

5-1-1984

The Elements of Wisdom Literature in the Messianic King Prophecy of the First Isaiah Centered on Isa. 9:2-7; 11:1-9

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Recommended Citation

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THE ELEMENTS OF WISDOM LITERATURE
IN THE MESSIANIC KING PROPHECY
OF THE FIRST ISAIAH
CENTERED ON ISA. 9:2-7; 11:1-9

by
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A research paper
submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Divinity
Western Evangelical Seminary
May, 1984

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Purpose

The prophecies of Isaiah are among the most important theological expressions in the Bible, and the Messianic oracle is one of those which has the most important values in the Old Testament.

The study of the Messianic idea has been done by many scholars, and our knowledge about the character of Isaiah's Messiah regarded it as eschatological.¹ But, even though Isaiah's Messianic king of pre-exilic period could be connected to the eschatological Messiah of later Judaism, it is too early to call him the eschatological being.

This research will confine its concern to the character of the Messiah of the first Isaiah and the relationship between Isaiah's Messiah and the Messianic conceptions of the ancient Near East, especially the influence of the elements of wisdom literature to Isaiah's Messianic oracle. The purpose of this research is to recognize the wisdom elements which are reflected metaphorically in the Messianic oracle of Isaiah, which may connect the kingship of the ancient

¹S. Mowinckel, He That Cometh (N.Y.: Abingdon Press, 1954) p. 3.

Near East and the Messianic idea of later Judaism. As a result of this research, we can see a part of the process how the Word of God is being proclaimed to the world in human idea and language.

B. Problem

I personally have received great inspiration for a long time from the wisdom of Israel reflected in wisdom literature of the Old Testament and Talmud. Though the study of the wisdom of Israel which has been shining through human history is my life-long task, I would like to take one step of it by studying specially the influence of the ancient Near East and ancient Israelite wisdom on the Messianic prophecy of the great prophet (first) Isaiah² at this point (9:2-7, 11:1-9).

"God's word" and "human wisdom," and "their harmony" are very interesting subjects to me. Teaching the God who uses our human resources such as intellect, knowledge, personality, and relating these ideas to the church members is a really important content of our teaching ministry in order to prevent extreme mysticism and secular intellectualism within the church.

I am concerned with Isaiah's understanding of

²I would like to accept the general hypothesis which divides the Book of Isaiah in three parts, and will call First Isaiah either Isaiah or First Isaiah from now on.

God's word and the process of the formation of his oracle using his knowledge. God shows Isaiah His intention, and he constructs his prophecy in his own idea and language according to God's will. That's what we ministers have to do in our life situation.

C. Method and Procedures

The question, "is the Messianic king idea of the first Isaiah a creative work of his own?," is useful first of all. In order to answer to this question, the background of Isaiah himself and the text of his Messianic prophecy must be examined. Therefore, through exegesis of the text, the components which compose the background of the text will be traced, and the central original elements, the process of their formulation, and the route of their influence on the Messianic prophecy of Isaiah will be studied. I think I can point out the wisdom elements from the background of the text and will extend the study of those in the context of the ancient Near East and Israel's wisdom literature. Then, I will observe the creative work of Isaiah in his Messianic king prophecy. Especially, the terms of נִצָּחַן, נִצָּחַן, נִצָּחַן, and נִצָּחַן will be selected and discussed extensively in the context of the ancient Near East and Israel's wisdom literature in order to prove their being influenced by wisdom literature.

Finally, the theological intention of Isaiah by

using those terms will be traced as his creative work, and through the summary of contents discussed I think I can reach a conclusion of the research.

D. Background of the Study

In order to recognize whether the Messianic king idea of Isaiah is his creative work or not, it is necessary to study the background of the text which describes this idea. And, since the study of the background illuminates the way to understanding the content of the text, it should be observed, first, that the study of prophetic characters of Isaiah would follow.

1. Historical Background of the Prophet Isaiah

The prophet Isaiah had appeared only in Jerusalem. And his message shows his intimate connection to the temple of Jerusalem. Therefore, he has been regarded as an inhabitant of Jerusalem. Generally, it is thought that his origin might be the aristocratic class or a member of royal family. But all of these are only guesses.

Klausner says about the person of Isaiah that he is not only a preacher who is conveying a religious and social message, but also a practical politician; and in this point of view, he is a man beyond Amos and Hosea, and something like Elijah and Elisha.³

³J. Klausner, The Messianic Idea in Israel (N.Y.:

He was not satisfied with only religious preaching, and being influenced by the historical and political situation, but also tried to give influence to Israel's political policy. He talked with Ahaz, and Hezekiah sent his messenger to Isaiah for his advice.

He received his vocation in the year of Uzziah's death, and his last utterance was said in 701 B.C. when Jerusalem was threatened by Sennacherib.⁴

Therefore, the period of his activity was 45 years of the latter part of 8th century B.C., the period reigned by Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah (715-687 B.C.).⁵ This period was filled with most important matters in the history of Israel. These matters are reflected in his prophecies, and it is difficult to understand his prophecies without knowledge of the historical background of the time.

At that time, Tiglath Pileser III (745-727 B.C.) was enthroned in Assyria and began to widen his dominion to all of Palestine, and by Sargon II (721-705 B.C.) and Sennacherib (705-681 B.C.) the Assyrian territory was widely extended. At last, the northern kingdom was destroyed by the fall of Samaria in 722/1 B.C. and subjected

⁴Isa. 36-37.

⁵Cf. Chronological Chart for ca. Mid-Eighth to Mid-Sixth Centuries. (J. Bright, A History of Israel, 3rd. ed., [Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1981] p. 471).

to the Assyrian Empire.

In 735 B.C., the northern kingdom formed a league with Damascus and attacked Judah. Ahaz, king of Judah, requested Assyrian support to defend against the attack of northern kingdom, but as a result of being supported by Assyria, Judah became subjected to Assyria. Therefore, the border of Assyria was several miles out of Jerusalem.

In 715 B.C., Ahaz died, and Hezekiah, a patriot and yahwist, became a king of Judah. He protested against Assyria. But Judah was conquered by Assyria in 701 B.C. Towns and provinces were destroyed and people were captured and taken to Assyria. Later, Jerusalem was surrounded and, three months later, Hezekiah surrendered to Assyria. The inhabitants of Jerusalem were treaded under the feet of Assyrian soldiers.

2. Etymological Observation of the Term Messiah

The term מָשִׁיחַ (anointed) derived from the verb מָשַׁח (to anoint), and it occurs thirty-nine times in Old Testament.⁶ The basic form of the title "the Lord's

⁶Basically and in most cases, this term was used to describe kings of Israel and Judah (29 times), one time for Cyrus of Persia (Isa. 45:1), several times for high priests who served the function of a king in post-exilic period (Jer. 4:3, 5, 16, 6:22, Dan. 9:25-26), and one time for patriarchs who were conceived as prophets (Ps. 105:15 = I Chr. 16:22). (E. Jenni, "Messiah," Interpreter's Diction-

Anointed" has shown up in several types, according to the context, as "mine anointed" (of the Davidic king: I Sam. 2:35, Ps. 132:17), "thine anointed" (of the Davidic king: Pss. 84:9-H 84:10, 89:38, 51-H 89:39, 52, 132:10, Hab. 3:13; of Solomon: II Chr. 6:42), "his anointed" (of Saul: I Sam. 12:3,5; of the king to be designated by Samuel: I Sam. 16:6; of David: II Sam. 22:51=Ps. 18:50-H 18:51; of a king or descendant of David who is not more precisely designated: I Sam. 2:10, Pss. 2:2, 20:6-H 20:7, 28:8), and once as the "anointed of the God of Jacob" (of David: II Sam. 23:1).⁷

Those designations point to the intimate relationship between Yahweh and the king. This relationship is guaranteed by the anointing, expressed in the inviolability of the king (I Sam. 24, 26, II Sam. 1:14, 16, 19:21-H 19:22), and recognized as receiving the spirit of Yahweh (I Sam. 16:13).

Therefore, it is very important to observe the concept of the kingship in Israel in order to understand the Messianic idea.

ary of the Bible, vol. III, [N.Y.: Abingdon Press, 1962] p. 360.)

⁷ Ibid.

CHAPTER II

ANALYSIS OF THE TEXTS

A. Isa. 9:2-7 (H 9:1-6)

1. Background of the Text

a. The Author and Date

It is not easy to tell the exact date of the text because of the lack of concrete clues about it.

Judah suffered oppression by Assyria in Isaiah's days, and afterward, she suffered under the yokes of Babylonia, Persia, Ptolemies and Seleucids. Therefore, consideration of these issues are not helpful to the solution of the problem, and unfortunately there is not any other decisive clue.¹ A. S. Herbert says that 9:1 is the historical record about two periods of invasion by Tiglath-Pileser III (the first was a minor invasion to the land of Zebulun and Naphtal, and the second invasion was a more severe one to the region of Galilee across the Jordan river), and the reason for the description in this verse is to tell the prophecy of hope which is following.² Besides, there are

¹G. B. Gray, A Critical & Exegetical Commentary on THE Book of Isaiah, I-XXXIX (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1962) p. 166.

²A. S. Herbert, Isaiah, I-XXXIX (London: Cambridge

various opinions from many scholars, but most of the scholars believe it as Isaiah's prophecy. It is likely that this passage is deeply connected to v. 1, and v. 1 seems to reflect the Assyrian invasion of the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali in 733/2 B.C. (II Kings 15:29).

After this particular invasion of the northern territory, there was the final attack on Israel in 724-721 B.C., and it is probable, like Scott believes, that this prophecy of God's intervention and great reversal was given to them.³

One thing which can be said clearly is that Israel was in the midst of darkness, under oppression of a foreign country.

b. Structure

According to G. B. Gray, this oracle of salvation falls into four strophes in the form of a poem, and their lengths are not the same. Except for the four lines of verse seven, all the lines are in parallelism.⁴ The tenses of the sentences are waw consecutive perfect forms or imperfect forms so that their styles are historical narrative, but

University Press, 1973) p. 73.

³R. B. Y. Scott, "Isaiah," Interpreter's Bible, vol. V (N.Y.: Abingdon Press, 1956) p. 230.

⁴Gray, Op. Cit., p. 164.

perfect forms are partly prophetic and partly historical.⁵ So, there is a problem in this passage in deciding how much of it is prophetic and how much is historical. We don't have any definite norm to divide these categories, but we can say that this poem is in a general way, a prophecy.

About the connection of verse to verse, Jenni thinks that the passages from 8:23 to 9:7 have the same kind of content, and says that the Messianic expectation develops gradually until it gets its climax at 11:1-9.⁶ Therefore, his opinion that 9:2-5 praises the liberation at hand and vv. 6-7 is in accord with the new king of Davidic dynasty⁷ comes to an agreement with me.

Like Gray, J. Skinner divides this poem into four strophes. The lines are of very unequal length, but the number of lines was probably the same in each strophe: either ten (Duhm) or eight (Gray).⁸

- i The light and joy of Deliverance (vv. 2,3),
- ii The manner of the Deliverance-the overthrow of the Assyrian tyranny (vv. 4,5),
- iv The epiphany of the Messiah (v. 6),
- v The eternal duration of the Messiah's righteous

⁵Ibid., p. 166.

⁶E. Jenni, Op. Cit., p. 361.

⁷Ibid.

⁸J. Skinner, The Book of the Prophet Isaiah, I-XXXIX

rule (v. 7).

c. Sitz im Leben

Herbert designates this passage in a narrow sense as a song of praise which was sung in the prospect of the accomplishment of God's purpose.⁹ The custom of designating a future ideal king as the Messiah took place by the fact in which a man became a king through a religious rite of anointment (II Sam. 2:4, II Kings 11:12). He was called as the Lord's Messiah during his life time. After the anointment he became a sacred man, and the maintenance of the life of the king was thought of as the way of sustaining the welfare of the nation (II Sam. 21:17). On the day of his anointing the king had a special relationship with God who now became his father (II Sam. 7:13-14, Ps. 2:6-7, 89:26-27). In the light of this, Scott says Isa. 9:2-7 appears to be a dynastic oracle uttered on the occasion of the anointing of a new king, or at the anniversary celebration of this event.¹⁰

Isaiah was a prophet who had official relationship with both temple and monarchic system. Therefore, he might be a person who had a responsibility for saying cult

(London: Cambridge University Press, 1954) p. 80.

⁹A. S. Herbert, Op. Cit., p. 74.

¹⁰R. B. Y. Scott, Op. Cit., p. 231.

oracle at an enthronement ceremony. The reason which made Isaiah tell an oracle was the historical situation of the last 45 years of eighth century B.C. It was a time filled with more important matters than any other time, and the fervent hope for salvation was highly stressed.¹¹

Isaiah was a many-sided man. With the ability to interpret religion and politics, he could express the oracle of an ideal king who would deliver Israel from a national crisis in the easiest way. The background of this oracle will be studied through the exegesis of the text.

2. Exegesis

a. Translation

v. 2: The people who are walking in darkness

Have seen a great light;

Those who have been dwelling in the land of the
shadow of death,

Upon them has light shone.

v. 3: Thou hast made great the rejoicing,

Thou hast increased the joy;

They rejoice before thee like joy in the harvest
time,

¹¹Cf. chapter I.

As they rejoice when they divide spoil.

- v. 4: For the yoke of his burden
And that which bows down his shoulder,
The rod of his oppressor,
Thou hast broken as in the day of Midian.
- v. 5: For every boot of the warrior in tumult
And garment rolled in blood
Will be, but, for burning,
As fuel for fire.
- v. 6: For to us a child is born,
To us a son is given;
And the government will be upon his shoulder,
And his name will be called
Wonderful Counselor,
Mighty God,
Everlasting Father,
Prince of Peace.
- v. 7: For the increase of his government and for the
peace
There will be no end,
Upon the throne of David and over his kingdom,
To establish it,
With justice and with righteousness,
From now on, even forever
The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

b. Exegesis and Analysis

Verse Two

The forms of the words הָלְכוּ בְּחֹשֶׁךְ and נִשְׁכַּח עָלֵיהֶם are Kal. participles and their meanings are "The people who are walking in darkness have seen a great light ..., those who have been dwelling ... upon them has light shone." According to Gray, אֶרֶץ צִלְעוֹת is used only here, and it is the same meaning with Job 10:21 f. ("a land that is dark and gloomy") which designates Sheol after death.¹² This expression is a vivid contrast to verse three and expresses that Yahweh will cause them to recover with life (Cf. Ps. 4:7). This verse is said directly to the Lord.

Verse Three

Scott says that the flat contradiction found in the KJV "not increased the joy" is due to corruption in the text, and must be solved by either 1) with RSV, by following the Masoretic tradition, Syriac, and Targum, reading "its joy"; or 2) by reading הִלָּחֵץ, "the rejoicing," for לֹא הִלָּחֵץ, "the nation, not." The second alternative, he says, is less awkward and restores the parallelism: "thou hast made great the rejoicing, thou hast increased

¹²G. B. Gray, Op. Cit., p. 169.

the joy."¹³

Verse Four

Delitzsch points out that יָבֹ֑ד (burden) and יָבֹ֑ד (in his oppressor) remind us of the slavery in Egypt (Ex. 2:11), and future deliverance is contrasted to the deliverance from Egypt.¹⁴ Isaiah seems to me to be comparing the participation of a remnant to salvation on the day of deliverance to the victory of Gideon's undisciplined small army blessed with the favor of the power of Yahweh. "The yoke of his burden shows a good picture which describes the scene of being oppressed in I Kings 12:4-14. "The staff for his shoulder" (RSV) and "the rod of his oppressor" (RSV) appear to be as synonymous. But כִּנּוּ֙יָּהּ may be a participle rather than a noun, "that which bows down his shoulder."¹⁵ Without saying about who is this hero, the verse begins with כִּי־ (because).

Verse Five

Kittel suggests that "rolled in blood" should be read "stained with blood" by a slight change in the text

¹³R. B. Y. Scott, Op. Cit., p. 233.

¹⁴F. Delitzsch, Commentary on Isaiah, vol. I (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1892) p. 242.

¹⁵R. B. Y. Scott, Op. Cit., p. 233.

(מִלְכִּי for מִלְכִּי), and Scott agrees with him.

But I think its meaning is not changed enough to merit consideration.

Verse Six

מִלְכִּי and מִלְכִּי do not necessarily imply an infant or a youngster, as we might assume. William Holladay says that this is the language of oriental monarchy, by which the king, specially on the day of his coronation, is called a "son" of the deity.¹⁶ There are some traces of such wording in the Old Testament (II Sam. 7:14, Ps. 2:7, 72:1).

מִלְכִּי (the government) is a rare Hebrew word meaning either "the burden of authority" or, more probably, some symbol of majesty such as a rosette embroidered on the royal robe (cf. Edwin R. Goodenough, "Kingship in Early Esrael," Journal of Biblical Literature, XLVIII [1929], 190; and I Kings 22:10, 30) or the scepter (cf. Ps. 45:6).¹⁷ And then, royal names and characters endowed by God follow. The first two titles represent the king's connection to the divine attributes of wisdom and might,

¹⁶William L. Holladay, Isaiah; Scroll of a Prophetic Heritage (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1978) p. 106.

¹⁷R. B. Y. Scott, Op. Cit., p. 233.

while the third and fourth are about the nature of his rule.

פֶּלֶא יוֹעֵז (Wonderful Counselor): this king will need no outside advice from any human, and his own plans, which extend to the whole world, will attain their goal, because God, the foundation of wisdom, guides his thoughts (cf. 25:1, Ps. 20:4).

אֱלֹהֵי גִבּוֹר (Mighty God): this second name emphasizes the fulness of his power and is reminiscent of the "spirit of heroic virtue" (11:1, cf. also Pss. 20:6, 21:1, 13). אֱלֹהֵי is the old word for the creator-god in Canaanite belief, now accommodated to the Israelite God.

אָבִי-עַד (Everlasting Father): this title has in mind his enduring, fatherly, beneficent, and righteous rule.

שָׁר-שָׁלוֹם (Prince of Peace): this last name is reminiscent of the divine name from Judge 6:24, "Yahweh is peace," and also of Isa. 11:6-9. For the Israelite, peace was more than the absence of war or the continuation of war by other means. Peace is a term for the condition in which all things, human beings, animals and plants, follow their destiny undisturbed. Thus it only exists when all creatures recognize God in his deity and live and act accordingly. The prince will bring prosperity.

Verse Seven

"Of the increase ... end" (RSV) can be translated as "For the increase of his government and for peace ... no end" for more clear meaning. But Kittel and Skinner suggest that the final M (מ) in the middle of the Hebrew word לְמַגְבֵּה (of the increase) points to some confusion of text, which can also be traced in the translation of the LXX. It is thought to have arisen through dittography of the last two letter of verse six (שָׁלֵם:לֵם). Therefore, verse seven would then begin with the word הַכֶּבֶד: "increased is authority, and endless the peace."¹⁸ But the meaning is not quite different. Here, Isaiah anticipates days of glorious light for Judah under a God-given king. Justice and right are the indispensable accomplishments of any sovereignty which is to endure. The Davidic kings were not absolute monarchs, but stood in a covenant relationship both with their God and with the people over whom they ruled (cf. II Sam. 5:3, II Kings 11:17, Jer. 22:15-16).

c. Exposition

In the two campaigns of Tiglath-Pileser in 734 and 732 B.C., there took place the separation of the western, eastern, and northern provinces of Israel, assumed by verse one, and their transformation into Assyrian provinces.

¹⁸J. Skinner, Op. Cit., p. 84.

The faith of the Israelite was thereby faced with the question of whether God had abandoned His people and His land forever to the enemies of Israel, or whether He intended to reunite them and awaken them to new life under a glorious ruler, corresponding to the ideal picture described in royal psalms.

Isaiah represents the darkness of the period. But the darkness is now to be replaced by the light which will bring rejoicing and happiness comparable to the darkness when, as victors in war, the winners fall upon the plunders of the enemy and divide them among themselves. Describing the supreme victory which is done by the Lord, Isaiah remembered the victory which had been accomplished long before by Gideon when he broke the yoke of the Midianite oppression of the Israelite, as vividly described in Judges 6-7 (v. 4). The spirit of the Lord took possession of Gideon (Judges 6: 34). The Israelite forces, reduced to only three hundred courageous and dependable troops (Judges 7:6-8), had defeated and routed the Midianites at the call of the trumpet and the battle cry "For the Lord and for Gideon" (Judges 7:18), and won a decisive triumph over those foreign forces invading the nation.

Aggression of Assyria upon Israel became the reason of Isaiah's prophecy about the birth of a child. Assyria was a rod of Yahweh's anger. The "day of Midian" was the time of Gideon's victory. The reason why Isaiah mentions

the delivery from Midian is that God saved the nation, not by its military power or prowess, but by His own choice of a small company and by means far otherwise than that of human might, so that they could not boast of their own strength. So in the coming day, it will be all the Lord's personal act, for the nation will be in its extremeity of weakness.¹⁹

Here, Isaiah is making a confession of his faith in the future of his people, which is based upon God's purpose of salvation. For the sake of His glorification in the sight of the nations He will fulfil the promises He has given, and bring to reality an empire in which all Israel is united and at peace, under a second David.

Even though we are looking at a historical fact here, there is a more important truth. In the contrast between light and darkness, we can find the Israelite's distinctive concept for the future life. There are two categories, like light, life, order, and the land with its landlord in one hand, and darkness, death, disorder, sea and wilderness in the other hand. It is the contrast between order and disorder. And it is said that the promised one comes after the misery as happiness and pros-

¹⁹G. B. Gray, *Op. Cit.*, p. 169.
W. E. Vine, Isaiah (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Pub. House, 1971) p. 42.

perity (vv. 4, 5).

The ideal which will be realized through a child in verse six is the traditional and ethical ideal transmitted by the kings and rulers. It is the ideal of maintaining the justice and blessing within and outside the country.

Herbert says that the titles given to the child are similar to the throne-names endowed to Pharaoh at his enthronement ceremony.²⁰ An Egyptian Pharaoh would adopt the throne-names when he began his reign. So Pharaoh Haremhab (1333-1306 B.C.) adopted these names: "Strong bull, able in counsels, great in wonders at Karnak, filled with the truth, creator of the two lands, splendid is the character of Re, elect of Re, beloved of Amon, Horus at festival, on whom life is conferred."²¹ Therefore, the fact that Isaiah gave prophetic names to his sons and used those names in his oracle suggests that he had certain skillful knowledge about the ancient mythological wisdom. And this knowledge might influence Isaiah's Messianic prophecy in a manner.

The newborn child is to sit on the throne of David; thus it is a royal child, the son of a king. His rule on

²⁰A. S. Herbert, Op. Cit., p. 74.

²¹William L. Holladay, Op. Cit., p. 106

the throne of David shall last eternally. Parallels to this name can be traced in Babylon and Ras Shamra,²² but this is of less importance in this connection. The main point is that they describe the ideal king and, at the same time, the divine ruler.²³

In conclusion, we come to see the strong expectation of a redeemer which is projected to an ideal king on the throne of David, and also come to recognize that the prophet Isaiah is knowledgeable about the myths and wisdom of the ancient Near East by the analysis of Isa. 9:2-7.

These issues are the main points of this research to be observed below. And we can understand Isaiah's creativeness in his Messianic prophecy by the result of this research.

B. Isa. 11:1-9

1. Background of the Text

a. The Author and Date

This passage is the companion piece to 9:2-7.

²²In the New Year Festival, the defeat of the enemies threatening order-cosmos-is a dominant motif, and where the king probably appears as a kind of guarantee of the order. (H. Ringgren, The Messiah in the Old Testament, Study of Biblical Theology No. 18 [London: SCM Press, 1961] p. 29).

²³Ibid.

Verses 1-5 enlarge upon the theme of 9:7, the theme of a Davidic king who will rule with justice and righteousness and will have concern with the poor and the meek of the earth. This oracle is, in the first instance, related like 9:2-7 to one of the royal accession ceremonies described in II Kings 11:12-19. The word "the anointed" does not occur in this passage, but it can be said that it is implicated in the description of enthronement of a Davidic king (Ps. 72:1-7).

What about the authenticity of the passage? That has been widely questioned, and some who affirm the authenticity of verses one to five believe verses six to eight or six to nine are a late addition. One reason, among many, is that this oracle presupposes post-exilic conditions. Mention is made of "a rod out of the cut-off stem of Jesse," and this, it is alleged, must presuppose the fall of the Davidic dynasty. But the right understanding of the Hebrew word for "cut-off stem," וְיֶזְעַר, which does not necessarily imply the total destruction of the tree, can be an answer to this issue.²⁴ Therefore, it is not at all impossible that the text derives from Isaiah himself, though the so-called authenticity of the text is not decisive for our purpose. And W. Holladay alleges that it is clear

²⁴Ibid., p. 31.

that the vocabulary in verses one to five is Isaiah's. We have seen how similar it is in motifs to the vocabulary in 9:7, and the concern for justice for the poor is plainly one which Isaiah preached. It is also clear that the vocabulary of verses six to eight is found in genuine passages of Isaiah—for example, "lamb" in 5:15, "lion" in 5:29 and 31:4. Therefore, Holladay is convinced that the passage must be taken as a whole and it is all genuine to Isaiah of the eighth century B.C. ²⁵

b. Structure

Gray says that the balanced form of Hebrew poems is 3:3 or 4;4, but this passage is structured in a different length, even though we are trying to correct the numbers of the line. The reason, he says, is that the text is wrongly transmitted in the view of parallelism. If this poem had had correct strophe, it would have three strophes with four parallels each. The first parallel of the poem disappeared. By this reason, the present text begins with waw conversive. ²⁶

- i Appearance of a king and his being anointed (1-3^a),
- ii His government and characteristics (3^b-5),
- iii Restoration of peace (6-9).

²⁵W. L. Holladay, Op. Cit., p. 111.

²⁶G. B. Gray, Op. Cit., p. 212.

c. Sitz im Leben

As it is said above, this passage has connection with 9:2-7 (H 9:1-6). King is "Messianic" only in the sense that every monarch of the Davidic dynasty was an anointed representative of Yahweh, and a sacred person. Every king was thus designated as a Messiah, and at his accession his reign was spoken of as a prospective golden age. Needless to say, this faith was often cruelly mocked and its language falsified by events. But when the last king of Judah had died in exile, the hope that God would yet restore his people under a Davidic king worthy to rule as his viceregent resulted.

The oracle reflects some relation to one of the royal accession (II Kings 11:12-19), and may well have been composed by Isaiah for the occasion of the anointing of Hezekiah. The important thing is that the main themes of the Festivals were real to the participants in a way that we can hardly imagine: they were experienced as concrete reality and the experience filled the participants with trust and courage.²⁷ The Festival (Enthronement, New Year, or Covenant) were held every year and the Israelites kept the hope that Yahweh would recover His people through Davidic king.

²⁷H. Ringgren, Op. Cit., p. 9.

2. Exegesis

a. Translation

- v. 1: And there shall come forth a shoot from the
stump of Jesse,
And a branch shall grow out of his roots.
- v. 2: And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him,
The spirit of wisdom and understanding,
The spirit of counsel and might,
The spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord.
- v. 3: And he shall have delight in the fear of the
Lord.
And he shall not judge by what his eyes see,
Nor decide by what his ears hear;
- v. 4: But he shall judge the poor with righteousness,
And shall decide with equity for the needy (of
the earth);
And he shall smite the violent with the rod of
his mouth,
And with the breath of his lips shall he slay
the wicked.
- v. 5: And righteousness shall be the girdle of his waist,
And faithfulness the girdle of his loins.
- v. 6: And wolves shall dwell with lambs,
And leopards shall lie down with young goats,
And calves and young lions and the fatling together,

And a little child shall lead them.

v. 7: And the cow and bear shall associate with each other;

And their young ones lie down together;

And the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

v. 8: And a baby shall play upon the hole of an asp,

And a weaned child shall put forth its hand on
the viper's den.

v. 9: They shall not hurt or destroy

In all my holy mountain;

For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of
the Lord

As the waters covering the sea.

b. Exegesis and Analysis

Verse One

"There shall come ... " In the Hebrew text the verb וַיָּבֵר is preceded by the conjunction וְ (and), which presupposes an immediately antecedent sentence in poetry, though not in prose. It thus appear that an opening couplet has been lost. וַיָּבֵר (stump) seems to be completely destroyed, but in fact it is a seed of new growing. The choice of the metaphor is perhaps bound up with the idea of a tree of life as a symbol of kingship.²⁸

²⁸Ibid., p. 31.

In Phoenician the word used here for "a shoot" (חֹטֶר) means "scepter."

נֶצֶר (a branch): the root of the word is Arabic, "to be beautiful, to be green." But Gray says that this word is evidently used for a growth of a tree in Isa. 60:21 and here, but it is not clear whether it is used for root or any other part of a tree.²⁹

יִפְרֶה (shall bear fruit): if the Hebrew text is correct, the second part of a parallel is developed beyond the thought of the first part, and the old stump will bear fruit beside the branch. That means that the Davidic dynasty will be not only recovered but also prosperous with its new king (Ps. 1:3).

Therefore, Gray says, in order to have the same meaning in this parallelism, יִפְרֶה should be seen as a mistaken rendering of יִצְרֶה (will be sprouted, flourished),³⁰ like the suggestion of Kittel. From the royal family of Judah, though it may seem ruined, is to spring the ideal ruler in the future.

Verse Two

רוּחַ יְהוָה designates the spirit of the Lord

²⁹G. B. Gray, Op. Cit., p. 215.

³⁰Ibid.

which has divine power. And six spirits are mentioned as a pair. The first pair is about perfection of intellectual endowment, the second pair tells of the full possession of a ruler's practical qualities, and the third refers to the religious spirit which is to crown and direct all other gifts.

הַזָּכָה is an ability to be conscious of the nature of a matter (σοφία), and הַבִּינָה is an ability to discriminate one thing from another (διάκρισις or σύλλεξις).

הַיָּשָׁר is a present which makes a man decide a right judgement, and הַגְּבוּרָה is a power which utilizes the decision. הַיָּהִירָה implies a knowledge of oneself as related to God-e.g., as acknowledging one's transgression (Ps. 51:3), realizing the former and present benefits of God (Jer. 9:12^b LXX; Ezek. 34:27-28), or assuming one's religious obligations (e.g., Isa. 1:3). The God of the Old Testament is a God who wants to be known. While his revelations are limited to a few chosen ones (Abraham, Moses, Joshua, the judges, David, the prophets), they are to be taught to all members of the nation (e.g., Deut. 4:9, 5:31, 6:7, Ps. 51:13), and the promise is extended to Israel that eventually all shall know God (Jer. 31:34, cf. Isa. 11:9). Here, the new son is said to be filled with the spirit of the knowledge of God.

יִרְאָה יְהוָה means praising the Lord with fear.

It is an essential ingredient in the Old Testament knowledge of God (e.g., Ps. 25:14, 111:10, Prov. 9:10).

Therefore, among these seven spirits, the spirit of the fear of the Lord is a fundamental (Ps, 1:7, Job 28:28) and absolute focus.

Verse Three

Masoretic Text writes one line (first line of verse three) after the last line of verse two, but it is thought to be changed or deleted as a dittograph of the preceding one.³¹ But H. Ringgren, like M. Crook, is positive about the meaning of this line. He says that the word for "to have delight in" (יִחַדְתִּי) is normally used of God's smelling or enjoying the smoke of sacrifices, so that it would not be impossible to take it as an allusion to the use of incense at the coronation: as otherwise the smell of incense is inhaled "with delight," the new king will have his delight in the fear of the Lord.³² It seems to me like a really reasonable interpretation.

Verse Four

Hastings suggests that יָדַעְתִּי (meek) is an error of יָדַעְתִּי³³ in the sense of parallelism. And then, it

³¹R. B. Y. Scott, Op. Cit., p. 248.

³²H. Ringgren, Op. Cit., p. 31.

³³Adj. pl. construct state of יָדַעְתִּי (poor, needy), masculine.

can harmonize with the former word מִלִּי and the meaning becomes logical.³⁴ This is what Kittel also suggests.

זָרָא of verse 4^b is not necessary in parallelism, and the meaning is not changed with it. זָרָא of verse 4^c doesn't harmonize with רָשָׁע (the wicked) of next line. Therefore, Kittel suggests that it should be read as זָרָא (violent, a tyrant).

Verse Five

The feature of a man (Hab. 2:4, I Sam. 26:23) or a king of Yahweh (Ps. 96:13) who is dressed with רָשָׁע and מִלִּי coincides well with the justice and righteousness of 9:7. This means that he is victorious and has been given the victory, and the two words seem to be not very distinguishable in meaning.

Verses Six-Eight

From the person and character of the ruler, Isaiah now passes on to the effects of His rule. Evil having been eradicated from human society, there will be a corresponding regeneration of the rest of creation. It is described as an idyllic picture of wild beasts and dangerous reptiles in harmonious companionship with domesticated animals and

³⁴J. Hastings, A Dictionary of the Bible (N.Y.: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1898) pp. 1898-1902.

children. This suggests that when the new king comes, everything will be recovered as it was in the golden age of primeval paradise.

אֶרֶב (fatling) may represent אֶרֶב (friends): "the calf and the lion shall be friends together."³⁵ This description is not to be interpreted allegorically, as if the wild beasts were merely symbols for cruel and rapacious men. Neither, perhaps, is it to be taken quite literally. William Holladay says that in an early passage on Assyria Isaiah described the enemy as a lion (5:29), and Jeremiah cited the first three wild beasts of Isa. 11:6 as a figure for the Babylonians (Jer. 5:6)-the lion, the wolf, and the leopard. And also Amos' sarcastic comment about "rescuing" from the mouth of the lion two legs, or a piece of an ear, suggests that this is the way the inhabitants of Samaria will be "rescued" (Amos 3:12).

All these examples suggest that in Isaiah's time predatory animals were mentioned to symbolize predatory nations.³⁶ Therefore, it is better to say as a metaphorical description. Skinner says that it is rather a poetic

³⁵R. B. Y. Scott, Op. Cit., p. 249.

³⁶W. Holladay, Op. Cit., p. 112.

presentation of the truth that the regeneration of human society is to be accompanied by a restoration of the harmony of creation.³⁷

Verse Nine

The two parts of this verse are found respectively also in 65:25 and Hab. 2:14, and for this reason its genuineness has been questioned. But examination of these passages suggests that they have been derived from this verse, not vice versa.³⁸ The "holy mountain" stands for the land, with Zion as its governmental center. The phrase "as the waters cover the sea" signifies the covering of the bed of the ocean by its waters, a symbol of the depth and fullness of the experiential knowledge of Yahweh.

c. Exposition

Verse one alludes that the Davidic dynasty will be ended. Herbert says that all the kings of Israel were called "David," just as all the emperors of Rome were called "Caesar."³⁹ But this verse is about a new king, and in Isaiah's time it could mean Hezekiah. However, this inter-

³⁷J. Skinner, Op. Cit., p. 106.

³⁸R. B. Y. Scott, Op. Cit., p. 250.

³⁹A. S. Herbert, Op. Cit., p. 89.

pretation is only one of many possibilities.

The spirit of Yahweh will be given to this new born royal child, new king, and he will achieve a particular work.⁴⁰ It is not impossible that the prophet, when composing the prophecy, had in mind something more than the actual royal child. We can find out, here, the wisdom in terms of legal sense which is a part of a king's virtue.⁴¹ The duty which must be achieved at the judgment of a new king is distributing the righteousness (P.T.S.). This is the central idea in kingship ideology. Therefore, justice and righteousness are the most important concepts in this oracle. Nature will be transformed and the glorious period of the past will return. Wild animals will not plunder each other, and will not harm a person any more in the age of the new king. This time will be like the periods right after the great flood of Gen. 9:3 and the creation of Gen. 1:30.

It is a very interesting thought of Scott that "a baby ... a weaned child shall put forth its hand on the

⁴⁰This spirit gave special ability to outstanding craftsmen (Ex. 31:3, 35:31), warriors (Judg. 6:34, 11:29, 13:25), prophets (Judg. 11:25f, Isa. 61:1), or interpreters of dreams (Gen. 41:38), and equipped a king with proper qualifications (I Sam. 16:13 f.).

⁴¹It is necessary to remember the legal wisdom which is given to David (I Sam. 14:17). The legal wisdom of Solomon formed the Proverbs.

viper's den" may be alluding to the perpetual enmity between man and serpents, which resulted from the loss of the original conditions of Eden (cf. Gen. 3:15).⁴² This verse summarizes 11:6-9 in the context of a re-created nature when there will be no more infant mortality. We may note in passing that the idea of the permanent taming of wild beasts is very old indeed. We find similar idea in the Sumerian paradise myth of Enki and Ninhursag, to be dated before 2000 B.C.: "The lion kills not, the wolf snatches not the lamb."⁴³

So far as form is concerned, these can be traced back into pre-Israelite royal material. In the expectation of the new royal child, Isaiah shares the royal ideology of Israel, and, indeed, of the whole of the ancient East.⁴⁴

Therefore, we may say that the Messianic prophecy of Isaiah might be influenced to some degree by Isaiah's knowledge of the Ancient Near East mythical kingship. And also he seems to be knowledgeable about the conception of kingship in the wisdom literature.⁴⁵ But he interpreted it in a religious context, not in the secular realm. This

⁴²R. B. Y. Scott, *Op. Cit.*, p. 250.

⁴³J. B. Pritchard, Ancient Near East Texts (N.J.: Princeton Univ. Press, 1955) p. 38.

⁴⁴Otto Kaiser, Isaiah 1-12 (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1976) p. 159.

element makes his prophecy a creative work. Now, we will proceed to study "On what tradition is Isaiah prophesying?" It is necessary to overview the ancient mythical tradition, kingship of the ancient Near East, and the Davidic tradition for this study.

⁴⁵It is a reasonable opinion that the wisdom literature movement in Israel began from David-Solomon period.

CHAPTER III

MESSIANIC KINGSHIP OF THE ANCIENT NEAR EAST AND ISRAEL

It is quite difficult to understand some of the Old Testament thoughts and terminologies about kingship without understanding the mythological ideas and terms. Almost all the ideas of king and kingship of the ancient Near East were mythical. Mythical element was a natural way of expression in describing divine power and instrument which a future king will have. Especially, the cultic myths of the eschatological New Year Festival were understood by prophets as events which took place at the dramatic battles between darkness and light, life and death.

In this chapter, the mythical elements, i.e. the ideas of Messiah which were spread around the ancient Near East and the idea of kingship of Israel will be observed. Then, we will consider their relationships to the Messianic oracle of Isaiah.

A. Messianic Kingship of the Ancient Near East

1. The Myth of the Realm of the Death (Sheol) and the Sun God

About Isa. 9:2, Mowinckel says that the metaphor is taken from the concept of Sheol, the realm of the dead.¹

¹S. Mowinckel, He That Cometh, p. 102.

It is the "land of shadow" or "gloom," the deep night in which the people are now living. And he also says that when salvation is described as a sunrise, as a light shining in the night at the moment when the deliverer is born, it is plain that this metaphor has been derived from the myth of the sun god, the god of life, and of his victorious invasion of the nether world, Sheol, to rouse the dead.² The Canaanite Baal, too, is both sun god and fertility god. When he is dead, he stays in the realm of death, but he comes to life and rises again, bringing the light back to the world.³ At the annual cultic festival, he is born again as the new year's god. The news of his rebirth is announced as good news. The pleasure of the birth of a child and the rejoicing at the harvest festival are compared to each other, and there is an echo of the conception of the association of the divine king with fertility.⁴

Isaiah has set aside the origin and the original meaning of these ideas, and he is depicting the misery and the brilliant dawn of deliverance metaphorically. He did not explain what kind of misfortune it was, because

²Ibid.

³J. B. Pritchard, Ancient Near East Text, pp. 129-144.

⁴Mowinckel, Op. Cit., p. 103.

all the people knew it very well. The allusion of the following content says that it is oppression of foreign country.

According to the prophet Isaiah, this misfortune will be ended sooner or later. When the light crushes the darkness of Sheol, the pleasure bursts out toward the heaven (9:3).

2. The Birth of a Child Who Will Be a King

One child is born. By the birth of the child the light is shone to those who are in darkness. The conviction of deliverance is given to them, and they are pleased with participating in victory and welfare (9:6). Mowinckel says that the association of the myth about the birth of the sun god with the idea of the birth of the royal child is not accidental.⁵ By the birth of the child, salvation and a glorious future are guaranteed. Canaanite myth about the birth of the divine child emphasizes the importance of the birth of the child. His birth accompanies a new period, a new year, life, and blessing.

Likewise, these elements are expressed in the names which are given to the child of the oracle of Isaiah, and the names are victorious ones that will be achieved when the child will mount the throne of his ancestor's dynasty.

⁵Ibid., p. 104.

The words "child" and "son" in v. 9:6 do not necessarily imply an infant or a youngster, as we might assume. This is the language of oriental monarchy, by which the king, specifically on the day of his coronation, is called a "son" of the deity.⁶

In the east, as is particularly clear from Egyptian sources, the ceremony of enthronement included the bestowal by the deity of names which expressed the king's nature, his relationship to the deity, and his destiny. And clearly this custom also formed part of the coronation ritual in Judah.⁷ This is what Isaiah is prophesying in 9:6.

The first word of the first name in Hebrew is a well-known governmental title, "counselor." The whole name means "a planner of marvels." These "marvels" are evidently prodigious acts (such as in battle) effected with God's help.

The form of the second name, אל גזיר offers a precise parallel to the epithet applied to Aleyan-Baal in the Ugaritic texts: 'ilu ġaziru, "the victorious or heroic god." This is a heroic god who defeats the enemy and raises life out of death again.⁸

⁶William Holladay, Isaiah, p. 106

⁷Mowinckel, *Op. Cit.*, p. 105.

⁸Pritchard, *Op. Cit.*, p. 129 ff.

The third name is "Father Forever" or "Everlasting Father." Here, too, Mowinckel designates some analogies which point in a somewhat different direction. He says that the Egyptian king-god also bears the title "Prince of Eternity" and "Lord of Infinity" and in the Ugaritic texts the supreme god, 𐎎𐎗𐎚, is also called "Father of Years." 𐎎𐎗𐎚, "Eternity" does not denote the infinite, linear prolongation of time which we associate with the word, but is equated with "time" in all its infinite comprehensiveness.⁹ To the Hebrew, time is not an empty formal notion. It is all that exists and happens in time. It is the sum of the content of the years. "Father of Eternity" and "Father of Years" are therefore identical conceptions.¹⁰

This name was given only to the supreme god,¹¹ the father of the gods, 𐎎𐎗𐎚, and when the Hebrews knew this name they used it.¹² Therefore, this new born child is a ruler and a king who is given divine power.

Then, what kind of child is this? And what is his duty and assignment to fulfill? 9:7 is written for this

⁹Mowinckel, Op. Cit., p. 106.

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹Ibid.

¹²Cf. Tobit. 13:6, 13, Ecclus. 36:22 (17), etc.

reason, i.e., he is the traditional ethical ideal king which the Israelites have expected for their kings and rulers. But, even this idea is found in the Keret Text which was discovered from Ugarit as a qualification of a fair and just king.¹³ So, we can imagine that this idea was also transmitted to Israel from the ancient Near East, and Isaiah knew all about it.

3. Paradise

The idea of Isa. 11:6-9 is not easy to find out in the Old Testament.¹⁴ But we can find that kind of idea from the ancient myth about the king of paradise. The paradise is recovered with the coming of real king. Jenni mentions that in the Messianic expectation of Isaiah and Micah there are some characteristics which can hardly be attributed to a king directly.¹⁵ The unifying element among these scattered traces has been presumed to be the mythical figure of original man or the king of paradise.¹⁶

The motives based on these kinds of features are found

¹³Cyrus H. Gordon, "Ugaritic Textbook," Analecta Orienta Lia, 38 (Roma: Pontificium Institut um Biblicum, 1965) p. 127.

¹⁴The idea of 11:9 is found in 65:25 and Hab. 2:14.

¹⁵Premival origin of the expectation of Messiah (Mic. 5:2), his myterious birth (Isa. 7:4, Mic. 5:3), the foods of gods such as milk, honey (Isa. 7:15), the peace of the paradise (Isa. 11:6-9), etc. (E. Jenni, Op. Cit., p. 361)

¹⁶Ibid.

in other parts of the Old Testament.¹⁷ Mowinckel states like this. It is not unlikely that we have evidence here that the royal ideology was sometimes influenced by the conception of the king of paradise or Urmensch.¹⁸ And Herbert explains that the idea of accomplishment of paradise was a practical idea of wide spread acceptance in nomadic Palestine because of their fight against the wild animals at the risk of their life to keep a herd of cattle.¹⁹ The interpretation is especially interesting. The serpent is depicted as crawling on its belly and eats dust. This means the period after bearing God's curse, and this oracle is not for the pure paradise, but for the ideal kingdom which will be constructed in reality.²⁰

As a conclusion, I can say that Isaiah is associating his expectation of the birth of the ideal king with the Ancient Near East myths such as sun god and the birth of the divine child of Canaan, and describes it in a similar way to the myths. Therefore, it can be said that the imagery underlying the Messianic oracle of Isaiah has some connection with general elements of myth. He is also drawing the picture about the time of the ideal king in the form of the paradise.

¹⁷Job. 15:7-8, Ezek. 28:12 ff. Cf. Ps. 8:5-8.

¹⁸Mowinckel, Op, Cit., p. 182.

¹⁹I Sam. 17:34-36 (Herbert, Op. Cit., p. 90).

²⁰Gray, Op, Cit., p. 219.

myth of the ancient Near East, and Isaiah's Messiah is compared to the king of paradise or the character of the ur-mensch.

Isaiah is not just a keeper or transmitter of myths. He reconstructs them in his own way. He demythologizes the myths by using them as metaphorical expressions about peace. The paradise he is talking about is evidently a period after creation. That is, a paradise which will be set up in reality, and its ruler, too, will be an actual king, not an eschatological being. This reality of the ideal king includes the characteristics of the Messianic oracle of Isaiah in 9:2-7, 11:1-9.

B. Messianic Kingship of Israel

It is common among scholars to believe that Isaiah is following the Davidic tradition. In this section, as a preliminary stage of studying the influences which Isaiah received, we will observe several conceptions of kingship in the ancient Near East which are considered to have influence over the formation of kingship idea of Israel.

1. The Kingship of the Ancient Near East

The kings were believed to be superhuman in the Ancient Near East. In the Amarna Letters, the Canaanite vassals address their Egyptian sovereign as "my god," "my sun," "sun of the land," and "my breath."²¹

²¹S. Szikszai, "King, Kingship," Interpreter's

a. The Conception of Divine Kingship in the Old Kingdom of Egypt

To the Egyptians their king Pharaoh was no viceroy ruling by divine election, nor was he a man who had been deified; he was god-Horus, Seth, and Osiris visible among his people.²² In theory, all Egypt was his property, all her resources at the disposal of his projects. Although the land was actually managed by a complex bureaucracy headed by the vizier, this too served the god-king.

Horus was a son of Osiris. Osiris was a good king, but murdered by his wicked brother, Seth. Therefore, the living king was referred as Horus, and the former king who had died was called Osiris. The sun god Rē commanded this king to keep the order of the world.²³ So, the king was the very source of action, executor of justice, and foundation of law. The king's power was influential over not only affairs of state, but also ensured a good harvest of crops, so that a Pharaoh's coronation was the most important ceremony in Egypt. Then, secondly, the festival for a rich harvest was celebrated.²⁴ At this ceremony, the

Dictionary of the Bible, vol. III (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1962) p. 14.

²²Ibid.

²³S. H. Hooke, Myth, Ritual & Kingship (Oxford: Clarendon, 1958) p. 76.

²⁴Ibid., p. 85.

king represented a god to man, and also he represented a man before god and functioned as a high-priest. Therefore, the conception of kingship in Egypt combined the ideas of god-king and priest-king. This king was eternal ruler after his death, and became a direct object of worship.²⁵

b. The Concept of Kingship in Mesopotamia

The conception of kingship in Mesopotamia is a little bit different from that of Egypt.

1) Old Babylonian Kingship

Even though the title "god" was used for a king in Old Babylonia, it largely differed from that of the Pharaoh. The Babylonian king was not the "son" of any particular god, but may be regarded as the son of all gods and goddesses. The god was his "creator," and has "brought him into being." However, the god or goddess has not "begotten" or "conceived" him; but "fashioned him with divine hands in his mother's womb."²⁶ Here, we can see that the king is being chosen to be a son of a god by the form of adoption and not by nature. He was not a direct object for worship. Indeed, the formula of adoption was, "you are my son, whom

²⁵Hooke, Op. Cit., p. 104.

²⁶Mowinckel, He That Cometh, p. 37.

I have begotten."²⁷ And the election of the king implies his definite vocation and task which are committed to him by god as his representative, and normally the vocation comes through an oracle. His divinity was functional rather than metaphysical, and he had priestly qualification of requesting god's blessing for the people.

2) The Kingship of the Hittites

The Hittites never recognized the living king as a god. They received various religious and cultural elements from several empires near to them. So, their conception of kingship had diversity. Their king was a competent commander in war, supreme judge, and a high-priest in a national ceremony.²⁸ But after a king died, he became an object for worship.

3) The Early Sumerian and Canaanite Conceptions of Kingship

The Sumerians most often looked upon the king as one of the human race - greater, to be sure, than other men, but still a man.²⁹ He reigned in his god's stead as a viceregent.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Cyris Hee-Suk Moon, The Background of the Old Testament (Seoul: The Christian Literature Society, 1973) p. 43 ff.

²⁹ Szikszai, Op. Cit., p. 15.

In Canaan, as the Ugaritic documents indicate, kings of the legendary past like Keret were recognized as demigods. King Keret himself was the "son" and "servant" of the highest god, El, and received immortality.³⁰

On the basis of the foregoing observations, we can conclude that there are some similarities and differences between the two ideas of kingship in Egypt and Mesopotamia. They had similar belief in divine kingship, and this can be stated as a mythical form in modern expression and thought.

Besides, E. Jacob insists that we cannot find any trace of God-King conception and sanctifying a king after his death in later Syria-Palestine area.³¹ But, on the other hand, M. Noth alleges a hypothesis that there was probably a Syria-Palestine Form of concept of a God-King.³² Noth's hypothesis seems to me like a more reasonable opinion than that of Jacob. Because, as I will explain later, the reason that Jerusalem's kingship idea is different from those of Israel and Judah can be explained by this hypothesis.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ E. Jacob, Theology of the Old Testament (N.Y.: Harper & Row, Pub., 1958) p. 331.

³² M. Noth, "God, King, People in the Old Testament," The Bultmann School of Biblical Interpretation: New Direction?, ed. by Robert W. Funk (N.Y.: Harper & Row, Pub., 1965) p. 43.

Now, we will consider the possible route, through which the various conceptions of kingship in Ancient Near East and Egypt might transmit to Israel and affect Isaiah's Messianic Expectation.

2. The Kingship of Israel

The politics of Israel began after their settlement in Canaan. But at that time, there was not political unification. There were patriarchs of tribes and they gathered together around the ark of covenant. During the two centuries of their settlement in Canaan, Israelites lived without a king among small city states. They recognized Yahweh as their king, subjecting themselves to the religious duty which had been taught by their charismatic leader, Moses. They rejected the institution of monarchy, because the cultic-ritual function of a divine-king under the political system of Syria-Palestine culture was not acceptable.³³ Then, when was the monarchical system of Israel begun, and how was it colored by the conception of divine-kingship? For the solution of this issue, we have to observe Israel's understanding of the concept of kingship through the study of traditions during the period of their being formed as a state.

In the time of Samuel, the Israelites were under the

³³Ibid., p. 35.

oppression of the Philistines (I Sam. 13:19-21), the Ammonites ridiculed the Israelites (I Sam. 11:1-2), and the Amalekites were trying to seize the land of Israel. Therefore, the acceptance of the monarchical system was required by historical necessity. Before the monarchical system was introduced to Israel, there was no one who was fit for the office of the God-King idea. And, the kingship of Saul and David was based on the human consent of the elders from each tribe. Solomon, too, became a king by the human decision of his father who was supported by the influential circle of the court (I Kings 1:11 ff.). After the death of Solomon, the stories of accession to the throne of Rehoboam and Jeroboam also reflect the human intention (I Kings 12:1, 12:20).

These obvious traditional materials can't be exempted from the question about the kingship of Israel. But these are only fragments, and there are quite a few instances portraying the king in extremely close relationship with Yahweh, who declares, "I will be his father, and he shall be my son" (II Sam. 7:14). Kingship is accepted here as a sacred institution, as it is elsewhere in the ancient Near East. M. Noth says that the Divine-Kingship School cites some Old Testament passages which reflect the characteristics of kingship given by god. He selects Ps. 45:7 as the most evident passage among them, and then II Sam. 7:14, Ps. 2:7 (Ps. 110:3) where the Davidic king is called as son of Yahweh.³⁴ He also says that it is difficult not to

say that Israel was assimilated into the Canaanite cultural tradition, and this seems to happen basically in the cultic situation.³⁵

Therefore, we can classify several different conceptions of kingship which were developed in Israel's history from the Old Testament tradition. Now, let's observe some conceptions of kingship of Israel with the opinion of M. Noth.

a. The Conception of Kingship in the Northern Kingdom of Israel

When Saul was given the spirit of Yahweh and conquered the Ammonites in the east of Jordan, the Israelites went to Gilgal and proclaimed Saul king at the holy place.³⁶ The ceremony was held before Yahweh at the sanctuary. In this ceremony, we can see that the subject of the event, making a king, is still the will of the people (human).³⁷

Noth mentions that, in the northern kingdom of Israel, a man who was designated by a prophet and proclaimed as being called by Yahweh became a king in the hand of the people and elders. But later, there was not a designated per-

³⁴Ibid., p. 37.

³⁵Ibid., p. 38.

³⁶I Sam. 11:15.

³⁷The function of Samuel is not clear at the ceremony. In I Sam. 11:1-14, he called the people to Gilgal,

son, and a charismatic leader became a king in every period.³⁸ Therefore, we can not find any similarity of conception of kingship between the northern Kingdom of Israel and the ancient Near East empire.³⁹

b. The Canaanite Conception of Kingship in the Southern Kingdom of Judah and the City of Jerusalem

After Saul died, the Judeans went to David in Hebron. They anointed him as king who would rule the house of Judah (II Sam. 2:4^a), and the subjects of this act were the men of Judah. Esh-baal, son of Saul, became a king by Abner, commander of Saul's army (II Sam. 2:9). But after he was murdered, all the elders of Israel also went to David in Hebron. Then David made a sacred alliance with them, and they gladly anointed him as their king of Israel (II Sam. 5:3). This makes it possible to allow M. Noth's hypothesis that once Hebron was a city state of Canaan, then it was occupied by Caleb (Josh. 14:13 ff., 15:13-14, etc.) and was designated a Levitical city and a city of refuge (Josh. 20:7, 21:10-13, I Chr. 6:57). So that at the time of David there was not the tradition of the Canaanite

but he couldn't do any thing without saying, "proclaim Saul as our king."

³⁸M. Noth, Op. Cit., p. 43.

³⁹In the ancient Near East, king was a sacred person, god's representative, son of god and object of worship after his death. He was also a hero armed with supernatural

conception of kingship anymore.⁴⁰ Therefore, basically, Judah and Israel have the same conception of kingship. But there was another idea of kingship in the kingdom of Israel.⁴¹

David conquered the city of Jerusalem which had been remaining as a Canaanite city at that time, and made it his capital city. He kept this city as neutral, and it is probable that the conception of kingship of this city developed in a different way from Judah and Israel. According to Noth, the conception of kingship of the city was a Canaanite form, and David might accept the local cultic form of Jerusalem.⁴²

We do not know a great deal about the ancient Canaanite history of kingship in Jerusalem. But we can find Melchizedek in Old Testament tradition.⁴³ It seems to be evident that he was a Canaanite king of Jerusalem

talents, high priest of a national ceremony, superior judge, and commander of army. Especially in Egypt, every king was Horus, that is, god. Therefore, Egyptian conception of kingship was god-king and priest-king. (S. H. Hooke, Op. Cit., p. 11 f.)

⁴⁰M. Noth, Op. Cit., p. 41.

⁴¹Ibid.

⁴²Ibid.

⁴³The name Jerusalem does not appear in the Pentateuch. But it had been remaining as a Jebusite city until David conquered it after his seven years of reign in Hebron (Judg. 1:21). (J. H. Hayes, "The Tradition of Zion's Inviolability,"

still alive in Salem tradition.⁴⁴ The only thing we are informed about Melchizedek is that he compounded the priesthood and kingship at the sacrifice in Jerusalem (Gen. 14:18, Ps. 110:4).

Now, let's consider the possible transformation of the conception of kingship in Israel. We can say that the Syro-Palestine form of the God-King idea in the ancient Near East could be transmitted to the Jebusite city of Jerusalem, and it could be spread in the kingdom of Israel by taking advantage of the important position of Jerusalem as the center of religion and administration of Israel.

But it is also evident that the semite conception of kingship should be transformed by the Yahwistic belief of Israel. For example, in the event designating the Davidic king as a son of God in Ps. 2:7, it does not mean that the nature of the king is son of God or he is in the realm of holiness by being designated as the son of Yahweh. He is not a God by nature, but a human king selected by the people before Yahweh, and Yahweh declares him as His son graciously. Anyhow, even in Jerusalem, the Egyptian and Mesopotamian characters of kingship were not sustained

Journal of Biblical Literature. 82 (1963), 419.

⁴⁴Noth insists that the name "Salem" in Gen. 14:18 was always recognized as the name of Jerusalem. Cf. Ps. 110. (Noth, *Op. Cit.*, p. 41).

(even though being influenced indirectly).

The formation of Davidic dynasty and featuring Jerusalem as the royal City made two special traditions.

3. The Oracle of Nathan

The legitimacy of divine kingship of Davidic dynasty took an important position in the history of Israel. It is verified by the oracle of Nathan (I Sam. 7:1-16). The idea of divine kingship was applied to David first, but, later, it was continually reinterpreted in the process of the history of Israel (cf. I Chr. 17:7-14). More concretely speaking, it is related to the temple construction plan of David which is rejected by Yahweh. Yahweh said to David through the prophet Nathan, "Would you build me a house to dwell in? ... I will make you a house." Here the house is interpreted as dynasty or descendants. Von Rad says that the text of the oracle of Nathan shows itself as a collection of several different conceptions.⁴⁵ 7:1-7, 11^b, 16 seem to be older conceptions, and in which the promise of Yahweh is confined to David. But in those which are considered to be later conceptions, all the concerns are transferred to the descendants of David.⁴⁶ There-

⁴⁵Von Rad, Old Testament Theology, vol. I (Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, 1965) p. 310.

⁴⁶In Isa. 55:3-5, the conception of divine kingship is enlarged and re-applied to the entire nation of Israel,

fore, in the background of this later tradition we can find certain attempts to extend the limits of the oracle to include the "offspring after you, who shall come forth from your body" (v. 12). Another idea is found in vs. 22-24, it is an intention to transfer the great promise from the one who has the crown to all the people of Yahweh.

From the interpretation of this oracle, new hope for glory was given to Israel in so far as the Davidic dynasty was alive. And the blessing of Jacob to Judah⁴⁷ concentrated on the royal house of Jesse. E. Jacob states about the importance of this text that the oracle is not only a promise of the coming of a Savior sooner or later, but includes a promise about the eternity of Davidic dynasty. Therefore, he asserts that this text must be considered as implying the meaning of Messiah.⁴⁸ And this tradition might develop in the relationship with the pre-Israelite resources which were introduced to Israel from the Jebusite ideas and beliefs.⁴⁹ Therefore, it may be said that the Messianic expectation of Israel begins

and it is powerfully democratized (Ps. 78:70-72, 89:21-38, 132:11:12).

⁴⁷Gen. 49:8 ff.

⁴⁸E. Jacob, Op. Cit., p. 334.

⁴⁹The Melchizedek traditions of Ps. 110:4 and Gen. 14:18-24 are s

with the Davidic king of Jerusalem. Especially, the writer of these historical writings about the succession to David reports this oracle of Nathan and takes it as his starting point. Noth explains the reason. That is, this oracle clarifies the hot discussion about the issue of succession to David and whether the successor to David is confined to his own son or not.⁵⁰ Actually, the oracle of Nathan itself does not focus on this practical issue, but the nuance of its words implies the kingship of Davidic dynasty in the total sense and treats its long prospective development in the future. The reason that these kings of proclamations are found exclusively in the prophets of Judah is that only Judah continued the relationship with the Davidic house in Jerusalem after the death of Solomon. But in the content of these sayings proclaiming the Messiah, all the prayers of Israel are firmly maintained. By uniting this oracle with the ark of covenant and the royal city, all the tribes of Israel had common concern with the house of David and the promise to David. Von Rad asserts that all the traditions of the selection of Israel come to their completion in the Davidic promise and the selection of Zion.

It is a natural conclusion that Isaiah, whose

⁵⁰M. Noth, *Op. Cit.*, p. 44.

activity was done around Jerusalem and who had a deep relationship with Royal Family, would know the Davidic tradition centered on king David and his line.

4. Selection of Zion

Isaiah who worked in Jerusalem was convinced of the inviolability of Zion and took it as a basis of his message for deliverance. The tradition of the selection of Zion starts from bringing the ark to Jerusalem. Noth states that when David brought the ark to Jerusalem (II Sam. chapter 6), he had an intention to make Jerusalem the religious as well as the political capital of the realm.⁵¹ Through the ark he sought to link the newly created state to Israel's ancient order as its legitimate successor, and to advertise the state as the patron and protector of the sacred institutions of the past.⁵² The ark was transferred to Jerusalem and placed in a tent shrine.⁵³ Whether there was a temple in Jerusalem or not, the fact that the ark of covenant was in Jerusalem meant Jerusalem was Yahweh's resident place to Israelites. There-

⁵¹J. Bright, The History of Israel, p. 200.

⁵²Ibid., p. 201.

⁵³I Sam. 4:1-7:2 and II Sam. 6:1-19 form the core of a successive narrative about the ark.

fore the basic idea of the tradition of the Inviolability of Zion was the thought that Zion which was symbolized as the ark of covenant and the temple was considered as Yahweh's dwelling place. This idea is drawn from the poems of Zion (Ps. 46, 48, 76), and also is verified by Isaiah's speech in Zion.⁵⁴

Then, how was this tradition transmitted continually in the history of Israel? The action of moving the ark of covenant into Jerusalem from Siloh (II Sam. 6) was re-enacted again and again at a annual festival as a part of ritual.⁵⁵ That is, at the annual feast in the month Ethanim, which is the seventh month, the Royal Festival of Zion seemed to be celebrated. This festival is something like a combined form of festivals celebrating the building of a sanctuary and establishing of a dynasty. In the rite of the festival, Yahweh selects Zion as his resting place, and at the same time a firm belief that Zion is the throne for its anointed king is given to the people of Israel.⁵⁶

This tradition conveyed through ritual was recreat-

⁵⁴Cf. Von Rad, Old Teatament, vol. II. pp. 166-178 for Isaiah's activities in Zion which includes the important Zion theology.

⁵⁵Cf. the Royal Festival of Zion (I Kings 8, Ps. 132).

⁵⁶Von Rad, Op. Cit., vol. I. P. 46.

ed in new meaning by the prophet Isaiah. Isaiah basically transformed the tradition of Inviolability of Zion in two ways. 1) He requested of Israelites the belief in Yahweh, suggesting this tradition included Yahweh's deliverance and protection of Israel.⁵⁷ He thought that Israel's trust of Egypt was rebellion to Yahweh (Isa. 31:1). 2) He understood the invasion and attack of enemies in the realm as the action of Yahweh. This understanding might have happened during the Assyrian invasion and the suffering of Jerusalem.⁵⁸

From the consideration above, it followed that the idea of selection of Zion is unlimited recognition of security within Yahweh, and Isaiah utilizes this idea as an introduction of Messianic conception in his prophecy. With Von Rad, we can say decisively that during the time when the Patriarch- Exodus tradition was alive in the northern kingdom, Davidic-Zion tradition was growing in Jerusalem and Judah.⁵⁹

⁵⁷The words given to Ahaz in Isa. 7:9 is a good example of this request. An imperative request of "Come back to Yahweh" in Zion Speech (Isa. 31:4-9) is unified with the promise of Yahweh's victory.

⁵⁸Cf. Isa. 10:5-6, Isaiah declares here that because of the unfaithfulness and sins of Israel and Jerusalem Yahweh is judging them through Assyria, His rod of anger. The destruction of Jerusalem was understood as evidence of Yahweh's judgement.

Isaiah's prophetic activity was thoroughly based on the David-Zion tradition. We can say that the political background of the time and his personal background centered on the palace of Jerusalem, and made Isaiah familiar with Davidic tradition. Likewise, I am sure that wisdom teachers' instructions which were spread out around the palace would influence Isaiah and his prophecy greatly (see following).

⁵⁹Von Rad, *Op. Cit.*, vol. I. p. 47.

CHAPTER IV

THE ELEMENTS OF WISDOM LITERATURE IN ISAIAH'S PROPHECY

A. The process of Settlement of Wisdom Literature in Israel

The study of wisdom environment, wisdom literature and its importance in the Old Testament has grown up lately. As a result, the influences of wisdom literature were discovered in unexpected parts of the Old Testament, i.e., creation story, law, historical books, and, especially, prophecies.¹ The study of wisdom literature by Kunkel and Humbert concluded that the wisdom literature of Israel originated from Egyptian culture. But other scholars had questions about that restriction of originality and, finally, found out that there are also many elements of wisdom literature in cuneiform character literature of ancient Mesopotamia.² In the Old Testament, it is verified in the Book of Kings that Israel was informed of these kinds of literatures.³

¹R. B. Y. Scott, "The Study of the Wisdom Literature," Interpretation, vol. XXIV, No. 1 (January, 1970), 20.

²In Suk Suh, "The process of Settlement of Wisdom Literature in Israel," Prospect, vol. 17 (1972), 90.

³"Solomon was wiser than the wise men of the East or the wise men of Egypt" (I Kings 4:30, 31). Furthermore, for the same reasons, the author of the Book of Job chose an Edomite

When we say חָכְמָה as the central concept of wisdom literature, the origin of this term is found in Ugaritic documents, חָכְמָה is introduced as a character of El. In this document, the root of חָכְמָה is used four times. One of them is found in the text of Gordon 126 which is about Keret Epic, and here El is described as the most excellent wise being.⁴

Therefore, we can recognize that the wisdom literature was spread widely in both Egypt and the ancient Near East. Then, when was wisdom literature transmitted to Israel?⁵ We can say that it was after the conquest of Jerusalem by David, and the transformation of traditional political line by an open door policy.⁶ David organized the Royal Guard of mercenaries and adapted them to the religious rites of every province. He took policies of appointing Egyptian sophers and receiving spouses of the royal family from outside Israel. Solomon who succeeded David promoted his father's policies positively so that he accomplished the prosperity of the country, and kept an intimate relationship with Egypt through inter-racial marriage. Therefore, I agree with Gray that, at the latest, this was

or Arabian as his wise hero and also gentiles as his friends.

⁴Pritchard, Op. Cit., p. 129.

⁵Generally, the beginning wisdom literature of Israel was considered as from post-exile period.

⁶R. B. Y Scott, "The Study of the Wisdom," p. 35.

the very time when the religious idea of human destiny penetrated to the Hebrew intellectuals, and some ideas of Israel were influenced by this transforming situation.⁷

As a result of this, the new system of government gave birth to a class of public service officials and wise men's groups such as sopher, ambassador, scribe and other subjects were formed. And also the skills of government in wisdom was considered as a virtue with which all the subjects had to be equipped in order to support their sovereign well. Therefore, a sopher had to be a wise man, and a wise man advising the king had to be educated by wisdom for a more adequate performance of his duty. All those kinds of wisdom were only practical wisdom for successful living. But this elementary wisdom began to develop toward the speculative wisdom, and it is reflected in religious issues. This trend of wisdom literature developed more and more and was in conflict with deep rooted religious traditions.⁸

Therefore, we can conclude that the wisdom literature of Israel did not begin in the Persian period. Already in the premonarchical period the wisdom elements penetrated into the religious thought of Israel and in Solomon's period the wisdom literatures of other countries were introduced to Israel in full

⁷Gray, Op. Cit., p. 164.

⁸II Sam. 14:17, 20, I Kings 3:9, Gen. 3.

scale and began to grow. Consequently, wisdom literature and the monarchical system have a concrete relationship with each other, and it appears that the Yahwist is the first person who made the settlement of wisdom literature in Israel.⁹

The process of development of wisdom literature in Israel is still obscure. The elements of wisdom which are found besides the Book of Wisdom Literature in the Old Testament appear in Historical Books,¹⁰ sayings of pre-exilic prophets, references about the wise men of Egypt in Genesis and Exodus, and wisdom tradition of Solomon in I Kings. The reaction of the prophets to the new class of wise men was cold. They looked down on the wisdom of wise men when it did not depend on the knowledge and command of Yahweh. They warned that saying or teaching human wisdom only for successful living, which was departed from Yahweh, would be a punishable act.

At last, the indirect criticism of the author of the Book of Kings toward the wisdom of Solomon comes clearly in the prophets, especially in Isaiah. Isaiah cursed those who pretended to be wise men in their own thinking (8:21). He said that their wisdom would be destroyed (29:14), the wisdom of the wise men of Hezekiah is useless. But even though the pre-

⁹This was fully discussed by Von Rad. (Von Rad, "Josephsgeschichte und ältere Hōkmā," VTS, I, (1953), 120-127.

¹⁰General Proverbs, riddles and professional wise women (II Sam. 14:2, 20:16, etc.).

exilic prophets and the orthodox belief of Israel attacked the false wise men and their wisdom, on the other hand there are some hints that some ways of thinking were expressed in the form of right wisdom from the early period of history of Israel. The prophets were using these kinds of methods and terminology.¹¹

On the question of possible influence on the prophets by the wisdom teachers, the theocentric emphasis of the former is stressed in contrast to the anthropocentric concern of the latter. But the wise men of Solomon's court were primarily ethical and religious teachers, as they later became.¹²

Fichtner points that prophecy and wisdom share essentially the same ethic and have a similar independent attitude to the cult.¹³ Therefore, I agree with the opinion of Fichtner that it is Isaiah who came to prophecy out of the wisdom tradition.¹⁴ It is because of the fact that Isaiah who acted in and around the palace of Jerusalem where most of the wise men were gathered would have known well about the literal style, ideas and terms of wise men. For this reason, it is logical opinion that Isaiah's expectation of the Messiah, too, may be colored by

¹¹Isa. 28:23-29, Jr. 4:22, 10:12, 17:5-11.

¹²R. B. Y. Scott, "The Study of Wisdom," p. 39.

¹³Ibid., p. 36.

¹⁴Ibid.

some terms of wisdom literature. Now, we will examine several terms of wisdom literature which are found in Isaiah's Messianic oracle.

B. Some Elements of Wisdom Literature in Isaiah's Prophecy

1. נִצַּח

This term is translated as "advice" or "counsel." Its root is נִצַּח.¹⁵ This is the basic element which wise men have, and it is considered that priests have חֹרֶה, prophets have נִצַּח, and wise men have נִצַּח. נִצַּח is found sixteen times in the Book of Isaiah,¹⁶ ten times in Proverbs, nine times in the Book of Job, etc. Its meaning is applied to man and Yahweh equally. In II Sam. 17:23, it meant Ahithophel's counsel, and in Prov. 21:30 it pointed to the arrogant request of human wisdom. This meaning is the general meaning of נִצַּח in Proverb 21:30.¹⁷ This meaning is also found in "The Instruction of Amen-em-Opet" of Egypt, but Isaiah uses this term for the character of Messianic

¹⁵Noun, singular, female.

¹⁶5:19, 8:10, 11:2, 16:3, 19:3, 11, 17, 25:1, 28:29, 29:15, 30:1, 36:5, (44:26, 46:10, 11, 47:13). Robert Young, Young's Analytical Concordance to the Bible, (N.Y.: Funk & Wagnalls Co., 1936) p

¹⁷Cf. Job 5:12-13, 12:2, 28:13, 39:19-35. R. B. Y. Scott, Proverbs & Ecclesiastes, The Anchor Bible (N.Y.:

king.

2. נִיָּן

An infinitive form of יָדַע whose meaning is "to know, knowledge" or "word of knowledge" (Ps. 22:12). This term is a typical terminology of wisdom literature and can be found forty-eight times in wisdom literature, nine times in the Book of Isaiah.¹⁸ In Prov. 10:14 this word refers to the characteristics of wise men compared to that of a fool, but among Egyptian wisdom we can see it from "The Instruction of Ptah-Hotep," where the passionate is compared to the silent.¹⁹ In I Sam. 2:3, it is described as a character of Yahweh, and Hosea connected it to the "keeping of the Ten Commandments" (Hos. 4:1 ff.).

"The tree of knowledge" in Gen. 2:17, 3:5, 22 is an important theme of wisdom literature. Isaiah condemns false wisdom which changes the quality of good into evil and evil into good, which had discriminated between good and evil by Yahweh. But there is one being who pursues consistently the true wisdom, without following the false wisdom with human arrogance. He is the successor to David, the hero of paradise in Isaiah's prophecy.

Doubleday & Co. Inc., 1965) p. 126.

¹⁸5:13, 11:2, 32:4, 33:6, (40:14, 44:19, 25, 47:10, 53:11). R. Young, Op. Cit., p.

¹⁹Pritchard, Op. Cit., pp. 214^a, 423^a.

3. יִרְאָה

This word is the feminine form of יָרָא and is translated as "to fear, fear, reverence." This term appears two times in the Book of Isaiah (7:25, 11:2) and nineteen times in wisdom literature. Whybray says that the conception of this word is deeply connected to education like יָדָה, but these two words show two fundamentally different types of education. That is, one shows the teaching of the wisdom school and the other refers to the religious education by parents or religious leaders of Israel.²⁰ When this word was used in the relationship to God, its meaning was regarded as "moral act."²¹ But when this word was used toward other gods, it meant "fear" which was implying worship (II Kings 17:35) and obedience (II Kings 17:7 f.).

Therefore, "fearing Yahweh" has many meaning in Israel.²² But Isaiah used this term to denote the thorough-going obedience to Yahweh in his oracle for a savior.

4. יָדָה

Among the characters of the Messianic king in Isaiah's oracle, the most important element is this word. It is con-

²⁰R. N. Whybray, Wisdom in Proverbs, SBT, No. 45, (Chicago: Alec R. Allcson, Inc., 1965) p. 96.

²¹Ex. 1:17, 21, Gen. 20:11.

²²Cf. Obedience, faithfulness, worship, sacrifice, love, etc.

ceivable that the reason is to give him an ethical responsibility and to allude to him as earthly king. The Hebrew word for righteousness appears in two forms such as רָצָה (masculine) and רָצָהּ (feminine), but there is not any important difference between them. The meaning of the root of this word, רָצָה, is very variable. The dictionaries and expositors who use Arabic confine the fundamental meaning of this word as "straightness, hardness, firmness," and say that straightness is the most important meaning among them.²³ But any one meaning can't explain the variety of the meaning of this word. In the contexts where this word is used, the common element of רָצָה is a conception of relationship. A man who does all the duties which are given by his relationship to someone is referred to as righteous man.²⁴ Therefore, רָצָה is one of the universal conceptions with love, and has a social nuance. The Ten Commandments are Israel's confession of belief about the righteous Yahweh whom they experienced during the exodus from Egypt. This is the foundation on which the Israelite's belief must stand, and the righteous God commanded of Israel social justice as general principles of their life in the latter part of Ten Commandments. This is the entire belief and ethic of Israel.

²³Cf. the article "Righteousness" in the Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible.

²⁴Ibid.

The opposite conception to justice is injustice. The first thing of the injustice is illicit fortune (Prov. 3:31, 4:17), the second is inspired decision (Prob. 16:10), and the third is the wicked mouth (Prob. 10: 6, 11). Therefore, a king shouldn't be a judge of inspired decision and he has to be a righteous judge whose decision is correct in order to be praised by the people and be blessed by God (Prob. 24:24). The ideal king whom Israel is expecting is a righteous judge, and his kingdom will be a period of peace (Isa. 11:6-9). Recently, some scholars found out that the Ten Commandments also stand on the tradition of wisdom literature, and the prophets and wise men stand on the tradition of the Ten Commandments.²⁵

5. Ideal King

In wisdom literature, the ideal king is an ethical king who has relation to P.T.S., but he has to have wisdom in order to get P.T.S.. Now, it is more reasonable to understand more about wisdom first, before we start to survey the function of the ideal king.

According to Whybray, wisdom was especially the supreme power of a king, and we can see the same situation in Israel in the wisdom tradition of Solomon and I Kings 3:14-15.²⁶

²⁵Ik Hwan Moon, Kingdom of God and Social Justice, (Seoul: Catholic Univ. Press, 1975) p. 12.

²⁶Whybray, Op. Cit., p. 89.

Also, he says that the idea about wisdom coming from Yahweh in Isa. 31:1-2 did not come out of Israel's own thinking, but from the ideas widely spread in the ancient Near East.²⁷

The original meaning of חָכָם came from training and experience of special skill, ability, high technique of a particular profession.²⁸ This was really a secret craftsmanship (Ex. 35:30-35, I Kings 7:13-14). But it sometimes appears that a man is wise by nature, with a kind of native talent or intelligence (II Sam. 16:18, I Kings 2:9). And there is also wisdom through the spirit of God (Gen. 41:38-39, Isa. 11:2, of the Messianic king). This is the wisdom of which the poet in Job 28 says: "Man does not know the way to it" (verse 13 LXX; cf. Eccclus. 3:20-21).²⁹ This חָכָם was demanded for a king, and David was said to have wisdom like the wisdom of the angel of God to know all things that are on the earth (II Sam. 14:20).

Therefore, the ideal king of wisdom literature could be a righteous ruler by getting this wisdom. This wisdom made a king judge rightly and try to build social justice. This was the duty given to him by the covenant, and he could

²⁷Ibid., p. 23.

²⁸S. H. Blank, "Wisdom," Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, vol. IV, p. 860.

²⁹Ibid.

be a righteous king through this righteous act.³⁰

According to McKane, Von Rad says that the old wisdom of Israel was a mixture of piety and man-centered wisdom, and its *sitz im leben* was the palace, and its basic function was teaching the officials. Since "fear of God" was a fundamental element of the education of officials, Joseph was depicted as a man who feared God in Joseph's story.³¹ But McKane manifests his disagreement to Von Rad. He asserts that the point is not whether these officials are religious or not, rather it is that "fear of God is central content of their wisdom." He concluded that their wisdom did not include piety, and it can be explained as follows. 1) Officials' wisdom was a wisdom for governing a state, 2) the owners of this wisdom thought of the world as discovered by themselves, and 3) they did not allow themselves to be captured by religious thought in dealing with their wisdom in practical situations.³² But we can imagine that the Yahwism which early settled down in Israel before the settlement of wisdom literature would not allow the faith of "fear of God" as a product of later period. The pulse underlying Israel was religious and

³⁰Cf. II Sam. 8:15=II Chron. 18:14, I Kings 10:9=II Chron. 9:8, Ps. 45:6-7, Prov. 16:12, II Sam. 23:3-4, Isa. 16:5.

³¹Von Rad insists this story is old wisdom. W. McKane, Prophets and Wise Men, SBT, No. 44 (Chicago: Alec R. Allenson, Inc., 1965) p. 48.

³²Ibid.

ethical, moralistic wisdom. It began and ended with fear of God, and the existence of wisdom without the fear of God was not conceivable. But the only new happening was that this awakening was given to the ideal king of wisdom literature by prophets, especially by Isaiah.

C. The Creative Work of Isaiah in His Prophecy

Isaiah found out that Israel had departed far from the relationship with Yahweh so that Yahweh would reject Israel and judge her. In this situation, Isaiah's prophecy focused its light upon Israel.

Then, what are the creative characteristics of Isaiah's Messianic orcle? This is the most important concern of this research based on everything stated above.

1. Interpretation of Tradition

When Isaiah was acting as a prophet, there was an expectation for a glorious king widely spread in Judah (II Sam. 7:14-17). And Isaiah recognized new activity of Yahweh in history by evaluating the complexity and political situation of the contemporary world. He saw God's instrument of judgement on Israel. But in the process of judgement, he also saw a light of hope. Von Rad says that the reason for Isaiah's expectation of an anointed one in future explains that the contemporary successors to David had lost the ability to deliver his people.³³

Generally, prophets were not makers of tradition or ones in charge of ritual function, but those who received God's grace. Therefore, they proclaimed what they had received from God, and they did not proclaim the tradition. Especially, we can see this phenomenon in Isaiah's Messianic oracle. This means that Isaiah did not try to keep the ancient tradition in its original form, but redacted it in his own way so that he brought fundamental transformation on it. He was not bound to or rooted in tradition. He was a prophet who used it as an instrument of his prophecy. It was the time of crisis in the Davidic dynasty when Isaiah concluded the future king would be a successor to David. The address spoken by Isaiah at this time was based on two traditions: Zion tradition and Davidic tradition. These two were selection-traditions and Isaiah probably got them from life centered on the palace in Jerusalem. But he gave a new conception to these traditions. Von Rad says that the song of Zion was based on God's selection of Zion, and Royal Psalms were from the fact that Yahweh chose David in the past. Isaiah projected them into future.³⁴ That is, Yahweh is planning to deliver Zion and seat an anointed, a new David.

Then, when will the new David sit on the throne?

³³Von Rad, Old Testament, vol. II, p. 171.

³⁴Ibid., p. 175.

It is hard to find eschatology in the narrower sense³⁵ from the Old Testament Prophets. We can see some phrases such as "the age to come" (Jeremiah), "in that day" (Isa. 7:18 ff.), and "in the latter days" (Isa. 2:2). These expressions of the prophets did not mean "the end," but the coming of a new order which would powerfully influence the world. This was the meaning of eschatology for the prophets, and we can understand their concerns for deciding and constructing the present in this eschatological meaning. Therefore, Isaiah's future at hand is prophesied in order to influence the present. In another word, the time of new David is the future at hand, and the new David is an earthly king who will rule that period. But Isaiah is thinking of the common process of nature and history in the category of myth.³⁶

Isaiah's creative element in his prophecy is not only the interpretation of tradition, but also new understanding of the righteousness of God as follows.

2. New Understanding of פְּתִיחַ

G. Fohrer says that the prophet was not the first

³⁵It means the (dogmatically firmly established) doctrine of the (dramatically conceived) end of history and of the course of the universe and the beginning of the time of eternal salvation. E Jenni, "Eschatology of the Old Testament," Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, vol.II, p. 126.

³⁶J. Lindblom, Prophecy in Ancient Israel (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1965) p. 363.

person who insisted on justice.³⁷ In the view point of religious history and sociology, the many instructions of Isaiah and the other prophets are not new.

In the ancient Near East society, the king was a head of people and a guardian who protected all the faithful social relationships. Therefore, he had to practice righteousness (Ras Shamra). In the wisdom literature of the Old Testament, righteousness was also a standard of right government for a king or a monarch in his political and social concern for the state. So, a king had to be a righteous judge (II Sam. 8:15; I Kings 3:6, etc.).

But how is the conception of קדש transformed by Isaiah? He understands it not in a secular framework, but in religious category. The respect for Yahweh is from the fear of Yahweh, and this can be found also in wisdom literature (Prov. 9:10, 15:33). But Isaiah brings the conception of holy which is not connected to righteousness in wisdom literature into his idea of קדש (5:16, 11:2, 3-5). That is, because Yahweh is holy, a king who is His representative must stand before Yahweh with fear and respect for Him. Even though this particular word "holy" was a term which the Semites used in order to distinguish gods from men (and it did not imply moralistic importance), Isaiah is using this

³⁷G. Fohrer, "Remarks on Modern Interpretation of the Prophets," Journal of Biblical Literature, LXXX, (1961), 310.

term with ethical meaning, especially as the same meaning of קִדְּשׁ, to his ideal king (Isa. 11:3-5, cf. 9:7).³⁸ Isaiah says that the holiness of Yahweh is manifested as judgement. That is, the holiness of Yahweh appears as the righteousness of Yahweh, and when the earthly king does not use the righteousness which is given to him, the holiness of Yahweh is represented by His judgement. Isaiah could see this judgement on Israel at his time.

The appearance of Yahweh's justice as judgement is also a concept beyond the wisdom literature. It is prophetic tradition, which had appeared in Amos (4:6-11).³⁹ And, Isaiah is following the tradition of Amos. But by adding the concept of holiness to the judgement of Amos, Isaiah is suggesting a new thing, i.e., a hope to Israel (11:1). In an other word, when a king who has to build justice destroys justice, it is natural that he should be punished. But this judgement is for building a right justice so that it also becomes a hope. Therefore, this hope answers the question, "what would be the result of the eternal covenant between Yahweh and Israel when the dynasty ends by the judgement?" Isaiah is convinced that Assyria who was an instrument of

³⁸G. W. Wade, The Book of the Prophet Isaiah (London: Methuen & Co., Ltd., 1911) p. XXXVII.

³⁹B. D. Napier, "Prophet," Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, vol. III, p. 917.

Yahweh, will be controlled by the power of Yahweh at the moment of its victory (Isa. 10:16-19, 33, 34), and those remnants who are pure and converted will come back to their land. Isaiah's belief in deliverance is represented in his two sons' names.

Here, we come to realize that the tradition of wisdom which has been transmitted from the ancient Near East to Isaiah, especially the conception of Ṣṭṭ, is re-evaluated by Isaiah and becomes one of the important elements of his Messianic oracle.

⁴⁰Shear-Yashub: a remnant shall return (7:3).
 Maher-Shalal-hashbaz: the spoil speeds, the prey hastes (8:1).
 Wade states that the meaning of "return" does not mean returning from exile, but becoming holy through conversion (Hos. 14:1, Jer. 3:12, 14, Ezek. 1:3, Mal. 3:7). G. W. Wade, Op. Cit., p. XXXVII.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

We have observed that the Messianic oracle of Isaiah was formed on the basis of the Davidic tradition in some metaphorical connection to the mythical elements of ancient Near East Messianic ideas and the conception of kingship of wisdom literature. Being different than the general kingship of wisdom literature, the Davidic king had to make a covenant with his people before Yahweh, and he should govern the people with P.T.Y which was given to him from Yahweh. But when the contemporary kings of Israel misconceived themselves as a king independent from Yahweh or misunderstood the conception of their kingship as if it were a kingship like the ancient Near East, Isaiah's Messianic oracle (judgement and salvation) was stated to them.

The king, the protector of justice, was branded as destroyer of justice, and the dynasty was being collapsed. But this judgement was not intend to destroy the eternal promise of Yahweh to Israel. It was a necessary action in order to set up a true justice, and the holy Yahweh's enthusiasm would accomplish this purpose (9:7). The one who appears to accomplish this purpose of Yahweh is the Messianic king. He is given several spiritual powers from Yahweh, but especially he is filled with the spirit of fear of the holy

God so that he can be a righteous king and a monarch who spreads God's justice in the world. His kingdom is the new period delivered from the judgement of Yahweh, and it is the time when paradise comes in reality, i.e., the period filled with peace to the ends of the earth. The character of the king which is described here is that he is really an actual king. In other words, he is an ideal king who will rule the future (distinguished from eschatological future) as the unrivaled present.

The character of this king would have developed toward the eschatological Messiah of later Judaism. Therefore, it can be said that the Messianic idea of Isaiah is a conception in midway toward its final form in later Judaism.

Finally, Isaiah was a man of creative ideas who transformed all the resources he got from the ancient Near East mythological conception of kingship and wisdom literature, and intermingled them in his contemporary historical situation in order to present his prophecy which he received from Yahweh. Therefore, we can see the process of the re-construction of God's words in human ideas and language through the knowledge of the prophet Isaiah.

God is still working in our contemporary situation using the human body, our limitation, experience, knowledge, and talent as His instruments. God wants to use us where we are standing. He wants to use everything we have for his

purpose in our concrete situation. So, God is a historical, contemporary, and personal God, and this must be the context of our teaching ministry in the church in order to prevent extreme mysticism and intellectualism within the church. We all are the people who are called for the problems at hand which have to be solved in the way of the Lord.

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