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## CHURCH AND STATE IN HOLY SCRIPTURE.

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IT may not be amiss to say at the outset that for the writer the subject of this paper entailed in great measure a fresh study of the process of divine revelation. The field is a vast one, and only the bare outline of the historical development is here attempted. The fact, however, that the study is fresh means, I trust, that it is free from prejudice, while on the other hand the absence of mature thought may, I hope, excuse its blemishes.

All the Pentateuchal sources, without exception, agree that the fundamental relationship of God to Israel is that of covenant, going back to Abraham as an individual and to the people at Sinai as a nation. "Now, therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed and keep my covenant ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me, above all people; for all the earth is mine and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation." Involved in this is the conviction that the adoption of Israel is an act of divine election, whereby God becomes both the Father and the King of a chosen people; and the mighty deliverance of the Exodus is the event to which all subsequent generations look back as the historical proof of this divine adoption.

Even in the period of tribal disintegration under the Judges this fundamental idea is still here. "And he (Jehovah) became King in Jeshurun when the heads of the people were assembled all together, the tribes of Israel." So in Judges viii. 23, Gideon says: "I will not rule over you, neither shall my son rule over you: the Lord shall rule over you." Similarly in the double account of the establishment of the monarchy we find the expressed conviction, dated according to Sellin about 800 B.C., that Jehovah is Israel's rightful King. It seems therefore justifiable to say that there is a strong theocratic tendency traceable to the early days of the monarchy. But even in the other and possibly earlier account of the setting up of the monarchy it is notable that the King is anointed and the Spirit of the Lord comes upon him. Jehovah still rules, though now by a vice-gerent. And when we come to David we reach another covenant of God, and the origin of Messianic expectation. In all this early period, that Jehovah is the God of Israel, and Israel the people of Jehovah, is the fundamental basis of national life.

When we come to the prophets we may observe that the subjects of prophetic announcement are well summed up as "the affairs of the theocracy." Through them God makes clear that His people must reflect His character, that the whole life of the nation, social as well as religious, must be imbued with His Spirit of righteous-

ness, justice, mercy and holiness. At the same time Jehovah's exclusive choice of Israel has as its necessary consequence the special responsibility of the nation as well as its unique privilege. "You only have I known of all the families of the earth, therefore I will visit upon you all your iniquities." Side by side with this goes the proclamation that all the nations, despite the election of Israel, are the subjects, unknown to them, of His kingly rule. "Have not I brought up Israel out of the land of Egypt and the Philistines from Capthor and the Syrians from Kir?" It is this double revelation, which we find in Amos, of God's demands upon Israel and His ultimate universal sovereignty which inaugurates a double process in all subsequent history. On the one hand is the failure of the whole nation to rise to its high calling, on the other the widening outlook of the true followers of Jehovah and their perception of the true destiny of God's people in relation to the world.

The failure of the nation is clearly seen by Isaiah, and gives rise to his doctrine of the Remnant. This is primarily an eschatological conception presupposing judgment, but Manson thinks that Isaiah viii. 16 "may fairly be considered an attempt to consolidate the remnant, the nucleus of the future people of God." The enactment under Josiah of the provisions of Deuteronomy, and the failure of that reformation, is the most eloquent testimony to the failure of Israel as a nation. It is perhaps true to say that nowhere in the Old Testament is the character of God as Father and as King more fully set out than in this great law-book (vii. 6-8, xiv. 2, xxviii. 9 f.). Consequently Israel is Jehovah's son (a conception which indeed goes back to Exod. iv. 22 (J), "Israel is my son, my firstborn son"), and the object of divine adoption (iv. 20) and care. But the attempt to secure by legislation the theocratic ideal failed, as mere legislation always must, and with Jeremiah the new covenant is individual and personal, "All shall know me," "I will put my law in their inward part."

So the nation as such is doomed, with the exile the State and the monarchy pass away, and we watch the birth-pangs of a new order. Throughout the period of exile Isaiah's concept, "a remnant shall return," represents a hope which is never extinguished. But it gives rise to two distinct conceptions of the future of the nation. On the one hand there is the thought of the purified Israel as the holy people of God wholly belonging to Him, expressing in its whole life obedience to the divine law, and separated from the heathen. This begins with Ezekiel, runs through Haggai, Zechariah, Ezra and Nehemiah, and ends with the enforcement of full Pentateuchal strictness. It is important to notice that, once again, this process which is inaugurated by the return from exile is thought of primarily as God's act. This is true both of Ezekiel and deutero-Isaiah, though more prominent in the former, where the name of the restored Jerusalem is Jahweh-shammah—Jehovah is there. The restored community is therefore in ideal a Church rather than a state, and with the priestly legislation, to which we may now come, we reach a true theocracy. Here the fundamental notion,

on which all the ceremonial law depends, is that in the domain of Jehovah's own people everything belongs to God and is consecrated to Him only—all space and time, all property and all life. The claim is absolute. But, in order that life may be lived at all, God ordains that a portion of all shall be given to Him, symbolising the whole which is His right. So we find the setting apart of priestly and Levitical cities, the Sabbatical year, the great year of Jubilee, and above all the Sabbath; the tithe which hallows all property and the sacrifices which express the consciousness that all earthly blessings are of God. So the redemption of the first-born and the poll-tax of the half-shekel express the divine claim over all human life. But above all in the worship of God, the priestly function of all male Israelites, or at least of the firstborn (Num. iii. 40), is delegated to the Levites, who thus are the gift of the people (Num. iii. 9) as their representatives to serve the hereditary priesthood of the Sons of Aaron. It is the latter class who alone can be expected to preserve the holiness necessary to Jehovah's service, and at their head stands the high-priest, who by his very clothing is shown to be the representative both of the holiness of the people of God, and of their kingly dignity.

It is this true theocracy, in which the law of God governs the whole of life, which is the ideal of Judaism, and despite the discrepancy between theory and practice it is at least true that it did produce a community in which what we call civil and ecclesiastical law were one and the same. As a system it failed to "make alive," as Paul, one of its most devoted adherents, testified; that for which it stands remains an ideal, but by grace, not law, can it alone be accomplished.

We must now return to the exile and trace the second great conception of the future of the nation, that of deutero-Isaiah. We may remind ourselves that the universalism towards which it looks is not a new thing in Israel. The prophecy of the nations flowing to the mountain of the Lord's house goes back to the eighth century. In Isaiah xix. 24—though some would date it later—is the remarkable prophecy: "In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt and Assyria, a blessing in the midst of the earth, for the Lord of hosts hath blessed them, saying, Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel my inheritance." Nevertheless, what is new is the function of the Servant of Jehovah. Israel's election is still to be the fount of her confidence (xli. 8) and still is the manifestation of God's love for her (xliii. 3, 4), but it is now an election to be a saving as well as saved remnant. Whether the servant be the ideal Israel, or a saving remnant within Israel, or whether, as the writer thinks, the conception narrows in the last servant-song to an individual, the divine mission is not confined to Israel, but is to all the ends of the earth, and that through the suffering of the Servant. The vision is, as Manson puts it, of a people wholly devoted to their King, conquering the world not by force of arms but by spiritual power, attracting men and women to voluntary acceptance of Israel's King as their King.

That vision never wholly dies. It is found again in Zechariah ix. 9-10, in some of the Psalms, and according to one dating in the books of Jonah and Ruth, but in the main its fulfilment remained to the Church of Christ.

There is a third element in post-exilic Judaism, of which something must briefly be said. The final vindication of God's people, the fulfilment of their hopes, and the consummation of the divine purpose is finally seen as the work of God Himself. So through this period there run the twin streams of Apocalyptic and the Messianic hope. They may be distinct one from the other or intermingled as in Enoch and possibly Daniel. The Pharisee might look for the coming glory of Israel, either in the person of Messiah or by direct divine intervention, when the law was perfectly obeyed. The common people of the New Testament clearly looked for the coming of the warrior-Messiah, the son of David, and the establishment through him of the divine Kingdom. The pre-existent heavenly Messiah, whose coming is preceded by Messianic woes, represents yet another type of thought not entirely insignificant. But what is true of them all is that the true theocracy still lies ahead.

And that means that the method of law, which in the course of post-exilic history had triumphed in Judaism, had failed to make alive. It is true that it had preserved, as it alone perhaps could preserve, the purity of the nation's faith from the assaults of Hellenism, it had conserved a pure monotheism and the ideal of a divine theocracy. But it failed by the inherent weakness of the method of law, which starts from externals and works inward. So over against it in the New Testament stands the grace of God, not a law but a gospel which alone can transform the very springs of a man's being. It is no accident that the Old Testament theocracy which points to the true ideal fails as a way of life, individual or corporate. The revelation of God was not yet complete, the Kingdom was not yet come.

So we turn to the New Testament, to One who was of the seed of David according to the flesh, born of woman, born under the law: to One moreover for Whom it remained true that "salvation is of the Jews," whose own mission was to Israel, Who Himself kept the law, to One who says, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law and the prophets, I came not to destroy but to fulfil." He it is Who, acknowledged as Israel's Messiah, builds upon that confession of faith in Himself His own ecclesia, "Blessed art thou, Simon bar Jonah, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in Heaven. And I say unto thee, Thou art Peter and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it." As Hort puts it: "Here there is no question of a partial or local ecclesia. The congregation of God, which held so conspicuous a place in the ancient scriptures, is assuredly what the disciples could not fail to understand as the foundation of the meaning of a sentence, which was indeed for the present mysterious. If we may venture

for a moment to substitute the name Israel, and read the words as 'on this rock I will build my Israel,' we gain an impression which supplies at least an approximation to the probable sense." It may perhaps be added that *ἐκκλησία* is the septuagint translation of *qāhāl* assembly, and has nothing to do with a people called out from the world—though, as Hort points out, the latter idea is entirely scriptural.

But the main point to notice at present is that the Church is founded upon faith in Jesus as Messiah. But it immediately becomes clear in all the Gospels that our Lord's conception of Messiahship was the Way of the Cross. The writer, personally, is convinced that the "suffering servant" of Isaiah and the "Son of Man" of Daniel are the clues to our understanding of our Lord's conception of His work. The Son of Man as used in the Gospels has the triple connotation of manhood, suffering and glory. There is not time to analyse its use, but in St. Mark particularly its direct relation to the Cross is manifest. And the Jesus who so thought of Himself, as one who gives His life a ransom for many, is the Jesus who called His disciples to take up the cross and come after Him. The prophecy of Isaiah liii., fulfilled in Christ, is to have its continued fulfilment in the life of the society which, to use a Pauline term, is the body of Christ. "As the Father hath sent me, even so send I you."

It will be seen that the life of a society has been assumed, for indeed it is required by the concept of the *ἐκκλησία*. But some further expansion is obviously necessary at this point. The difficulty is to find the right relationship between the Kingdom of God, or of Heaven, and the *ἐκκλησία*. It is clear that the two cannot simply be equated. *βασιλεία* corresponds more closely to rule than to realm. It is primarily the sovereignty of God to be received, *δέχεσθαι τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ* (Mark x. 15), but this sovereignty also manifests itself in a society of those who have received it, and it will have its final consummation when at the Parousia the Son of Man appears in glory. It is the second sense of the phrase which now concerns us. That this sense is important is shown by the simple fact that the Lord's prayer is "Our Father" (at least in one Gospel), and that so many of our Lord's promises are not individual but corporate. With it we may associate the parables which imply growth, as well as those which imply imperfection in a community, such as the tares and the drag-net. It is in this sense only that we may say that Church represents the Kingdom, or to use Hort's phrase "is the primary instrument of its sway."

Now for this society of His disciples, our Lord laid down no constitution and gave no law. It is a platitude to say that He laid down simply broad principles, the double law of love to God and to neighbours, but it is nevertheless simple truth. We may add from His teaching the simile of the Vine, the promise of the Spirit of Truth, and the prayer for unity of St. John xvii., as expressing the fundamentals of the life of the *ἐκκλησία*.

It is this society which, when we pass outside the Gospels, we find actively at work in the world. It is conscious of itself as the new Israel, for it had accepted Israel's Messiah. The evidence for this is striking. Most explicit is St. Paul's simile of the grafting in of the wild olive of Romans xi., but equally important is the fact that St. James writes to the twelve tribes, and St. Peter to the dispersion. The abundant quotation of the promises of God to Israel now applied to the *ἐκκλησία* points to the same conclusion. 1 Peter ii. 9 must suffice as an example: "But ye are a chosen generation, an holy nation, a peculiar people." The same may be said of the New Testament use of *λαός*, transferred from the Old to the New Israel. Perhaps we may include all such quotations in the highly significant fact that the Church at once took over the Old Testament as its own rightful possession. It is thus clear that the *ἐκκλησία* as the New Israel is the true people of God, chosen, a purchased possession, as distinct from the world as the ancient people of God; its members are *κλήτοι ἅγιοι*.

But as the New Israel it inherited Israel's double vocation. The Christian was *ἅγιος* that he might become *δσιος*. The whole body was holy in purpose, the organ of the activity of the Risen Lord through the Spirit, and therefore the fulfilment of the Old Testament theocratic ideal, wherein the grace of God did that which "the law because it was weak through the flesh could not do." But it was also the fulfilment of Israel's mission to the ends of the earth. We need not labour the point, for it is set out for us as the Lord's final command, and the position of the Gentile within it, on the sole basis of faith in Christ, is clearly defined in Ephesians ii. Thus the Church becomes the body in which there is neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free, male nor female, "for ye are all one in Christ Jesus."

As such it stood over against Judaism and the heathen world, in the world but not of the world. Within the limits of the New Testament that world was the Roman Empire. What was the relationship between this Church and State to be? Our Lord stated the principle "Give back to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things that are God's," and the rest of the New Testament is in accord with that principle. God has a primary claim on the man who has accepted His sovereignty. But the State has also a rightful claim. The powers that be are ordained of God—and when St. Paul was writing the Emperor was Nero—"Render therefore to all their due, tribute to whom tribute is due, custom to whom custom, fear to whom fear, honour to whom honour." So in 1 Timothy ii. 2 the authorities of the State are to be prayed for, and in Titus iii. 1 the civil power is to be obeyed. The same advice is given by St. Peter: "Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, whether it be to the King, as supreme, or unto governors as those sent by him. Honour all men, Love the brotherhood, Fear God, Honour the King."

The principle of the Christian man's duty to the State is therefore unequivocally stated in scripture. But equally clearly, where

there is a conflict of loyalties, God has an absolute claim. "Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye," said St. Peter to the assembled Sanhedrin presided over by the High Priest. And it was not long before Church and Empire were set over against each other in direct conflict. The Church won because in the power of Christ it accepted the rôle of the suffering servant, because its way was not law but love.

There the paper ends, but I would ask the indulgence of the Conference if I draw some conclusions from this brief survey in relation to the problems now before us.

In the first place it is, I think, clear that the Christian cannot give the State an unqualified loyalty, and what is true of the Christian is equally true of the Church. The way of the cross is still an offence: where it is not, the salt has lost its savour. In modern Germany the issue is clearly seen.

Secondly, the Church transcends the boundaries of race and nation. Within it there must still be neither Jew nor Gentile, East nor West, white nor black. From which it follows, I think, that the supernatural life of the Church which transcends the nation can alone make possible the existence of a true family of nations, because it alone can transform the lives of sinful men. If this be true then the restoration of the Church's unity is the greatest need of the world to-day, and only by spiritual revival can that come.

Thirdly, and this goes beyond the necessarily limited scope of the paper, is not our primary need a sure hold on our doctrine of the Church, and especially of the true function of the laity? That as I see it is the true crux of the situation in which we find ourselves. In this connection there are some words of the late Dr. Griffith Thomas which seem to me well worth quoting:

"It is, of course, easy to say that the influence of the State on the Church is injurious, and many Churchmen would be ready to admit this. But on the other hand establishment is cherished by many because of its essential value as a national testimony to God. The matter is one involving grave differences of view, and whatever may be the precise relation in the future between the English Church and the State there can be no doubt that, as in Scotland, there will be a definite and determined insistence upon the two great principles that the State shall not control the Church and that the clergy shall not control the laity."