. The witnesses confessed the truth just before the execution. But the victim refused to be tried again. "Father," he said, "if thou desirest that help come through thee, use me as a threshold." In other words, he was willing to be an example of the judicial abuse against which his father was agitating. This and other coincidences help us to fix the date of the book and its purpose in the reign of Alexandra, about 70 B.C.

Now there is but one more incident to mention before we come to the fringe of the history as we have it in the New Testament.

Once more there was civil war going on, at the queen's death. Young Hyrcanus, the weak high priest, had resigned; his more vigorous brother, Aristobulus II., had taken his place. Some sort of a peace was patched up between the brothers. But meanwhile there lived, as governor of Idumea, a man of obscure origin, named Antipater or

Antipas, whose father had been appointed to the position five years before by Alexander Jannæus. The dissensions between the two Asmonean princes offered him an opportunity for realizing his ambitions. He sided with Hyrcanus, the weak; persuaded him to seek help from an Arab sheik, Aretas; helped him to besiege his own brother in the Temple fortress, and would have captured him, had not Aristobulus called in the power of Rome once more. This time, with the Herods stepping into the picture—for Antipas was grandfather to Herod the Great, of ill fame —and the empire of Rome bent on acquiring Palestine as part of the empire, the fate of the Jews was sealed.

LECTURE VI.*

THE LAST OF THE JEWS.

LAST week we traced the rise of the new parties in Palestine, the Pharisees and Sadducees, and we saw how, through their influence with Queen Alexandra, civil war broke out once more on the battlefield of Judæa.

The young weak high priest, Hyrcanus II., the tool of the Pharisees, had resigned his position, yielding to the stronger character of his opponent and brother, Aristobulus. But at this juncture there came on the scene one who was destined to play an important part, and to give to Jewish affairs their last important turn—Antipater, governor of Idumea, the father of Herod the Great. In the quarrels of the Asmonean brothers he saw his chance, and took it, becoming a partisan of Hyrcanus, and urging him to claim his rights again, and to plead his cause before the tribunal of Rome.

Pompey the Great was at that moment on the outskirts of Palestine, at Damascus, fresh from a succession of brilliant victories over the pirates of the Mediterranean and Mithridates, King of Pontus. He had taken over the government of

* This lecture owes much to Edersheim and Stanley.

Syria, dissolving the last remnant of the Syrian monarchy, and now he was at Damascus, 63 B.C. Before this great man, one of the noblest of the Romans, the two Jewish rivals came to plead their cause. Urged and persuaded by Antipas (*i.e.* Antipater), Pompey decided in favour of Hyrcanus, and restored him to the office of high priest —again to be a mere figure-head; in reality, to be a puppet in the hands of Antipas and his son Herod.

Aristobulus would not retire, however, without a struggle, and withdrew to the family fortress, commanding the passes into South Palestine. But Pompey followed him, with the result that he broke away, and, throwing himself into Jerusalem, defied Rome and Hyrcanus, and Herod and all. Thither Pompey pursued him, and, on his besieging the city, Aristobulus once more came out to parley with Rome, this time to be held captive and loaded with chains, whilst his adherents, clinging to the Temple fortifications, refused to surrender. But Pompey knew that victory was certain to be his, and made his preparations outside the city with calm confidence. Once more in the history of the Jews they refused to fight on the sabbath day, and, in spite of the example of the Maccabæans, allowed Pompey to bring up his engines and make his dispositions unchecked. At last the assault was made, and the city fell. A hideous massacre took place. Twelve thousand Jews are said to have been slaughtered in the streets. Many leapt over the precipitous cliffs round the walls. Many died in the flames of the houses which they

themselves had set on fire. But, most terrible of all the horrors in the Jewish eyes, was the storming of the Temple. There, on that solemn festival on which the Romans chose to make their attack, the priests went on with their sacred duties. It was a fast-day, and they were clothed in black sackcloth, and sat motionless on their seats round the Temple court, till they were butchered one by one by the soldiers of the enemy.

Then Pompey did that which, it was said, had never been done before, even in the days of Antiochus Epiphanes. The Roman general entered the very Holy of Holies itself. Drawn, no doubt, by curiosity, to see the inmost shrine of the Jewish religion, to pierce the mystery which had always overhung their rites, he entered, and saw the golden candlestick, in the outer court—the nave—of the Temple, the golden table of shewbread, the golden offerings from far-off Jewish settlements; looked at them all, though, as Cicero himself remarked, with a moderation that was rare in those times, he took nothing, touched nothing. Finally, he swept aside the dark curtain that covered the innermost sanctuary—that part which only the high priest could enter, and he but one day in the year. He strode in to see the Jews' God. It was empty! The surprise, the shock, of that discovery re-echoes from the pages of the Roman writers of that day—"the empty throne, the vacant shrine," says Tacitus, *e.g.* At that moment the superiority of the Jewish religion to any other in the world was manifest.

The next day, with that fine courtesy which

characterized him, he gave orders that the Temple was to be purified from the desecration it had received, and he invested Hyrcanus with the high-priestly office, taking command himself thereby of the whole country. The Jewish race was confined to the limits of Judah, which henceforth was called by that name we know in the New Testament—"Judæa." Palestine was divided into five provinces, and thus, as Josephus says with bitter irony, "the Jews were now freed from a monarchy, and governed by an aristocracy."

Pompey returned to Rome, and presented to the people his third and greatest triumph. In his procession came first the heralds, bearing announcements of his conquests—1000 fortresses, 900 cities, 800 pirate vessels, 39 cities rebuilt! Then came the magnificent spoils, and then the crowds of prisoners, each in his national costume. In front of the conqueror's jewelled chariot came the 300 princes of the East—amongst them Aristobulus, "King of Judæa." But when they reached the turn in the road, where, ordinarily, the captives were led off to execution, the prisoners found themselves free, either as hostages within the city, or literally free to return to their own homes.

Amongst the crowd of captives there was a large number of Jews, and these settled down in the city, and formed the foundation of that Church at Rome, to which in after-years St. Paul wrote his Epistle.

A special district was assigned to them on the right bank of the Tiber, near the wharves, and the Jewish settlement was quickly added to by

emigrants from other countries. Those Romans who had Jewish slaves found them difficult to keep or train. They clung so tenaciously to their ancestral customs that they were a nuisance in their masters' houses. It was much easier to give them their freedom, either at a small ransom, if they could get it, or if not, then without any, and these freedmen swelled the Jewish colony. They were always industrious, pushing, clever. As usual, they soon became rich. In the time of Augustus, thirty years later, their numbers were 40,000, and fifty years later still, 60,000. They spread to other parts of the city. The quarter near the docks was left to the poor, hawkers, sellers of matches, old clothes and second-hand goods; but in other parts there were merchants, bankers, writers, even actors. Their burial-places—the poor, with rough daubs of the Jewish symbols, the seven-branched candlestick, *e.g.*; the rich, with marble sarcophagi, and rich paintings, remain unto this day. Indeed, it is by their graveyards that their quarters are identified. Think for a moment of their influence in the capital of the world. If they were regarded with some awe and curiosity because of their mystic religion, they were also the best-hated and despised nation ever made tributary of Rome. At Alexandria, their wealth and pride and contempt of the superstitions round them excited the feelings of the populace; and more than once there were massacres. The satirists of the day and the literary buffoons wrote scurrilous diatribes about them—of the unfortunate Greek, *e.g.*, whom they captured and fattened once a year, and then

killed with horrible rites; of the ass's head, which Pompey found in the Temple; of their evident worship of swine, since they refused to eat pork; of the origin of their sabbath rest, which came from the fact that the people who left Egypt were covered with such sores that they had to rest once in seven days. Such were the lampoons directed against them, which show at least something of the contempt which was exemplified in Pilate's famous question, "Am I a Jew?"

The educated Roman, however, regarded the Jew with a mixture of contempt and anger. He considered that now that the Jews were captives of Rome they had no right to their religion. Yet, do what he chose, he was confronted by that despised race, with an uncompromising wall of separation and exclusive rites. Yet, though he hated the Jew, there was something in his religion which held him spell-bound, and commanded his unwilling respect. He could not shut his eyes to it. On the Sabbath, *e.g.* all the Jewish shops shut, the folk in strange attire to be found in their synagogues. Romans became proselytes, and whilst some of the Jews gave up their profession, and turned pagan for the sake of gain, others "would compass sea and land to make one" convert.

And whilst the Roman despised and hated the Jew, yet, step by step, the Jew gained power and place in the Empire, and pulled the strings of politics, as they do to-day. Occasionally the Roman Emperors tried to rid themselves of their influence by wholesale banishment, but the Jew

always came back, stronger than ever, having made himself too necessary to be dropped. Here they were then, at last, at the heart of the Empire, in a community destined to have a strange bearing upon the after history of the Christian Church.

Aristobulus and his sons, Alexander and Antigonus, ere long made their escape from Rome. The two first, after various vicissitudes, passed out of the story, but Antigonus and his sister-in-law, Alexandra, and the two sons of Alexander, Aristobulus and Mariamne, these four remained to play their part in the closing tragedy of the Asmonean house.

At this moment, in far away Britain and western Europe, a certain Julius Cæsar was winning to himself glory and the admiration and loyalty of the Roman army. Between Pompey and Cæsar there were personal and political issues which darkened the horizon for many years, and ended in the assassination of Pompey (not by Cæsar's orders, however) in Alexandria, and in the latter's assumption of the chieftainship of the Roman Empire. You will recollect the history of Rome during the ensuing years, made immortal to us by Shakespeare's *Julius Cæsar* and *Antony and Cleopatra*. In the midst of this intricate plot we notice the entrance of a new character. Through all the preceding acts, the Idumean Antipas had made himself indispensable to the feeble High Priest Hyrcanus, and to the leaders of the Roman Republic. Now he makes way for his son, "Herod the Great,"—a man whose life presents one of those complex characters of such interest to the

student of human nature. We are accustomed to think of him as a blood-stained tyrant, hated of the Jews, and so he was ; yet with it all he was a man of remarkable governing power, who raised the Jewish nation to a position they had not previously occupied, who was famous all over the world for his diplomacy, for his artistic ability, for his cultivation of literature, his passion for history and philosophy and the arts. Add to that, that whilst he did not hesitate to stain his sword with treachery, and to remove all rivals, however near the ties of kinship, he possessed the power of loving to so deep and passionate a degree that he may be said to have died insane and broken-hearted for love. His father, Antipas, making himself necessary to Pompey, and to his rival, Cæsar, had obtained as a reward the Procuratorship of Judæa. Previously Herod had governed Galilee when little more than a boy, and by his exploits against the Galilæan Highlanders, the brigands of Israel, his name was celebrated in popular ballads in Syria and the Lebanon as the hero who had delivered the people from the outrages of Galilæan robbers, whilst in Judæa, of course, these acts of his were considered as disloyal and traitorous to the Jews. So much was this the case, that at last the high priest, Hyrcanus, was reluctantly compelled to summon him to appear before the Sanhedrin on a charge of murder, He came, not as a prisoner under the shadow of a death penalty, but in all the dignity of his purple robes and shining bodyguard, and carrying no less than Cæsar's own letter, insisting that he should be acquitted.

When Julius Cæsar fell before the daggers of Brutus and the aristocracy, and Cassius obtained possession of Syria, Herod and his father changed sides again, and retained their position, and when the battle of Philippi placed the Roman Empire in the hands of Antony and Octavius, again the Idumeans knew how to win over their new rulers. Antipater had died, but Herod and his brother Phasael were joint tetrarchs of Judæa. Then, for a moment, his career was checked, for Antony lay in the toils of Cleopatra, heedless of what became of the Empire. The Parthians invaded Palestine, in support of the rival Asmonean prince, Antigonus, son of Aristobulus. Phasael, Herod's brother, and Hyrcanus, the High Priest, were captured by treachery. Phasael killed himself in prison, whilst Hyrcanus was deprived of his ears to unfit him for the office of High Priest. Herod escaped by a roundabout route to Rome, leaving Antigonus to assume high priesthood and royalty for a brief hour in Jerusalem. Herod was not beaten. Ere long he had been proclaimed by the Roman Senate "King of the Jews," and came back to Palestine with a Roman army, to succeed at last in capturing Jerusalem, amidst scenes of horrible carnage, and to hand over his enemy Antigonus to be executed by the Romans—the first of the remnant of the Asmonean house to fall a victim to his jealousy and hatred.

Meanwhile, even whilst his armies were battering at the walls, he slipped off to Samaria, to marry a beautiful and high-spirited wife, to whom he had been betrothed five years before. This was

Mariamne, the Asmonean princess, who with her brother Aristobulus united in themselves the two branches of the Maccabæan house. These two and Alexandra, the old mother of Mariamne, and the ex-High Priest, Hyrcanus, were all that remained of the once famous family. From this moment till the end the story is one of terrible tragedy.

Herod invited Hyrcanus from his honourable retreat in Babylon to share once more the regal dignity in Jerusalem. The loss of his ears, by the strict law of the Jews, prevented him from ever being High Priest again, and Herod invited a Babylonian Jew, Hananel, to fill the vacant office. This wakened the hostility of his mother-in-law, Alexandra, who naturally enough felt that there was no reason why the High Priesthood should not have continued in the Asmonean family, and that her son Aristobulus, brother of Herod's wife Mariamne, should have obtained the post.

It seemed as if in Mariamne and this brother the climax of the beauty and dignity of the Maccabæan line had been reached. Alexandra intrigued with Cleopatra, and by her clever tactics, as well as Mariamne's entreaties, Herod was forced to depose his friend, and appoint Aristobulus to the office he desired. Naturally Herod was not best pleased with the result of Alexandra's intrigues, and his suspicions were further aroused when, on the Feast of Tabernacles, young Aristobulus was consecrated.

He was only seventeen, but a tall and exceedingly handsome youth, and when he ascended to the altar before the multitude he was received with

rapturous plaudits, and his likeness to his grandfather, the old king so deeply lamented, passed from mouth to mouth—and reached Herod. It was obvious to him that here was a dangerous rival to the throne. Aristobulus was invited by Herod to the fashionable watering-place Jericho, where he was treated with all Herod's usual hospitable welcome. One warm evening the young High Priest stood watching the sporting and bathing of the king's attendants in the palace baths. They invited him to join with them in their games. He plunged in, and the bodyguard of unscrupulous Gaulish troops dipped and dived with him under the water—and at last held him under till he was drowned.

We imagine the passionate laments of the people. The intolerable anguish of the mother Alexandra, which drove her nearly to suicide, while she suspected, but dared not reveal her suspicions. Even Herod, as he looked on the young dead face, still preserving its glorious colouring, was moved to tears so genuine as almost to dispel suspicion. Alexandra darkly bided her time, with ever growing hatred of her son-in-law, whilst Mariamne still trusted in the nobler side of her husband's character, and refused to think him guilty of such a cold-blooded murder. At last Alexandra got her opportunity, through Cleopatra, who hated Herod with a deadly hatred, all the more intense because she had tried to lure him to her side and failed. Herod had to go before Antony to answer to the charge of murder, leaving the government of Judæa in the hands of Joseph, the husband of

Herod's sister, Salome, herself a snake at the Herodian court. Carried away by his intense passion for Mariamne, Herod left secret directions with Joseph, that in case he was condemned to death at Rome, Mariamne was to be killed, rather than she should wed another. Joseph actually told Mariamne this as a sign of the deep love her husband bore her. On Herod's return, acquitted Salome accused her husband of intrigue with Mariamne and when Herod discovered that he had told her of his secret commission, the proof seemed to be clear enough. Joseph was summarily dispatched, whilst Mariamne, because her purity and innocence were overwhelming, retained her place in Herod's heart.

Again Roman politics interfered. Antony's fate was decided at the battle of Actium, and Herod had to make his peace with his successor Augustus (Octavius), 31 B.C. Again he was successful, but before he left Judæa, he had committed one more foul murder. Wishing to save himself from all, possible rivals, he accused the old Hyrcanus of plotting with the Arabs against him, and after the solemn farce of a trial and judgment, the old man, over eighty, was executed.

Once again, on his journey to Rome, Herod entrusted to another man the care of Mariamne, with the same directions as he had given to Joseph. Again Mariamne learnt the secret. Again the old calumnies were revived, this time, not only by that she-wolf Salome, but by Herod's own mother as well. Marianne stands out in this picture one of the finest heroines of history. Unstained by

any of the miserable court intrigues, moving statelily through them, with a soul above them all, true to her husband, yet never hiding from him her sense of his injustice and his wickedness, she was at last tried on this charge of infidelity, and Herod, maddened by jealousy, incited by Salome and his mother, sat in judgment upon her. Her mother, Alexandra, a woman of entirely different stamp, who had played with intrigue and plot ever since Mariamne had married, now tried to clear herself by reproaching her daughter as she stood at the bar of justice. Mariamne listened unmoved, and went to her execution, with calm face and unblanched cheek, a Maccabæan princess to the end.

When it was over an awful paroxysm of remorse and passion and longing for his dead wife seized the frenzied king, and nearly killed him. He plunged into society, hoping to drown his pain. In vain. He gave orders to his servants that they should act as if Mariamne were alive, addressing her, as she lay in her glass coffin, as if she could still hear. Then he shut himself up in Samaria, the scene of their first wedded life, and, attacked by a fever, hovered on the verge of death. Her monument was the third and most beautiful of three costly towers erected on the walls of Jerusalem.

It seems as if, after Mariamne's death, Herod was reckless of blood. Alexandra soon fell before him, the victim of her own intrigues, and there only remained the two sons of Mariamne, in whom their father loved to trace the image of their

beloved mother. He showered upon them tokens of his affection and remorse, sent them to Rome to be educated, in the house of Pollio, Virgil's friend, and on their return prepared for them high and important marriages. But the sons, cherishing an undying memory of their mother, cursed their father to his face, did not disguise their hatred and contempt, and would not be won over by anything their father did. This conduct was just suited to the purposes of their elder brother Antipas, son of Herod by a former wife. Once more he plotted with Salome, and succeeded in destroying Herod's love for them. Six years before Christ was born, these two young princes were tried and condemned and tortured to death, the last of their race. Last, at any rate, to all practical purposes, though of two their children, Herod Agrippa and Herodias, were destined to play a part in the sacred history of the New Testament. But these had lost the associations with the Maccabæan name.

Antipas was now the heir-presumptive, and with villainous ingratitude he plotted against his father. Herod discovered it, and cast him into prison, and sent to Rome for permission to execute him. Herod was by this time a dying man. But at Jerusalem he was still as determined as ever to allow no rivals to the throne. Wise men came one day to the city seeking for One born King of the Jews. The king heard of their search, and, as you know, added to his crimes, the murder of helpless babes at Bethlehem. Then he went to Jericho, in bodily agony, whilst somewhere through the southern wilderness towards Egypt, there

travelled day by day a humble family a Virgin mother and her new-born babe, Herod the king, unconscious of all that lay in that incident.

The king had himself taken to the sulphur baths, east of the Dead Sea, for a last resort. Five days before his death the warrant came for his son's execution, and was carried out. It was but one death more. Back from the hopeless cure, the raving king was carried to Jericho, in his dying moments commanding that the chief men of the State, whom he had already had imprisoned in the hippodrome, should be killed on his death, that so, as he said, with grim humour, there might be universal mourning through the land. So he died, and went to his own place.

But his last order was not carried out. Salome, already deeply imbrued with murder, restrained herself from that last crime, and Herod's funeral was "attended with unusual pomp, not with unusual crime—the Jewish Othello, with more than a Desdemona for his victim."

And with this story ends also the last earthly chance of the Jews for an earthly king. The Maccabæan race was sped, and though their names lingered on beloved, John, and Judas, and Simon, and Matthias, and, above all, "Mary," yet there was no longer any hope of an earthly king of the Jews. Is it not, then, the most remarkable fact on record in history, that just as these earthly hopes faded from the Jewish nation, and the wider vision of a king of the house of David came to the forefront again, just as the last descendants of the last royalty of Judæa perished, at the precise

moment when, from despair of an Asmonean heir, and from hatred of Herodian tyranny, a new Messianic hope might be expected to revive—that God sent into the world Him Who was to be King of Kings and Lord of Lords, the Babe of Bethlehem.

But now that we have done with Herod's personal history, we pass on to remember that he created in Palestine that stage upon which the scenes of the New Testament were set, *e.g.* whilst hated and abhorred by many of the Jews as an upstart and a usurper, yet there were others who saw in the prince who always managed to conciliate the favour of the successive rulers of the world, and who, by the steady support of Rome, had placed the Jewish nation high amongst the nations of the world, the Promised Deliverer of Israel. This section of Jewish society is known to us in the New Testament by the name of the Herodians.

Again, few men have ever transformed a country in so short a space of time as Herod. His public works in Palestine were enormous. Cæsarea Philippi, Sebaste, Cæsarea Stratonitis were some of the towns he built. He added baths, fountains, colonnades to many another city. He made Jericho a place of resort, and built, there, as well as at Jerusalem, theatres, hippodromes, and gymnasia, by which the Saviour must have passed many times.

But greatest of all his works was the rebuilding of the Temple, that Temple which the disciples bade our Lord admire. It was one of the wonders of the world. "He that hath not seen the Temple of Herod," was the common proverb, "doth not know what beauty is." The existing Temple was

continued into the new building, and thus the worship was never interrupted. 1000 vehicles carried up the stone. 10,000 workmen laboured at the task. 1000 priests, trained as masons and carpenters supervised the building, whilst the actual Sanctuary was built by the priests alone, and thus from the beginning was never profaned. The inner sanctuary was finished in eighteen months, the outer walls in eight years, but additions continued to be made to it for eighty years after.

Meanwhile, we notice other developments during Herod's lifetime. That judicial body under John Hyrcanus was now known technically as the Sanhedrin. But it was not only as a legislative body that its members, the Scribes, exercised their main influence. Under Herod they appear by their new name as "teachers"—"Rab" the great, "Rabbi or Rabboni." We had these scribes forming two schools of thought under two leaders whose duality seems to have been a recognized thing. But their teaching was occupied with minutiæ of ceremonial and ritual, and was always founded upon something that some former rabbi had said. It was reserved for a new Teacher to "speak with authority, and not as the scribes."

E.g., on one occasion the leaders of the Rabbinic school were discussing the grave problem, as it seemed to them, whether the Paschal Lamb could be killed on the Sabbath. A strange Jew from Babylon answered them so well, that they hailed him as chief. This was Hillel, the most eminent teacher of the era before Christ, 36 B.C. Coming from Babylon to learn in the University of

Jerusalem, he earned his living as a labourer, supporting his family on twopence a day, the rest going to pay his lodgings and the doorkeeper of the school where the two chief Rabbis taught. Living was fortunately cheap in those days, and Jerusalem was, under Herod, one of the richest commercial cities of the world. But on one occasion when work failed, and he could not pay the doorkeeper —it was a Sabbath eve—Hillel climbed to the window-sill to listen. It was a bitter winter night and he was soon benumbed, and covered with a drift of snow. As the day dawned, the two Rabbis within noticed how dark their window was, and thus discovered their scholar. And though it was the Sabbath, and therefore forbidden to give medical aid on that day, they were so touched by that form of flattery, that they took him in, revived him, and made him their favourite scholar.

He became the real founder of that school of traditionalism which so bound the Jews in legal chains. He was head of the Sanhedrin at the time when they met to discuss, in answer to Herod's inquiry, the birthplace of the Messiah, and he was the grandfather of that Gamaliel at whose feet St. Paul sat. He was a man of great influence, the reformer in many ways of the Jewish law, and he died a few years after our Lord's birth.

Think then of the three worlds in Jerusalem. The Jews, with their rapt devotion to the law; the Romans, with their sense of Empire; the Greeks with their elegance and luxury. It was a strange world, and yet just the proper world into which Christ should be born. In the streets and

lanes of the city, every article of commerce could be obtained. The bazaars were full of articles from the remotest parts of the world, strangers of every nation jostled each other in the streets, Jews speaking so many languages, that there were special synagogues erected for Jews from each country (cp. Acts vi. 9), "Libertines, and Cyrenians, and Alexandrians, and them of Cilicia and Asia." Articles of luxury from abroad fetched fabulous prices. A lady would pay thirty pounds for a cloak. Silk was paid for by its weight in gold, whilst the price of the best scents and perfumes, spikenard and balsam, was enormous. But ordinary living was cheap. You could buy a suit for your slave for eighteen or nineteen shillings. Meat was about a penny a pound, and lodgings obtainable at sixpence a week. The wages of a day labourer about sevenpence-halfpenny, paid in the coin called in New Testament a "penny."

In the upper part of the City, you would lose the din of the markets and shops, and pass the residence of the High Priests and the houses of the aristocracy. Here, too, were the theatre and hippodrome, whilst outside the walls Herod had a magnificent amphitheatre.

And, lastly, there was an underground Jerusalem —catacombs and passages so vast and ramified that at the final capture of the city, more than two thousand dead bodies were found in those subterranean streets, besides the large number of living persons who had sought refuge there.*

It was a peculiar mixture of worlds, and a still

* Edersheim.

more peculiar mixture of piety and frivolity. The devotion of the people and the liberality of the rich were unbounded. If, *e.g.* priestly avarice had raised the price of sacrificial lambs, then some rich man would bring into the Temple a sufficient number, paid for, for the poor who could not afford them. Charity was so delicate and open-handed that a man who fell on poverty would be enabled to maintain his former station. And these gentlefolks of Jerusalem were so polished and witty and agreeable. They spoke a dainty dialect of their own, a sort of Parisian accent. Their hospitality was generous to a degree. No stranger was ever kept outside their doors. At their feasts all might enter, and many did, for no one knew what splendid sights might not be seen at those entertainments. In the women's rooms, *e.g.* your country friends would have the opportunity of seeing every novelty in dress and jewellery and fashion, even the latest invention--"looking-glasses." But you might not look in them on the Sabbath. At least, not in a hand-mirror. So the Rabbis decided. For if a woman happened to look in her hand-glass, she might be tempted to "*do work*" on the Sabbath day, by seizing the tweezers attached to the glass for the purpose of pulling out a grey hair.

As for the men, they had their news and their politics to discuss. They had a real delivery of letters, and even a kind of parcels post. Yes, even the newspaper was published, though, again, you might not read that on the Sabbath, unless it treated of public affairs.

Such was the Jerusalem, then, a type of modern

London or Paris, over which Herod ruled, to which Jesus came. Amidst the good nature, and frivolity, and formalism, there were yet many who looked beyond these things to a Day when the Messiah should come. For now, they looked for an angel, or a messenger, possibly a second Elijah, who should prepare the way for a New King. Simeons and Annas waited in the Temple. The crowd that filled the Temple Courts, watched the Priest Zacharias signing to them dumbly, as he came out from the sacrifice, and perceiving that he had had a vision, dispersed to ponder the question what that vision might be. There was a Light expected that "should lighten the Gentiles and should be the glory of my people Israel."

The history of that last century, with its dying hopes of a royal heir to the Asmonean line, had turned the thoughts of the devout to this higher view of their Messiah.

He came, and they crucified Him, because His Life was a continual protest against this frivolity and luxury, and formalism, and righteousness of works. But ere He died, He foretold the doom that awaited that thoughtless city. "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, that killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, but ye would not! Now your house is left unto you desolate."

Those words came true. Two years after Christ's Death and Resurrection and Ascension Pontius Pilate was recalled to Rome in consequence of a riot caused by his appropriating the Temple

money for the purpose of building an aqueduct. He was succeeded by King Agrippa, and he in turn by his son. But Jewish discontent had been growing, and at last there was a serious revolt against the tyranny of one of the Roman governors, by name, Gessius Florus, A.D. 66. In consequence, Jerusalem was besieged, first by Gallus, president of Syria, then by Vespasian, who inch by inch put down the revolution throughout Palestine, and finally invested the Holy City. On his becoming Emperor of Rome, Titus completed what he had begun, and the great siege of Jerusalem, in A.D. 70, was one of the most terrible sieges in the whole of history. It lasted 143 days, and was accompanied by horrors of civil war and famine within the city itself. On the 84th day, the daily sacrifice could no longer be held in the Temple, the supply of sheep having failed. On the 105th day the Temple itself was fired. The city was crowded, not only with its ordinary population, but with thousands of pilgrims who had come up before, for the Feast of Dedication, and were not able to get away before the city was invested. In the final destruction of the city on September 4, the Jewish system came to an end in blood and fire, and the few survivors were made victims of the games in the circus at Cæsarea, or led captive to Rome, where on the arch of Titus, the golden candlestick and the silver trumpets are shown to this day as spoils of this great victory.

Now it only remains just to place the remaining books of the Apocrypha in their position in this last chapter of Jewish history.

The Book of Baruch consists apparently of two parts. The first part written after the capture of Jerusalem by Pompey, 63 B.C.; the second part after the capture by Herod, and then the book was finally edited in its present form sometime after the Destruction of Jerusalem by Titus. It contains a deep and sincere confession of Israel's sins, and an acknowledgment that God's judgments have been deserved. Then Israel is admonished to turn to God the Fountain of all Wisdom, for God shall yet punish the tyrants, and shall restore the city.

Two passages are of special interest. First of all, Wisdom is personified in chapter iii., and from the second century this was regarded by Christian writers as a prophecy of Christ, "God hath found out the way of knowledge, and hath given it unto Jacob his servant and Israel his beloved. Afterwards did He shew himself upon earth, and conversed with men." And the last chapter is a quotation of the eleventh Psalm of Solomon, a book of psalms written to revive the hopes of the Jews after the destruction and capture of Jerusalem by Pompey, "O Jerusalem, look about thee toward the East, and behold the joy that cometh unto thee from God. Lo, thy sons come, whom thou sentest away, they come gathered together from the East to the West by the Word of the Holy One, rejoicing in the glory of God. . . . For God shall (yet) lead Israel with joy in the light of his glory with the mercy and righteousness that come from him."

Then we turn to the Wisdom of Solomon,

written at Alexandria, shortly before the birth of Christ, showing in a remarkable way the influence of the philosophy of Greece upon Jewish belief, and a close approach to the thought and teaching of Philo, the greatest of the Alexandrian Jewish teachers. Here we find Wisdom approaching very near to that idea of the Word of God, which in St. John's Gospel becomes incarnate in Jesus Christ. Above all, we see God held up as being, not merely Lord of His creatures, but known to them as "Love." Therefore it is maintained that there must be an immortality of good and bad, where the good shall meet with their deserts, and the evil be punished. In this book again, early Christian writers loved to see a picture of Christ in the "righteous man" of chapter iv.

He pleased God, and was beloved of him: so that living among sinners he was translated. Yea, speedily was he taken away, lest that wickedness should alter his understanding, or deceit beguile his soul. For the bewitching of naughtiness doth obscure things that are honest; and the wandering of concupiscence doth undermine the simple mind. He, being made perfect in a short time, fulfilled a long time: For his soul pleased the Lord: therefore hasted he *to take him away* from among the wicked. This the people saw, and understood it not, neither laid they up this in their minds, That his grace and mercy is with his saints, and that he hath respect unto his chosen. Thus the righteous which is dead shall condemn the ungodly which are living; and youth that is soon perfected the many years and old age of the unrighteous."

Many of the expressions used by the author

were of such value that they were adopted by the New Testament writers. Faith, hope, and love, grace, mercy, and peace. St. James uses several turns of expression derived from it, whilst the author of Hebrews had an undoubted knowledge of it. "The author had an honourable share," says Farrar, "in moulding the religious phraseology in which the Gospel was ultimately to be preached."

Finally, the Second Book of Esdras marks the lowest period of Jewish depression, when all hope had perished at the close of the first century A.D. But none the less, though its dominant note is one of sadness, yet it is permeated by new thoughts, derived as it seems from the teaching of Jesus Christ. The author tries in his own way to solve the problem of the fate of the Jewish race, which St. Paul does in Ephesians, Romans, and Galatians.

The book has been actually touched up by a Christian, and the name of Jesus introduced. This was natural enough, for the book in its original form contains references to the Messiah, a suffering Messiah, and a dead Messiah, which seem to show how much the life and teaching of Jesus had permeated to the Jewish mind afterwards.

So, if this last chapter of the Jewish story is sad, yet, thank God, it closes with a hope, with the merging of Jewish belief in the Person of the Christ, as exemplified by Jesus the Saviour, and we cannot do better than draw to a close with the prophetic words of this Jewish writer, speaking after the Gospel was an accomplished fact.

" Behold, the time shall come, that these tokens which I have told thee shall come to pass, and the bride shall appear, and she coming forth shall be seen, that now is withdrawn from the earth. And whosoever is delivered from the foresaid evils shall see my wonders. For my son Jesus shall be revealed with those that be with him, and they that remain shall rejoice within four hundred years. After these years shall my son Christ die, and all men that have life. And the world shall be turned into the old silence seven days, like as in the former judgments: so that no man shall remain. And after seven days in the world, that yet awaketh not, shall be raised up, and that shall die that is corrupt. And the earth shall restore those that are asleep in her, and so shall the dust those that dwell in silence, and the secret places shall deliver those souls that were committed unto them. And the most high shall appear upon the seat of judgment, and misery shall pass away, and the long suffering shall have an end: But judgment only shall remain, truth shall stand, and faith shall wax strong."

THE END.

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