The ideas expressed in some of these papers have sometimes been vehemently attacked, and the author has been accused of promoting all kinds of destructive, nihilistic, and what-not tendencies. There is no point in answering such polemics or trying to distinguish between the nonsense attributed to me and those theses I in fact defend. The work has to stand on its own, and its theses will be proved and confirmed by the fruits these new insights into the meaning of Jewish history are likely to produce.

It is often said that this generation is not interested in history and tradition. I find it hard to believe this. At any rate, this book (in which repetitions of certain concepts and issues have intentionally been retained), is addressed to people who have not merely some moderate and far-away interest in the questions of Judaism and its past, but a passionate one. The connection between the renascence of the Jewish people and its historical consciousness is obvious, and has resulted in a new awareness of the dynamics and dialectics of Jewish history. The papers collected in this book are, I venture to hope, living witness to this.

Jewish history has many aspects—paths and bypaths—which were forgotten, lost sight of, and sometimes consciously played down by a galaxy of great scholars who had a one-sided and rather dogmatic idea of what Judaism was and should be. This book is written by a man who believes Judaism to be a living phenomenon, which, although developing under the impact of a great idea, has changed considerably over the long periods of its history and has not yet exhausted its potentialities. As long as it is alive, it will cast off forms and take on new ones, and who are we to predict in what guise they will present themselves? A new period of Jewish history has begun with the holocaust and the foundation of the State of Israel. But by whatever new forms the living consciousness of the Jews will be expressed, the old ones will always be of relevance to those who find in Judaism both a challenge and an answer.

I wish to express my debt of gratitude to my friend and colleague Nahum N. Glatzer, who was instrumental in bringing about this collection, and equally to the translators who have faced no easy task in putting these essays, written originally in Hebrew and German, into English.

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Toward an Understanding of the Messianic Idea in Judaism

I

ANY DISCUSSION OF the problems relating to Messianism is a delicate matter, for it is here that the essential conflict between Judaism and Christianity has developed and continues to exist. Although our discussion will not be concerned with this conflict, but rather with internally Jewish perspectives on Messianism, it will be of value to recall the central issue of this conflict. A totally different concept of redemption determines the attitude to Messianism in Judaism and in Christianity; what appears to the one as a proud indication of its understanding and a positive achievement of its message is most unequivocally belittled and disputed by the other. Judaism, in all of its forms and manifestations, has always maintained a concept of redemption as an event which takes place publicly, on the stage of history and within the community. It is an occurrence which takes place in the visible world and which cannot be conceived apart from such a visible appearance. In contrast, Christianity conceives of redemption as an event in the spiritual and unseen realm, an event which is reflected in the soul, in the private world of each individual, and which effects an inner transformation which need not correspond to anything outside. Even the *civitas dei* of Augustine, which within the confines of Christian dogmatics and in the interest of the Church has made the most far-reaching attempt both to retain and to reinterpret the Jewish categories of redemption, is a community of the mysteriously redeemed within an unredeemed world. What for the one stood unconditionally at the end of history as its most distant aim was for the other the true center of the historical process, even if that process was henceforth peculiarly decked out as *Heilsgeschichte*. The Church was

convinced that by perceiving redemption in this way it had overcome an external conception that was bound to the material world, and it had counterpoised a new conception that possessed higher dignity. But it was just this conviction that always seemed to Judaism to be anything but progress. The reinterpretation of the prophetic promises of the Bible to refer to a realm of inwardness, which seemed as remote as possible from any contents of these prophecies, always seemed to the religious thinkers of Judaism to be an illegitimate anticipation of something which could at best be seen as the interior side of an event basically taking place in the external world, but could never be cut off from the event itself. What appeared to the Christians as a deeper apprehension of the external realm appeared to the Jew as its liquidation and as a flight which sought to escape verification of the Messianic claim within its most empirical categories by means of a non-existent pure inwardness.

The history of the Messianic idea in Judaism has run its course within the framework of this idea's never-relinquished demand for fulfillment of its original vision. The considerations I would like to set forth in what follows concern the special tensions in the Messianic idea and their understanding in rabbinic Judaism. These tensions manifest themselves within a fixed tradition which we shall try to understand. But even where it is not stated explicitly, we shall often enough find as well a polemical side-glance, or an allusion, albeit concealed, to the claims of Christian Messianism. A number of the things which I would here like to sum up briefly are obvious and hardly constitute an object of learned controversy; of others, however, this can hardly be said, and much as the history of Messianism has been discussed, there is room for a sharper analysis of what it is that makes up the specific vitality of this phenomenon in the history of the Jewish religion. I shall not try to compete with historical and mythological analyses of the origins of Messianic belief in biblical texts or in the history of religion in general; such studies have been undertaken by outstanding scholars like Joseph Klausner, Willi Staerk, Hugo Gressmann, Sigmund Mowinckel, and many others.[1] The object of these remarks is not the initial development of the Messianic idea but the varying perspectives by which it became an effective force after its crystallization in historical Judaism. In this connection it must be emphasized that in the history of Judaism its influence has been exercised almost exclusively under the conditions of the exile as a primary reality of Jewish life and Jewish history. This reality lends its

special coloring to each of the various conceptions with which we shall be dealing here.

Within rabbinic Judaism as a social and religious phenomenon three kinds of forces are active precisely at those points where it is the most alive: conservative, restorative, and utopian. The conservative forces are directed toward the preservation of that which exists and which, in the historical environment of Judaism, was always in danger. They are the most easily visible and immediately obvious forces that operate in this type of Judaism. They have established themselves most effectively in the world of *Halakhah*, in the construction and continuing preservation and development of religious law. This law determined the nature of the Jew's life in exile, the only frame in which a life in the light of Sinaitic revelation seemed possible, and it is not surprising that it drew to itself, above all, the conservative forces. The restorative forces are directed to the return and recreation of a past condition which comes to be felt as ideal. More precisely, they are directed to a condition pictured by the historical fantasy and the memory of the nation as circumstances of an ideal past. Here hope is turned backwards to the re-establishment of an original state of things and to a "life with the ancestors." But there are, in addition, forces which press forward and renew; they are nourished by a vision of the future and receive utopian inspiration. They aim at a state of things which has never yet existed. The problem of Messianism in historical Judaism appears within the field of influence of these forces. To be sure, the conservative tendencies, great and even crucial as their role and their significance were for the existence of the religious community of Judaism, have no part in the development of Messianism within this community. This is not true, however, of the two other tendencies which I characterize as restorative and utopian. Both tendencies are deeply intertwined and yet at the same time of a contradictory nature; the Messianic idea crystallizes only out of the two of them together. Neither is entirely absent in the historical and ideological manifestations of Messianism. Only the proportion between them is subject to the widest fluctuations. Among various groupings within Jewry entirely different points of application for such forces and tendencies are emphasized. There has never been in Judaism a measured harmony between the restorative and the utopian factor. Sometimes the one tendency appears with maximal emphasis while the other is reduced to a minimum, but we never find a "pure case" of exclusive influence or crystallization of one of

these tendencies. The reason for this is clear: even the restorative force has a utopian factor, and in utopianism restorative factors are at work. The restorative tendency, per se, even when it understands itself as such—as for example in the case of Maimonides whose statements regarding the Messianic idea I shall shortly discuss in greater detail—is nourished to no small degree by a utopian impulse which now appears as projection upon the past instead of projection on the future. The reason for this, too, is clear. There is a common ground of Messianic hope. The utopianism which presents the Jew of that epoch with the vision of an ideal as he would like to see it realized, itself falls naturally into two categories. It can take on the radical form of the vision of a new content which is to be realized in a future that will in fact be nothing other than the restoration of what is ancient, bringing back that which had been lost; the ideal content of the past at the same time delivers the basis for the vision of the future. However, knowingly or unknowingly, certain elements creep into such a restoratively oriented utopianism which are not in the least restorative and which derive from the vision of a completely new state of the Messianic world. The completely new order has elements of the completely old, but even this old order does not consist of the actual past; rather, it is a past transformed and transfigured in a dream brightened by the rays of utopianism.[2] Thus the dialectically linked tension between the utopian and restorative factors provides us also with deep tensions in the forms of Messianism crystallized in rabbinic Judaism, to say nothing of the interiorization of these impulses in Jewish mysticism. I shall now elaborate several principal structures of these forms and in so doing try to clarify the tensions they express.

II

When the Messianic idea appears as a living force in the world of Judaism—especially in that of medieval Judaism, which seems so totally interwoven with the realm of the *Halakhah*—it always occurs in the closest connection with apocalypticism. In these instances the Messianic idea constitutes both a content of religious faith as such and also living, acute anticipation. Apocalypticism appears as the form necessarily created by acute Messianism.

It is self-evident and needs no justification that the Messianic idea came into being not only as the revelation of an abstract proposition regarding the hope of mankind for redemption, but

rather in very specific historical circumstances. The predictions and messages of the biblical prophets come to an equal degree from revelation and from the suffering and desperation of those whom they addressed; they are spoken from the context of situations and again and again have proven effective in situations where the End, perceived in the immediate future, was thought about to break in abruptly at any moment. To be sure, the predictions of the prophets do not yet give us any kind of well-defined conception of Messianism. Rather we have a variety of different motifs in which the much emphasized utopian impulse—the vision of a better humanity at the End of Days—is interpenetrated with restorative impulses like the reinstitution of an ideally conceived Davidic kingdom. This Messianic message of the prophets addresses man as a whole and sets forth images of natural and historical events through which God speaks and in which the End of Days is announced or realized. These visions never involve the individual as such, nor do these declarations claim any special "secret" knowledge gained from an inner realm not accessible to every man. By contrast, the words of the apocalyptists represent a shift in this view of the content of prophecy. These anonymous authors of writings like the biblical book of Daniel, the two books of Enoch, Fourth Ezra, the Baruch apocalypses, or the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs—to name only a few documents of this at one time seemingly over-flourishing literature—encase the words of the ancient prophets in a frame which they mold and furnish in their own way.

Here God no longer shows the seer individual instances of historical occurrence or only a vision of history's end; rather he sees all of history from beginning to end with particular emphasis on the arrival of that new aeon which manifests itself and prevails in the Messianic events. The Pharisee Josephus had already seen Adam, the first man, as a prophet whose vision encompassed not only the flood in Noah's day but also the flood of fire at the end of time and thus included all of history.[3] The talmudic Aggadah saw things very much the same: God shows Adam—but also Abraham or Moses—the entire past and future, the current and the final aeon.[4] Likewise, the priest of the End of Days (the priestly Messiah) who appears in the Habakkuk commentary of the Dead Sea sectarians, will be able to interpret the visions of the ancient prophets regarding the total course of the history of Israel as all of their features now become fully visible. In this interpretation of the visions of the ancient prophets or even in

the work of the apocalyptists themselves, motifs of current history, which refer to contemporary conditions and needs, are closely intertwined with those of an apocalyptic, eschatological nature, in which not only the experiences of the present exercise an influence, but often enough ancient mythical images are filled with utopian content. As students of apocalypticism have always noted correctly, in this process the new eschatology moves decisively beyond the ancient prophecies. Hosea, Amos, or Isaiah know only a single world, in which even the great events at the End of Days run their course. Their eschatology is of a national kind: it speaks of the re-establishment of the House of David, now in ruins, and of the future glory of an Israel returned to God; also of everlasting peace and the turning of all nations toward the one God of Israel and away from heathen cults and images. In contrast, apocalypticism produced the doctrine of the two aeons which follow one another and stand in antithetical relationship: this world and the world to come, the reign of darkness and the reign of light. The national antithesis between Israel and the heathens is broadened into a cosmic antithesis in which the realms of the holy and of sin, of purity and impurity, of life and death, of light and darkness, God and the anti-divine powers, stand opposed. A wider cosmic background is superadded to the national content of eschatology and it is here that the final struggle between Israel and the heathens takes place. There arise the conceptions of the Resurrection of the Dead, of reward and punishment in the Last Judgment, and of Paradise and Hell, in which notions of individual retribution at the End of Days occur in conjunction with promises and threats addressed to the nation. All these are conceptions which are now closely tied to the ancient prophecies. The words of the prophets, which in their original context appear so clear and direct, henceforth become riddles, allegories, and mysteries which are interpreted—one might say, deciphered—by an apocalyptic homiletic or an original apocalyptic vision. And thus we have the framework in which the Messianic idea now begins its historical influence.

But there is an additional factor. As the meaning of the Greek word indicates, apocalypses are revelations or disclosures of God's hidden knowledge of the End. That is to say, what reached the prophets as knowledge which could hardly be proclaimed with sufficient loudness and publicity, in the apocalypses becomes secret. It is one of those enigmas of Jewish religious history that have not been satisfactorily solved by any of the many attempts at

explanation just what the real reason is for this metamorphosis which makes knowledge of the Messianic End, where it oversteps the prophetic framework of the biblical texts, into an esoteric form of knowing. Why does the apocalyptist conceal himself instead of shouting his vision into the face of the enemy power as did the prophets? Why does he load the responsibility for those visions, fraught with danger, on the heroes of biblical antiquity and why does he convey them only to the select or initiated? Is it politics? Is it a changed understanding of the nature of this knowing? There is something disturbing in this transcendence of the prophetic which at the same time carries along with it a narrowing of its realm of influence. It cannot be coincidental that for nearly a millennium this character of apocalyptic knowing has also been preserved by the heirs of the ancient apocalyptists within rabbinic Judaism. For them it takes its place at the side of the gnostic knowledge of the *merkabah,* the throne-world of God and its mysteries which, explosive as this knowledge in itself was, could be reported only in a whisper. Not without reason the writings of the *merkabah* mystics in Judaism always contain apocalyptic chapters.[5] The stronger the loss of historical reality in Judaism during the turmoil surrounding the destruction of the Second Temple and of the ancient world, the more intensive became consciousness of the cryptic character and mystery of the Messianic message, which indeed always referred precisely to the re-establishment of that lost reality although it also went beyond it.

In an almost natural way Messianic apocalypticism orders the old promises and traditions, along with the newly adhering motifs, interpretations, and reinterpretations, under the two aspects which the Messianic idea henceforth takes on and keeps in Jewish consciousness. These two aspects, which in fact are based on the words of the prophets themselves and are more or less visible there, concern the catastrophic and destructive nature of the redemption on the one hand and the utopianism of the content of realized Messianism on the other. Jewish Messianism is in its origins and by its nature—this cannot be sufficiently emphasized—a theory of catastrophe. This theory stresses the revolutionary, cataclysmic element in the transition from every historical present to the Messianic future. This transition itself becomes a problem in that, beginning with the words of the prophets Amos and Isaiah, the really non-transitional character of it is pointed up and emphasized. Isaiah's Day of the Lord (chapters 2 and 4) is a day of catastrophe and is described in visions which stress this catastrophic

nature in the extreme. But we learn nothing about how that Day of the Lord, on which previous history ends and on which the world is shaken to its foundations, is related to the "End of Days" (promised at the beginning of chapter 2 of Isaiah) on which the House of the Lord shall be established at the top of the mountains and the peoples flow unto it.

The elements of the catastrophic and the visions of doom are present in peculiar fashion in the Messianic vision. On the one hand, they are applied to the transition or destruction in which the Messianic redemption is born—hence the ascription of the Jewish concept of "birth pangs of the Messiah" to this period. But, on the other hand, it is also applied to the terrors of the Last Judgment which in many of these descriptions concludes the Messianic period instead of accompanying its beginnings. And thus for the apocalyptist's glance the Messianic utopia may often become twofold. The new aeon and the days of the Messiah are no longer one (as they still are in some writings of this literature); rather they refer to two periods of which the one, the rule of the Messiah, really still belongs to this world; the other, however, already belongs entirely to the new aeon which begins with the Last Judgment. But this doubling of the stages of redemption is mostly the result of learned exegesis which seeks to put every saying of the Bible harmoniously into place. In an original vision catastrophe and utopia do not twice follow after each other, but it is precisely by their uniqueness that they bring to bear with full force the two sides of the Messianic event.

However, before I devote a few remarks to these two sides of the Messianic idea as they characterize Messianic apocalypticism, I must preface a word intended to correct a widespread misconception. I am referring to the distortion of historical circumstances, equally popular among both Jewish and Christian scholars, which lies in denying the continuation of the apocalyptic tradition in rabbinic Judaism. This distortion of intellectual history is quite understandable in terms of the anti-Jewish interests of Christian scholars as well as the anti-Christian interests of Jewish ones. It was in keeping with the tendencies of the former group to regard Judaism only as the antechamber of Christianity and to see it as moribund once it had brought forth Christianity. Their view led to the conception of a genuine continuation of Messianism via the apocalyptists in the new world of Christianity. But the other group, too, paid tribute to their own prejudices. They were the great Jewish scholars of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, who to a great extent determined the popular image of Judaism. In view of their concept of a purified and rational Judaism, they could only applaud the attempt to eliminate or liquidate apocalypticism from the realm of Judaism. Without regrets, they left the claim of apocalyptic continuity to a Christianity which, to their minds, gained nothing on that account. Historical truth was the price paid for the prejudices of both camps. Attempts to eliminate apocalypticism completely from the realm of rabbinic Judaism have not been lacking since the Middle Ages and in what follows we shall even deal with the most consequential of these attempts, that of Maimonides. Such attempts represent one tendency among other, entirely different ones which have also been active in the history of Judaism. By themselves these attempts can claim no value as a truthful representation of the historical reality of Judaism. For this denial of apocalypticism set out to suppress exceedingly vital elements in the realm of Judaism, elements filled with historical dynamism even if they combined destructive with constructive forces. The idea that all apocalyptic currents of the pre-Christian age flowed into Christianity and there found their real place is a fiction which cannot be maintained against more careful historical examination. Just after the origin of the known apocalypses, especially those of the first pre- and post-Christian centuries, an undiminished mighty stream of apocalypticism rushes forth within the Jewish rabbinic tradition; in part it flows into the channel of the talmudic and aggadic literature, in part it finds its expression in its own literature, preserved in Hebrew and Aramaic. There can be no talk of a discontinuity between these later apocalypses and those ancient ones whose Hebrew originals have until now remained lost and which have only been preserved in translations and in the adaptations of the Christian churches. While one may question to which Jewish circles these independent writings that preserve their pseudepigraphic literary form really belong—nothing in them contradicts the spiritual world of the rabbis even if it is not possible to bring them into close relationship with it—there remains no doubt about the entry of apocalyptic tradition into the House of Study and the range of ideas of the traditional scholars. Here the cover of anonymity is again thrown off, the secretive whisper turns into an open exchange of ideas, into formal instruction, and even into pointed epigrams whose authors, with their often well-known names, take responsibility for their words. The significance of these two sources of rabbinic apocalypticism for an under-

standing of Messianism in the world of the *Halakhah* cannot be estimated too highly.

I spoke of the catastrophic nature of redemption as a decisive characteristic of every such apocalypticism, which is then complemented by the utopian view of the content of realized redemption. Apocalyptic thinking always contains the elements of dread and consolation intertwined. The dread and peril of the End form an element of shock and of the shocking which induces extravagance. The terrors of the real historical experiences of the Jewish people are joined with images drawn from the heritage of myth or mythical fantasy. This is expressed with particular forcefulness in the concept of the birth pangs of the Messiah which in this case means the Messianic age. The paradoxical nature of this conception exists in the fact that the redemption which is born here is in no causal sense a result of previous history. It is precisely the lack of transition between history and the redemption which is always stressed by the prophets and apocalyptists. The Bible and the apocalyptic writers know of no progress in history leading to the redemption. The redemption is not the product of immanent developments such as we find it in modern Western reinterpretations of Messianism since the Enlightenment where, secularized as the belief in progress, Messianism still displayed unbroken and immense vigor. It is rather transcendence breaking in upon history, an intrusion in which history itself perishes, transformed in its ruin because it is struck by a beam of light shining into it from an outside source. The constructions of history in which the apocalyptists (as opposed to the prophets of the Bible) revel have nothing to do with modern conceptions of development or progress, and if there is anything which, in the view of these seers, history deserves, it can only be to perish. The apocalyptists have always cherished a pessimistic view of the world. Their optimism, their hope, is not directed to what history will bring forth, but to that which will arise in its ruin, free at last and undisguised.

To be sure, the "light of the Messiah" which is to shine wondrously into the world, is not always seen as breaking in with complete suddenness; it may become visible by gradations and stages, but these gradations and stages have nothing to do with the history that has gone before. "It is told of Rabbi Hiyya and Rabbi Simeon that they walked in the valley of Arbela early in the morning and saw the dawn breaking on the horizon. Thereupon Rabbi Hiyya said: 'So too is Israel's redemption; at first it will be only very slightly visible, then it will shine forth more

brightly, and only afterwards will it break forth in all of its glory.' "[6] Such a belief was very common among apocalyptic calculators in all ages whenever they sought schemata according to which the different stages of the redemption would occur within the frame of the Last Days. But the apocalyptic calculation which relied upon numbers and constellations expresses only one side of this point of view and many teachers repudiated it again and again, not without reason, though with little success. In opposition to it stands the no less powerful sentiment that the Messianic age cannot be calculated. This was most pointedly expressed in the words of a talmudic teacher of the third century: "Three things come unawares: the Messiah, a found article, and a scorpion."[7] And with sharper stress on the always possible End, the immediacy to God of each day, we find: "If Israel would repent even for a single day, they would be instantly redeemed and the Son of David would instantly come, for it says (Ps. 95:7): *Today* if you will listen to His voice."[8]

Such words add to the concept of the spontaneity of the redemption the idea, expressed in numerous moral dicta of the talmudic literature, that there are deeds which, as it were, help to bring about the redemption, somewhat like a midwife at a birth. Whoever does one thing or another (whoever, for example, cites what he has heard, stating the name of his source), "he brings redemption into the world." But here it is not a matter of real causality, only of an already established frame for pointed, sententious formulations which are directed less at the Messianic redemption than at the moral value of the suggested conduct. Indeed, statements of this kind stand totally outside the realm of apocalyptic thought. They present a moralism which must have been welcomed by later reinterpretations of Messianism in the sense of a rational and sensible utopianism. But in fact there can be no preparation for the Messiah. He comes suddenly, unannounced, and precisely when he is least expected or when hope has long been abandoned.

This deep feeling of the impossibility of calculating the Messianic age has produced in the Messianic Aggadah the idea of the occultation of the Messiah, who is always already present somewhere and whom a profound legend, not without cause, allows to have been born on the day of the destruction of the Temple. Beginning at the moment of the deepest catastrophe there exists the chance for redemption. "Israel speaks to God: When will You redeem us? He answers: When you have sunk to the lowest level,

at that time will I redeem you."[9] Corresponding to this continually present possibility is the concept of the Messiah who continually waits in hiding. It has taken many forms, though admittedly none more grand than that which, with extravagant anticipation, has transplanted the Messiah to the gates of Rome, where he dwells among the lepers and beggars of the Eternal City.[10] This truly staggering "rabbinic fable" stems from the second century, long before the Rome which has just destroyed the Temple and driven Israel into exile itself becomes the seat of the Vicar of Christ and of a Church seeking dominion by its claim to Messianic fulfillment. This symbolic antithesis between the true Messiah sitting at the gates of Rome and the head of Christendom, who reigns there, accompanies Jewish Messianic thought through the centuries. And more than once we learn that Messianic aspirants have made a pilgrimage to Rome in order to sit by the bridge in front of the Castel Sant' Angelo and thus enact this symbolic ritual.

III

This catastrophic character of the redemption, which is essential to the apocalyptic conception, is pictured in all of these texts and traditions in glaring images. It finds manifold expression: in world wars and revolutions, in epidemics, famine, and economic catastrophe; but to an equal degree in apostasy and the desecration of God's name, in forgetting of the Torah and the upsetting of all moral order to the point of dissolving the laws of nature.[11] Such apocalyptic paradoxes regarding the final catastrophe were accepted even into as sober a text as the Mishnah, the first canonical codification of the *Halakhah*.

> In the footsteps of the Messiah [i.e., in the period of his arrival] presumption will increase and respect disappear. The empire will turn to heresy and there will be no moral reproof. The house of assembly will become a brothel, Galilee will be laid waste, and the people of the frontiers will wander from city to city and none will pity them. The wisdom of the scribes will become odious and those who shun sin will be despised; truth will nowhere be found. Boys will shame old men and old men will show deference to boys. "The son reviles the father, the daughter rises up against the mother . . . a man's enemies are the men of his own house" (Micah 7:6). The face of the generation is like the face of a dog [i.e., brazenness will reign]. On whom shall we then rely? On our Father in heaven.[12]

The pages of the Talmud tractate Sanhedrin which deal with the Messianic age are full of most extravagant formulations of this kind. They drive toward the point that the Messiah will come only in an age which is either totally pure or totally guilty and corrupt. Little wonder that in one such context the Talmud cites the bald statement of three famous teachers of the third and fourth centuries: "May he come, but I do not want to see him."[13]

Though the redemption, then, cannot be realized without dread and ruin, its positive aspect is provided with all the accents of utopianism. This utopianism seizes upon all the restorative hopes turned toward the past and describes an arc from the re-establishment of Israel and of the Davidic kingdom as a kingdom of God on earth to the re-establishment of the condition of Paradise as it is foreseen by many old Midrashim, but above all by the thought of Jewish mystics, for whom the analogy of First Days and Last Days possess living reality. But it does more than that. For already in the Messianic utopianism of Isaiah we find the Last Days conceived immeasurably more richly than any beginning. The condition of the world, wherein the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea (Isa. 11:9), does not repeat anything that has ever been, but presents something new. The world of *tikkun*, the re-establishment of the harmonious condition of the world, which in the Lurianic Kabbalah is the Messianic world, still contains a strictly utopian impulse. That harmony which it reconstitutes does not at all correspond to any condition of things that has ever existed even in Paradise, but at most to a plan contained in the divine idea of Creation. This plan, however, even with the first stages of its realization, came up against that disturbance and hindrance of the cosmic process known as the "breaking of the vessels" which initiates the Lurianic myth. In reality, therefore, the Last Days realize a higher, richer, and more fulfilled condition than the First Days, and even the Kabbalists remain bound to a utopian conception. The contents of this utopia differ in the various circles. The model of a renewed humanity and of a renewed kingdom of David or of a descendant of David, which represents the prophetic legacy of Messianic utopianism, is often enough combined by the apocalyptists and mystics with a renewed condition of nature and even of the cosmos as a whole. The escapist and extravagant character of such utopianism, which undertakes to determine the content of redemption without having experienced it yet in fact, does of course subject it to the wild

indulgence of fantasy. But it always retains that fascinating vitality to which no historical reality can do justice and which in times of darkness and persecution counterpoises the fulfilled image of wholeness to the piecemeal, wretched reality which was available to the Jew. Thus the images of the New Jerusalem that float before the eyes of the apocalyptists always contain more than was ever present in the old one, and the renewal of the world is simply more than its restoration.

In this connection, the talmudic teachers were already faced with the question whether one may "press for the End," that is to say, force its coming by one's own activity. Here we find a deep cleavage of opinion with regard to Messianism. The dream was not always accompanied by the determination to do something for its realization. On the contrary: it is one of the most important characteristics of Messianism that to the minds of a great many there was an abyss here. And this is not surprising since precisely in the biblical texts which served as the basis for the crystallization of the Messianic idea it is nowhere made dependent upon human activity. Neither Amos' Day of the Lord nor Isaiah's visions of the End of Days are deemed the results of such action. Likewise, the ancient apocalyptists, who undertook to disclose the secrets of the End, know nothing of this. In truth, everything is here attributed to God and it is just this that lends a special character to the contradiction between what is and what shall be. The warnings against human action which dares to bring about the redemption have always been most offensive to the revolutionary and to the one who "presses for the End," as the Jewish term would have it. But they do not lack legitimacy, and they are by no means only signs of weakness and possible cowardice (although they may sometimes be that as well).

In Song of Songs 2:7 we find the verse: "I adjure you, daughters of Jerusalem, by the gazelles and by the hinds of the field, do not awaken or stir up love until it is ready." Rabbi Helbo comments: "Four vows are contained here. The Israelites are adjured not to revolt against the kingdoms of the world [the secular powers], not to press for the End, not to reveal their mystery to the nations of the world, and not to come up from exile like a wall [in great masses]. But, if so, why does King Messiah come? To gather in the exiled of Israel."

Thus we read in the old Midrash to the Song of Songs.[14] But likewise the author of Fourth Ezra is exhorted by the angel: "You will certainly not want to hasten more than the Creator" (4:34).

This is the attitude of the spokesmen of that Messianism in Judaism which still placed all hope on unbroken faith in God. It corresponds to and originates from the afore-mentioned conception of the essential lack of relation between human history and the redemption. But we can understand why such an attitude was again and again in danger of being overrun by the apocalyptic certainty that the End had begun and all that was still required was the call to ingathering. Ever and again the revolutionary opinion that this attitude deserves to be overrun breaks through in the Messianic actions of individuals or entire movements. This is the Messianic activism in which utopianism becomes the lever by which to establish the Messianic kingdom. One may, perhaps, formulate the question which produced this division of minds more pointedly. It would then be: Can man master his own future? And the answer of the apocalyptist would be: no. But the enticement to action, the call to fulfillment, is inherent in this projection of the best in man upon his future, which is just what Jewish Messianism in its utopian elements so emphatically set forth.

And it is not surprising that beyond the repudiations and reservations of the theologians, historical recollection and mythical legend together kept alive the memory of the Messianic ventures of Bar Kokhba or of Sabbatai Zevi, who created epochs in the history of Judaism. The legend of Rabbi Joseph de la Reyna, which long enjoyed great popularity,[15] pictures in extreme fashion an individual's enticement to Messianic action, an enticement which must fail because no one is capable of such action. It describes the undertaking of a great teacher in Israel, for whom the redemption is concentrated on shattering only one last barrier. But it must be done by magic, and it must fail for just this reason. This legend of the great magician and Kabbalist who captured Sammael, the devil, and thus could have brought about the redemption if he had not himself fallen under the devil's sway in the process, is a grand allegory on all "pressing for the End." Such Joseph de la Reynas have never been lacking in Jewish life, whether they remained hidden in some corner of the exile or, by exposing their identity and exaggerating their own magic, made the jump into world history.

This Messianic activism, incidentally, lies on that peculiar double line of mutual influence between Judaism and Christianity which goes hand in hand with inner tendencies of development in both religions. The political and chiliastic Messianism of impor-

tant religious movements within Christianity often appears as a reflection of what is really Jewish Messianism. It is well known how vigorously such tendencies were decried as Judaizing heresies by their orthodox opponents in Catholicism and Protestantism alike. From a purely phenomenological point of view there is doubtless some truth to these reproaches, even if in historical reality these tendencies also arise spontaneously from attempts to take Messianism seriously and from a feeling of dissatisfaction with a Kingdom of God which is to lie within us and not about us. The more Christian Messianism—to use the words of a significant Protestant theologian, who with this formulation no doubt believed he had expressed something most positive [16]—presented itself as "this wondrous certainty of pure inwardness," the more strongly dissatisfaction with this view had to find itself referred back to the Jewish vision. And thus, again and again, such chiliastic and revolutionary Messianism as emerges, for example, among the Taborites, the Anabaptists, or the radical wing of the Puritans, draws its inspiration mainly from the Old Testament and not from Christian sources. To be sure, it is the Christian conviction regarding the redemption which has already come that lends this activism a special seriousness and its special vehemence—and thus its significance in world history. In the Jewish realm, from which it originates, this activism remains singular and strangely powerless precisely because it is aware of the radical difference between the unredeemed world of history and that of the Messianic redemption, as I have explained it above. Parallel to this line, along which Judaism has again and again furnished Christianity with political chiliastic Messianism, runs the other one, along which Christianity, for its part, has bequeathed to Judaism or aroused within it the tendency to discover a mystical aspect of the interiorization of the Messianic idea. To be sure, this aspect comes to the same degree from the inner movement and development of mysticism in Judaism itself, for which the Messianically promised reality must in addition appear as a symbol of an inner condition of the world and of man. It will always remain difficult to decide how much may be said of historical influence with regard to these two channels and how much must be ascribed to immanent movement within each one's own world of ideas.

The interiorization of the redemption remains a problem even where, unlike in Christianity, it did not serve to establish a thesis alleging that in the redemption something like a pure inwardness bursts forth. I have already stressed that it is indicative of the

special position of Judaism in the history of religion that it thought nothing of such a chemically pure inwardness of redemption. I do not say: thought little, but thought nothing at all. An inwardness, which does not present itself in the most external realm and is not bound up with it in every way, was regarded here as of no value. According to the dialectics of Jewish mysticism, the drive to the essence was at the same time the drive outward. The re-establishment of all things in their proper place, which constitutes the redemption, produces a totality that knows nothing of such a division between inwardness and outwardness. The utopian element in Messianism refers to this totality and to it alone. Historically, this totality could be viewed with a double glance, cast upon the inner and outer aspect of the world, as in the Lurianic Kabbalah, so long as it was certain that one would not fall victim to the other. But it remains peculiar that this question concerning the inner aspect of the redemption should emerge so late in Judaism—though it finally does emerge with great vehemence. In the Middle Ages it played no role. Perhaps this is connected with the repudiation of the Christian claim which just at that time returned to the notion of the inwardness of redemption and insisted upon it, a notion which was so evidently refuted on the stage of history and therefore, as far as the churches were concerned, had no business being there.

IV

In the above, I have emphasized the two aspects of the Messianic idea which appear in rabbinic Judaism and provide it with ongoing apocalyptic inspiration: the catastrophic and the utopian. Yet the figure of the Messiah, in whom the fulfillment of redemption is concentrated, remains peculiarly vague; and this, I think, has good reason. Features of such varying historical and psychological origins are gathered into this medium of fulfillment and coexist within it that they do not furnish a clear picture of the man. One is almost tempted to say that his character is overdetermined and therefore has again become uncertain. Unlike Christian or Shiite Messianism, no memories of a real person are at work here which, though they might arouse the imagination and attract old images of expectation, nonetheless are always bound to something deeply personal. Jesus or the Hidden Imam, who once existed as persons, possess the unmistakable and unforgettable qualities of a person. This is just what the Jewish

image of the Messiah, by its nature, cannot have since it can picture everything personal only in completely abstract fashion, having as yet no living experience on which to base it.

There is, however, a historical development in this character of the Messiah on which the two aspects stressed here shed a great deal of light. I am referring to the doubling of the figure of the Messiah, its split into a Messiah of the House of David and one of the House of Joseph. This conception of the "Messiah ben Joseph" was again discussed only a few years ago in a very interesting monograph by Siegmund Hurwitz which tries to explain its origins in psychological terms.[17] But I think it can best be understood in terms of those two aspects with which we have been concerned here. The Messiah ben Joseph is the dying Messiah who perishes in the Messianic catastrophe. The features of the catastrophic are gathered together in him. He fights and loses—but he does not suffer. The prophecy of Isaiah regarding the suffering servant of God is never applied to him. He is a redeemer who redeems nothing, in whom only the final battle with the powers of the world is crystallized. His destruction coincides with the destruction of history. By contrast, when the figure is split, all of the utopian interest is concentrated on the Messiah ben David. He is the one in whom what is new finally comes to the fore, who once and for all defeats the antichrist, and thus presents the purely positive side of this complex phenomenon. The more these two sides are made independent and emphasized, the more this doubling of the Messiah figure remains alive for the circles of apocalyptic Messianists even in later Judaism. The more this dualism becomes weakened, the less is the doubling mentioned, and the special figure of the Messiah ben Joseph becomes superfluous and meaningless.

Such mitigations of the dualism occur even in the talmudic literature itself. Much as apocalyptic imagination fascinated many rabbinic teachers, and varied as its continuing influence was in medieval Judaism, more sober conceptions remained alive as well. There were many who felt repulsed by apocalypticism. Their attitude is most sharply expressed by the strictly anti-apocalyptical definition of the Babylonian teacher Samuel of the first half of the third century, which is often referred to in the Talmud: "The only difference between this aeon and the Days of the Messiah is the subjection [of Israel] to the nations." [18] This obviously polemical utterance provides the cue for a tendency with which we

shall still have to deal in terms of its effect and its crystallization in the powerful formulations of Maimonides.

Such counter-tendencies have not, however, been able to hamper the continuing effectiveness of radical apocalyptic, utopian currents in Jewish Messianism. On the contrary, one might say that this apocalypticism was deeply rooted in popular forms of Judaism that were widespread during the Middle Ages. The esoteric element increasingly spills out into the popular domain. Apocalyptic productivity stretches from the third century down to the period of the Crusades. Important products of the Kabbalistic literature still clearly manifest the continuing influence of this apocalyptic element, as indeed many of its parts represent a productive continuation of the old Aggadah, though on a new level. We must of course take into account that a number of such products of popular apocalypticism fell victim to rabbinical censorship. This censorship, though not constituted in any institutional form, was no doubt effective. Much that was written in the Middle Ages did not at all suit the fancy of the responsible leadership, and sometimes we learn of ideas and writings, which did not gain entry into the "higher literature," only via fortuitously preserved letters or some hidden quotation. This popular apocalypticism presents itself to us as propaganda literature. In a time of gloom and oppression it seeks to bring consolation and hope, and thereby it necessarily generates extravagances. There is an anarchic element in the very nature of Messianic utopianism: the dissolution of old ties which lose their meaning in the new context of Messianic freedom. The total novelty for which utopianism hopes enters thus into a momentous tension with the world of bonds and laws which is the world of *Halakhah*.

The relationship between the Jewish *Halakhah* and Messianism is indeed filled with such tension. On the one hand, Messianic utopianism presents itself as the completion and perfection of *Halakhah*. It is to perfect what cannot yet find expression in the *Halakhah* as the law of an unredeemed world. Thus, for example, only in Messianic times will all those parts of the law which are not realizable under the conditions of the exile become capable of fufillment. And thus there seems to be no antagonism created at all between what can be provisionally fulfilled in the law and what can only be fulfilled Messianically. The one calls for the other, and the concept of a Messianic *Halakhah* in the Talmud's terms, i.e., one which can be taught and fufilled only in the Days

of the Messiah, is by no means merely an empty phrase; it represents a very real content. The law as such can be fulfilled in its total plenitude only in a redeemed world. But there is doubtless another side to the matter as well. For apocalypticism and its inherent mythology tore open a window on a world which the *Halakhah* rather preferred to leave shrouded in the mists of uncertainty. The vision of Messianic renewal and freedom was by its nature inclined to produce the question of what it would do to the status of Torah and of the *Halakhah* which was dependent on it. This question, which the men of *Halakhah* could consider only with misgivings, is necessarily raised by rabbinic apocalypticism. For even if the Torah was regarded as not subject to change, the problem of its practical application in the Messianic age had to emerge within such conceptions as well. And here indeed it was easier to assume that the divine "Yoke of the Torah" would become heavier rather than lighter. For at that time a great deal would become capable of fulfillment for the first time which under the conditions of the exile, in which the *Halakhah* had largely developed, was not at all realizable. At the same time, the conception of a "Torah of the Messiah," as it appears in the talmudic literature, drew in its wake yet another conception: that of a more complete development of the reasons for the commandments, which only the Messiah will be able to explain.[19] Both understanding of the Torah and its fulfillment will thus be infinitely richer than they are now. But along with this, there were bound to be motifs which carried this new understanding to the level of a deeper, even purely mystical comprehension of the world of the law. The greater the assumption of changes in nature or of revolutions in man's moral character—which latter were determined by the extinction of the destructive power of the evil inclination in the Messianic age—the greater did the modification also have to become which under such circumstances affected the operation of the law. A positive commandment or a prohibition could scarcely still be the same when it no longer had for its object the separation of good and evil to which man was called, but rather arose from the Messianic spontaneity of human freedom purely flowing forth. Since by its nature this freedom realizes only the good, it has no real need for all those "fences" and restrictions with which the *Halakhah* was surrounded in order to secure it from the temptations of evil. At this point there arises the possibility of a turning from the restorative conception of the final re-establishment of the reign of law to a utopian view

in which restrictive traits will no longer be determinative and decisive, but be replaced by certain as yet totally unpredictable traits which will reveal entirely new aspects of free fulfillment. Thus an anarchic element enters Messianic utopianism. The Pauline "freedom of the children of God" is a form in which such a turning meant leaving Judaism behind. But this was by no means the only form of these conceptions, which appear in Messianism again and again with dialectical necessity. Finally, the anarchic element is also joined by the antinomian potentialities which are latent in Messianic utopianism. (See "Redemption Through Sin.")

The opposition between restorative and purely utopian, radical elements in the conception of the Messianic Torah brings an element of uncertainty into the *Halakhah*'s attitude to Messianism. The battle lines are by no means clearly drawn. Unfortunately, a penetrating and serious study of this relationship of the medieval *Halakhah* to Messianism is one of the most important yet unfulfilled desiderata of the scientific study of Judaism. As far as I can see, no one has taken an interest in doing it. If I may trust my own very incompetent judgment—really only an impression—I would say that many of the great men of *Halakhah* are completely entwined in the realm of popular apocalypticism when they come to speak of the redemption. For a number of them, apocalypticism is not a foreign element and is not felt to be in contradiction to the realm of the *Halakhah*. From the point of view of the *Halakhah,* to be sure, Judaism appears as a well-ordered house, and it is a profound truth that a well-ordered house is a dangerous thing. Something of Messianic apocalypticism penetrates into this house; perhaps I can best describe it as a kind of anarchic breeze. A window is open through which the winds blow in, and it is not quite certain just what they bring in with them. As vital as this anarchic airing may have been for the house of the law, it is certainly easy to understand the reticence and misgivings with which other significant representatives of *Halakhah* regarded everything that makes up Messianic utopianism. Many, as I have said, were deeply involved with apocalypticism; but among many others one can notice an equally deep uneasiness with regard to the perspectives it reveals. As long as Messianism appeared only as an abstract hope, as an element totally deferred to the future which had no living significance for the life of the Jew in the present, the opposition between the essentially conservative rabbinic and the never completely defined Messianic authority, which was to be estab-

lished from entirely new dimensions of the utopian, could remain without real tension; indeed, there could be attempts to create a certain harmony between such authorities. But whenever there was an actual eruption of such hope, that is to say, in every historical hour in which the Messianic idea entered the mind as a power with direct influence, the tension which exists between these two forms of religious authority immediately became noticeable. These things could be united in pure thought, or at least they could be preserved next to one another, but they could not be united in their execution. Observing the appearance of such tension in the Messianic movements of the twelfth century with their concomitant antinomianism, among the followers of David Alroy in Kurdistan or among those of the Messiah who appeared at that time in Yemen, no doubt influenced Maimonides' attitude when with such great energy he set about to restrict the scope of Messianic utopianism to an absolute minimum.

The emergence of such radical contents in the Messianic idea can be most clearly seen in a medieval work in which *Halakhah* and Kabbalah are very closely intertwined. I am thinking of the book *Ra'ya Mehemna,* which belongs to the most recent layer of the literature that is gathered together in the *Zohar* and which came into being in the last years of the thirteenth or the first years of the fourteenth century. The author, who is a Kabbalist deeply rooted in the *Halakhah,* here deals with the mystical reasons for the commandments and prohibitions of the Torah. But his book is also written out of an acute Messianic expectation which possesses all of the urgency of the imminently impending End. He is not, however, motivated in the least by an interest in the catastrophic aspect of the redemption, of which he has not discovered any new, independent features, but rather in the utopian content which in anticipation he seeks to formulate. Here an anarchic vision of liberation from the restrictions which the Torah has laid upon the Jew in an unredeemed world, and above all in the exile, plays a central role. The author expresses his vision by means of old biblical symbols which now become types for the different status of things in the unredeemed world and in the Messianic age.

These symbols are the Tree of Life and the Tree of Knowledge, or the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, which because its fruit brings about death is also called the Tree of Death. These trees, respectively, control the state of the world, be it the state of Creation as such or of the Torah, which as the divine law

governs and determines it. Standing in the center of Paradise and representing higher orders of things, the trees control a great deal more than just existence in the Garden of Eden. Since the Fall of Adam, the world is no longer ruled by the Tree of Life as it had been in the beginning, but by the Tree of Knowledge. The Tree of Life represents the pure, unbroken power of the holy, the diffusion of the divine life through all worlds and the communication of all living things with their divine source. There is no admixture of evil in it, no "shells" which dam up and choke life, no death, and no restriction. But since the Fall of Adam, since the time when the forbidden fruit of the Tree of Knowledge was eaten, the world is ruled by the mystery of this second tree in which both good and evil have their place. Hence, under the rule of this Tree, the world contains differentiated spheres: the holy and the profane, the pure and the impure, the permitted and the forbidden, the living and the dead, the divine and the demonic. Although the Torah, the revelation of God's providence, is in essence one and immutable, it manifests itself in every state of the world in a manner befitting this state. Our comprehension of revelation is presently tied to the Tree of Knowledge and presents itself as the positive law of the Torah and as the realm of the *Halakhah*. Its meaning appears to us now in what is commanded and what is prohibited and in everything which follows from this basic distinction. The power of evil, of destruction and death, has become real in the free will of man. The purpose of the law, which as it were constitutes the Torah as it can be read in the light—or shadow!—of the Tree of Knowledge, is to confine this power if not to overcome it entirely. But in the Messianic redemption the full glory of the utopian again breaks forth, although characteristically and in keeping with the idea of the Tree of Life it is conceived as a restoration of the state of things in Paradise. In a world in which the power of evil has been broken, all those differentiations also disappear which had been derived from it. In a world in which only the pure life still reigns, obstructions to the stream of life, which solidify it in externals and in "shells," no longer have any validity or significance. In the present state of the world the Torah must appear on many levels of meaning; even the mystical meaning, by which the insightful individual is permitted a glance at least into its hidden life and into his own connection with this life, is necessarily bound to the phenomena of even the most external realm. Therefore, in exile, *Halakhah* and Kabbalah always remain mutually related. But when the world

will again be subject to the law of the Tree of Life, the face of *Halakhah* itself will change. Where everything is holy there will no longer be need of restrictions and prohibitions, and whatever appear as such today will either vanish or reveal a totally new, as yet undiscovered, aspect of pure positiveness. In this conception, the redemption now appears as the manifestation of something deeply spiritual, as a spiritual revolution which discloses the mystical content and significance of the Torah as its real and true literal meaning. Mystical utopia takes the place of the national and political utopia without actually abrogating it, but as a kernel which has now begun to sprout. The author revels in the contrast between the "Torah of the Exile" and the "Torah of Redemption": the latter alone will disclose the undistorted and living meaning of the entire Torah in its infinite fullness. But he does not elucidate any transition between these two kinds of manifestation or between the conditions in the two states of the world which are expressed in these two aspects of the one "complete Torah of God." The utopian vision in rabbinic Judaism was driven no further than this, and scarcely could have been.

V

If we now move on to an examination of the function of the Messianic idea in connection with the rational tendencies in Judaism we shall reach conclusions very different from those of our previous discussion. These rational tendencies developed within the Jewish philosophy of the Middle Ages, which attempted to prove that Jewish monotheism and the religion of revelation based on it were a consistent system of rational religion and insofar as possible tried to construe them as such. This project of the philosophers and rational theologians of Judaism does not immediately and in the same manner attack all of the realms of Jewish tradition in which the earlier Judaism's convictions of faith had still without any systematic connection been crystallized. But since its development in the period from Saadia Gaon (died 942) to Moses Maimonides (died 1204) and Hasdai Crescas (died 1410), there has been an unmistakable tendency to open up to rational inquiry and hence to rational critique even such realms as were originally the most foreign to it. The Messianic idea is a case in point, and most drastically so in the forms of rabbinic apocalypticism of which we have spoken above.[20]

We here encounter the important fact that the rational tendencies in Judaism pushed the restorative factor in Messianism decidedly into the foreground. With the influential formulation of this tendency by Maimonides restoration becomes the focus of Messianism. By contrast, the utopian element quite peculiarly recedes and is only maintained at a bare minimum. That it is maintained at all is due only to the fact that a utopian element of the prophetic promise in a precise sense, namely the universal knowledge of God, is related to the supreme good of these philosophical doctrines. But this supreme good is the contemplative life which the medieval philosophers, on account of the presuppositions of their Greek philosophical legacy, were bound to regard as the ideal of a fulfilled life. As the history of all three monotheistic religions teaches us, the theoretical contemplation, which on a purely philosophical basis could be set up as the highest value, was easily able to find a connection with the religious sphere. Occupation with the contents of the Torah and the reflection on God's attributes and rule created within Judaism a traditional framework for such an identification of the *vita contemplativa* with concern for the objects and facts of the Jewish religious realm. The fulfillment of God's law was, after all, always closely connected with its study, without which such fulfillment could not even be considered legitimate. It is this idea of study of the Torah which opens up the highest realm of contemplation to the Jewish philosopher, and it is only from here that the world of *Halakhah* was illumined. The active life, which is ordered by the *Halakhah*, finds its complement and consummation in that sphere which Maimonides never doubted was of superior worth. It was possible to develop this idea of the contemplative life as a positive value without any reference to the Messianic idea. And in fact it appears without any such reference as the crowning element at the conclusion of Maimonides' main philosophical work, his *Guide of the Perplexed*. In other words, it is in principle, though only in rare and isolated cases, independently capable of realization even in an unredeemed world. However, a utopian content of this vision is preserved, since in the Messianic age—incidentally, under purely natural conditions—the leisure for such a *vita contemplativa* will take on entirely different dimensions and the contemplative knowledge of God will become everyone's principal concern. The utopian content does not disappear entirely, but it is now only the intensive realization of a state which fundamentally and in its real essence can be already reached under the conditions of our time. Utopianism is

preserved in the boundless expansion and increase of the contemplative element. Restorative elements determine everything else.

I must now emphasize that this rational limitation of the Messianic to its restorative components lies not at all in the nature of the rationalistic tendencies in Judaism as such. Rather, it occurs only in its medieval varieties, and there is a great difference here between medieval and modern rationalism which must be maintained against obvious tendencies to efface it. For precisely to the extent that the rationalism of the Jewish and European Enlightenment subjected the Messianic idea to an ever advancing secularization, it freed itself of the restorative element. It stressed instead the utopian element, though in a totally new way that is foreign to the Middle Ages. Messianism became tied up with the idea of the eternal progress and infinite task of humanity perfecting itself. In this process, the concept of progress, itself a non-restorative element, became central for rational utopianism. The restorative factors lost their effect to the degree that the national and historical elements of the Messianic idea were superseded by a purely universalistic interpretation. Hermann Cohen, surely as distinguished a representative of the liberal and rationalistic reinterpretation of the Messianic idea in Judaism as one could find, was driven by his religion of reason into becoming a genuine and unhampered utopian who would have liked to liquidate the restorative factor entirely.

If we ask ourselves why this changed attitude to Messianism in medieval and modern Jewish rationalism came about, the answer seems to me that in the Middle Ages apocalypticism received a significance which by the time of the Enlightenment had completely lost its impact. That tendency, of which Maimonides was the grandest and most influential representative, consciously and with clear intent aimed at the liquidation of apocalypticism in Jewish Messianism. It was deeply suspicious of that anarchic element which I discussed earlier—perhaps on account of a fear of the eruption of antinomian trains of thought, which apocalypticism, in fact, could easily produce. This fear of radical utopianism and its various forms brought about the determined reversion to the restorative factor which lent itself to setting a limit to such eruptions. In Maimonides' environment these were quite real apprehensions, well founded upon historical phenomena of his own experience. In an era like the nineteenth century, by contrast, apocalypticism seemed finally liquidated and possessed, at least for

the historical experience of the great Jewish rationalists of this age, no urgency or force whatever. (That they deeply and crucially deluded themselves on this score is another matter.) Nowhere did they reveal any feeling for the immense power of apocalypticism, which was still active in disguised forms, since for them it had become meaningless, empty nonsense. The anarchic element in utopianism no longer frightened the freest among them as something destructive, but rather counted as a positive element in the progress of mankind, which was developing from old forms to ever higher and less restricted forms of human freedom. But in medieval Judaism currents of this kind were without significance. We may say that to the medievals only the radical antipodes possess creative significance for an understanding of the Messianic idea: on the one hand, the apocalyptists; on the other, the liquidators of apocalypticism. The latter group's thinking, whether rooted in *Halakhah* or in philosophy, is ultimately motivated by anti-Messianic impulses and recognizes the dangers inherent in the utopianism of Messianic freedom. It is an error often committed to see only the second tendency in Judaism, though, to be sure, it is represented by the most powerful personalities. It is no less wrong, however, in awareness of the great importance of apocalypticism, to underestimate the effect of that other tendency which aimed at removing the apocalyptic thorn. The particular vitality of the Messianic idea in Judaism resides in the dialectical tension between these two tendencies.

Despite the conception's immense power of attraction, the Messianic idea was formulated only quite late into a positive basic dogma or principle of Judaism. There were a great many enthusiasts among the Jews who rejected in advance any selection of principles whatever, and who demanded equal authority for all components of the tradition. When a selection was made at all, it could remain doubtful whether next to the principles of monotheism and of the authority of the Torah as the norm of life, the Messianic hope as certainty of the redemption could claim an equivalent sanction. It is surely worth noting in this connection that Maimonides, who took this step more decisively than several of his predecessors and who made room for the Messianic idea among his thirteen principles of the Jewish faith, accepted it only together with anti-apocalyptic restrictions.[21] Maimonides, who sought to set down a firm authority for a rather anarchically organized medieval Jewry, was a man of extraordinary intellectual courage. In his nearly standard codification of *Halakhah*, he

succeeded in including his own metaphysical convictions as binding norms of religious conduct for the Jews in general, i.e., as *Halakhot,* although crucial parts of these theses have no legitimate basis whatever in the biblical and talmudic sources and are rather indebted to the philosophical traditions of Greece. And just as he is prepared at the beginning of his great work to lend the power of law in the sense of *Halakhah* to his own convictions, thus he acts no less arbitrarily in his radical acceptance of the anti-apocalyptical elements of the talmudic tradition and his decided exaggeration of them in the sense of his own realm of ideas at the end of this work. In the last two passages of his code of laws, in the eleventh and twelfth paragraphs of the "Laws Concerning the Installation of Kings," we find a portrait of the Messianic idea. After we have become acquainted above with several of the formulations of the apocalyptists, it will be of value to look at several essential points of these contradictory remarks.[22] Here we read:

> The Messiah will arise and restore the kingdom of David to its former might. He will rebuild the sanctuary and gather the dispersed of Israel. All the laws will be reinstituted in his days as of old. Sacrifices will be offered and the Sabbatical and Jubilee years will be observed exactly in accordance with the commandments of the Torah. But whoever does not believe in him or does not await his coming denies not only the rest of the prophets, but also the Torah and our teacher Moses.
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> Do not think that the Messiah needs to perform signs and miracles, bring about a new state of things in the world, revive the dead, and the like. It is not so. . . . Rather it is the case in these matters that the statutes of our Torah are valid forever and eternally. Nothing can be added to them or taken away from them. And if there arise a king from the House of David who meditates on the Torah and practices its commandments like his ancestor David in accordance with the Written and Oral Law, prevails upon all Israel to walk in the ways of the Torah and to repair its breaches [i.e., to eliminate the bad state of affairs resulting from the incomplete observance of the law], and fights the battles of the Lord, then one may properly assume that he is the Messiah. If he is then successful in rebuilding the sanctuary on its site and in gathering the dispersed of Israel, then he has in fact [as a result of his success] proven himself to be the Messiah. He will then arrange the whole world to serve only God, as it is said: "For then shall I create a pure language for the peoples that they may all call upon the name of God and serve him with one accord" (Zeph. 3:9).
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> Let no one think that in the days of the Messiah anything of the natural course of the world will cease or that any innovation will be introduced into creation. Rather, the world will continue in its accustomed course. The words of Isaiah: "The wolf shall dwell with the lamb and the panther shall lie down with the kid" (Isa. 11:6) are a parable and an allegory which must be understood to mean that Israel will dwell securely even among the wicked of the heathen nations who are compared to a wolf and a panther. For they will all accept the true faith and will no longer rob or destroy. Likewise, all similar scriptural passages dealing with the Messiah must be regarded as figurative. Only in the Days of the Messiah will everyone know what the metaphors mean and to what they refer. The sages said: "The only difference between this world and the Days of the Messiah is the subjection of Israel to the nations." [23]
>
> From the simple meaning of the words of the prophets it appears that at the beginning of the Days of the Messiah the war between Gog and Magog will take place. . . . [With regard to these Messianic wars and the coming of the prophet Elijah before the End, Maimonides then continues:] Concerning all these things and others like them, no one knows how they will come about until they actually happen, since the words of the prophets on these matters are not clear. Even the sages have no tradition regarding them but allow themselves to be guided by the texts. Hence there are differences of opinion on the subject. In any case, the order and details of these events are not religious dogmas. Therefore a person should never occupy himself a great deal with the legendary accounts nor spend much time on the Midrashim dealing with these and similar matters. He should not regard them as of prime importance,[24] since devoting himself to them leads neither to the fear nor to the love of God. . . .
>
> The sages and prophets longed for the days of the Messiah not in order to rule over the world and not to bring the heathens under their control, not to be exalted by the nations, or even to eat, drink, and rejoice. All they wanted was to have time for the Torah and its wisdom with no one to oppress or disturb them.
>
> In that age there will be neither famine nor war, nor envy nor strife, for there will be an abundance of worldly goods. The whole world will be occupied solely with the knowledge of God. Therefore the Children of Israel will be great sages; they will know hidden things and attain an understanding of their Creator to the extent of human capability, as it is said: "For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of God as the waters cover the sea" (Isa. 11:9).

In these measured words of a great master every sentence has a polemical purpose, whether or not it is openly expressed. Their sober prudence codifies the protest against apocalypticism, against the rampant fantasy of the Aggadists, and against the authors of the popular Midrashim in which the stages of the End and the catastrophes of nature and history which accompany it are de-

scribed. With a grand gesture all of this is waived aside. Maimonides knows nothing of Messianic miracles or other signs. Negatively, the Messianic age brings about freedom from the enslavement of Israel, and, positively, freedom for the knowledge of God. But to this end it is necessary to abrogate neither the law of moral order (the revelation of the Torah) nor the law of natural order. Neither creation nor revelation undergo any kind of change. The binding force of the law does not cease and the lawful order of nature does not give way to any miracles. For Maimonides, the intervention of heaven on earth constitutes no criterion for the legitimacy of the Messiah and of his mission. He will allow only one criterion: whether the Messiah succeeds in his endeavors.[25] The Messiah must prove his identity to justified skeptics not by cosmic signs and miracles, but by historical success. Nothing in any supernatural constitution of his nature guarantees his success and makes it possible to recognize him with certainty until he has proven his identity.[26] Every crucial aspect of the Messianic age which he inaugurates is emphasized as restorative. Anything leading beyond this, specifically the utopian state of the world, is rejected with a powerful: no. Only contemplation of the Torah and the knowledge of God within a world that otherwise operates entirely according to natural laws remains, as indicated above, the one irreducible utopian element. And this is quite understandable. For Maimonides, the task of man since the Revelation has been clearly defined and man's fulfilling it is not dependent upon the coming of the Messiah. As a state of things here on earth, the Messianic age is no highest good but only a preliminary stage in the final transition to the world-to-come; the immortal soul enters this world after its severance from the body, in proportion to the share of eternity it has gained through rational activity in this life. Thus, since the end of the individual life leads it anyhow to the threshold of the longed-for final state—which in reality is not a future world but an eternal present, the immanent logic of Maimonides' general position does not in the least require an effort to bring about the end of world history in order for man to fulfill his task.[27] Messianism, in fact, is not a postulate of his philosophical thought; regardless of how he may twist it to fit his rationalism, it remains even in this minimal state of utopianism a pure element of the stock of tradition. It is tied to the concerns of Maimonides' systematic thought only via this earlier mentioned highly presumptuous identification of the contemplative life with the knowledge of God demanded

by the prophets—but which in the prophetic sense always contained an active and moral element. The Messianic age eases the conditions under which the salvation of the soul can be found in the fulfillment of the Torah and the knowledge of God, but this facilitation is really all that here lends the restorative ideal a faint utopian shimmer.

Maimonides regards the Messianic age as restorative and as a public event realized in the community. It is not to be confused with the conception of the salvation of each individual soul, which has nothing at all to do with the Messianic and can be achieved without its assistance. Earlier writings of Maimonides, above all his *Epistle to Yemen* (1172), directed to a community in which a strong Messianic movement had come into being, show that he had a deep sensitivity for the national elements of this expectation, even where he very carefully tries to weaken them. Here the bitter account of oppressions and persecutions by the nations, which is almost totally eliminated in the rational formulation of his code of law, remains present in his mind, and he consoles the Yemenite Jews by telling them that God will cause the false religions to perish and reveal the Messiah precisely when the nations would least expect it. But Maimonides nowhere recognizes a causal relationship between the coming of the Messiah and human conduct. It is not Israel's repentance which brings about the redemption; rather, because the eruption of redemption is to occur by divine decree, at the last moment there also erupts a movement of repentance in Israel itself. The Messianic restoration, which is tied to no idea of progress toward the redemption, is and remains a miracle—though of course not a miracle that occurs outside of nature and her laws, but a miracle because it has been previously announced by the prophets to affirm God's dominion in the world. The Messianic age is a free-will gift of God, but it is a gift which has been promised, and that raises its beginnings above the level of nature, even if they do occur under natural conditions. Maimonides did not attempt a purely philosophical justification of the Messianic idea on the basis of his ontology or ethics. Man is in principle completely capable of mastering his task and thereby mastering his future—in contrast to the apocalyptists who do not attribute this ability to man. The anti-apocalyptic vision of Maimonides says only that the Messianic age will strengthen man's capability by favorable conditions of universal peace and universal happiness, but not that it will make possible that capability for the first time.

Thus the dramatic element, which lent apocalypticism so much vitality, is, of course, lost.[28] Maimonides does not deny in advance the traditions and prophecies regarding the catastrophic character of the redemption—indeed, he considers them a possibility here and there in his writings—but he decides to forego them. He leaves them as sealed enigmas which will be disclosed only in the events themselves and which allow of no anticipation. He pulls back from this realm and tries to forbid it to everyone else. The monumental simplicity and decisiveness with which Maimonides formulates this attitude in no way vitiates the polemical character of this effort. Maimonides knows that he stands on an advance outpost which has been held only by relatively few before him. He is not concerned about the real continuation of an unbroken tradition but about gaining the acceptance of a new concept of the redemption which is formed from a selection of congenial elements in the tradition. Saadia's *Book of Beliefs and Opinions* still contains the opposite of Maimonides' opinion regarding the Messianic idea, to say nothing of the works of other Messianists of the Middle Ages who must have gone directly *contre coeur* to Maimonides: for example, the detailed presentation of Messianism in Abraham bar Hiyya's *Scroll of the Revealer* from the early twelfth century.[29] But since the time of Maimonides this tendency has not vanished from the forefront of discussions within Judaism.

The rival tendencies of apocalyptic and rationalistic Messianism, as we might expect, define their differences on the basis of contradictory biblical exegeses. Exegesis becomes a weapon in constructing and destroying apocalypses. The apocalyptists can never get enough of biblical sayings which they can relate to the Last Days: to their dawning and their content. They draw upon everything: not just texts which manifestly deal with the Last Days, but a great deal else, and the more the better. The more colorful and the more complete the picture, the greater the possibility of creating a dramatic montage of the individual stages of the redemption and the plenitude of its content. There has been no lack of mystics who on the basis of their assumptions regarding the inherently infinite meaning of Scripture concluded that one of these levels of meaning in every biblical word contained a reference to, or a prefiguration of, the Messianic End. Thus apocalyptic exegesis could be applied without exception. There exists a commentary on the Psalter which carries such interpretation through nearly completely. It stems from the period shortly after the expulsion from Spain when the apocalyptic waves rose especially high in the agitated hearts of the people.[30]

Their opponents do exactly the opposite. As much as possible, they try to refer biblical passages not to Messianic, but to some other circumstances. They detest typology. The predictions of the prophets have for the most part already come to pass in events at the time of Ezra, Zerubbabel, the Maccabees, and the period of the Second Temple in general. Many passages which the one group interprets to refer to the Messiah are interpreted by the other as predictions regarding the destiny of the entire Jewish people (like that famous chapter 53 in Isaiah, which speaks of the suffering servant of God). The second tendency, then, is to restrict the valid scope of the Messianic as much as possible. However, there is also an apologetic impulse at work which must not be underestimated. The representatives of the rational tendencies stood in the forefront of the theological defenses mounted against the claims of the Church. The more biblical exegesis could reduce the purely Messianic element, the better it was for the defenses of the Jewish position which were often made necessary by the application of external force. But the apocalyptists were not in the least interested in apologetics. Their thought has its locus beyond such disputes that occur on the borders, and they are not concerned with fortifying the frontiers. This is no doubt the reason why the statements of the apocalyptists often appear freer and more genuine than those of their opponents who often enough must take into account the diplomatic necessities of anti-Christian polemics and therefore do not always permit penetration to the true motives of their thought. In rare individuals the two tendencies come together. The most important codifications of the Messianic idea in later Judaism are the writings of Isaac Abravanel (ca. 1500) and *The Victory of Israel* by the "High Rabbi Loew," Judah Loew ben Bezalel of Prague (1599). The authors are not visionaries but writers who endeavor to embrace as a whole the legacy of ideas which has been transmitted in such contradictory traditions. Despite their otherwise reticent manner, they richly avail themselves of the apocalyptic traditions.

VI

I have endeavored to shed some light on the significance of two major currents for an understanding of the Messianic idea in Judaism. Only in passing have I touched on the specific forms

which the Messianic idea took in the thinking of the Jewish mystics, and I have dealt not at all with the specific problematics which the question of the redemption had to assume in the thought of the Kabbalists for whom Judaism was more than anything else a *corpus symbolicum,* a symbolic representation of the world's reality and of man's task within it. I discuss these matters in the next essay and will not repeat myself here.[31] The Kabbalists were of course concerned with the mystical meaning of the redemption in which the true meaning of the event is revealed for the first time. (Incidentally, in keeping with what I said at the outset, the concept is not thereby in the least divested of its historical, national, and social character.) They too must deal with the question of the restorative and the utopian elements in the redemption: it is they who often give special emphasis to the relation of the End to the beginning of all things. The restorative factor here very often receives not so much a purely historical character as that of the restoration of an interrupted initial unity and harmony of all things. But it is of course true that a restored unity simply is not the original one, and so it is not surprising that the utopian element, in multiple forms, expresses itself in new formulations or symbols. In the redemption lights shine forth from within the universe which until then had remained hidden inside their source.[32] There are locked-up realms of the divine which will not be opened until that time, and they make the state of redemption infinitely richer and more fulfilled than any initial state.

The utopian content of the Messianic redemption as a non-restorative state of the world is continued in the Jewish mystical tradition of the Kabbalists and Hasidim. It is preserved, above all, in an awareness of the strictly paradoxical nature—from our point of view—of the renewed Messianic existence, about which the mystics have written so much. The arrival of the Messiah himself is tied to impossible, or at any rate highly paradoxical, conditions, probably never expressed in a more melancholy and humanly contorted way than in this sharpened expression of a saying from the *Zohar:* the Messiah will not come until the tears of Esau will be exhausted.[33] Of all the conditions for redemption, truly the most surprising and at the same time the most impossible! For the tears of Esau are those which, according to Genesis 27:38, he shed when Jacob deceived him to gain Isaac's blessing. There has never been a lack of such profound dicta. Among the most famous sayings of this kind are those of Rabbi Israel of Rizhin,

that in the days of the Messiah man will no longer quarrel with his fellow but with himself, or his bold suggestion that the Messianic world will be a world without images, "in which the image and its object can no longer be related"—which apparently means that a new mode of being will emerge which cannot be pictorially represented. All these are forms by which the utopian element gives evidence of its continuing power, and the writings of the Kabbalists are full of attempts to fathom its unfathomable depths.

One word more, by way of conclusion, should be said about a point which, to my mind, has generally received too little attention in discussions of the Messianic idea. What I have in mind is the price demanded by Messianism, the price which the Jewish people has had to pay out of its own substance for this idea which it handed over to the world. The magnitude of the Messianic idea corresponds to the endless powerlessness in Jewish history during all the centuries of exile, when it was unprepared to come forward onto the plane of world history. There's something preliminary, something provisional about Jewish history; hence its inability to give of itself entirely. For the Messianic idea is not only consolation and hope. Every attempt to realize it tears open the abysses which lead each of its manifestations *ad absurdum.* There is something grand about living in hope, but at the same time there is something profoundly unreal about it. It diminishes the singular worth of the individual, and he can never fulfill himself, because the incompleteness of his endeavors eliminates precisely what constitutes its highest value. Thus in Judaism the Messianic idea has compelled a *life lived in deferment,* in which nothing can be done definitively, nothing can be irrevocably accomplished. One may say, perhaps, the Messianic idea is the real anti-existentialist idea. Precisely understood, there is nothing concrete which can be accomplished by the unredeemed. This makes for the greatness of Messianism, but also for its constitutional weakness. Jewish so-called *Existenz* possesses a tension that never finds true release; it never burns itself out. And when in our history it does discharge, then it is foolishly decried (or, one might say, unmasked) as "pseudo-Messianism." The blazing landscape of redemption (as if it were a point of focus) has concentrated in itself the historical outlook of Judaism. Little wonder that overtones of Messianism have accompanied the modern Jewish readiness for irrevocable action in the concrete realm, when it set out on the utopian return to Zion. It is a readiness which no longer allows itself to be fed

on hopes. Born out of the horror and destruction that was Jewish history in our generation, it is bound to history itself and not to meta-history; it has not given itself up totally to Messianism. Whether or not Jewish history will be able to endure this entry into the concrete realm without perishing in the crisis of the Messianic claim which has virtually been conjured up—that is the question which out of his great and dangerous past the Jew of this age poses to his present and to his future.

The Messianic Idea in Kabbalism

THE NINETEENTH CENTURY, and nineteenth-century Judaism, have bequeathed to the modern mind a complex of ideas about Messianism that have led to distortions and counterfeits from which it is by no means easy to free ourselves. We have been taught that the Messianic idea is part and parcel of the idea of the progress of the human race in the universe, that redemption is achieved by man's unassisted and continuous progress, leading to the ultimate liberation of all the goodness and nobility hidden within him. This, in essence, is the content which the Messianic ideal acquired under the combined dominance of religious and political liberalism—the result of an attempt to adapt the Messianic conceptions of the prophets and of Jewish religious tradition to the ideals of the French Revolution.

Traditionally, however, the Messianic idea in Judaism was not so cheerful; the coming of the Messiah was supposed to shake the foundations of the world. In the view of the prophets and Aggadists, redemption would only follow upon a universal revolutionary disturbance, unparalleled disasters in which history would be dislodged and destroyed. The nineteenth-century view is blind to this catastrophic aspect. It looks only to progress toward infinite perfection. In probing into the roots of this new conception of the Messianic ideal as man's infinite progress and perfectibility, we find, surprisingly, that they stem from the Kabbalah.

When we study the Messianic ideal we simultaneously study the nature of the Diaspora, the Galut. The medieval Jew thought of redemption as a state that would be brought about by the reversal of all that had produced Galut. The Messianic ideal of the prophets of the Bible and other classical Jewish sources provided no precedent for this view. Both prophets and Aggadists con-

water to the house. The new one serves his rabbi; Chaim Pekeris, by calculating the movement of the ocean tides—a somewhat more progressive type of activity, so far as water is concerned.

5. What about memory and the faculty of speech? As for memory, we don't know how the old Golem scored. The new one certainly shows a great improvement—although he has, I am sorry to say, occasional lapses of memory and other momentary weaknesses which cause trouble to his makers. The progress of the new Golem is thus linked to a certain regression from the previous state. Adam never fell ill, according to the rabbis, and the same goes for the old Golem of the Kabbalists. The new one, alas, shows a deplorable propensity in this direction. And as for speech, and all that it implies—I mean the spontaneity of intelligence—both the old and the new Golem are found to be sadly lacking. Everybody speculates about what is to become of the more advanced forms of the Golem. But it seems that for the time being, and for quite some time to come, we are saddled with a Golem that will only do what he is told. There is still a long, long stretch ahead to that utopian figure of a Golem, about whom the famous cartoon in the *New Yorker* spoke. It showed two scientists standing in great embarrassment before this end-of-days Golem as they scanned the tape giving out his latest information. The caption read: "The damned thing says: *Cogito, ergo sum.*"

6. And this brings me to my last question: Can the Golem love? In an old book we read some sayings about the Golem attributed to the rabbi of Prague. Here is one of them: "The Golem was never ill, for he was immune to every impulse to do evil, from which all illness stems. And the Golem had to be created without the sexual urge; for, if he had had that instinct, no woman would have been safe from him." Now I have to leave it to you to answer this query. For I am really at a loss what to think.

All my days I have been complaining that the Weizmann Institute has not mobilized the funds to build up the Institute for Experimental Demonology and Magic which I have for so long proposed to establish there. They preferred what they call Applied Mathematics and its sinister possibilities to my more direct magical approach. Little did they know, when they preferred Chaim Pekeris to me, what they were letting themselves in for. So I resign myself and say to the Golem and its creator: develop peacefully and don't destroy the world. *Shalom.*

Notes

TOWARD AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE MESSIANIC IDEA IN JUDAISM

1. Cf. Joseph Klausner, *The Messianic Idea in Israel from its Beginning to the Completion of the Mishnah* (New York, 1955); Hugo Gressmann, *Der Messias* (Göttingen, 1929); Lorenz Dürr, *Ursprung und Ausbau der israelitisch-jüdischen Heilandserwartung* (Berlin, 1925); Willi Staerk, *Die Erlösererwartung in den östlichen Religionen* (Stuttgart, 1938); Sigmund Mowinckel, *He That Cometh: The Messianic Concept in the Old Testament and Later Judaism* (Oxford, 1956).

2. For the concept of the utopian, as discussed in the following, see above all the analyses of this category presented by Ernst Bloch in his two works: *Geist der Utopie* (Munich, 1918) and *Das Prinzip Hoffnung* (Berlin, 1954-59). Although many of Bloch's suggestions elicit great reservations, one must admire the energy and insight with which he has approached and carried through his discussion of utopianism. The elaborate Marxist montage of his second work stands in poorly concealed contradiction to the mystical inspiration which is basically responsible for Bloch's best insights. Not without a measure of courage, he has managed to draw his insights safely through a veritable jungle of Marxist rhapsodies.

3. Flavius Josephus, *Antiquities,* I, 70.

4. *Midrash Tanhuma,* Section *Mas'e,* Paragraph 4; *Midrash Bereshit Rabba,* ed. Theodor, p. 445.

5. Cf. G. G. Scholem, *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism* (New York and London, 1946), p. 72.

6. *Midrash Shir ha-Shirim Rabba,* VI, 10.

7. Sanhedrin 97a.

8. *Exodus Rabba,* XXV, 16.

9. *Midrash Tehillim* to Psalm 45:3.

10. Sanhedrin 98a.

11. Cf. the synoptical compilation of the pertinent material in Strack-Billerbeck, *Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch,* IV, 977-86.

12. End of the Mishnah tractate Sota.

13. Sanhedrin 98a.

14. *Shir ha-Shirim Rabba,* II, 7 (Cf. Ketubot 110a).

15. This legend, which for some strange reason is missing from M. J. Bin Gorion's *Der Born Judas,* was often printed as a small popular book. Cf. also my essay concerning it in *Zion,* V (Jerusalem, 1933), 124-30, as well as Z. Rubashov, "The Legend of Rabbi Joseph de la Reyna in the Sabbatian Tradition" (Hebrew), in *Eder Yakar* (Tel Aviv, 1947), pp. 97-118.

16. Karl Bornhausen, *Der Erlöser* (Leipzig, 1927), p. 74.

17. Siegmund Hurwitz, *Die Gestalt des sterbenden Messias* (Zurich, 1958).

18. Berakhot 34b.

19. An excellent discussion of the various nuances of this conception of the Messianic Torah in the Talmud and Midrash is contained in the monograph of W. D. Davies, *Torah in the Messianic Age* (Philadelphia, 1952).

20. Cf. the detailed presentation of the individual stages of this development in Joseph Sarachek, *The Messianic Ideal in Medieval Jewish Literature* (New York, 1932).

21. In the Thirteen Principles which Maimonides set forth in the introduction to Sanhedrin, Ch. 10, of his Mishnah commentary, we find the following: "The twelfth principle concerns the Days of the Messiah. It consists of believing and recognizing as true that he will come and not thinking that he will delay. 'Though he tarry, wait for him.' And one must not determine a time for him nor speculate on biblical verses in order to bring about his coming. And the sages said: 'May the spirit of those who calculate the End be extinguished.' One should rather believe in him . . . magnify and love him, and pray for him, in accordance with the words of all the prophets from Moses to Malachi. And whoever is in doubt concerning him or belittles his glory, he has denied the Torah which explicitly promises his coming."

22. Cf. the German translation by Moritz Zobel in his excellent compilation, *Der Messias und die messianische Zeit in Talmud und Midrasch* (Berlin, 1938), pp. 90-91.

23. Sanhedrin 91b.

24. The word can mean: as a fundamental principle; but also (in Zobel's view): as an important object of attention.

25. In his *Epistle to Yemen,* where Maimonides pays great heed to the eschatological requirements of the tradition which he later eliminates, this element of miracle still has its place, though it is presented in very sober fashion. With manifest conservative regard for his Yemenite readers, Maimonides here formulates the difference between the prophetic rank of the Messiah and that of the other prophets from Moses to Malachi in this way: "But his unique characteristic is that when he appears God will cause all the kings of the earth to tremble and be afraid at the report of him. Their kingdoms will fall; they will be unable to stand up against him, neither by the sword nor by revolt. They will neither defame nor slander him, but they will be frightened into silence when they behold his miracles and wonders. He will slay anyone who tries to kill him and none shall escape or be saved from him. . . . That king will be very mighty. All peoples will maintain peace with him, all nations will serve him on account of the great justice and the miracles which issue from his hand. All the words of Scripture testify to his success and to our success with him." (*Iggeret Teman,* ed. David Hollub [Vienna, 1875], p. 48.)

26. Abraham Cardozo, the very differently oriented follower of Sabbatai Zevi, surprisingly referred to this discussion of Maimonides even after his apostasy. He sought to support his thesis that it is in the nature of the Messiah for him to behave in such fashion as to nurture doubts regarding the legitimacy of his mission until his authority is finally established.

27. The conception of the Last Judgment plays no role at all in Maimonides' writings. There is no future retribution in the sense of eschatological reward and punishment.

28. Of course he also excludes conceptions like that of the preexistence of the Messiah and of the Messiah ben Joseph.

29. *Megillat ha-Megalle,* ed. Adolf Poznanski and Julius Guttmann (Berlin, 1924).

30. Cf. Scholem, *op. cit.,* p. 248.

31. Cf. also *ibid.,* pp. 244-51, 278-86, and *Eranos Jahrbuch,* XVII, 325-33.

32. This conception, especially prevalent in the Lurianic School, was earlier developed by Moses Cordovero in his *Elima Rabbati* (Brody, 1881), ff.46c/d. In the older Kabbalah it is especially the now uninterrupted *hieros gamos* of *tiferet* and *malkhut* which characterizes the mystical aspect of the Messianic age.

33. As a citation from the *Zohar* in Benjamin of Zlasitz, *Ture Zahav* (Mohilev, 1816), ff. 56b. The formulation makes more pointed a passage in *Zohar,* II, 12b.

THE CRISIS OF TRADITION IN JEWISH MESSIANISM

1. Cf. "Revelation and Tradition as Religious Categories in Judaism" (this volume, pp. 282-303).

2. Victor Aptowitzer, *Parteipolitik der Hasmonäerzeit im rabbinischen und pseudoepigraphischen Schrifttum* (Vienna, 1927).

3. Aage Bentzen, *Messias, Moses Redivivus* (Zurich, 1948).

4. George Foot Moore, *Judaism in the First Centuries of the Christian Era* (Cambridge, Mass., 1927), I, 271. Despite the profound