

THE PRE-CHRISTIAN JEWISH CHRIST.

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WHILE the idea of the suffering, dying, and resurrected god, as it appears in pagan religions around the Mediterranean, must be readily acknowledged as having influenced Christianity in its origin, we can have no truly historical view of the formation of Christianity unless we also make clear to ourselves the character of the Christ figure as it existed in Judaism previous to Christianity. This has been somewhat neglected thus far, it seems to me, the search for parallel ideas in pagan religions which have entered into Christianity, being almost the only line investigation has taken.

Christianity was cradled and nourished by Judaism; it always retained very strong Jewish characteristics even after it assimilated many pagan elements; its earliest protagonists always drew mainly from Jewish ideas and Jewish literature, not alone that of the Old Testament but Apocryphal and other sources as well; even Paul, through whom, mainly, Christianity widened into a more universal religion, was strongly Jewish in education, thought, and sentiment; Paul de Lagarde even said that he was the most Jewish of all. This does not mean that Judaism was anything entirely original, uninfluenced by other sources, but it means that we must take into full consideration the peculiar Jewish character by which many religious ideas were so transformed that it became possible for them to enter into a more universal religion, Christianity, though without depriving it of its original traits and marks of descent.

The very name "Christianity" betrays its Jewish origin. It is connected with the Christ or Messiah idea prevalent among the Jews before Christianity. In order to see why that idea was embodied in Christianity, what it really meant, and why it became attached to a human personality instead of a mythical one, such as Osiris, Attis, Mithras, or others, we ought to make a thorough historical examination of its development in pre-Christian Judaism.

As is well known, the Greek *christos* for the Hebrew *mashiach* in the Old Testament means "the anointed." It is used many times of Hebrew kings in the form *meshiach Yahveh*, "the anointed of Yahveh," meaning one who takes the place of Yahveh in earthly affairs as a sacrosanct person, just as other Oriental kings were assumed to take the place of their national gods.

But we see this term, originally connected with the ceremony of anointing a Hebrew king, also used in a transferred sense. In Ps. cv. 15 the Hebrew patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, besides being represented as prophets (a thing we will do well to bear in mind), are also Yahveh's anointed (Hebr. *mshichim* pl., Greek *christoi* pl.). Moreover, a foreign king like Cyrus, who stands in no connection with Yahveh, the national deity of the Hebrews, is also called the anointed of Yahveh (Is. xlv. 1) because he is to fulfil God's will in the government of the world, and especially in the release of the Jews from captivity, just as Alexander the Great seems to have been looked upon in a similar way by the Jews later, according to the view of some scholars.¹ Finally, the whole people of Israel is called the anointed of Yahveh in Habak. iii. 13; Ps. xxviii. 8; lxxxiv. 9.

In all these instances the term Messiah or Christ is applied to human beings. They are either individuals or a whole people, with whom Yahveh stands in a close connection and whom He has chosen either to execute or proclaim His will. Messiah or Christ here means nothing but the especial "servant of Yahveh," a term often applied to the prophets in the Old Testament, to the whole of the Jewish people (or the most faithful part of it) in Deutero-Isaiah, and also to the national Messiah himself in Zech. iii. 8. Similarly the same term, "servant of Yahveh," is often applied to Nebuchadnezzar in Jeremiah, just as the term Christ or Messiah of Yahveh is applied in a similar sense to Cyrus in Deutero-Isaiah. Likewise just as the whole Jewish people is called the Christ or Messiah of Yahveh, so Israel is also called the son of Yahveh (Hos. xi), all this so far without any supernatural meaning.

The term Christ or Messiah of Yahveh is not used in the specifically Messianic prophecies, to which of course Is. vii. 14 does not belong though traditionally accepted as such on the basis of Matt. i. 23, following the wrong translation of the Septuagint. In these passages the Messiah *par excellence* is described as the Branch of Jesse, or simply the Branch, or by his properties, as in Is. xi and ix. 6-7. He is also considered as a human being, though of course especially chosen by Yahveh and extraordinarily endowed with His spirit. Is. ix. 6, etc., taken traditionally as signifying the supernatural origin of the future Messiah on account of the terms "Wonderful," "Counsellor," "Mighty God," "Everlasting Father," "Prince of Peace," need not be taken in this way. The future

¹ Kampers, *Alexander der Grosse und die Idee des Weltimperiiums in Prophetie und Sage*.

Messiah is described in that passage as a king sitting on the throne of David, and the names given to him are simply a representation, denoting that God is in an especial and extraordinary way with him, and that he will represent God's government on earth.

The future Messiah is to sit on David's throne, the old royal house is to blossom forth again. This is the view of the specifically Messianic passages, and became the orthodox belief among the Jews in accord with those passages. However, we must remember that in Jewish history there was a departure from this belief, in that the Messiah was represented as coming from the tribe of Levi instead of Judah. This is found in the Apocryphal Jewish Testament of Levi. According to Bousset this idea dates from the times of the Maccabees, when a priestly family became the occupant of the royal throne among the Jews.

We must also remember that the Samaritans believed the future Messiah to be a reincarnation of Joshua of the tribe of Ephraim, an idea plainly continuing the old rivalry between the two former Israelitic kingdoms, of which the one was led by Ephraim, the other by Judah. Perhaps this Samaritan idea was based on older Israelitic traditions, and these may have influenced the later Jewish view (of which we shall speak further on) of a double Messiah, the Messiah *ben* Joseph (son of Joseph) preceding the Messiah *ben* David. Still, in spite of these departures, the idea that the future Messiah was to be of the royal house of David remained a prevalent one; it asserts itself strongly even as late as in the so-called Psalms of Solomon, a Jewish book of the second half of the last pre-Christian century. In fact, this belief even persisted into the Middle Ages.

Alongside this idea we see a new stage of the Messianic hope developing during the Maccabean wars. This appears in the Book of Daniel then coming into existence, the first and only book of the many Jewish apocalypses written from now on which found entrance into the Old Testament. With this book the gate was thrown open to further speculations on the future Messiah, a topic of especial interest to the Jew both from a political and religious view-point. The Jewish literature on this subject, though not canonical, must be considered—as well as the canonical literature—in detail in order to obtain a right view of the pre-Christian Jewish Christ idea and its influence on Christianity.

The Book of Daniel, as is well known, speaks in the seventh chapter of "one coming with the clouds of heaven like unto a son of man," i. e., in human form, to whom "dominion and glory is

given by the Ancient of days." As the Book of Daniel is thoroughly pervaded by Zoroastrian ideas translated into Jewish form, "the son of man" may probably be connected with the Persian *Vohumanah*, i. e., the Good Mind, one of the highest attendants and counselors of Ahura Mazda, of whose distinct spheres one was the maintenance of goodness in man. "He comes like Vohumanah" repeatedly occurs in Yasht XLVIII of the Zend-Avesta.

The author of Daniel probably understood by the expression "the son of man" the fulfilment of a truly human empire, with which the kingdom of God was to come, in contrast to the preceding world empires represented by the symbols of wild devouring beasts. In this kingdom "the saints of the Most High," i. e., the Jewish people, or at least the faithful part of them, was to "receive the kingdom," according to verse 18 of that chapter. The Son of Man was to be the culmination of the Christ idea as it had been prefigured in the patriarchs, the prophets, and the Hebrew people as a whole, or its better part, as "the anointed of Yahveh."

The Book of Enoch, a writing of somewhat later date, develops further the figure of the Son of Man, first introduced by Daniel. It very frequently represents this figure, calling him also "the Elect One," as dwelling with God, and having been chosen and hidden (i. e., kept latent) by Him before the world was created. He is to be "the staff of the just," "the hope of the dejected," "the light of the peoples," and all dwelling on earth shall fall down before him; he shall throw down the kings and the mighty and prostrate the wicked (chaps. xlvi and xlviii, ed. Hinrichs, Leipsic, 1901). We are reminded, of course, in such descriptions of the representation of the Messiah in Is. xi, where similar language is used. On the other hand, we have also in the same Enoch symbolic representations, which remind us of those passages of the Old Testament that represent the patriarchs and the whole Jewish people as Christs or Messiahs. Adam, Seth, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, and the new congregation of Israel which has remained faithful to God's law during the persecutions by their enemies, are symbolized by white bulls, and the Messiah *par excellence* is represented by the same symbol (chaps. lxxxv-xc) in contrast to black bulls and other animals, symbols of Israel's enemies.

The idea of the Messiah is thus represented under the figure of reincarnations culminating in the specific Messiah of the future, who naturally would be the revelation on earth of the Son of Man or the Elect One hidden and dwelling with God, as Enoch pictures him. The book does not state explicitly that the future Messiah

is a revelation on earth of the personality dwelling with God, but that is the logical inference. Whether the writer considered the Son of Man, or Elect One, a mysterious divine personality I will not discuss, but the meaning of the book, given in the language of realistic visions seen by the antediluvian patriarch throughout the different heavens, is surely this: the idea of the specific future Christ, the culmination of all previous Christ forms as they appeared in the patriarchs, prophets, and great men of Israel, and in the people of Israel itself, is not yet realized on earth, but hidden and dwelling with God—but it will yet be actually realized on earth.

We have thus far only spoken of the Jewish expectation of a specific future Messiah, the culmination of all the previously anointed and servants of Yahveh, through whom God's will is to be fully realized on earth. But we have not spoken of the part which was expected to fall to the Messiah when appearing on earth. Of this part the Messianic passages of the Old Testament said nothing. Now it was natural to assume that when a terrestrial Messiah would appear he would not live eternally. The Samaritans believed that their Messiah would die at the age of one hundred and ten years, the age at which Joshua died, of whom their Messiah was expected to be a reincarnation. The Messiah *ben Joseph*, in whom the Jews, too, believed and who was said to precede the Messiah *ben David*, the triumphant Messiah, was believed to fall in battle with Gog and Magog, the enemy coming against the land of Israel from the north, anciently believed to be the region of darkness and later understood in a transferred sense as being the region of evil. The Fourth Book of Ezra² (chap. vii) and likewise the Talmud in tract "Sanhedrin" (*Talmud*, Vol. VIII, p. 311, Rodkinson) speaks of the Messiah's death after four hundred years. It was further natural that the terrestrial Messiah, the culmination of Israel's greatest virtues, who was to be a king of justice and peace, a proclaimer, prophet and teacher of God's will, would find obstinate resistance from the wicked, and that he would have to suffer much, as did the patriarchs, the prophets, and the people of Israel in former times, who had acted in the same capacity as the anointed of Yahveh. The mystical interpretation of the Old Testament, which had its beginning after the close of the canon and which sought under the literal sense a deeper meaning, just as the Alexandrians and Plato did in regard to Homer, found passages in the Old Testament which they could turn to account in this way.

It is a wide-spread error that the Jews, before the origin of

² Known as 2 Esdras in English editions of the Apocrypha.

Christianity, knew nothing of a suffering Messiah. Even the Talmud, of which we should least expect it because it was compiled after Christianity had already existed for some time, being in many instances a polemic against it, knows of a suffering Messiah. It interprets Is. liii in tract "Sanhedrin" (*loc. cit.*, Vol. VIII, p. 310) as referring to the suffering Messiah, whether rightly or wrongly does not affect our discussion. The fact stands out that that passage and other passages of the Old Testament were explained as referring to the Messiah by many Jewish rabbis before Christianity. Even the dark passage Zech. xii. 10, speaking probably, according to Cornill, of some judicial murder in Jerusalem at the time of the writing and interpreted in the Fourth Gospel as referring to the thrust of the lance into the side of Jesus, was referred to the death of the Messiah—though to that of the Messiah *ben Joseph*—by the Talmud in tract "Succah" (*loc. cit.*, Vol. IV, p. 79).

The Targums,³ interpretations of the Hebrew text of the Old Testament in the vernacular Aramaic, as they were used in the Palestinian synagogues at the beginning of our era, likewise interpret Is. liii as referring to the suffering and atoning Messiah. They further teach that in the beginning he will labor unknown among the poor and miserable, that he will suffer because of the sins of the people which delay his revelation (*Targum Jonathan ad Is. liii*). The passage, "Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him; he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street. A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench; he shall bring forth judgment unto truth," etc., Is. xlii. 1ff, is interpreted of the Messiah by the same Targum "in a manner which sometimes comes very near to that in the Gospels," compare Matt. xii. 17 (Nestle). We further read the following Targumic interpretation of Is. liii: "He (the Messiah) will build the sanctuary, which has been profaned on account of our guilt and has been delivered over on account of our misdeeds. Through his teaching peace will be multiplied for us, and if we listen to his words our sins will be forgiven." Zech. ix. 9 was also interpreted of the Messiah even in the Talmud ("Bab. Sanhedrin," f. 98) in the following way: "If they have gained merit he comes with the clouds of heaven: if not, poor and riding upon an ass."

³ Though put into writing in post-Christian times the Targums are based upon pre-Christian sources, since they are totally lacking in any polemic against Christianity. See Cornill, *Alttestamentl. Einl.*

The aspect of a Messiah thus interpreted was naturally very human; there was nothing especially divine and supernatural about him. Such a Messiah was in fact nothing but a prophet, a servant and anointed of Yahveh, of course on a higher level, who suffers as all true prophets and servants of Yahveh did, but whose work, like that of all true prophets, was not entirely without avail. Here in the suffering, teaching, atoning, and dying Messiah of pre-Christian Judaism we have the connecting link with the first Jewish-Christian community. If we take into consideration the great value attributed to the blood of the righteous shed as an atoning instrument for the whole people, as we find it expressed in several passages of the Fourth Book of Maccabees (vi. 28; xvi. 25; xvii. 20) in connection with the death of Jewish martyrs, it does not seem such an unwarrantable assumption that the death of the Prophet of Nazareth was already considered as a ransom for many by his first followers in Palestine. And if in the beginning the Messiah was to labor unknown among the poor and miserable, as the Targums taught, another pre-Christian Jewish conception was offered to the followers of Jesus which they could apply to their master.

Of course there were other elements in the pre-Christian Jewish speculations about the Messiah which the followers of Jesus could not very well apply to him. Such were the ideas expressed in the Targums that the Messiah would break the foreign yoke (*Targ. Jon. ad Is. x. 27*) and unite all Israel again (*Targ. Jon. ad Zech. x. 6*). The Gospels, already written with the idea that Jesus was only a spiritual saviour and the Saviour of *all* mankind, say very little about the degree to which his first followers connected nationalistic expectations with their master. Nevertheless a few traces appear. The Gospels tell us that in the beginning of the career of Jesus the Galileans once intended to make him king, and of the Disciples on the way to Emmaus the saying is recorded that they hoped he would redeem Israel. Luke even carries this thought into the ascension story, for the Disciples ask: "Wilt thou at this time restore the kingdom of Israel?" That the first followers of Jesus connected nationalistic hopes, the idea of some miraculous intervention of God in behalf of His people, with the person of their master is entirely probable and was even to be expected. The execution of Jesus by the Roman authorities was a terrible blow to them. But the Targums also taught the doctrine of the double Messiah, the Messiah *ben Joseph* or Ephraim and the Messiah *ben David* (*Targ. ad Cant. iv. 5; vii. 3*). The speculations about the Messiah *ben David*, the triumphant Messiah who was to follow

the slain Messiah, may have raised their hopes again. Of course the many different views concerning the Messiah current at the time of Jesus, may have brought about curious combinations and conjectures among his first followers. Not one of the many speculations concerning the Messiah had the weight of absolute authority, and the imagination of the Disciples was fully at liberty to give itself up to all kinds of conjectures regarding the way in which their nationalistic hopes would be realized. Even Paul still held to the doctrine of the final redemption of all Israel. Mistaken or not, the hope of the final triumph of the Messiah's cause buoyed up the spirit of the first Jewish-Christian community again after the death of their master.

Of a bodily resurrection of the suffering and dying Messiah the pre-Christian Jewish speculations concerning the Christ knew nothing, but the Disciples were fully persuaded that their master was living, according to the belief of the Jews "that those who died for God were living before God just as Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the patriarchs" (4 Macc. xvi. 25). The report that Jesus remained on earth forty days after his death (the Valentinians and other early Christian sects even said eighteen months) and then ascended bodily to heaven is, as must be remembered, one of the latest reports; according to the earlier belief Jesus left the Disciples on the day of his resurrection; even the late Epistle of Barnabas says so (chap. xv). Further, the resurrection of the third day is very probably connected with the ancient belief current among Jews and pagans, that the soul of the dead remains near the grave for three days and then departs. The hope of the final triumph of the Messiah's cause was likewise strengthened in the hearts of the Disciples by the glorious results promised as the outcome of the suffering and dying of the servant of Yahveh in Is. liii. 10-12, and by the consolation of such words as Hos. vi. 1, 2: "He hath torn, and He will heal us; He hath smitten, and He will bind us up. After two days He will revive us: on the third day He will raise us up, and we shall live in His sight." According to the mystical interpretation of the Old Testament current in the times of Jesus which referred everything to the Messiah, the soul of all Jewish belief, all such consolations were very probable.

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After all that we have thus far heard about the pre-Christian Jewish Christ or Messiah, I think the assumption is warranted that the Jewish speculations concerning the Christ could materially con-

tribute to the idea spreading in the first Jewish-Christian circles, that Jesus was the Christ, or at least a stage in the fulfilment of the Christ idea, even if not the fulfilment of the final triumph of the Messiah's cause.

But how about the Christ of Paul? Did the pre-Christian Jewish Christ conception contribute anything to his picture of Christ? In order to prove to the reader the possibility of this, let us see how thoroughly Jewish Paul was in thought, sentiment, and argumentation.

In regard to his method how to carry his points little need be said, for its thorough rabbinical nature, due to his training, is well known. Paul makes the most arbitrary, twisting, indefensible, and often puerile use of the Old Testament. Well known and flagrant examples are those in which he says of the law forbidding the muzzling of oxen while treading out the grain, that God did not care for the oxen and did not give that law for their sake; or when he says of the promise of Canaan to Abraham and his seed, that it does not say "seeds" but "seed, as of one."⁴ In his mode of argumentation Paul is not second to any rabbi in the Talmud. Nor is he behind his contemporary Philo or any rabbi of his day or any of the Talmud as regards his allegorical interpretation of the Old Testament. He is thoroughly acquainted with the Apocryphal literature of his people, not only the Apocrypha of the Old Testament known to us, for he cites words of an apocalypse now lost, that of Elias. He is also acquainted with Targumic paraphrastic readings of Old Testament passages and turns them to good account in argumentation (compare on both points Meyer's commentary on 1 Cor. ii. 9 and Eph. iv. 8). Over and over again we meet with stereotyped Jewish and rabbinical phrases in his writings, as when he speaks of a believer in Christ as "a new creature," corresponding to the same rabbinical term used of a convert to Judaism;⁵ or when he speaks of doctrines which cannot stand the test as "hay and stubble," corresponding to a similar rabbinical expression when speaking of false teachers;⁶ or when he uses the same terminology

⁴ Similar interpretations of the word "seed" are given, as pointing to the Messiah, by the Rabbis. The words of Eve at the birth of Seth: "God has given me another seed," are interpreted as expressing her hope of the Messiah (*Beresith Rabba*, Chap. 23, *Mekor*). Likewise *Beresith Rabba*, f. 51, the words to Abraham: "In thy seed all peoples shall be blessed," is interpreted as promising the best and noblest seed.

⁵ בריאה חדשה

⁶ *Midr. Tillin* 119, 51: "As hay does not last, so their words will not stand forever."

as Jewish rabbis did in regard to matters of oral tradition;⁷ or when he speaks of "the great tribulation" preceding the end, and "the day of wrath" ushered in by "the sound of the last trumpet."⁸

This brings us also to many peculiar conceptions which Paul had in common with Jewish and rabbinical ideas. He speaks of a "Jerusalem now" and a "Jerusalem above," corresponding to the rabbinical "Jerusalem below" and "Jerusalem on high."⁹ When speaking of the father "from whom every family in heaven and earth is named," he reminds us of the rabbinical "family on high";¹⁰ when speaking of "the prince of the power of the air," he is in accord with the rabbinical doctrine that the demons dwell in the air (compare Meyer's commentary on Ephes. ii. 2). "The outer form of his ecstatic experiences," i. e., of being snatched up into the third heaven and paradise, "is entirely the property of the rabbinical school" (Bousset), in which he was brought up. If Paul further demands that women should be veiled in the assemblies of the Christians in order not to invite the glances of the angels thought to be present at such gatherings, he is also in accord with Jewish notions. Also the idea that the angels were instrumental in the giving of the law on Sinai, that the believers will not only judge the world but also angels, that the gods of paganism are demons, that the stars are the bodies of angels, that the Devil has brought death into the world, are all Jewish ideas found in their Apocryphal literature. Altogether Paul's demonology and angelology, one of the main substructures of his Christology, are Jewish. That these doctrines had originally been derived from Zoroastrian and Babylonian sources does not alter the matter much. At Paul's time they had long been thoroughly assimilated with Judaism. Also another substructure of Paul's Christology, justification by faith, for which he adduces Abraham as an example, is Jewish. "Abraham had long been glorified as a hero of faith" (Wrede). Paul's whole doctrine of sin and the disastrous effects of the fall of Adam, the continuous infirmity of all, i. e., his ethical pessimism (another substructure of his Christology), are rooted in Judaism. The Fourth Book of Ezra in this respect furnishes a very striking parallel. One can understand how Paul de Lagarde, a man who has

⁷ 1 Cor. xv. 3, *παρέλαβον*, comp. rabbinical קבל ; *παρέδωκα*, comp. rabbinical מסרה. J. Weiss in "Das Problem der Entstehung des Christentums," *Arch. f. Rel.-Wissenschaft*, Vol. XVI (1913).

⁸ The Rabbis believed that the Day of Judgment was to be ushered in by seven calls of the trumpet.

⁹ ירושלים של מעלה : ירושלים של מטה.

¹⁰ פמריה של מעלה.

entered deeply into Oriental and Semitic studies, into Targumic and rabbinical literature, and who once was accused of having committed the sin against the Holy Ghost for calling Jesus a "*lang-zeitlicher jüdischer Rabbi*," also called Paul, the opponent of Judaism, the most Jewish of all the Apostles.

Even Paul's violent polemics against the ceremonial law of Judaism in order to break down the barrier between paganism and Judaism was rooted in certain Jewish ideas. In a few remarks in a former article I have dwelt on the fact that, according to Jewish belief, even the ceremonial law would be put away at the coming of the Messiah, and that even swine-flesh would be allowed (*Nidda*, f. 61; *Mekor Chajim*, f. 66). "The idea of the Messiah—that lofty ideal—made its appearance not only as a saviour of Israel from physical and political subjection, but also to free them from spiritual bondage, from the burden of useless laws. That is the reason why every pretending Messiah sought first of all to lighten the yoke of the laws, just as the prophets had done in their time. A proof of the fact that the people in general, in their inmost heart, had a hostile feeling toward all these superfluous laws is this, that they were ever ready to give up those laws, to which they had become accustomed for centuries, as soon as a Messiah would appear who could gain their confidence and inspire their trust. It is evident that from the start the laws appeared to the people as an imposed burden to which they only submitted from compulsion" (S. A. Horodezky, "Zwei Richtungen im Judentum," in *Arch. für Rel.-Wissenschaft*, Vol. XV, 1912).

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In what way now is the Christ figure of Paul connected with the pre-Christian Jewish Christ? As is generally known, Paul dwells more on the metaphysical, heavenly Christ than on the life and personality of Jesus. He of course connects the heavenly Christ with the earthly Jesus in whom the heavenly Christ becomes incarnate, but it is not the work and life and death of the human Jesus that brings about the redemption of mankind, but wholly the work of the heavenly Christ. The human Jesus almost entirely disappears in this figure.

We have already seen that the Book of Enoch speaks of the Son of Man or the Elect One as dwelling with God, and having been chosen and hidden by Him before the world was created. "The Messiah was before *Tohu*" (the chaos of Gen. i), said the Rabbis (*Nezach Jisrael*, f. 481). "The name of the Messiah was

already called before creation" (*Bereshith Rabba*, k. i). Similarly the *Targum Yerushalaim ad. Is. ix. 5*. "This is the king Messiah, he will be higher than Abraham and exalted above Moses and above the ministering angels," says *Midrash Tanchuma*, f. 53, c. 3, 1. Here we have Paul's doctrine of the preexistence of the Christ with God, and his high station. "The spirit of God, who was above the waters in the beginning, was the Messiah," said the Rabbis. This is the same as when Paul identifies the Christ with the Holy Spirit in the words, "the Lord is the Spirit."

We have no support in Paul's writings, but he may also have been acquainted with those speculations about the Messiah which identified him with the Metatron or Metatyranus, the highest ministering spirit who stands next to God and represents His rulership, or with Michael who vanquishes the Devil, just as the Sraosha of Parsism vanquishes Angromainyush, or with the angel of the Apocalypse of Moses (chap. xiv) "who stands in the highest place" and will begin the judgment of the Devil and all the enemies of God. So Paul may also have known of those mystical interpretations which identified the Messiah with the *Maleach Yahveh* (the angel of Yahveh) mentioned so often in the Old Testament, although there is no support for this in his writings. But that he was acquainted with the mystical doctrine of previous appearances of the heavenly Christ in accord with rabbinical notions, of this we have proof. When he says in 1 Cor. x. 1-4, that the Israelites had been baptized in the cloud and the sea, that they had eaten the same spiritual food and drunk the same spiritual drink [as the Christians], that they drank from a spiritual Rock that followed them, "the Rock however was Christ"—he is in accord with such notions as those expressed in the *Targum ad Is. xvi. 1*, and with Philo's view that the Rock was the *sophia*. The phrase, "the Rock that followed them," even reminds us of the monstrous rabbinical notions that the rock rolled along after the marching host (comp. Meyer's commentary on the passage). The idea of the Christ as "a life-giving spirit-being," accompanied by rabbinical phraseology, occurs also in 1 Cor. xv. 45-47, where he compares "the first" and "last Adam." Of the first Adam he says that he was created "unto a living soul-nature" (Hebr. *le nephesh chajah*); of the last Adam, that he was created "unto a life-giving spirit-being (Gr. *eis pneuma zōopoion*). The Rabbis said: "The last Adam (Hebr. *ha acharon Adam*) is the Messiah" (*Neve Shalom*, IX, 9).

When speaking of the final triumph of the Christ, Paul is entirely in accord with the phraseology of the Old Testament and

the apocalyptic conceptions of Judaism on that matter. This final triumph of the Messiah is preceded by a great tribulation, a general apostasy, all kinds of lying signs and miracles of the Evil One, and the revelation of the Antichrist,¹¹ "who will exalt himself over everything called God," as the Jews described him in the language of Daniel applying originally to their whilom arch-enemy, Antiochus Epiphanes (compare especially 2 Thess. ii). But, continues Paul, the Messiah will destroy him through "the breath of his mouth," a phrase used for the first time of the Messiah in Is. xi, and a figure further elaborated in apocalyptic writings such as 4 Ezra (chap. xiii). Also "all powers," "principalities," and "rulers of darkness," i. e., the demons which play such a great role in Paul's letters, will be destroyed, and as we know, their final and lasting destruction is also treated in the Book of Enoch, which deals so much with the fall of the angels and their dominion over mankind. The last enemy to be destroyed, says Paul, is death, and in Is. xxv. 8 we read: "He will swallow up death in victory," just as the Rabbis said on the basis of the same passage: "In the days of the Messiah, God, be He blessed, will swallow up death." The ultimate reign of God, the Eternal, that will follow as the apocalypses teach it, is also expressed by Paul when he says (1 Cor. xv. 28): "And when all things shall be subject unto Him, then shall the Son also Himself be subject unto Him that put all things under Him, that God may be all in all."

The figure of the pre-Christian Jewish Christ is an established fact, and this heavenly Christ has strongly influenced the Christ representation of Paul. He brought that Christ figure with him when he joined the Jewish-Christian community, and then centered upon it all his speculative thought. "The combination of the rabbinical Messiah who dwelt through eternity in heaven among the angels of God, with the historical figure of Jesus has produced the belief in the miraculous birth of Jesus," says Hausrath. Paul did not touch the question of a miraculous birth, nor did even the later speculative Fourth Gospel following close in the footsteps of Paul do this, for although Paul saw in Jesus an incarnation of his Christ such an incarnation did not necessarily imply a miraculous birth, according to mystical Jewish notions of previous incarnations of the Christ in Hebrew history of which we have seen examples

¹¹ The term "the Lawless One" used of the Antichrist, 2. Thess. ii. 8, reminds of the rabbinical designation of him מְנִי עוֹל = "without yoke," as also the term "that which restraineth," viz., the coming of him (verse 6), of the rabbinical מַעֲבְרֵי אֵת הַגְּאֻלָּה = "things impeding the redemption." See *The Jewish Encyclopedia*, art. "Saul.")

above. Nor does Paul dwell much upon the life and teachings of Jesus. The main thing with him is the descent of the heavenly Christ upon earth to assume human form and to suffer death at the instigation of "the princes of this world," i. e., the demons (1 Cor. ii. 8), who have brought about all evil, and who were ignorant that in the death of Jesus they had crucified "the Lord of glory" to their own ruin; for, Paul argues, the powers of Hades could not hold him; he arose to life again, returned to his heavenly abode, and God exalted his name above every name, so that every knee in heaven, earth, and Hades must bow down to him and every tongue confess that he is the Lord.

Here are the points where the Jewish and rabbinical speculations on the heavenly Christ forsake us. They of course know, as we have seen, of a Messiah form appearing in humility who, like the prophets of old, will be a proclaimer of God's will; they know of a suffering and dying Messiah; they speak of a triumphant Messiah, at whose coming the final destruction of the Devil and demons and death, and a "regeneration of all things" will take place; but they know nothing, as far as we can tell, of the way—as Paul describes it—in which the work of the heavenly Messiah and its results will be brought about.

Here Paul's speculations surely show a connection with the ancient ideas existing around the Mediterranean, of the suffering, dying, and resurrected god, originally reflecting processes of nature but widened into the ethical and human sphere, and connected with the ancient longings for immortality and for release from guilt, from moral and physical evil and bondage. Paul speaks of his representation of the heavenly Christ and his work and its results as being a mystery revealed to him, and we may confidently believe that he was fully persuaded of the truth of that fact, for his Christology has throughout the stamp of genuine conviction, and the blissful state of mind into which this conviction has brought him often breaks out in strains of the highest enthusiasm and feelings of the deepest gratitude for the work of the heavenly Christ, so that we even now cannot escape the powerful impression of his hymnic outpourings. But Paul was probably unconscious of the influence which the wide-spread idea of antiquity of the suffering, dying, and rising god had had long ago on the minds of the people generally and consequently on his own mind, so that when he joined the Jewish-Christian community the result of his speculations on the heavenly Christ in connection with Jesus appeared as a mystery revealed to him directly by God, especially as he evidently

was peculiarly prepared for such a persuasion by his rabbinical-
gnostic training, his ethical pessimism, and a nature prone to
ecstatic visions.

What strengthened Paul in his persuasion was this, that the
heavenly Christ seemed to him to have *really* taken upon himself
human form, not in a mythical personality said to have lived long
ago, but in a historical personality living in Paul's own day and
among his own people, the very soul of whose religion was the
Messianic belief and to whom the Messiah's advent had long been
promised. This historical personality, whom he had not seen him-
self, he found had been able to gather about him a circle of fol-
lowers persuaded that they had seen him again after his death
and ready to take upon themselves persecution and death for his
sake. Their conviction was so strong that not even their persecutor
Paul could escape its contagious influence, but was driven to con-
nect his rabbinical-*gnostic* ideas about the heavenly Christ and the
idea of the suffering, dying, and risen god unconsciously influencing
him, with that historical personality of his own people and his own
time. The Christology of Paul, then, rooted partly in mythical
and mystical, and partly in historical experiences—and we may say
the Christology of Christianity generally—is a blending of Jewish
and pagan elements, by which it became possible that a new religion,
Christianity, arose in the broad daylight of history.

SHINRAN, FOUNDER OF THE PURE LAND SECT.

BY YEJITSU OKUSA.

[The Pure Land sect is perhaps the most extensive Buddhist organization
in Japan. It grew from small beginnings and brings Buddhism nearer to the
common people. It has been compared to the Reformation in Christianity
because it bears several obvious similarities to the creed as well as the religious
practices of Protestantism. First of all there is no priesthood in the literal
sense of the word. The priests live like laymen. They marry and do not
observe any of the stricter rules of monkish life. But, above all, their main
reliance in religious practices is upon faith. Shinran insisted as vigorously
as Luther on the formula that by faith alone (or, as Luther expressed himself
in Latin, *sola fide*) can man be saved. The Buddhist expression is: "To hope
for faith by one's own power or by other power." The rule of the stricter or
older Buddhists is to walk the Path with self-reliance. Every one must be-
come his own savior. In order to be truly saved he must retire from the world,
practise all the austere rules of monkhood, and renounce everything except
his desire for entering Nirvana. Shinran insisted that the better and superior
method was to save oneself by a leap relying on the saving power of Amida,