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Inter testamental Period.
By John B. Shaw

The intertestamental Period:-

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Section I

2. The Beginning of the Maccabean Revolt. and its immediate results.

The Maccabean Revolt had its immediate and most important cause in a religious motive. It represented the refusal of the Jew of pious feelings to have the religion of his fathers interfered with. Since the collapse of the Kingdoms of Israel and Judah, the Hebrews had left political ambitions well enough alone. Following the Persian period and into the Greek period the Jew - as a people - seemed at all times perfectly ready to fit into any changes in the imperial scene.

It is true that in the long and confused struggle between Alexander's generals for his empire, the Jews did favour the Ptolemies. The Author of Daniel shows this sympathy and we know of a large number of Jewish mercenaries in the Egyptian army. This was no doubt because under Ptolemies they, especially in their religious practices, were left in peace. A tax was collected of course but that was to be expected.

The aristocratic and priestly ruling class seems to have accepted Greek domination and influence with no compunctions whatever. They were opportunists and as well welcomed the "liberalizing" influence of the new culture. The pious ones, those who clung as true orientals to their old religion and culture, although regretting the worldliness of their priestly rulers, were ready enough to accept the political situation so long as nothing interfered with their religious practices. That is to say, the group of pious Jews, from whom the Maccabean revolt sprang, was originally committed to a policy of passive resistance. Circumstances and to some extent a misunderstanding of the Jewish way of life, gave rise to a change in this policy. This circumstance was the growing favour of the Greek Ruler of the Syrian Empire's policy of coarsing the Jewish culture into the Hellenistic mould.

As has been suggested, among the aristocracy, the Greek influence was already strong. By 175 B.C. the Jewish leaders asked that a gymnasium be built in Jerusalem. The young men of these families were enjoying the games and somewhat corrupted arts, and indulgence of the Greek way. However there was no attempt to convert the rest of the people and if they could

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not be held up as perfect examples who were in no way influenced by these foreigners, there was fundamentally no change at all.

By this time control of Palestine had been transferred from Egypt to Syria. It seems, for all the references for Hellenism, that the Jews had little trouble transferring their allegiance to the Seleucid family.

It can be seen from the types of tribute that the High Priest had to pay to the Imperial Rulers that in their eyes, he was considered the political head of the little kingdom. That the Jews would consider the High Priest as the head of the church and that position as for his most significant function was, to these foreign rulers, not uncontrollable. So it was that when first Jason and then Menelaus in even better form, came to Antiochus. Euphrates with bribes, he felt no compunction about appointing first one and then the other High Priest. That a heathen should be capable of appointing the High Priest and that bribery should be the basis of such an appointment was a sacrilege to the Jewish party: - Especially when Menelaus was not even of the priestly family. At an opportune moment he was driven out by Jason, a man greatly preferable if not entirely satisfactory.

To Antiochus this was treason. He came to Jerusalem and wreaked vengeance. After he left, Jewish opposition continued, in vain he sent an officer there to carry out his will. His appointment must stand. Thus we have here a religious scruple of the Jews which to their rulers could be interpreted in no other terms but treasonable.

This situation was particularly aggravating to Antiochus as his plans for Egypt had been interfered with by Rome's rising power. Rome was beginning to make itself felt in the East. Syria could not afford to be a loosely knit Empire in the face of this rising western power. This situation hastened Antiochus in his attempt to stamp out any signs of treason in his empire. In his eyes the Jewish religion was one of these treasonable elements. Thus the Emperor aimed at a definite religious policy of eradicating this oriental cult.

A "chief collector of tribute" was sent to Jerusalem. He gained the support of the Jewish Hellenistic party. They were set up in the inner citadel. The sanctuary was laid waste - this of the Jewish party again. Then Antiochus attempted to thoroughly eliminate the Jewish Religion. Jewish sacrifices were forbidden. Sabbaths and feast days were not to be observed. Heathen altars were set up throughout the country upon which

swine were to be offered. An altar to Zeus was made the central altar in the temple and swine were offered on it. An attempt was made to destroy the scriptures. The Emperor was going to be rid of this pest once and for all.

However the Jews were orientals. Western civilization was not to be shown upon them. Their reaction to this policy indicates how little Hellenizing influences had touched their basic thoughts. At first resistance was passive. But the emperor made good his threats. The Jewish religion was headed for extinction. The action of an old Priest Mattathias, who killed an apostate Jew as he performed heathen rites in a local temple, was the starting point of a change in policy. He and his sons fled to the hills. They were joined by many zealous Jews. They agreed to defend themselves on the Sabbath and in this were supported even by the priests and until then quietest Chasidim. Their first aim was to remove all apostate Jews and then to gain freedom of Religion.

This Maccabean revolt was, on the death of the old priest, first headed by Judas. This showed general and electrifying personality led the small but growing band of Jews in many victories. At first they engaged in only guerrilla warfare. Two officers were sent to evacuate him, but both were defeated. Finally when Antiochus was east on a campaign the Maccabees attacked the Governor Tergias. This began the kind of trouble in Syria which was to bedevil that country and weaken its people until Rome finally took over. A partition appeared and civil war began on the night of the threat. Judas took this opportunity to consolidate his position.

He entered Jerusalem. He was not able to clear the altar but in 164 the temple was re-dedicated. Jewish compatriots in Galilee and Gilead were rescued. Religious freedom had been gained. The Hellenizing part of Jews had begun to take second place to the religious party. Because of the subsequent uncertainty of practical every claim to the throne in Syria, each emperor was willing enough to give the Jews some concessions in exchange for their support. With varying degrees of thoroughness, the Jews were thus able to retain religious freedom.

With the struggle for political freedom we have nothing to say here. That some Jews, in these initial successes, saw possibilities of gaining political freedom, is no doubt true. The attempt to gain it is a long and bloody story. However little change in the matter of Religious freedom was caused - and as has been suggested, this was the primary motive in the Maccabean revolt.

The immediate results of the Revolt was the re-establishment of the Jewish Religion. The Temple was rededicated. Pious Jews were able to return to their own pursuits. Judaism had been saved from extinction in a crisis which next to the exile was its greatest in history. The Religion of the Hebrews was to remain a force in the world.

In Jewish history, it meant two things. It meant that the dominant part from then on, that is the popular one, was to be the pious, Religious group. The Hellenists, and the apostatizers were out of line with the main tradition. Thus future Judaism got its main character. The other result was that the partial success of the revolt caused dreams to be dreamt of Jewish political freedom. This struggle was to involve the Jews in turmoil of no end and eventually to associate them with claims the people out of which came the hateful Herod.

3. "The Reign of John Hyrcanus." 134-104.

The Father of John Hyrcanus, Simon Maccabees, had been murdered by the party of Jewish Hellenists. He had been popular. He was able to take advantage of the uncertain nature of the Syrian throne to strongly establish Jewish freedom. The Akra had at last been stormed out. Gaza was fortified, and Simon himself elected High Priest of the people. He was well loved and at his death the people were glad enough to turn to his son John as their popular head. He also succeeded to the High Priesthood although as we shall see, not with the full support of the people.

The young John upon taking the leadership was vigorous of the instigation of his father's murder - young Ptolemy. The latter was sent to flight. The story following is most confusing. Antiochus VII in the support of Ptolemy captured Jerusalem but left religious practices intact. He was subsequently killed in a Parthian campaign and the Syrian Empire again entered upon its endless wars of succession.

Hyrcanus used this time when the Syrians were so occupied to increase the territory of Judah. His predecessors had already shown some expanding but John added several territories including Idumea. It is difficult to say which motive was the most influential in his desire to expand. The fact that he forced the Idumeans to accept Judaism seems to suggest that the Religious motive was strong. While Jewish successes were more going on, Hyrcanus added Samaria to Judah. On the surface at least

the Jews seem to have won political independence. Hyrcanus was the first of the Hasmonaean house to issue coins in his own name.

Perhaps the most significant event in John's reign was his quarrel with the Pharisaic Party. Originally he had been a popular choice. The majority of the religious party were pleased enough that he should be made High Priest. Nevertheless a quarrel came.

The struggle between the Hellenizers and the pious Jews was not over. The majority of the pious Jews were not interested in plans of territorial aggrandizement. Some of the most strict were opposed to a warrior's becoming High Priest. However John Hyrcanus was popular enough to be able to count on the support of most of the Pharisees.

However in a meeting with the Pharisees John Hyrcanus after bringing in most of the reforms demanded of that pious sect, asked if everything was as they wished. One fanatical person demanded that John was to be denied the High Priesthood. His mother had been a captive which meant she certainly must have been outraged. Hyrcanus was greatly angered, as were most of the Pharisees. However when he asked them what punishment they thought was coming to the offender they suggested one which was due a man who outraged a High Priest. John reformed a punishment which befitted the out-raging of a king. He broke with the Pharisaic Party, as a result, except among the people, the Pharisees lost their political influence until the country was under the leadership of Alexandria. For a time then the aristocratic Hellenizing party was again in the ascending.

It seems that the only explanation for John's break with the Pharisees was over his position. Evidently he claimed the King-ships. The Pharisees, true to their prophetic heritage, would see no one King who was not of the lineage of David. It was opposition to the Kingship of John Hyrcanus that caused the break between the Pharisees and this popular leader.

Whichever quarters he was hailed as the three-fold messiah. King, prophet and Priest.

At his death John Hyrcanus hoped to leave the managing of his Kingdom to his widow. However his son ~~seized~~ broke his plan. Hyrcanus had begun a quarrel between Pharisee and crown which was to bear very bitter fruit.

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4. Origin and Characteristics of Pharisees and Sadducees.

It can be stated definitely that both movements came from peasant movements that sprang up at the restoration. We know that at the time of the restoration attempts were made to set up again a royal kingship. The attempt failed. Imperial power would permit no little independent state to grow up sovereign. As a result the restoration movement that succeeded was the one which emphasized religious culture. Judaism was to be of religious and cultural significance, if not political. Judaism became a church, not a nation. Thus in the culture of the land, the place of the king was taken over by the High Priest. Hence we have the seed of the Sadduceean party. Priests who were virtually nobles. Originally their policy was one of racial exclusiveness and of obedience to the law in the Pentateuch the then only accepted part of the canon. However years of acquaintance with almost king rule, the hereditary nature of the position, soon grew up an aristocracy like all aristocracies. They were conservative as to their own religion: - only the ancient Law of the Pentateuch was the true religion for them. Further they became emancipated, having less and less to do with the people except in a formal, and ceremonial way. Popular leadership was left to other movements. These in themselves were varied but unfortunately came to be dominated by a dry legalism: -

Thus we see that in the Sadducees we have a movement which began with religious legalism and exclusiveness in racial matters, grew into an aristocratic, disinterested, and eventually "liberalized" movement. As we have seen, it was this party which was most affected by the Hellenizing influence of the Greek conquerors. They deserted their own religion except in its most formal aspects. They felt themselves to be of the old families and therefore privileged. In support of this thesis they wrote chronicles, so as to give full due to the priestly party in Israel's history. They failed to bring to the people the truly heart warming elements in Jewish religion which were connected with the Temple Ritual. By the second century this party was definitely distinguished and as such had entered (or remained in) the political arena.

The Sadducees were conservative and formal in their religious beliefs. It did not seem to trouble them to offer bribes to obtain the High Priesthood and yet they had nothing to do with the developing religious ideas of the people. Therefore they denied such doctrines as the future life or the intervention of God on behalf of his people. This party was not popular and it can be

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seen now that it was out of line with the true development of Judaism.

The Pharisaic party can be traced back to the Restoration also. When we have a lay movement which grew up in opposition to the gradual secularization and exclusiveness of the priestly party. This movement cannot be identified with the Pharisees or that movement, as yet it is too varied to be classified except as popular. In fact it is doubtless true that the movement recognized as Pharisaism in the New Testament was a very narrow outworking of the whole movement. Pharisaism itself is greatly varied.

Now this original lay movement set itself up as a movement to liberalize and popularize the legislation and ethics of the Jewish Church. The Temple and priesthood was becoming more and more formal and less and less of any application to the lives of the people. This movement popularized the law and the ethical teaching of the prophets. As well it popularized ideas of a social attitude towards other races, in the midst of the terrible suffering of the people at Antiochus Epiphanes' hands. - This group clung to hopeful interpretations of history, if it did have to include divine intervention. In short this group gave to the Jewish people their religion.

Certainly the Pharisees grew out of this group of religious teachers. Their first appearance came with the Chasidim a group of pious souls who were strongest in their opposition to any kind of Hellenization. (Scholars tell us that the Apokalyptists and Essenes both came out of this movement so it is doubtless right to call Pharisaism and some of the more liberal and general rabbinical writers, as being related movements.) These Chasidim were ready to die for their convictions; for them the Jewish religion with its law and ethics was a serious business. They were students of the old religion. At first they were prepared to cling to a sort of passive resistance, but those circumstances which gave rise to the Maccabean revolt convinced them that in this emergency, to take up arms was the only procedure possible. These Chasidim were undoubtedly the heirs of those old popularizers.

The Pharisees grew out of this movement. As a party in the political affairs of the country they were first recognized in the second century. The main characteristics of the party were as follows: - They held to the old Jewish law with added observances which were worked out to apply to certain situations. They made it their business to propagate the law. They were most strict in their teaching of monotheism. Compared to the Temple influence they insisted on personal religion of a high order. - They believed in immortality as a place where evils were punished. Under them the local synagogues were secured.

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and fastened. No doubt Phariseism at this time contained many various elements. Racial exclusiveness at the beginning was not quite so universally accepted.

However the main and controlling characteristic was the Law. Both scriptural and oral. For this school the Law was messiah. Legalism was the breath of the movement. The result was that when this movement did become corrupt it became awfully legal. Its constant connection with the prophets ignored the prophetic spirit. When the Pharisees did enter politics and began to wield political power (beginning of Alexandria) they became as worldly and as formal as the Sadducees. Legalism became an abomination under these circumstances. By New Testament times Phariseism had become identified with this kind of legalism.

However it might be said that even as late as this, the Pharisees are still the popular teachers. Judaeaism had been preserved under them it had been brought to the people. They had the people's support even against a teacher who was as popular as Jesus.

Section Two:

7. Book of Daniel :-

© The Problem of the Bilingual nature of the Book :-

Although there is no change in subject matter the Book of Daniel in its most original form in which we have it is written in two languages. The first and latter portions - 1:1 - 2:4a and 8-12 - appear in Hebrew. The central portion - 2:4b - 7:26 - in Aramaic.

Several solutions to the problem have been offered :-

The first group is to attribute the bilingual character of the book to the author :-

Perhaps the author used Aramaic in the central portion of the Book because that was the language of Babylon and therefore it was used for that passage referring to Babylon. - Scholars however can demonstrate that Aramaic was, under no circumstances the language of Babylon at this time.

Perhaps this passage is in Aramaic because the author thought it was the language of Babylon. - However an author that knew his present history as well as Daniel could hardly make that mistake.

That a Maccabean Hebrew author took hold of an old Aramaic document and added to it has also been offered as a solution. However the book seems to be a unity. Contains the ideas are much the same.

The more satisfactory solution attributes the bilingual character of the book to the history of the version, rather than the author.

The solution which claims that the original work was Hebrew, thus that it was popularized into Aramaic runs up against the problem that the Central Aramaic portion cannot be easily translated back into Hebrew.

The only satisfactory solution seems to be that, - the author wrote the book in Aramaic. It was translated into Hebrew; - either all of it, or first the opening and closing passages to get it into the Canon. If it was all translated into Hebrew the Central portion might have become lost and later supplied by the Aramaic original. However the book seems to come at a very natural place and the coincidence of a fragment of text being lost at such an opportunity, is too much to hope for. Rather the former suggestion seems acceptable. The first and last portions were translated to gain admittance to the Canon. - At least these Hebrew passages are capable of re-translation into Aramaic.

(b) Value of historical References:-

It is of the accuracy of the historical references that the Date of Daniel is judged. Concerning the Babylonian Period the author is quite inaccurate. His knowledge of this history seems to be from the contemporary popular historian, rather than first hand knowledge of the times. Certainly his view of Babylon's history is quite different from that gained from her own records. Daniel is mistaken about the transportation of Jehoiachin about the insanity of Nebuchadnezzar, about the fact that Darius was the only Emperor before Cyrus, and about the fact that Belshazzar was Nebuchadnezzar's son. Of the Persian Period he seems equally confused.

However concerning Antiochus Epiphanes and the struggle leading up to his ascendancy, and generally concerning the Greek period up to a little before Antiochus' death, he is surprisingly accurate. His description of Antiochus - the prototype of Anti Christ, is true. In chapter 11 His description of Antiochus' Egyptian campaigns are true to history. The persecution of the Jews under him is accurately depicted. The Desecration of the Altar, the Maccabean revolt and the first Maccabean victories are all presented. The Death of Antiochus is just a little out - suggesting that the Book was written shortly before the death of the Tyrant. From here on the book launches into vague prophecy.

8. Chap 7. interpretation :-

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The interpretation given will be that which the author was intending to be taken at the time of writing. As with all apocalyptic, when its predictions failed to come true it was taken no - regarded of the faithful. However for his readers, Daniel doubtless meant them to take the interpretation that the Babylonian oracles, the oldest extant reference to the book, take in their time.

In the chapter we have four beasts mentioned. As with the vision of chapter two, whose parts of a statue are referred to, these represent the four kingdoms of the heathen: - when these are through, the eternal kingdom will come.

The first - the lion with eagle wings is Babylon. Babylon is might and swift. The standing of the beast on its feet and giving it the intelligence of a man may be the confused reference to Nebuchadnezzar's experience in chapter four.

Then for a stout which the heads - they are represented by a bear with ribs in its mouth.

The Persian kingdom is indicated of a leopard with four heads and four wings: - the four wings representing the unlimited extent of the Persian kingdom and the 4 heads representing the four emperors.

The Greek empire is represented of a beast that is unnamed. It is too terrible: - it does a thorough job of conquering and destroys all its opposition. Finally it made war with the saints - the religious Jews in this case. The two horns and the three last ones represent the wars and intrigues which followed Alexander's death, culminating in the ascending in Syria of Antiochus Epiphanes.

Verses 9-14 describe the eternal judgment. This is one of the main features of apocalypticism. The Righteous judge is in contrast of the world. He is just waiting to make his judgment felt. After reading the record, divine judgment is passed. The first three kingdoms can be carried on, but not as empires. The final beast is to be utterly destroyed. Then a Being like the Son of man is to come - and at so a kingdom that shall never pass away: -

Charles suggests that in apocalyptic literature, where animals in human always refer to men & people that people represent supernatural beings. Thus the "son of man" is simply a man, but in this use a supernatural being is meant. The judgment and kingdom are to come

through divine intervention. -

In the closing verses Daniel asks for an interpretation of the Vision. It comes much as we have given it. The new kingdom is to be a divinely organized community. The "Saints of the Most High" are again supernatural beings who organize the Kingdom of the earth into this divinely ordered community.

In this usage it was only natural that this Jesus the "Son of Man" should come to have a messianic use as messianism was coming more and more at this time to depend on divine intervention.

9. The Development of the doctrine of the Future life:

At the opening of the intertestamental period, the Hebrews had no definite doctrine concerning the future life. Hints can be gained here and there. It is evident that the popular belief was somewhat different from the official doctrine. However in held cases we can see the seed of a doctrine of immortality if not of actual resurrection.

First of all it is evident that the Hebrews practiced necromancy. This we can learn if only through the Prophetic opposition to it. This of course suggests some belief in the power of the dead spirits over the living. In accompaniment with this the Hebrews doubtless practiced ancestor worship. - These two elements were there from the beginning.

However life after death, if at all was considered to take place in Sheol. This was a realm of shadows, the dead spirits were without substance and their existence kind of unreal. There was no hope - They were ignorant of all that went on. At first it seems that Yahweh had no control over Sheol, but as the transcendence and omnipotence of God was emphasized of the prophets the domain was soon extended to include Sheol. - Perhaps the earliest reason for increasing Yahweh's jurisdiction was the fact that no good prophet could see a place where wicked people went unpunished.

The prophetic message was influential also in individualizing man. The prophetic insistence on the individual worth, and his importance in the sight of Yahweh - opened the question of his after life. Thus in Job we get a demand for some kind of preservation for the individual life.

In the same period as well we have developing the individualizing of religion. Beginning with Jeremiah and the works of the "neo-pharisaic" party the Hebrew religion was taking on the aspect of a personal religion. This development also culminates in Job and Ecclesiastes - the view of the worth & dignity of man, taught.

by the prophets - seems inconsistent with the world as these authors found it. Somehow, historic doctrine was incomplete.

Perhaps the reason why the doctrine of a Blessed future life for the individual had not developed earlier, in the face of the ethical development is that Messianism played such a strong part in the history of Hebrew culture: - In this community mysticism the individual was lost in the life of the whole. The Kingdom, the state, it was eternal, life was stronger than death, but it went on in the state or in one's descendants, from generation to generation. Thus in this essentially optimistic faith the prophets thought they sufficient promise for the setting of their ethics. Further the prophetic order had for so long approved the "call of the dead" that any chance of the doctrine developing out of pessimistic animism was waylaid. One further difficulty was the fact that in the Hebrew psychology there was no dualism. Spirit was superfluous matter, the Body equaled the man, life was essentially world which and there was no rejection in the interests of the life of the soul.

This is the picture when the intertestamental period opened. The Hebrew heritage full of potential doctrine of immortality, its view of man demanding something akin to it and some elements in it working against it. In the confusion we have the cry of the sceptical writers.

In the intertestamental period we have a positive answer to these sceptics: - There is a future life - it is individual and yet - characteristically - it is essentially social.

The needs are various some necessitating are sudden, some are not. Some will include the righteous ^{and unrighteous} some of the righteous. Some will bring them back to the earth in earthly bodies - some will have it transcendent and supernatural: - at least four intertestamental authors - 1st Enoch, Wisdom, Jubilees, or Maccabees. accept the Greek view of the immortality of the spirit.

The influences are varied. Messianism either political, ecclesiastical or legal has availed nothing: Thus Messianism, with its powerful appeal was made transcendent. The lot of the Jews in this period was terrible in its severity. - It was only natural that Messianism should lose contact with this world - it became a divine Kingdom - brought about in the near future of divine intervention. Sometimes this was in heaven. However to make it fair all the righteous who had suffered would be raised to enjoy its bliss.

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Further, in face of the inconsistencies of life. - The belief of God as judge demanded, even more sure - a doctrine of a last judgment where goodness and evil were finally awarded. The spirit of the times, and the intensity of their hopes helped the people to interpret this end in catastrophic terms.

These two things contributed to the development of a definite doctrine of a future life, during intertestamental times. - The setting in transcendental terms of the old messianism and a just reward. It was a case of high and noble hopes - facing dark and twilight days.

One further thing of note is that, in spite of supposed Greek influence in this regard, the doctrine of the future life still remained essentially a Hebrew conception. It was a kingdom: - there was not just bliss for the individual soul, no absorption into nothingness, but a densely organized community. Life was still together. - Social relationships were there and God was in them.