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THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CONCEPT OF SUFFERING  
IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

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CHAPTER I  
THE INTRODUCTION

# THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CONCEPT OF SUFFERING IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

## CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

### A. The Subject

#### 1. The Subject Stated

The problem of suffering has been one of the perplexing phases of life for centuries and generations past. It has disturbed the believer and the agnostic, the young and the old, the saved and the unsaved. However, as the Bible student searches the Scriptures, he finds much light shed on the problem that otherwise causes man to despair of and defame God.

There appears to be a development of the concept of suffering from the primitive concept of a god of wrath to a God-given revelation of one who punishes with reason and purpose of ultimate value.

Thus the problem of this thesis is one of research to determine wherein there is a development, the various aspects of this development and to discover

its pattern.

## 2. The Subject Justified

From one viewpoint, John Stuart Mill has posed the problem for the modern theist when he calls it, "the impossible problem of reconciling the infinite benevolence and justice with infinite power in the Creator of such a world as this" 1

Although the problem is stated by Mill in such a strong fashion, the modern Biblical student cannot follow his "impossible" solution.

O.E. Oesterley and Theodore H. Robinson have further contributed to the statement of the problem at hand in these words:

We are forced to admit that, though we have light on the problem, and though for many its pressure is no longer crushing, we have as yet found no answer which we can regard as finally valid and satisfying to the human mind. Nevertheless, even if a conclusive answer to the great question has not been suggested, by grappling with its development much light has been thrown on the relation between man and God; and this we can trace in the Hebrew religion. 2

The above quoted words both of Mill and Oesterley and Robinson give a measure of awareness to the difficulty of the problem which presents itself. This problem is further emphasized in the words of Paul Troutman Bahner, which are here quoted:

- . . . . .
1. Mill, John Stuart: Essay on Tehism, Part II, p.80
  2. Oesterley, O.E. and Theodore H. Robinson. The Hebrew Religion, p.308



These early Hebrews looked upon their sufferings and disasters as tokens of divine anger. In the very earliest stage misfortune befell a person not because of any sin he had committed, but because of the fitful wrath of some deity. This was true among the Semites in general, for they conceived of their deities as being subject to impulses, and not guided by any fixed principles. However, this stage of thought disappeared when Israel appeared on the scene. Among the early Israelites the problem of suffering is closely related to the doctrine of sin, guilt and punishment. In fact throughout the entire Old Testament these three go hand in hand and reveal a changing consciousness as time transpires. 1

The thesis herein proposed is that there is a development of the concept of suffering in the Old Testament.

H. Wheeler Robinson rightly emphasizes the importance of the subject at hand in these words, "The noblest creation of Old Testament religion" 2

The importance of the subject has been recognized for generations by theologians, by philosophers, and by other individuals disturbed by the ever recurring pressure of suffering.

A correct view of suffering in the Old Testament is essential to the Christian in his interpretation of the New Testament. In order to fully appreciate its outreach, and implications, an awareness of the development in the consciousness of the Old Testament characters is basic.

. . . . .

1. Bahner, Paul Troutman: The Problem of Suffering in the Epistles of St. Paul, pp. 9,10
2. Robinson, H. Wheeler: The Religious Ideas of the Old Testament, p.176

The need for a clearer concept of the subject and appreciation of its ramifications comes to the modern pastor in the requests to preach on or speak about suffering, its source, its purpose, and its effect on human life.

### 3. The Subject Delimited

The subject as stated delimits itself to the development of the concept of suffering in the Old Testament. Selected and representative writings from the Old Testament will be used as the basis for this writing.

The attempt here is not to present every evidence of suffering in the Old Testament; for neither time nor space would thus permit. However, the essential passages will be dealt with in their historical sequence.

Nor will the attempt be made to include all the historical background which leads up to the concept of suffering in the Old Testament, but the proposed plan is to present in three definite steps the development of the great concept of suffering.

Thus the limitation will remain within the scope of these three main divisions or steps of development; The Concept of Suffering as Punitive, The Concept of Suffering as Disciplinary, and The Concept of Suffering as Redemptive. As will be noted this is a theological and ideological development on the part of the

people within defined periods of time.

#### B. The Sources For The Study

The sources for the study will basically include Old Testament selections which the writer has found best portray and reveal the development of the concept of suffering. One or more such references or citations will be made for each step or portion of such step as is deemed sufficient to make clear the progression of the thought and concept. Others will be selected for their particular or peculiar contribution to the problem.

Generally speaking, the sources for the study are from well-known passages of the Old Testament or familiar characters, which often have not been correlated to demonstrate a progressive concept in the hearts and minds of the people concerned.

The writer has not been limited to primary sources alone. There has been consultation with many an individual as well as the free use of libraries and scholarly writings on one or more phases of the subject.

The names of authors and writings thus consulted are listed elsewhere in this thesis.

Thus thoughts have been gleaned from every available source. As a consequence, various "schools of thought" are quoted, from the extreme liberal to the conservative Biblical scholar. In the final analysis the concept will stand or fall only as it is rightly related to the true interpretation of the Old Testament; for it is the Old Testament concept that this thesis seeks to unfold.

### C. Method Of Procedure

This thesis will consist of four main parts; A study of Punitive Suffering, Disciplinary Suffering, Redemptive Suffering, and the Summary and Conclusion.

In the second chapter, the Old Testament Concept of Suffering as Punitive, there will be three main divisions dealing with the periods of the Theocracy, the Monarchy, and the Exile and Hierarchy or Post-exilic Period.

The third chapter, The Old Testament Concept of Suffering as Disciplinary, will have the same divisions as the first, but there will be a major empha-

sis placed on the problem as revealed through Job.

The Old Testament concept of Redemptive Suffering will be considered in the fourth chapter. Here again the same periods of division will be basic; however, the stress will be on Isaiah's contribution in the well-known fifty-third chapter of the book of Isaiah.

In the final and fifth chapter, a concise summary of the findings will be stated and the conclusion presented. This conclusion will seek to enumerate the essential logical development of the subject, arriving at the climax in the redemptive aspect. The theological ladder will thus progress from the Punitive to the Disciplinary and finally to the height of Redemptive Suffering.

In many instances the chronological place of the various books is generally accepted. However, in some cases the dates of the book or books have not been finally established. The writer has carefully analyzed this aspect of the problem and followed the most generally accepted pattern. In the situations where disagreement is still strong or date doubtful the change of date by a few years one way or the other will in no large measure affect this study or its results. A chronological arrangement of material is carried out to facilitate a systematic, orderly search for the develop-

ment of the concept of suffering.

## CHAPTER II

### THE PUNITIVE CONCEPT OF SUFFERING IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

## CHAPTER II

### THE PUNITIVE CONCEPT OF SUFFERING IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

#### A. The Introduction

In this chapter there will be three main historical divisions, namely, the period of the Theocracy, the period of the Monarchy, and the period of the Exile and Hierarchy or Post-exilic Period. The focus of consideration will be representative writings from the Old Testament which best portray the punitive concept of suffering in these three periods of history.

The chronological use of Scripture seems to be the procedure that best facilitates as clear an understanding of the ideological as possible. Although the dates of some books of the Bible have not been finally and conclusively established, a few years one way or the other will not materially in the final analysis affect the true picture as given in this thesis.



B. The Punitive Concept of Suffering during  
the Period of the Theocracy

1. The Punitive Concept of Suffering during the  
Pre-patriarchal and the Patriarchal Period

a. The Pre-patriarchal Period

1. The Period of Adam

The experience of Adam and Eve in the Garden is the first evidence of suffering in the Old Testament. Their sin of disobedience was punished in such a manner as to have an effect of suffering on all of life. In the third chapter of Genesis the record says:

Unto the woman He said, I will greatly multiply thy pain and thy conception; in pain thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee. And unto Adam He said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in toil shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return. 1

The punitive aspect of suffering is very strongly emphasized to both Adam and Eve. Their sin against God was the cause, and its effect would be felt throughout all time to come.

God here used physical pain and death as well as spiritual death as punishment for the sin of the will.

. . . . .

1. Genesis 3:16-19

Man had the choice of following God's commands and will or of choosing disobedience and thus suffering the known consequence. The consequence was suffering, even unto death, because man chose the path of disobedience.

The punitive concept of suffering is thus present in the first period of Biblical history. Curses are pronounced in the Garden on the serpent, the man, and the woman. There sin originated; there also began man's suffering, built right into the very structure of life itself.

## 2. The Period of Noah

In the account of the Flood recorded in Genesis, chapters six through nine inclusively, the reason for the suffering that God allowed is plainly stated as wickedness. The punitive measure was the flood. The account is given of the history of the early families. Man began to multiply and in this growth sin continued to be prominent. Every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil. This was not pleasing in the sight of the Creator which is evidenced in the sixth chapter of Genesis:

And Jehovah saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented Jehovah that He had made man on the earth, and it grieved Him at His heart. And Jehovah said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the ground; both man and

beast and creeping things, and birds of the heavens;  
for it repenteth me that I have made them. 1

Again the willful disobedience of God's law was the basis for the punishment which was all-inclusive except for Noah's family. This is the second major emphasis on the concept of suffering in the Old Testament.

#### b. The Patriarchal Period

In this patriarchal period the strong consciousness of wrong being punished by a just God is revealed through Abraham's Sodom experience. This experience is found narrated in the eighteenth chapter of Genesis:

And Jehovah said, Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous - - - and Abraham drew near and said, Wilt thou consume the righteous with the wicked? - - - That be far from Thee to slay the righteous with the wicked, that so the righteous should be as the wicked; that be far from Thee: shall not the Judge of all the earth do right? 2

Abraham is here seen pleading for mercy on behalf of Sodom. There is no question as to the guilt and the punishment that is justly due Sodom. However, Abraham seeks to save the righteous ones in the midst of the terrible punitive measures which God has threatened the wicked due to their wickedness.

. . . . .

1. Genesis 6:5-7  
Genesis 6:1-9:17
2. Genesis 18:20,23,25

## 2. The Punitive Concept of Suffering during the Mosaic Period

### a. The Period in Egypt

In the Old Testament the story of Pharaoh and the Egyptians holding Israel in bondage presents one of the clearest demonstrations of the consequences of sin, and the suffering that follows deliberate disobedience and persistent disregard of the Divine and His law.

In the twelfth chapter of Exodus the climax of the experience of suffering as punitive in the lives of the Egyptians, their leaders, Israel, and Moses, comes in such a forceful manner that it is deemed essential to quote at this point:

And it came to pass at midnight, that Jehovah smote all the first-born in the land of Egypt, from the first-born of Pharaoh that sat on his throne unto the first-born of the captive that was in the dungeon; and all the first-born of cattle. And Pharaoh rose up in the night, he, and all his servants, and all the Egyptians; and there was a cry in Egypt; for there was not a house where there was not one dead. And he called for Moses and Aaron by night, and he said, rise up, get you forth from among my people, both ye and the children of Israel; and go, serve Jehovah as ye have said. 1

Pharaoh knew that the plagues, now climaxed in the worst of all plagues, the death of the first-born, came as punishment for the sin of stubbornness against God and His people. His sin was against the will of

. . . . .

God.(1) His sin was personal , but it was also reflected in the national life of his people. The consequence became progressively worse as the stubborn will continued to assert itself. God, who had warned and who was the God who did not simply punish promiscuously , a God who was concerned, and loving, and patient, had to exercise such punitive measures that finally brought suffering in great measure upon the whole nation. 2

The concept of suffering here is not only national but also individual. The individual aspect is clear in these words; "For there was not a house where there was not one dead." (3) Each home suffered for the sins that had been so glaringly and flauntingly committed by Pharaoh against Jehovah God. (4) Not a single home escaped this suffering.

#### b. The Period in the Wilderness

As a result of the terrible and unbearable measures that were imposed on the Egyptians, the Israelites were given to see the effectiveness of the warnings in Exodus the twentieth chapter which reads as follows:

. . . . .

1. Exodus 7:14-19
2. Exodus 7:20-12:28
3. Exodus 12:30
4. Exodus 11:9 and 12:29

Thou shalt not bow down thyself unto them, nor nor serve them; for Jehovah thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, upon the third and upon the fourth generation of them that hate me, and showing loving-kindness unto thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments. 1

Apparently this was taken to be direct suffering for sinful conduct on the part of the people. God continued to appear as the just God who rendered punishment, in the form of suffering, for all sins against Him.

Bahner states it in this wise:

On the whole the emphasis is on a practical view of life in which transgressions of divine ordinances were to be followed by earthly misfortunes and physical suffering, while obedience was to be followed by happiness in life. 2

The punishments that are described in the Old Testament for the terrible sins committed by both the people of God and the infidel were met with measures that reached far into every recess of society, and went even further; for they were passed on down to the "third and fourth generation". The effects of the sins of the people would be felt for generations to come. This was to impress upon the Israelites the importance of living in right relationship to the God, who had thus far so abundantly provided for their release and escape, but who at the same time stressed the punitive concept of suffering.

. . . . .

1. Exodus 20:5
2. Bahner, op. cit., p.10

There was no excuse for the Israelites as individuals or for Israel as a nation to transgress the will of this God. He had not only given them the commandments but He now gave them ample warnings as to what would come their way in the form of suffering and punishment if they neglected Him.

### 3. The Punitive Concept of Suffering during the Period of the Conquest and Judges

Punitive suffering is realistically portrayed in this period especially by the oppression to which Israel is subjected due to its evil in the sight of God.

In the third chapter of the book of Judges the following account is given:

And the children of Israel again did that which was evil in the sight of Jehovah; and Jehovah strengthened Eglon the king of Moab against Israel, because they had done that which was evil in the sight of Jehovah. And He gathered unto him the children of Ammon and Amalek; and he went and smote Israel, and they possessed the city of palm trees. And the children of Israel served Eglon the king of Moab eighteen years. 1

Similar oppressions due to evil are given with a difference only in the medium of punishment and the duration of this suffering.

. . . . .

1. Judges 3:12-14

Under the king of Cannan the oppression lasted twenty years. (1) Under Midian the suffering lasted seven years. (2) Under the Philistines the punitive measure lasted forty years. 3

Thus one is made aware of the national suffering of Israel due to its sins.

C. The Punitive Concept of Suffering during the Period of the Monarchy

1. The Punitive Concept of Suffering during the Period of the United Kingdom

a. The Period of David

In Second Samuel David reveals his expectation of punishment for sin, but pleads the effect on the people:

And David spake unto Jehovah when he saw the angel that smote the people, and said, Lo, I have sinned, and I have done perversely ; but these sheep, what have they done? let thy hand I pray thee, be against me, and against my father's house. 4

David here sheds light on his concept of suffering. He believed that the deserved suffering should be his, according to the "orthodox" view of suffering in the Old Testament. According to this view, David's error in taking the census against custom meant suffering and

. . . . .

1. Judges 4:1-4
2. Judges 6:1-10
3. Judges 13:1 ff
4. II Samuel 24:17



punishment for him. However, David prayed that the national as a whole might be spared. He questioned when he saw what had been done to the people, but admitted that he himself deserved what they received.

The strongest contribution to this view of punitive suffering in this period is given in the David and Bathsheba narrative in Second Samuel eleven and twelve:

And when the wife of Uriah heard that her husband was dead, she made lamentation for her husband. And when the mourning was past, David sent and took her home to his house, and she became his wife and bare him a son. But the thing that David had done displeased Jehovah.(1) Wherefore hast thou despised the word of Jehovah, to do that which is evil in His sight? thou hast smitten Uriah the Hittite with the sword, and hast taken his wife to be thy wife, and hast slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon. Now therefore the sword shall never depart from thy house, because thou hast despised me, and hast taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy wife. Thus saith Jehovah, Behold, I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house; and I will take thy wives before thine eyes, and give them unto thy neighbor, and he shall lie with thy wives in the sight of this sun. 2

God speaks to David through Nathan the prophet. The message is definitely a message of punishment for David's sin with Uriah and his wife Bathsheba. The measures are harsh and yet David accepts them as affliction due to sin.

. . . . .

1. II Samuel 11:26-27
2. II Samuel 12:9-11

Additional references are suggested in the footnotes at this point which bring added emphasis on the punitive concept here considered.(1) Special mention is made of the Psalms, which reveal a great deal of David's consciousness of his responsibility not only as a leader but as an individual in the presence of God, and what God specifically demanded . 2

Of all the Old Testament leaders, David gives as clear an expression of the punitive concept of suffering as does any other. David, a strong man of God, standing as leader, sees that there is more to life than simply to gratify the flesh, and that in pursuing the goals set up by God he needed to reveal consistent responsibility of word and deed. Faith demanded obedience, and obedience demanded a consistent life that would exemplify what God called for in His demands upon both the people and the individual. 3

#### b. The Period of Solomon

During this period the same emphasis is maintained in the writings of Solomon and the history of his life and rule. The concept of suffering as punishment for sin is especially prominent in the twenty-fourth chapter of the book of Proverbs:

. . . . .

1. Psalm 51
2. Psalm 38
3. Psalm 37

For a righteous man falleth seven times, and riseth up again; But the wicked are overthrown by calamity. Rejoice not when thine enemy falleth, And let not thy heart be glad when he is overthrown; Lest Jehovah see it, and it displease Him, and He turn away His wrath from him. Fret not thyself because of evil-doers; Neither be thou envious of the wicked: For there shall be not reward to the evil man; The lamp of the wicked shall be put out. My son, fear thou Jehovah and the king; And company not with them that are given to change: For their calamity shall rise suddenly; And the destruction from them both, who knoweth it? 1

Here two phases are of major significance; "the lamp of the wicked shall be put out," and "their calamity shall rise suddenly." Solomon was quite aware of the punitive measures that were imminent. Sin brought its consequences. Disobedience was rewarded with retribution.

In First Kings Solomon's personal experiences are expressed in the following manner:

And God raised up another adversary unto him, Rezon the son of Elida, who had fled from his lord, Hadadezer king of Zobah: and he gathered men unto him and became captain over a troop, when David slew them of Zobah: and they went to Damascus and dwelt therein, and reigned in Damascus. And he was an adversary to Israel all the days of Solomon, besides the mischief that Hadad did: and he abhorred Israel, and reigned over Syria. 2

God exercises the punishment for Solomon's apostasy. The medium God used was Rezon, another leader who rose up against Solomon. Sin thus continued to be the cause for punitive suffering.

. . . . .

1. Proverbs 24:16-22
2. I Kings 11:23-25 also II Kings 21:13 , 24:3-4

## 2. The Punitive Concept of Suffering during the Period of the Divided Kingdom

### a. The Prophecy of Isaiah

The convictions of the eighth century prophets have been discussed by many as having contributed much to the concept of suffering.

H. Wheeler Robinson says of them:

The eighth century prophets made some important contributions to the problem. They emphasized severely the monotheistic conception of God and identified morality with the true worship of Jahweh. They proclaimed that Jahweh administered human affairs on moral principles. As a result every experience of suffering was ascribed to the direct will of God, and interpreted by the simple and obvious principle of moral retribution. It was a fundamental tenet of old Israelitish religion that all suffering was caused by some known or unknown offence against God. 1

T.K. Cheyne writes thus on this matter: "By obeying the command of God the community might ensure for itself God's favor and protection". 2

The Assyrian King seemed to Isaiah to be the appointed minister of God's wrath; for in Isaiah ten is written:

Ho, Assyrian, the rod of mine anger, the staff in whose hand is mine indignation!- I will send him against a profane nation, and against the people of my wrath will I give him charge to take the spoil and to take the prey, and to tread them down like the mire of the streets. 3

. . . . .

1. Robinson, H. Wheeler: The Religious Ideas of the Old Testament, p. 170
2. Cheyne, T.K.: Jewish Religious Life, p. 163
3. Isaiah 10:5-6 also 4:4 & 6:11 & 7:21

In this paragraph from Isaiah the attempt is made to show the extent to which the punitive aspect of suffering was carried. The extent to which one nation was used as retribution for sin against another nation or people is here demonstrated. In the same way that the conflict developed in relation to the Egyptians and God, so now the pendulum swings and the forces of evil are used as an instrument to carry out the punitive measures that morally belonged to the people of sin and disobedience.

Isaiah saw the Assyrians as the "hand" that was used of God for the fulfillment of His warnings against Israel's pride and iniquity. Certainly here are added substantial evidences of the widespread concept of suffering as punitive in the Old Testament. It meant dire suffering for sins committed against God. Such was the cry of the prophet Isaiah, to warn the peoples of the results of their persistent and willful disregard of God's law.

Isaiah's further contribution to the concept of suffering will be dealt with in later chapters in which even deeper interpretations of suffering will be found.

. . . . .

b. The Prophecy of Jeremiah

Now there appears to be additional evidence of individualism in the personal responsibility before a just God.

A.S. Peake gives an awareness to the contribution that Jeremiah has made in the following manner:

It was this life of unceasing sorrow, this isolation and misunderstanding, that forces the prophet from man to God. Thus he came to understand religion as being a personal relationship between himself and God, and the individual as standing in direct responsibility. <sup>1</sup>

Peake further states, "The emphasis with Jeremiah is on a personal religion!" (2) A personal religion also demands a personal solution to suffering.

Otto J. Baab summarizes one viewpoint as to Jeremiah's contribution on suffering:

He anticipates the later question of Job when he cries, "Why is my pain unceasing, my wound incurable, refusing to be healed? Wilt thou really be to me like a treacherous brook?" (3) and again, "Why came I out of the womb, to see trouble and sorrow?" <sup>4</sup>

It was always possible to find enough sin in a nation as a whole to justify the suffering and punishment which came its way, but at the same time, the individual stood also in the presence of God, one to be reckoned with in a real way, when it came to suffering. As a part of the group or the nation, the individual faced trouble and suffering as his just

1. Peake, A.S.: The Problem of Suffering in the O.T.p.14
2. Ibid, p.27
3. Jeremiah 31:29-31
4. Jeremiah 20:18

reward for sin. Jeremiah gives us his concept of the "established formula", that all suffering is deserved punishment , when he calls on the people in relation to the coming of the Chaldeans and their continued victories. 1

Whether the stress is placed on the individual or the nation in Jeremiah's writings ,(2) it can be very safely concluded that his concept of suffering was definitely that it was a punitive measure for sins committed. This concept is further evident in another representative account in the fifteenth chapter of the book of Jeremiah:

And I will cause them to be tossed to and fro among all the kingdoms of the earth, because of Manasseh the son of Hezekiah, king of Judah, for that which he did in Jerusalem. 3

The punishment and suffering will come to "them" for what he (Manasseh) did in Jerusalem. There could be no other interpretation that would more closely fit this passage when taken in its context. The reason and the punishment are given directly in this verse. Wrongdoing was the cause of the punitive suffering that followed.

. . . . .

1. Jeremiah 32:28-32
2. Jeremiah 31:29-30
3. Jeremiah 15:4

c. The Prophecy of Hosea

Hosea is very clear and precise in his constant emphasis on the punitive suffering that Israel must face due to its persistent sinfulness and willful departure from God's ordinances.

From the fourth chapter of Hosea these words are quoted:

There is naught but swearing and breaking faith, and killing, and stealing, and committing adultery; they break out and blood toucheth blood. Therefore shall the land mourn, and every one that dwelleth therein shall languish, with the beasts of the field and the birds of the heavens; yea the fishes of the sea also shall be taken away. 1

At this point there is added stress by the specific enumeration of sins. The sins mentioned for which punitive suffering will come are, swearing, breaking faith, killing, stealing, adultery, and the like. It is a direct result of such open rebellion against God and such immoral practices that the concept of suffering as punitive continues to be stressed by such a man as Hosea. Hosea's interpretation is typical of the interpretation that the prophets of this period give to the terrible suffering that is imminent. 2

In his further rebuke of the people, Hosea demonstrates by his prophecy, the awful details of the

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1. Hosea 4:2-3
2. Hosea 3-5



punishment that shall fall on them as punishment for the long catalogue of sins mentioned in the previous paragraph . In the same chapter these words are found:

And I will punish them for their ways, and will requite them their doings. And they shall eat and not have enough; they shall play the harlot, and shall not increase; because they have left off taking heed to Jehovah. 1

Withholding blessings is another way in which punishment for sin was exercised by God. The medium used was that of natural phenomena. 2

#### d. The Prophecy of Amos

In the midst of wickedness and sin of all kinds the prophets recall to the minds of the people the punitive steps that God had taken and would take against such willful and open sin.

Among the definite measures of punishment thus spoken, Amos gives direct warning when in the third chapter these words are recorded:

Hear this word which Jehovah hath spoken against you, O children of Israel, against the whole family which I brought up out of the land of Egypt, saying, You only have I known of all the families of the earth; therefore I will visit upon you all your iniquities. 3

. . . . .

1. Hosea 4:9-10
2. Hosea 4:7-10
3. Amos 3:1-2

Further references in which Amos predicts captive punitive suffering are found in chapter five (1) and in chapter six:(2) Specific reference to the captive suffering is also given in the following quotation from Amos:

Therefore shall they now go captive with the first that go captive; and the revelry of them that stretched themselves shall pass away. The Lord Jehovah hath sworn by himself, saith Jehovah the God of hosts: I abhor the excellency of Jacob and hate his palaces ; therefore will I deliver up the city with all that is therein. And it shall come to pass that if there remain ten men in one house, that they shall die. . . . For behold Jehovah commandeth , and the great house shall be smitten with breaches, and the little house with clefts. 3

The force of these passages is to show the reason for the captivity. Again it is quite evident that the sins of the people are at the root of all the suffering through which they will pass. The picture here is that of direct punishment for their sins.

#### e. The Prophecy of Joel

There has been much disagreement concerning the interpretation of Joel's discussion of the plague of locusts and their pertinence to the judgment of the nation, as found in the first two chapters of Joel.

. . . . .

1. Amos 5:27
2. Amos 6:7-11
3. Amos 6:7-9 and 11 and 9:7

There are, however, some very evident aspects which will strengthen the concept of suffering at this point. Joel in his short book is calling on the nation to return and repent before Jehovah in view of its desperately sinful condition.

In the first chapter the fifteenth verse ~~are~~ recorded these words of the prophet; "Alas for the day! for the day of Jehovah is at hand, and as destruction from the almighty shall it come!" The whole atmosphere gives the reader to see the awful condition that has existed, but also the terrible suffering that comes to those who continue in sin willfully.

There is at least a two-fold aspect of the punitive measures within this writing; first, there is a discussion of a historical event of locusts coming as a plague, and secondly, the warning of what will come if sin is not repented of immediately.

The terribleness of the visitation is strongly accentuated in in the first two chapters of the book of Joel. Anyone reading it cannot but get a glimpse of the sinful condition for which the nation was to be visited.

George Adam Smith comments thus in relation to this section of Joel:

One other proof of Joel's conviction of the religious meaning of the plague might also have been pled

by the early prophets, but certainly not in the terms in which Joel expresses it. Amos and Hosea had both described the destruction of the country's fertility in their day as God's displeasure on His people and (as Hosea puts it)-his divorce of His Bride from Himself. But by them the physical calamities were not threatened alone; banishment from the land and from the enjoyment of its fruits, was to follow upon drought, locusts and famine. 1

Mention should here be made of the possible later date of the book of Joel which is probably the reason for some of the differences expressed by Mr. Smith. However, suffice it to say that Joel gives weighty evidence for the continued and generally accepted concept of suffering as punitive. His contribution is that of the natural elements entering the judgment which become a real suffering for the nation. Joel would say, "All punishment is deserved punishment".

D. The Punitive Concept of Suffering during the Period of the Exile and the Hierarchy or Post-exilic Period

1. The Punitive Concept of Suffering during the Exilic Period

a. The Prophecy of Zephaniah

All punishment as deserved punishment for sin was corroborated by the prophet Zephaniah as the Scythians came. In the first chapter of the book of Zephaniah appear these striking and direct words of

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1. Smith, George Adam: The Book of the Twelve Prophets, pp. 407-408

judgment and prophecy:

The great day of Jehovah is near, it is near and hasteth greatly, even the voice of the day of Jehovah; the mighty man crieth there bitterly. That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of gloominess and clouds and thick darkness, a day of the trumpet and alarm, against the fortified cities, and against the high battlements. and I will bring distress upon men, that they shall walk like blind men, because they have sinned against Jehovah; and their blood shall be poured out as dust, and their flesh as dung. Neither their silver not even their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of Jehovah's wrath. But the whole land shall be devoured by the fire of his jealousy; for he will make an end of all them that dwell in the land. 1

The established conviction of suffering as punitive thus is championed further by this great prophet. Zephaniah warned of the imminent suffering for specific sins against God.

In the section of Scripture just preceding the above quoted passage, a detailed description is given of the punishment that was inevitable. Judah had continued willfully in sin, and as a consequence every phase of life would be affected in the punishment which the Day of Wrath would bring to it. The prophet, seeing what was so evident, calls upon the people for a return to God. 2

The prophet strengthens his warnings in the words of the third chapter:

. . . . .

1. Zephaniah 1:14-18
2. Zephaniah 1:1-14

Therefore wait ye for me saith Jehovah , until the day that I rise up to the prey; for my determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger; for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy. 1

#### b. The Prophecy of Ezekiel

The most frequently quoted passage from Ezekiel on the subject of suffering is probably the one taken from the eighteenth chapter:

The soul that sinneth it shall die: the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son; the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him , and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him. 2

Fosdick has pinpointed the contribution that Ezekiel has made to the concept of suffering in these words:

That one should suffer penalty for another's sin or for the group's sin as a whole seemed to him essentially unjust. So thorough-going was his revolt that he swung to the opposite extreme and in his individualism would say: No punishment from God would ever leak through from a guilty man to an innocent, even in the intimate relationships of the family; each is penalized exclusively for his own iniquity. 3

Although Mr. Fosdick may have over-emphasized the ex-

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1. Zephaniah 3:8
2. Ezekiel 18:20
3. Fosdick, op. cit., pp.67-68

tremity of the positions, yet there is definitely strong evidence that Ezekiel believed in punitive suffering. And though it is not the purpose of this writer to go into details on the various other aspects of suffering, yet the passages now considered bring out the convictions of this man of God.

Ezekiel came to this extreme statement of conviction when the condition in Babylonia became so severe that he had to call on the people to a personal responsibility for their sins. They had been blaming their fathers and their ancestry for the calamities that they endured. Ezekiel wants them to know their own individual responsibility. In the thirty-third chapter of his prophecy he says:

Yet the children of thy people say, but as for them their way is not equal. When the righteous turneth from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, he shall even die therein. And when the wicked turneth from his wickedness, and doeth that which is lawful and right and he shall live thereby. Yet ye say the way of the Lord is not equal. O house of Israel, I will judge you every one after his ways. 1

Robert Alexander Aytoun puts it in these words:

Ezekiel dealt with the problem and though he did not explain how it could be in accordance with the justice of Jehovah that the innocent should be suffering with the guilty, he taught that Jehovah was so just that each individual in his eyes was responsible for no one's sins but his own. 2

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1. Ezekiel 33:17-20
2. Aytoun, Robert Alexander: God in the Old Testament, p. 109

Oesterley and Robinson, in commenting on Ezekiel's contribution to the concept of suffering, have this to offer: "Ezekiel's individualism emphasizes man's own responsibility for his deeds, and he is thus the first to teach such a strong personal responsibility to such an extent." 1

Even in his consideration of the problem of suffering, Ezekiel seems to be more concerned about the name of Jehovah, and that His name should be vindicated.(2)

Peake has stressed this aspect of the problem by saying:

If he seeks to justify the ways of God to man, it is rather that God may be vindicated than that man's heart may be at peace. He never felt the pressure of the mystery of suffering; where Jehovah governed, to recognize a problem was to challenge the equity of His rule. 3

Ezekiel's concept may thus be stated in these simple and brief words, that he felt that doom when it strikes is just. "The soul that sinneth it shall die!" He asserted in unqualified terms the doctrine of individual retribution. This then is Ezekiel's contribution to the concept of suffering.

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1. Oesterley and Robinson: op.cit., p.252
2. Ezekiel 18:25-30 ; 14:14
3. Peake, op. cit., p.108



### c. The Prophecy of Daniel

The outstanding contribution that Daniel makes to the punitive concept of suffering is found in his prayer of penitence in the ninth chapter of the book of Daniel:

O Lord, to us belongeth confusion of face, to our kings, to our princes, and to our fathers, because we have sinned against thee. To the Lord our God belong mercies and forgiveness; for we have rebelled against him; neither have we obeyed the voice of Jehovah our God, to walk in his laws, which he set before us by his servants the prophets. Yea, all Israel have transgressed thy law, even turning aside, that they should not obey thy voice: therefore hath the curse been poured out upon us, and the oath that is written in the law of Moses the servant of God; for we have sinned against him. And he hath confirmed his words which he spoke against us, and against our judges that judged us, by bringing upon us a great evil; for under the whole heaven hath not been done as hath been done upon Jerusalem. 1

In this prayer there is true confession of the sin and the guilt of the people. In addition to this admission of sin and a repentance for it, Daniel gives the reason for the suffering (evil) that had befallen them. His interpretation of all the terrible things through which the people had to go was that it was the direct punishment of God for sin. Specifically he speaks of the rebellion and disobedience which they have evidenced against God.

Daniel does not hesitate to express his con-

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viction of the cause of the curse that the nation faced. In addition to this aspect there are two more which he calls confusion and great evil. These all came to the Israelites on account of their persistent and stubborn sins. Daniel stands thus as another prophet who claimed that suffering was definitely punitive and deserved punishment for sin. 1

On the basis of the findings thus far it is apparent to the writer that during this period of the Exile as in the other periods punitive suffering was an accepted "doctrine", and thus proclaimed by Zephaniah, Ezekiel, and Daniel.

## 2. The Punitive Concept of Suffering during the Post-exilic Period

### a. The Prophecy of Haggai

In relation to the concept of suffering an explanation of the promise to Zerubbabel is given in the second chapter of Haggai in these words:

And the word of Jehovah came the second time unto Haggai in the four and twentieth day of the month, saying, Speak to Zerubbabel the governor of Judah, saying, I will shake the heavens and the earth; and I will overthrow the throne of Kingdoms; and I will destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the nations; and I will overthrow the chariots and

. . . . .

1. Daniel 9:9

those that ride in them; and the horses and their riders shall come down, every one by the sword of his brother. 1

The people's unfaithfulness is reproved, and their suffering came as a result of their sin as seen by Haggai. In the preceding verses of this chapter Haggai has declared to the people the terrible guilt that is theirs because of their unfaithfulness to God. In his promise to Zerubbabel the overthrown kingdom as the consequence of sin is made clear. Haggai is the mouthpiece through whom God speaks to reveal His demand for obedience and His declaration of punishment for transgression.

#### b. The Prophecy of Zechariah

Zechariah interprets some of the experiences of suffering that Israel had undergone in the words of the seventh chapter:

And it is come to pass that, as he cried, and they would not hear, so they shall cry, and I will not hear, said Jehovah of hosts; but I will scatter them with a whirlwind among all the nations which they have not known. Thus the land was desolate after them, so that no man passed through nor returned; for they laid the pleasant land desolate. 2

The same interpretation of suffering is quoted in the thirteenth chapter:

Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith Jehovah of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered; and I will turn my hand upon the little ones. And it shall come to pass that in all the

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1. Haggai 2:20-22
2. Zechariah 7:13-14

land, saith 'ehovah, two parts therein shall be cut off and die.<sup>1</sup>

Zechariah of the post-exilic period manifests the hand of God standing in strong retribution for the iniquities of the people of Israel. Just as Haggai specifically announces the due reward for sin, so Zechariah declares that the suffering and punishment which Israel experienced was due to his waywardness.

#### c. The Prophecy of Ezra

The cause of the suffering of the exile to which Israel had been subjected is clearly given by Ezra when he says in the ninth chapter:

Since the days of our fathers we have been exceeding guilty unto this day; and for our iniquities have we, our kings, and our priests, been delivered into the hand of the kings of the lands, to the sword, to captivity and to plunder, and to confusion of face, as it is this day.<sup>2</sup>

Ezra admits the guilt of sin of the nation and specifically gives the consequences of the sin. In describing these consequences he says that they took the form of the sword, captivity, plunder, and confusion. This is his interpretation of what the captivity meant. In the Israelites' experiences they faced the sword, that is

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1. Zechariah 13:7-8
2. Ezra 9:7

suffering and death. They were subjected to plunder and abuse. They were finally routed in their confusion.

This interpretation of the exile is in line with the other prophets who had foretold what was to come. Here after the experiences have come and gone, Ezra reminds of the punitive suffering to which the Israelites had been subjected.

Ezra thus climaxes the consideration of the concept of punitive suffering by his ~~planning~~ writing and interpretation of the exile.

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#### E. Summary of Chapter on Punitive Suffering in the Old Testament

##### 1. The Period of the Theocracy

In this first division of the consideration of the concept of punitive suffering it was found that in the three subdivisions of this period the punitive measures came as retribution for sin. From the experience of Adam and Eve to the conquest under the Philistines, the individual as well as the nation suffered curses and punishment.

This concept of punitive suffering seems to have been built right into the very structure of life from the time of Adam's disobedience and fall in Eden.

It was found that there prevailed a progression from the individual to the group and then to the nation . The nation was responsible for its actions and faith, or lack of same. As the representative references were studied each one added further evidence to the great concept of punitive suffering.

However, the greatest number of passages in this period dealt with Israel as a nation in suffering as a consequence of sin. The means administered varied with the circumstances. God used the natural elements as well as the ~~social~~ group to carry out this punishment.

## 2. The Period of the Monarchy

Again in this division as in the preceding one, the concept of suffering as punitive progresses from David's personal experiences to the prophetic record of the national suffering as given by Isaiah.

The Period of David and Solomon during the united kingdom and the prophets during the divided kingdom produced much evidence of the stress and attention given to the punishment for sin.

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### 3. The Period of the Exile and Hierarchy or Post-exilic Period

In this third and final division it was again demonstrated that the interpretation of the prophets concerning suffering centered in a <sup>greater</sup> ~~greater or less~~ degree in the punitive aspect. In this section the prophets revealed their conviction in the matter of the exile and the post-exilic period of judgment.

Just as the first part of this chapter stressed the national aspect of punitive suffering so this last section stressed the individual aspect of suffering.

Zephaniah speaks of the Day of Wrath which would bring punishment for sin. Ezekiel's stress came as an individual responsibility and thus an individual punishment for sin. Daniel spoke of the rebellion that brought upon them God's specific condemnation.

Haggai in the post-exilic period looks back and sees the fulfillment of prophecy. He labels the individual's unfaithfulness in the nation as the direct cause of the exile and thus the direct cause of national but more specifically individual sin. Zechariah like Haggai points out Israel's terrible experiences as suffering for his waywardness. Ezra climaxes the chapter by pointing directly to the sword, captivity, plunder, and confusion as punitive measures.

for transgressions of God's law and will.

Thus there is seen a development of simple and then complex measures of punishment as the sins and iniquities of man reach a varied proportion in each period. National, group, and individual punishment came as due reward for national , group, and individual sin. If there is any one particular emphasis in this concept of suffering, it might be said that the trend was definitely from national or group suffering to that of personal or individual suffering for sin.

The following chapter will attempt to show that the people did not hold to only one concept of suffering but that there was a higher concept which prevailed as contemporaneous interpretation of suffering. This higher concept was that of the disciplinary concept of suffering which will be the burden of the following chapter.

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### CHAPTER III

## THE DISCIPLINARY CONCEPT OF SUFFERING IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

### CHAPTER III

#### THE DISCIPLINARY CONCEPT OF SUFFERING IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

##### A. The Introduction

The punitive concept of suffering did not hold the ultimate answer to the problem. It was not the most satisfying concept of this deep aspect of life. Although the punitive concept of suffering is present throughout the Old Testament there prevailed also a higher concept, namely, the disciplinary concept of suffering. The punitive concept contributed to and was foundational to the disciplinary concept of suffering.

The purpose of this thesis as stated in the general introduction is to show the development in the concept of suffering. It is the purpose of this chapter to show the second major emphasis in this development, which is the disciplinary concept. This disciplinary concept is not a separate step in a development but another interpretation of the problem of suffering which is simultaneously present with the puni-

tive concept of suffering.

In this regard Fosdick comments:

Two influences in Jewish thinking naturally converged to make this explanation of trouble acceptable. First, as the idea of God was heightened into nobler meanings, nothing for which He was responsible could be conceived as aimless and, therefore the suffering which He brought on men and nations could readily be thought of, not as retribution merely, but as purposeful discipline and chastisement. Second, the experienced fact was, then as now, that suffering well handled adds new dimensions to character, that indeed, the noblest attributes of man are inconceivable in an untroubled life. 1

To be sure, the punitive concept of suffering held the center of the field. However, there were those with deeper insight who saw in suffering a purposefulness hitherto unheralded.

The identical procedure of the second chapter will prevail. Scripture passages representative of the three periods will direct the reader's attention to the higher concept of disciplinary suffering in the period of the Theocracy, the Monarchy, and the Exile and Hierarchy or Post-exilic Period.

The term "discipline" is here used in its broader sense as "teaching, instruction, training which corrects, molds, strengthens or perfects." 2

Again references to secondary sources will supply supporting materials which will facilitate understanding this concept of disciplinary suffering in

1. Fosdick, op.cit., p.170

2. Webster: Webster Collegiate Dictionary, p.287

its deeper significance and implications.

B. The Disciplinary Concept of Suffering  
during the Period of the Theocracy

1. The Disciplinary Concept of Suffering  
during the Pre-patriarchal and the Patri-  
archal Periods

a. The Pre-patriarchal Period- the Period  
of Adam

The first indication of this concept is  
found early in the book of Genesis, where in the third  
chapter the Garden experience presents evidence of  
discipline in God's forceful dealing with Adam and  
Eve:

And Jehovah God said, Behold, the man is become  
as one of us, to know good and evil; and now,  
lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the  
tree of life, and eat, and live for ever: therefore  
Jehovah God sent him forth from the Garden of  
Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken.  
So He drove out the man; and He placed at the  
east of the garden of Eden the Cherubim, and the  
flame of a sword which turned every way, to keep  
the way of the tree of life. 1

In the twenty-second verse above, these words are sig-  
nificant; "God sent him forth from the garden of Eden  
to till the ground from whence he was taken." This re-  
veals an added purpose in the suffering that Adam had

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1. Genesis 3:22-24

already been told was punitive. He had already faced God's words of punishment for the sin of disobedience as seen in the second chapter of this thesis, but here he is driven out of the Garden.

The fact that Adam and Eve were not finally judged at this point but allowed to continue life outside the Garden clearly reveals the disciplinary aspect of God's punishment. God here certainly punished sin but not with the finality that could have been exercised. This points to a higher concept in the purpose of the suffering, namely, that man might be restored in the future.

Thus is born the first concept of disciplinary suffering in the history of man's relation to God. God who punished as a reward for sin punished also for a disciplinary effect on Adam.

#### b. The Patriarchal Period

Man's wickedness increased in outward evidence as time went on. In the eleventh chapter of Genesis the Tower of Babel experience serves to point out the second specific example of disciplinary suffering:

And Jehovah came down to see the city and the tower which the children of men builded. And Jehovah said, Behold, they are one people, and they have all one language; and this is what they begin to do: and

now nothing will be withholden from them, which they purpose to do. Come, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech. So Jehovah scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth; and they left off building the city. Therefore was the name of it called Babel; because Jehovah did there confound the language of all the earth; and from thence did Jehovah scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth. 1

The immediate purpose of the punishment of the confusion of tongues was "that they may not understand one another's speech." The second was to scatter them in order that they may not attempt further to blaspheme God by progressive evil desires and intents. At the same time that there is punitive suffering present there is strong discipline placed on the people by this confusion and scattering.

## 2. The Disciplinary Concept of Suffering during the Mosaic Period

### a. The Period in Egypt

In the early life of the Israelites under the domination of Egypt there is abundant testimony to the concept of disciplinary suffering. During the critical period in which the Israelites were in the balance and Moses was calling on Pharaoh for their deliverance the episodes of the Plagues are pertinent. In the seventh

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1. Genesis 11:5-9

through the twelfth chapters of Exodus the account is vividly portrayed. The verses which specifically reveal the purpose are here quoted with the suggestion that the entire six chapters be read:

But Pharaoh will not hearken unto you, and I will lay my hand upon Egypt, and bring forth my hosts, my people the children of Israel, out of the land of Egypt by great judgments. And the Egyptians shall know that I am Jehovah, when I stretch forth my hand upon Egypt, and bring out the children of Israel from among them.(1) And if thou refuse to let them go, behold I will smite all thy borders with frogs. 2

Further details that have the same purpose as the above quoted passages are here suggested by reference to the other plagues. 3

It may therefore be concluded on the basis of all the plagues that there was at least a two-fold purpose in sending them: first, in order that the Egyptians would release the Israelites; and secondly, that the Egyptians might know that it was Jehovah God with whom they were dealing. The severe punishments that brought such drastic lessons to the Egyptians became progressively worse, climaxing in the death of the first-born. It seems that the plagues fulfilled at least part of their purpose, the freedom of the slaves and a part-

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1. Exodus 7:4-5
2. Exodus 8:2
3. Exodus 8:16-19 , 8:21 , 9:3 , 9:14 , 10:4 , 12:29-30

ial consciousness and realization on the part of the Egyptians of the God with whom they dealt.

b. The Period in the Wilderness

The Israelites had experienced much at the hands of the Egyptians and through these experiences learned some severe lessons. But even with all their experiences of suffering and final deliverance they still had much to learn.

In their wanderings and in their worship they had manifested carelessness in fulfilling God's will. God had warned them time and again. Frequently they were chastised for their disobedience. God specifically warns them in the twenty-sixth chapter of Leviticus, where He also gives the purpose of the chastisement:

And I will set my face against you, and ye shall be smitten before your enemies: they that hate you shall rule over you; and ye shall flee when none pursueth you. And if ye will not yet for these things hearken unto me, then I will chastise you seven times more for your sins . . . And if by these things ye will not be reformed unto me, but will walk contrary unto me; then will I also walk contrary unto you; and I will smite you even I, seven times for your sins. 1

The purpose stated in the above verses is that they would hearken unto God. In spite of God's continued care and guidance they were disobedient and here in

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1. Leviticus 26:17-18, 23-24. See also 26:27-28



this portion they are punished in order that they would heed God. He says very definitely if what they had gone through will not cause them to hearken, He will chastise them seven times more.

God's clarion call is so strong that there is no excuse for them not to seek Him. Here God is seen as a loving, concerned, patient God who is using every measure to get them to seek righteousness in His presence. God's desire is for their good and He even goes to the effort of appealing to them through various experiences of suffering. 1

C. The Disciplinary Concept of Suffering during the Period of the Monarchy

1. The Disciplinary Concept of Suffering during the Period of the United Kingdom

a. The Period of David

One of the most effective lessons from suffering comes from the record of David's life and experience in relation to the death of his child as recorded in Second Samuel twelve. (2) David had sinned against God in his relations with Bathsheba and Uriah. As a re-

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1. Numbers 11:1-9 , 14:26-35 , 16:41-50
2. II Samuel 12:13-23

sult of David's sin Nathan the prophet points out his errors (1) reprimanding him and telling him that his son shall die. 2

David is driven to seek God's assistance when he realizes what is transpiring during the illness of his child. 3

David is so convicted of his sin that he pours out his heart to God. This outpouring of his heart, and contrition for sin is recorded in the fifty-first Psalm. (4) He calls upon God to forgive his sin (5) and to purify and wash him (6) and to restore him into God's fellowship.

This suffering through which David went as a result of his sin had a disciplinary effect on his life. It brought him back to an acknowledgment of sin and a restored fellowship with God.

Other Psalms which are not definitely established as to authorship, but which according to some authorities could have reference to the Davidic period are here referred to with suggestions for further reading and consultation. 7

. . . . .

1. II Samuel 11:1-27
2. II Samuel 12:14
3. II Samuel 12:16
4. Psalm 51:1-17
5. Psalm 51:2-4
6. Psalm 51:7-9
7. Psalm 6:1-10

Reference to suffering which in truth is a means to an end, is found in several Psalms . (1) This suffering very evidently brings repentance on the part of the ones who suffer. Other selections which may be helpful in this regard are found in the one hundred and seventh Psalm . (2) In man's despair God becomes the only source of life and power for the wayward sinner. 3 Affliction is found in the Psalms with the frequent result found to be an acknowledgment of God's laws as binding. 4

#### b. The Period of Solomon

This period in its contribution to this concept of suffering can best be told in the words of the third chapter of the book of Proverbs in which Solomon's concept of suffering is shown:

My son, despise not the chastening of Jehovah;  
Neither be weary of His reproof; For whom Jehovah  
loveth He reproveth; Even as a father the son in whom  
He delighteth. 5

Although there is disagreement in the interpretation of the term "chastening", it is evident that whatever degree of suffering is involved is given with a purpose

. . . . .

1. Psalm 32:3-5
2. Psalm 107:4-6 , 10-14 , 17-19 , 25-28
3. Psalm 118:18
4. Psalm 119:67-72
5. Proverbs 3:11-12

other than simple punishment. Solomon claimed that affliction was sent to bring man to acknowledge God. This adds further light to the research under consideration, for this disciplinary suffering has as its goal this closer fellowship with God beginning with an acknowledgment of Him. In this sense, it teaches man more of God's ways.

## 2. The Disciplinary Concept of Suffering during the Period of the Divided Kingdom

### a. The Experience of Job

The critical question of the date of Job has puzzled many and has not as yet been finally settled. There are at least three prominent views as to the date of this book. Some propose that it dates from the time of Moses or earlier. Others believe that it dates from the time of Solomon or the following period. The third well-known view is that the author lived shortly before, or during, or after the Babylonian Exile, that is, in the time of Jeremiah, in the time of Daniel, or the time of Ezra.

However, it seems to the writer of this thesis that it is quite certain that it does not belong to the pre-Mosaic period, and that the Babylonian Exile is

too late. All facts carefully considered the writer is led to the conclusion that it was not written prior to the time of Samuel and David and not later than Isaiah. The fact that Isaiah seems to have quoted from Job leads the writer to place the book of Job at this point in the chronology of the various periods.

Suffice it to say that wherever this book is placed, Job has a definite contribution to the disciplinary concept of suffering and his chronological position will not materially change his contribution in any way.

In the book of Job are recorded some of the most horrible experiences of suffering ever recorded concerning man. Job went through manifold temptations in his extreme suffering and even his family did not rightly interpret his plight. For some time Job himself could not comprehend his lot.

Some references which most clearly shed light on the concepts of suffering Job revealed are here--quoted:

- . Behold, happy is the man whom God correcteth: Therefore despise not thou the chastening of the Almighty. For he maketh sore and bindeth up; He woundeth and his hands make whole. 1

He is chastened also with pain upon his bed,  
And with continual strife in his bones; Lo all these things doth God work, Twice, yea thrice with a man, to bring his soul back from the pit, that he may be

. . . . .

enlightened with the light of the living.<sup>1</sup>

And if they be bound in fetters, and be taken in the cords of affliction; then he showeth them their work, and their transgressions, that they behaved themselves proudly. He openeth also their ear to instruction, and commandeth that they turn from iniquity . . . He delivereth the afflicted by their affliction, and openeth their ear to oppression.<sup>2</sup>

The discussion between Job and Elihu brings out the concept of suffering as disciplinary. Elihu interprets Job's suffering with a tendency toward blaming God. Job struggling through the deepest of suffering, finally hears Elihu's interpretation of suffering as given in the thirty-third chapter above quoted. The angel gives a clear analysis of the suffering suggesting that it may move Job to humble penitence, which is the condition of recovery and thus the purpose of his suffering.<sup>3</sup>

Robinson says concerning Job:

These passages together give us as detailed an account of disciplinary suffering and its purpose as we shall find in the Old Testament, though there are many references to it elsewhere.<sup>4</sup>

Job himself finally confesses the result of all his suffering and admits the purpose of the experiences:

. . . . .

1. Job 33:19,29,30
2. Job 36:8-10,15
3. Job 33:23-28
4. Robinson, H. Wheeler: Suffering Human and Divine, pp. 37-38

Shall he that cavilleth contend with the Almighty? He that argueth with God let him answer it. Then Job answered Jehovah, and said, Behold, I am of small account; what shall I answer thee? I lay my hand upon my mouth. 1

I had heard of thee by the hearing of the ear; But now mine eye seeth thee: Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes. 2

All that Job has been through has brought him to a fuller realization of God's power and grace. It has taught Job utter dependence on God and he himself stands at God's disposal. It has been a means whereby God has corrected, guided, and molded him. Thus Job gives one of the strongest disciplinary effects of suffering.

#### b. The Prophecy of Isaiah

The prophet Isaiah also adds much to the concept of suffering and its disciplinary effects in the following words:

Therefore saith the Lord, Jehovah of hosts, the Mighty one of Israel, Ah, I will ease me of mine adversaries, and avenge me of mine enemies; and I will turn my hand upon thee, and thoroughly purge away thy dross, and will take away all thy tin; and I will restore thy judges as at the first, and thy counsellors as at the beginning: afterward thou shalt be called the city of righteousness, a faithful town. 3

. . . . .

1. Job 40:2-4
2. Job 42:5-6
3. Isaiah 1:24-26

Isaiah is concerned with the attitude which the nation displays and the life it is leading in relation to God. Thus he says as God's spokesman that through suffering Israel shall be purged. He seeks in a desperate manner to call the nation to a change of ways and life, because God demands that His laws be kept. In so doing Isaiah stresses disciplinary suffering. He speaks of the suffering that will overtake the nation of Israel if it does not return. Through suffering he indicates that Israel will learn he cannot follow in his own sinful ways. Through suffering, says Isaiah, there will be a change for the better. This will be one means whereby God will be able to bring the nation into a vital living relation with Himself. In order to accomplish this desired end for the good of the people severe and extreme suffering was announced. 1

#### c. The Prophecy of Jeremiah

Three passages which unquestionably belong bring to the fore Jeremiah's concept of suffering in its disciplinary effects are here quoted:

O Jehovah , correct me, but in measure; not in  
thine anger lest thou bring me to nothing. O Jehovah,

. . . . .

1. Isaiah 10:20-25 see also 25:1-13



I know that the way of man is not in himself;  
it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. 1

Be thou instructed , O Jerusalem, lest my soul be  
alienated from thee; lest I make thee a desolation,  
a land not inhabite. 2

For I am with thee, saith Jehovah, to save thee;  
for I will make a full end of all the nations  
whither I have scattered thee,, but I will not make  
a full end of thee; but I will correct thee in  
measure,, and will in no wise leave thee unpunished. 3

Jeremiah called upon God for mercy. In this call he re-  
veals God's possible dealings with him and Israel. He  
even calls on God for correction. The means that he re-  
quests are the judgments of God. There seems to be almost  
a paradox here,, and yet when understood in the light of  
the exile it came as a warning to the people. Jeremiah  
realized the need of being corrected but at the same  
time pleaded mercy.

In the thirteenth chapter quoted above Je-  
hovah answers by saying that He will deliver Israel but  
that in this deliverance He will correct in judgment.  
There will surely be suffering, but in this suffering  
Israel will be corrected.

The climax , however, to this great concept in  
Jeremiah's prophecy is found in the thirty-first chap-  
ter:

. . . . .

1. Jeremiah 10:23-24
2. Jeremiah 6:8
3. Jeremiah 30:11

I have surely heard Ephraim bemoaning himself thus, Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastized as a calf unaccustomed to the yoke: turn thou me and I shall be turned; for thou art Jehovah my God. 1

This passage recounts what has already transpired. Ephraim speaks of the result of the chastisement through which Israel had passed. It caused them to repent and in that repentance to be instructed further. Thus it is seen that Jeremiah tells of that which Israel and Ephraim learned through the sufferings that they experienced. It is seen that as the various periods come and go the emphasis on disciplinary suffering centers more in the life of Israel as the chosen nation of God.

#### d. The Prophecy of Amos

Amos is representative of the prophets of this period as seen in the following verses:

And I also have given you cleanness of teeth in all your cities, and want of bread in all your places; yet have ye not returned unto me saith Jehovah. And I also have withholden the rain from you, when there were yet three months to the harvest; and I caused it to rain upon one city, and caused it not to rain upon another city: one piece was rained upon, and the piece where upon it rained not withered. So two or three cities

. . . . .

#### 1. Jeremiah 31:18-19

wandered unto one city to drink water and were not satisfied: yet have ye not returned unto me, saith Jehovah. I have smitten you with blasting and mildew: the multitude of your gardens and your vineyards and your figtrees and your olive-trees hath the palmer-worm devoured: yet have ye not returned unto me saith Jehovah. 1

The disciplinary concept of suffering is prominent in these verses, which speak of God's dealings with Israel. Each time God allowed famine, disease, death, and destruction; "yet," says He, "Have ye not returned unto me?" God in love permitted terrible suffering in order to teach Israel. He reveals a discipline of love and concern; however, in this instance it seems almost useless.

Amos continued to call upon the people and reminded them of God's purposes for them. The picture is one of a God who allows almost everything to come to them in order that they might return to the fold. In this respect Hosea and Joel support this teaching. 2

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1. Amos 4:6-9 See also 4:10-11
2. Hosea 10:10 , Joel 2:12-14

D. The Disciplinary Concept of Suffering during the period of the Exile and the Hierarchy or Post-exilic Period

1. The Disciplinary Concept of Suffering during the Exilic Period

a. The Prophecy of Zephaniah

Zephaniah interprets God's words of judgment not only as punitive but as directive . This is set forth in the third chapter of the book of Zephaniah:

Therefore wait ye for me saith Jehovah, until the day that I rise up to the prey; for my determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger; for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy. For then will I turn to the peoples a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of Jehovah, to serve Him with one consent. 1

The warnings that come through the prophets call presented a God who demanded purity and obedience. Zephaniah sends out a series of woes in order to instruct the people concerning destruction due to their sins and rebellion. Specific mention is made of Jerusalem and the nations.

When God pours on them His indignation (2) the desired result will according to this verse be that they will call upon the name of Jehovah. He is concern-

. . . . .

1. Zephaniah 3:8-9
2. Zephaniah 3:9

ed that the people know that Gd is punishing in order to bring men to their knees.

Zephaniah has a personal as well as national concern.

#### b. The Prophecy of Ezekiel

A passage revealing a similar stress on this concept of disciplinary suffering is found in the twenty-third chapter of Ezekiel :

And the word of Jehovah came unto me, saying, Son of man, the house of Israel is become dross unto me: all of them are brass and tin and iron and lead, in the midst of the furnace; they are the dross of silver. Therefore thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Because ye are all become dross, therefore, behold, I will gather you into the midst of Jerusalem. As they gather silver and brass and iron and lead and tin into the midst of the furnace, to blow the fire upon it to melt it; so will I gather you in mine anger and in my wrath, and I will lay you there and melt you. Yea, I will gather you and blow upon you with the fire of my wrath, and ye shall be melted in the midst thereof. As silver is melted in the midst of the furnace, so shall ye be melted in the midst thereof; and ye shall know that I, Jehovah, have poured out my wrath upon you. 1

The analogy used here is that of the furnace. Iron, lead, tin, and brass are placed in the furnace for a purpose. They are put under heat in order to purge and to cleanse them. So also the suffering that is facing Israel is not only punishment for iniquities, but will serve as a

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1. Ezekiel 22:17-22

means to make Israel what he should be. The refining process will bring the people of Israel to a consciousness of the true and mighty God with whom they are dealing. It will drive them to an utter dependence on this God who has blessed and released them down through the years.

Ezekiel re-echoes the call of the other prophets in his urgent appeal on the basis of God's word to him. He is convinced that God must be honored and obeyed, and thus he warns of impending doom and judgments of suffering to bring men to an acknowledgment of this God.

### c. The Prophecy of Daniel

During the period of the Exile the prophet Daniel sounds a clarion voice to reveal God's purposes with men. Daniel in penitence has called on God for his people. Sin and wickedness brought them to the despicable condition in which they existed. Now the prophet sees what is approaching in the series of conflicts and trials. Thus in the eleventh chapter is heard the voice of interpreted suffering in these words:

And some of them that are wise shall fall,  
to refine them, and to purify, and to make them

white, even to the time of the end; because it is yet for the time appointed. 1

Here too the suffering would effect some definite results other than retribution, namely, to refine, to purify, and to make white . This gives another phase of the explanation of disciplinary suffering accomplishing its end. Daniel brings into the picture the illustrations of the refining and purifying effects of suffering and thus has been said by some to give the clearest purpose of disciplinary suffering in the Old Testament.

## 2. The Disciplinary Concept of Suffering during the Post-exilic Period - the Prophecy of Haggai

Although there are not numerous direct references to the disciplinary concept of suffering in this period it is still evident. In the second chapter of Haggai these words appear:

I smote you with blasting and with mildew and with hail in all the work of your hands; yet ye turned not to me, saith Jehovah. 2

This passage does not specifically say that there was disciplinary suffering ; however, God says that He punished them and yet they did not turn to Him. Although the desired end was not accomplished, nevertheless the purpose was present. God punished in order to bring men to Him. Thus there is throughout the

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1. Daniel 11:35
2. Haggai 2:17

Old Testament disciplinary suffering, suffering in order that certain lessons may be learned.

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#### E. Summary and Conclusion of Chapter on Disciplinary Suffering in the Old Testament

##### 1. The Period of the Theocracy

Just as the punitive aspect of suffering was built right into the very structure of life in the garden of Eden, so also the disciplinary concept of suffering was present in early Biblical history. When Adam and Eve on account of sin called upon themselves the punitive measures of God, there came with this punishment God's desire to rectify the situation. God in His patience and love seeking to teach them their lesson takes measures which will remind man of his need of God.

However, man's departure from God's goal evidenced itself in more involved situations as time elapsed. The Babel experience showed another phase of man's wickedness, and at the same time God's disciplinary ways with him. Here again there was punishment for sin, but with more than direct punishment as its goal. God sought to prevent further active development of



the evil tendency and life of man.

The Mosaic period is highlighted by the Israelites' bondage in Egypt. The plagues are sent to the Egyptians in order to free the slaves. The plagues also taught the Egyptians that it was God with whom they were dealing and to whom they were responsible.

With all these experiences of hardship and affliction the Israelites continued in the school of suffering as they journeyed in the wilderness. The warning hand of God directed their paths and in suffering they were partially brought to heed God. The punishment was not therefore only for sin but for direction and guidance.

## 2. The Period of the Monarchy

David, the representative character of the period of the united Kingdom, reveals much of specific and purposeful disciplinary suffering through his own personal experience. Throughout the fifty-first Psalm the outstanding effect of suffering and affliction is repentance. David departs from God's paths and desires, God punishes him, and then are heard the songs of repentance which demonstrate the purpose of his difficult afflictions. Suffering meant much more than simple punishment ; it meant corrective guidance.

Further the Psalmists accepted the suffering as a means whereby God will be able to bless and forgive when man acknowledges his own helplessness.

The Davidic period shed much light on the concept of suffering as did also the period of Solomon. The period of Solomon may be summed up in these words, "Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth".(1) Punishments and afflictions were applied as measures through which God was able to place man in a position wherein he would listen to God. This in turn meant possibility for closer fellowship with God the Creator and Law-giver.

Even further than these interpretations were the prophets' contributions. The children of Israel had departed from God's pathway in so many ways. They had served other gods, they had fallen for fleshly desires and immorality and thus turned their backs on God. Seeing their desperate and hopeless condition, the merciful and patient God sends the prophets with their words of warning and judgment, suffering and death in order that the Israelites would return to God and thus to a restored fellowship. The concentration in the concept of disciplinary suffering has been on God's own people, developing from the heathen nations to this one chosen people.

In this general period the clearest analysis of suffering comes in the life of Job. Having gone

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1. Proverbs 3:11-12

through the extreme measures of physical, mental, and spiritual torture, Job finally comes to the place where he recognizes that God moves with reason and purpose through the sufferings that came his way. Elihu brings Job to this point of acknowledgment of disciplinary suffering when he reports that release will come only when there is repentance.

Corroborating this same view are Isaiah and Jeremiah who besides this announce that suffering, if heeded, will result in a purging and cleansing. They called on God for mercy but at the same time accepted the message of suffering in order to rectify the sinful and evil generation and nation of Israel.

### 3. The Period of the Exile and the Hierarchy or Post-exilic Period

Here too the exile is not only interpreted as a suffering for sins but a suffering unto repentance and hence obedience. Zephaniah calls that men may come to God on their knees. Ezekiel explains the exile as a process of purging, a cleansing as through the furnace. Daniel strengthens Ezekiel's interpretation and announces the exilic suffering as a means to purify and make white that which was evil and black.

Haggai in the post-exilic period interprets the past and concurs with all the others by saying that

God punished in order to bring men unto Himself.

Thus in this third chapter it has been shown that there is a consciousness of suffering that surpasses the simpler interpretation of the punitive concept. There is strong evidence that in the suffering which man experienced , a God was revealed who sought to bring man in his lost condition , out of that hopeless state of sin and into restored fellowship with Him.

At the same time that there was a strong emphasis on punitive suffering there was simultaneously present the disciplinary concept which lent further effects to suffering. While in the second chapter on punitive suffering the concept was found to develop from the national or social level to the individual stress, so here it was found that the concept of disciplinary suffering developed from the national suffering of the non-Israelitish peoples to the specific disciplinary suffering of the Israelites, God's chosen people.

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## CHAPTER IV

### THE REDEMPTIVE CONCEPT OF SUFFERING IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

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OLD TESTAMENT

A. The Introduction

Just as the punitive concept of suffering in relation to the disciplinary concept was not the ultimate answer to the problem of suffering, so also the disciplinary concept of suffering was not the final word on the subject. The third and highest concept or interpretation of suffering was found to be the redemptive concept. 1

It is the purpose of this chapter to point out this highest concept of suffering as it is given in the periods of the Theocracy, the Monarchy, and the Exile and Hierarchy or Post-exilic Period. Although the redemptive concept of suffering was the most advanced

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1. Robinson, H. Wheeler: The Religious Ideas of the Old Testament, p.176

interpretation of suffering, it is evident that all three concepts were accepted views throughout all three periods of Old Testament history.

This chapter will attempt to show the various ways in which the concept of redemptive suffering is present and the specific developments of this concept that are characteristic of the three historical periods of the Theocracy, the Monarchy, and the Exile and Hierarchy or Post-exilic period.

It will attempt to show the relation between the concept of disciplinary suffering and that of redemptive suffering, as the former is basic to the understanding of the latter.

The similar procedure of the second and third chapters will prevail in this fourth chapter. Representative Old Testament references will form the basis for the chapter supported by secondary source material.

## B. The Redemptive Concept of Suffering during the Period of the Theocracy

### 1. The Redemptive Concept of Suffering during the Pre-patriarchal Period - The Period of Adam

The first evidence of the third and highest concept of suffering is found early in the Adamic period. This concept of redemptive suffering is present in the

third chapter of Genesis, where these words are recorded:

And I will put enmity between thee and the woman,  
and between thy seed and her seed: he shall bruise  
thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel. 1

As a sequence to the curse that God placed on Adam and Eve and all creation, there came also a promise. In this familiar passage there is specific reference to bruising his "heel". (2) Whether this is interpreted as the human race suffering or the first promise of a savior suffering, there is evident a redemptive aspect. God had pronounced the statement of curse but at the same time reveals His love in announcing almost immediately this promise of a suffering, which would restore man to fellowship with Him. 3

It is significant that all three concepts of suffering are found in this one narrative of Adam and Eve. It depicts the triumvirate of thought in the first record of God-man relationships.

## 2. The Redemptive Concept of Suffering during the Patriarchal Period

### a. The Period of Abraham

In the eighteenth chapter of Genesis, Abra-

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1. Genesis 3:15
2. Keil and Delitzsch: Commentaries on the Old Testament,  
Vol. 1. p.102
3. Genesis 3:16-24



ham is pictured as intercessor for Sodom and Gomorrah.(1) In Abraham's argument, that if there were even ten good men in Sodom it should not be destroyed, there is implied a propitiatory concept. In this respect Mr. Fosdick has said:

The redemptive effect of substitutionary suffering was not new, as a fact, in Israel's history, although as an idea it had never before been clearly stated. The saving efficacy of good lives in a community is picturesquely evidenced in God's consent to Abraham's argument that if there were ten good men in Sodom it should not be destroyed. 2

Abraham's willingness to suffer in intercession before God reveals the patriarch's genuine desire to save Sodom and Gomorrah. He was urged to this, not by any special interest in Lot, for in that case he would have prayed for Lot's deliverance. (3) As Abraham apparently felt himself called upon to be the protector, avenger, and deliverer of the land from its foes, so he now thought himself called upon to act as mediator. (4) In this sense Abraham's willingness to go before God on behalf of Sodom demonstrates the redemptive concept.

#### b. The Period of Joseph

One of the most striking and most dramatic examples of redemptive suffering is related in the

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1. Genesis 18:22-32
2. Fosdick, op.cit., p.173
3. Genesis 18:16-21
4. Keil and Delitzsch, op.cit., pp.230-231

experience of Joseph with his brothers as recorded in Genesis forty-five:

And now be not grieved , nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life. For these two years hath the famine been in the land: and there are yet five years, in which there shall be neither plowing nor harvest. And God sent me before you to preserve you a remnant in the earth, and to save you alive by a great deliverance. 1

From the time of his youth Joseph had been mocked and hated by his brothers. (2) He was thrown into a pit in order that his brothers might be rid of him. (3) His suffering was further intensified when he was sold into Egypt. 4

When in Egypt Joseph refused to yield to Potiphar's wife's fleshly temptations, he was thrown into prison. (5) As each experience surpassed the former, Joseph's sufferings seemed to be multiplied. However, God was with Joseph to redeem him for a greater purpose.

In the forty-fifth chapter quoted above Joseph in his own words gives the heart-rending interpretation of all his sufferings for these many years. He says, "For God did send me before you to preserve

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1. Genesis 45:5-7
2. Genesis 37:4,8
3. Genesis 37:24
4. Genesis 37:27-28
5. Genesis 39

life," and "To save you alive by a great deliverance!" All that Joseph had undergone in his youth as a shepherd, in his sufferings in the pit, at the hands of the Egyptians, and in prison, all these were with a redemptive purpose on God's part. Joseph now reveals, in his own astounding explanation of his present position as ruler under Pharaoh, that it all was to save a remnant and preserve life. What a climax to a life that had been filled with physical, mental, and spiritual anguish! Here is certainly one of the loftier concepts of love and suffering demonstrated on the part of a man of God. Joseph, one who was consecrated and yielded to God, was the redemptive instrument in the hand of God. Joseph's suffering may thus be basically called a redemptive suffering.

### 3. The Redemptive Concept of Suffering during the Mosaic Period

Continuing the high plane of the concept of redemptive suffering, another representative man of God appears on the scene in the person of Moses. In the thirty-second chapter of the book of Exodus these words appear:

And it came to pass on the morrow, that Moses said unto the people, Ye have sinned a great sin: and now I will go up unto Jehovah; peradventure I shall make atonement for your sin. And Moses returned unto Jehovah, and said, Oh, this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them gods of gold. Yet now if thou wilt forgive their sin --: and if

not, blot me, I pray thee out of thy book which thou hast written. And Jehovah said unto Moses, Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book. And now go, and lead the people unto the place of which I have spoken unto thee; behold mine angel shall go before thee; nevertheless in the day when I visit, I will visit their sin upon them. And Jehovah smote the people, because they made the calf, which Aaron made. 1

The background for this experience is the disobedience of Israel in erecting a golden calf and worshipping idols in place of God. 2

Moses first reminds the people of the seriousness of their sin when he says, "Ye have sinned a great sin ! At the same time as Moses recognizes the extent and implications of this sin, he further exposes its extent by telling them that he would seek to make atonement for the sin.

Moses then returns to God and pleads the people's cause. In pleading God's forgiveness of the people, Moses says that if God will not forgive the people, then he, Moses, would have his name blotted out of God's book on behalf of the people of Israel.

This is Moses' contribution to the redemptive concept of suffering. He is willing that his name be blotted out for his people's sake. This strong concept

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1. Exodus 32:30-35
2. Exodus 32:1-6

of a personal redemptive suffering for the sake of a group strengthens the prevalent yet not too widely accepted interpretation of a self-sacrificial suffering in this period of the Theocracy.

C. The Redemptive Concept of Suffering in the Period of the Monarchy

1. The Redemptive Concept of Suffering during the period of the United Kingdom - the Davidic Period

The period of the United Kingdom is perhaps best represented by David's voluntary offer to suffer on behalf of Israel. (1) The people of Israel under Saul were being challenged by the Philistines through the giant Goliath. There was no one who dared to face the giant until David came and offered to fight him. 2

In David's own words there is evidenced the consciousness of one going forth on behalf of the armies of Israel whom the Philistines had defied. The fact that David gave himself so willingly to the cause of saving Israel gives a redemptive interpretation to his possible suffering. No matter what the prospects might have been, he was voluntarily offering himself

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1. I Samuel 17:17-40
2. I Samuel 17:41-58

as the instrument through which possible redemption could be accomplished.

In the nineteenth chapter of First Samuel there is further substantiation for the actual accomplishment of and success for David's redemptive mission:

And Jonathan spake good of David unto Saul his father and said unto him , Let not the king sin against his servant, against David; because he hath not sinned against thee, and because his works have been to thee-ward very good: for he put his life in his hand and smote the Philistine, and Jehovah wrought a great victory for all Israel: thou sawest it and didst rejoice; wherefore then wilt thou sin against innocent blood, to slay David without a cause? 1

The above quoted passage implies a redemptive aspect in David's life. Jonathan, David's bosom friend pleads with Saul to spare David's life because of what David had undergone previously in order to save life. He had offered his life against Goliath. Because of the victory given Israel through David, Jonathan pleads David's life.

David further suffers for the sake of the Kingdom of Israel at the hands of Saul. (2) Saul is constantly after David's life as a result of the honor accorded David pursuant to his victory over Goliath. All that David experienced he did without complaint. David stands as a representative man of God willing to go to any extreme to redeem Israel and to fulfill God's

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1. I Samuel 19:4-5
2. I Samuel 18-24

purpose in and for Israel. 1

The Davidic Period may well be characterized by the self-sacrificial life of David first seen in his shepherd days and finally as King David. 2

2. The Redemptive Concept of Suffering during the period of the Divided Kingdom

a. The Prophecy of Isaiah

Perhaps the most familiar and detailed account of the concept of redemptive suffering is found in the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah. (3) At the same time it is one that is interpreted in various ways by various groups and individuals. It is, however, agreed<sup>4</sup> that this chapter has reference to the Suffering Servant.

There are at least four interpretations of its application. It could possibly refer either to an individual, to the nation as a whole, to the "spiritual Israel", or to Israel as conceived in the mind and purpose of God as the ideal Israel.

All these views have their basis in various interpretations of the word. Whichever view is taken gives the redemptive aspect with which the writer is here basically concerned. To limit the application of the

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1. I Samuel 14:7
2. Psalms 37, 51, 73
3. Isaiah 53:1-12
4. Isaiah 42:1-4 , 49:1-6 , 50:4-9

servant to the "spiritual Israel" or the Israel as conceived in the mind and purpose of God as the ideal Israel seems to take away from the reality of the physical suffering which is so realistically portrayed. Although these two concepts are not ruled out, in order to point up the various redemptive aspects, the writer is here limiting discussion to the application of the servant to Israel as a nation and secondly to one individual personally suffering redemptively.

First, as a nation, Israel had suffered grievously, a suffering which was not due to her sins.<sup>1</sup> Through all her sufferings she was still God's chosen nation and thus subjected to bitter persecution. This reveals the high concept of redemptive suffering in relation to God's people. Israel's sufferings were vicarious and redemptive. She was "stricken, smitten of God and afflicted," but with a purpose which no other person had surpassed in the past. The real purpose was that she might take the one true God to the idolatrous heathen. Hence Israel was wounded for the heathen's transgressions, and bruised for their iniquities. The sufferings that fell upon Israel ought to have fallen upon the heathen.

They also served as a means of healing, a

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1. Isaiah 40:2 , 42:24



chastisement that won for the heathen peace of soul.

Mr. Knudson has said in this regard:

The very fact that Israel's sufferings were undeserved, that they were endured for others, brought home to the heathen a poignant consciousness of their own sins and wrought in them a change of heart. It led to repentance and confession, and to the recognition of Israel's God as the God of all the world. Such an end might well justify and sanctify any affliction and any sacrifice. No deeper or higher thought concerning suffering is anywhere to be found. <sup>1</sup>

Secondly, considering the suffering servant as an individual person much is evident. Just as it is questionable how many persons realized the application of the suffering servant to Israel, it is equally questionable as to the consciousness of a prophetic aspect in the application of this suffering servant to one person. Numerous exegetical studies stress that Isaiah himself was not consciously referring to the future but to the past. However, there were probably some among the prophets who had God-given insight and who thus saw this suffering servant first as Israel and then in a promised redemptive mission by one person.

This servant suffered not for his own sins, but for the sins of the nation. He was enduring the nation's sin and sickness. Their rebellion also caused his suffering. His chastisement procured for them peace and wrought their healing. The people of Israel

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1. Knudson, op.cit., p.284

had gone astray in self-will, and God inflicted upon this one individual the penalty of their guilt. But this servant also suffered willingly and vicariously for the sins of the nation. Meekly he bore their burdens. Patiently he endured the smiting that should have rightly been their suffering. Innocently suffering violence, he was "despised and rejected" of men, a "man of sorrows and acquainted with grief".

Perhaps within the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah this one verse climaxes the thought on the concept of redemptive suffering:

But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. 1

Here the specific punishment for iniquities and transgressions which did not belong to the servant are attributed to him. This truly is the height of redemptive suffering, when the servant goes willingly to death for others.

The manner of the servant's walk on the road to accomplishing this redemption, as he goes to the ultimate self-sacrifice for the sins of others, further intensifies the concept of redemptive suffering: "He opened not his mouth!" (2) The meek and voluntary self-sacrifice even unto death depicts the desire

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1. Isaiah 53:5
2. Isaiah 53:7

the servant must have had in his heart to intercede for and redeem the lost transgressors.

Whichever interpretation of the above two is accepted, it is based on the fact of history in the life of Israel or the fact of the fulfillment in the New Testament of the individual Suffering Servant , or both.

#### b. The Prophecy of Jeremiah

Jeremiah's contribution to the concept of redemptive suffering strikes another high note by its depth and directness of thought. Jeremiah himself had been through some extreme sufferings. His sensitivity to the demands of God on the individual~~are~~ are brought out in his personal sufferings. (1) He is thus especially known for his contribution to individualism in suffering. Jeremiah was in a position to give this emphasis to suffering through his own voluntary self-sacrificial devotion to the redemptive work among God's people. For not only was there strong discipline for him as was seen in the previous chapter, but the higher concept of redemptive suffering seemed uppermost in terms of the interpretation of suffering.

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#### 1. Jeremiah 11 & 12

In the fifteenth chapter of the book of Jeremiah, these words give the explanation of his sufferings:

O Jehovah, thou knowest; remember me, and visit me, and avenge me of my persecutors ; take me not away in thy longsuffering: know that for thy sake I have suffered reproach. 1

Jeremiah here is conscious of the fact that he was suffering for the sake of the people of Judah and thus the prophet interprets his personal sufferings, sufferings as something done for the sake of God. Apparently Jeremiah, who had so thoroughly and completely given himself in suffering, persecution, and death threats, now was able to express his final goal in suffering in relation to God and God's people.

However, it cannot be presumed that Jeremiah's sufferings were endured without murmurings along the way. He too was often overtaken by doubts. This phase of Jeremiah's suffering is clear in the fifteenth chapter of his prophecy:

I sat not in the assembly of them that make merry, nor rejoiced; I sat alone because of thy hand; for thou hast filled me with indignation. Why is my pain perpetual, and my wound incurable, which refuseth to be healed? wilt thou indeed be unto me as a deceitful brook, as waters that fail? 2

Here is heard the cry of one who has been under pressure for some time. Jeremiah calls on God with the question in his heart as to the extent and duration of his suffering.

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1. Jeremiah 15:15
2. Jeremiah 15:17-18

God in reply says that He will redeem Jeremiah through all his afflictions which he had endured. 1 However, Jeremiah continues to inquire of God the purposes that may be involved in the persistent persecution, trial, and suffering that come his way. 2

The promise of God's redemption and restoration through all this suffering is that to which Jeremiah finally gives heed. (3) In it all Jeremiah is now confident that God shall fulfill through his sufferings judgment for the nations and final restoration for God's people.

#### c. The Prophecy of Hosea

Of all the prophetic records the record of Hosea reveals perhaps one of the saddest in history. Hosea's wife was an adulteress who caused him much anguish. He reports that he had to purchase her, perhaps from the slavery of sanctuary prostitution, at a slave's ransom. The price was fifteen pieces of silver, and a homer and a half of barley, which is thought to be the equivalent of the thirty shekels at which a male or female slave was rated in Hebrew law. Apparently this was a necessary step in the process of her recovery. 4

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1. Jeremiah 15:20-21
2. Jeremiah 20:7-18
3. Jeremiah 30:12-17
4. Hosea 3:2

Hosea's purpose in saving Gomer, his wife, at the price of shame, disgrace, abuse, and financial loss, gave expression to the great concept of redemptive suffering in Hosea. The human price was quite evident, but the spiritual price and anguish could only be measured by his extreme suffering on her behalf. (1) There was the suffering of inward association as well as the shame and disgrace of outward association which he experienced that weighed on him for many years. There was the sacrifice of so much in the prophet's life for which the answer is apparently given in the third chapter:

Afterward shall the children of Israel return,  
and seek Jehovah their God, and David their king,  
and shall come with fear unto Jehovah and to his  
goodness in the latter days. 2

Whether Hosea's prophecy was a reality in his life or whether it is told simply as an analogy of the life of Israel, it is clear that the concept of redemptive suffering is predominant. The physical purchase of Gomer is incidental when compared with the higher concept, that of spiritual redemption. Actually the price that Hosea paid was a spiritual price rather than material, although the two are never completely separated in man's present state of body and soul. When a holy will takes

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1. Hosea 2:14-20
2. Hosea 3:5

to itself and accepts the burden of responsibility for an unholy will, there is the inevitable condition that the sin is transformed in the consciousness of the holy man into suffering. He cannot share its burden on any other terms. If the analogy is to Israel and her waywardness, which seems a natural interpretation, the redemptive concept is even more inclusive and significant. The purpose here however, is simply to show that not only are the punitive and disciplinary concepts of suffering present, but superceding all is the redemptive concept of suffering for one or more individuals or possibly a nation.

D. The Redemptive Concept of Suffering during  
the Period of the Exile and Hierarchy or Post-  
exilic Period - the Prophet Daniel

The prophet Daniel stands as the self-sacrificial servant of God who best depicts the concept of redemptive suffering in this period.

In the sixth chapter of Daniel (1) there is found the narrative of Daniel's suffering, trial, persecution, and imprisonment in the lion's den because of his allegiance to God. (2) He was ready and willing to

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1. Daniel 6:16-24
2. Daniel 6:10-15

suffer even unto death for his faithfulness to God and thus for a self-sacrificial purpose in fulfilling God's will. He was in a sense redeemed in the presence of God by his suffering for the sake of his God. But there was more than self-redemption effected; it was done in order that the Kingdom of Darius should also find in God its hope. 1

There is another experience of suffering in the book of Daniel which gives added strength to the concept. (2) Under similar circumstances as Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were cast into the fiery furnace because of their allegiance to the true God. When they were threatened by the king, they too were ready to go to any extent of suffering to justify the name of God. In a sense they also expressed a high concept of redemptive suffering. They suffered for the sake of their God. But even further they suffered in order that God's name might be known by the nation. Their suffering bore individual as well as national significance , for as a result of their suffering an order by the king went out that all should worship this one true God, the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.

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1. Daniel 6:25-27
2. Daniel 3:13-27



Thus it may be said that Daniel, Meshach, Shadrach, and Abednego evidenced the continued concept of redemptive suffering in this last major period, the period of the Exile and Hierarchy or Post-exilic Period.

#### E. Summary and Conclusion of the Chapter on Redemptive Suffering in the Old Testament

##### 1. The Period of the Theocracy

During the period of the Theocracy the leading characters which best portrayed the concept of redemptive suffering were Adam, Abraham, Joseph, and Moses.

It was found that there was a stress on the concept of individual redemptive suffering in the case of Adam, a stress on the concept of group redemption in the lives of Abraham and Joseph, the former pleading for Sodom and Gomorrah and the latter giving his life in suffering for his family. There was found a development from the individual suffering for another individual to the idea of an individual suffering for a group.

##### 2. The Period of the Monarchy

During the period of the Monarchy the life of David represents the period of the United Kingdom.

David and his Goliath experience show a man willing to suffer for the sake of the nation of Israel.

However, the high point in this period is undoubtedly the narrative of the suffering servant in Isaiah fifty-three. In this account the extreme suffering which the servant willingly takes upon himself is given in much detail. The progression of thought in describing the exact steps in the suffering point up this experience of suffering as the ultimate in the extent of suffering. Whether the suffering servant is interpreted as Israel or one individual person, there is no higher redemptive concept found in this period.

Jeremiah and Hosea further support and nurture the concept of redemptive suffering by their prophecies , which commence with their own personal experience. Each of them, ultimately willing to suffer for the sake of the individual and the nation, and for God's sake, certainly maintains the highest interpretation of suffering.

Thus the period represents a development over the period of the Theocracy in that in this period there is developed more of the idea of suffering for a nation. Isaiah, Jeremiah , and Hosea all suffered vicariously for their nation.

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### 3. The Period of the Exile and Hierarchy or Post-exilic Period

In this period it was found that Daniel stood as the self-sacrificing individual who was willing to suffer to justify God's law, but even further that the kingdom of Nebuchadnezzar might also be redeemed, or at least acknowledge the Lord.

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego likewise gave themselves to the extreme suffering of the fiery furnace in order that God's name may be justified and that the kingdom of Darius might acknowledge God's sovereignty .

Thus it has been shown in this chapter that there was a development from the personal and the individual redemptive suffering of Genesis three to the national redemptive suffering of Isaiah fifty-three. Within this phase there was the self-sacrificial concept of suffering as well as the vicarious suffering of an individual for another. There was also the development from the vicarious aspect of one individual such as Abraham willing to suffer to save physical life, to the self-sacrificial suffering of the servant of Isaiah fifty-three who was willing to suffer even unto death to redeem man from his sin and iniquity.

Thus this chapter has contributed the third and highest concept of redemptive suffering to the other

two concepts, namely, the punitive concept of suffering and the disciplinary concept of suffering .

CHAPTER V  
GENERAL SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

## CHAPTER V

### GENERAL SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

#### A. Purpose and Restatement

As stated at the outset of the present study, the purpose of this thesis has been two-fold: first, to examine the Old Testament to determine whether there was a development in the concept of suffering, and second, to discover the nature of this development.

The procedure was to examine representative passages and characters of the three major periods of the Theocracy, the Monarchy, and the Exile and Hierarchy. A chronological arrangement of materials was carried out in order to facilitate a systematic, orderly, search for the development of the concept of suffering and its nature.

#### B. General Summary of Chapter Two - the Punitive Concept of Suffering

1. Suffering came as retribution for sin. (Genesis 3:16 )
2. Punitive suffering was built right into the very structure of life as a result of the

Garden of Eden experience. (Genesis 3:16-19)

3. The emphasis during the period of the Theocracy was on the concept of national suffering. (Exodus 7:14-12:28 , 12:30 , 20:5)

4. The means of punishment varied from the use of natural elements to the use of society as an instrument to carry out said punitive measures. (Exodus 7:20-12:28, Judges 4:1-4 , 6:1-10 , 13:1 ff, Joel 1:15)

5. During the period of the Monarchy the development was from the individual suffering of David to the national suffering of Israel, with the stress on the national aspect of suffering. (II Samuel 11:26-27, 12:9-11 , 24:17 , I Kings 11:23-25, Psalms 51,38,37 , Proverbs 24:16-22 , II Kings 21:13 , 24:3-4 , Isaiah 4:4 , 6:11 , 7:21 , 10:5-6 )

6. During the third period which was that of the Exile and Hierarchy the emphasis was strongly individual. Zephaniah , Ezekiel, Daniel, Haggai, Zechariah, and Ezra, placed the emphasis on personal individual suffering. (Zephaniah 1:1-18 , 3:8 , Ezekiel 18:20-30 , 33:17-20 , Daniel 9:8-12 , Haggai 2:20-22, 14:14 , Zechariah 13:7-8, Ezra 9:7 )

7. The main development in the concept of punitive suffering in the Old Testament thus was found to be a development from the concept of national suffering to the concept of individual suffering.

C. General Summary of Chapter Three - the Disciplinary Concept of Suffering

1. Punishment for sin as such was not the solution to the problem of the interpretation of suffering.

2. Suffering was not always a final judgment and thus the higher concept of suffering was evident, namely, the disciplinary concept of suffering. (Genesis 3:22-24 , 11:5-9 . Exodus 7:4-5 , 8:2 )

3. Suffering in the form of plagues came to the Egyptians in order that they would release the Israelites and in order that the Egyptians themselves might know with whom they were dealing when disobeying God. (Exodus 8:16-19 , 21, 9:3,14, 10:4 , 12:29-30)

4. There was a development within the period of the Theocracy from the national suffering of Egypt to the suffering of Israel. (Leviticus 26:17-18, 23-24, 26:27-28 , Numbers 11:1-9 , 14:26-35 , 16:41-50 )

5. During the period of the Monarchy the first evidences of disciplinary suffering came in the life of David. He was brought to repentance after being driven to helplessness. (II Samuel 12:13-23, 11:1-27, Psalm 51:1-17 , 6:1-10 , 32:3-5)

6. Solomon's contribution to the concept of disciplinary suffering was seen to be that of a loving God teaching through suffering . (Proverbs 3:11-12 )



7. God's correction, guidance, and direction , were clearly revealed in Job's personal sufferings. (Job 33:19,29,30 , 36:8-10,15 , 40:2-4 , 42:5-6)

8. Isaiah presented added evidence to the concept of disciplinary suffering in relation to Israel as a nation. (Isaiah 10:20-25 , 25:1-13 )

9. Jeremiah stressed the individual concept of disciplinary suffering within the life of Israel. (Jeremiah 6:8, 16:23-24, 30:11 )

10. Amos revealed a consciousness of suffering as a means of bringing Israel back to God. (Amos 4:6-9, 4:10-11 )

11. The prophets of the Exile and Post-exilic period referred to the suffering of Israel as a nation in order to bring Israel to repentance and to a closer fellowship with God and to cleanse and purify Israel. (Zephaniah 3:8-9 , Ezekiel 22:17-22 )

12. It was thus evident in this chapter that the progression in the disciplinary suffering developed from the suffering of the non-Israelitish nations to Israel's suffering as a nation under God.

13. The reason for the presence of the further concept of disciplinary suffering surpassing the concept of punitive suffering seemed to be a part of God's final plan for redemption. Since man's sin and man's punishment for sin entered into man's experience , God's concern

was manifested by this disciplinary emphasis.

D. General Summary of Chapter Four - the Redemptive Concept of Suffering

1. God's ultimate plan as revealed in His Word was man's redemption. Thus the concept of redemptive suffering was an expression of God's final desire or highest goal for man. This desire was manifested by His revelation of this concept of redemptive suffering. In this redemptive suffering man needed to be made conscious of his sin through punishment and suffering and thus made conscious of God's desire for him to change his ways by the lessons of disciplinary suffering. It was seen in chapters two and three that these essential elements of suffering were present and thus made man conscious of God's highest desire namely, redemption.

2. As such, redemptive suffering was found present in the first period of Biblical history. (Genesis 3:15-24)

3. Individual redemptive suffering was evident in the lives of Abraham and Joseph. (Genesis 18:16-32 , 37:4,8,24,27-28 , 39 , 45:5-7 )

4. Vicarious suffering was strongly portrayed by Moses on behalf of Israel. (Exodus 32:30-35 )

5. Redemptive suffering for Israel as a nation

continued to be a concept expressed by David. (I Samuel 17:17-58 , I Samuel 18-24 , 19:4-5 Psalms 37,51,73)

6. The strongest expression of the concept of redemptive suffering was found in Isaiah fifty-three. Here too the stress continues to be that of the national concept. However, within this national life of Israel the individual is brought face to face with suffering and its interpretation. (Isaiah 53:1-12 , 42:1-4 , 49:1-6 , 50:4-9 )

7. Jeremiah, though concerned with Israel as a nation, gave additional stress to the concept of individual redemptive suffering. (Jeremiah 11 and 12 , 15:15, 17-18)

8. The national stress is again evident in Hosea and Daniel. Hosea was concerned that through suffering Israel might be saved and Daniel was ready and willing to sacrifice self in order that the heathen too might be redeemed. (Hosea 2:14-20 , 3:5 , Daniel 3:13-27, 6:10-27)

#### E. Summary and Conclusion of the Thesis

In this research on the concept of suffering in the Old Testament it was found that throughout all three periods of the Theocracy, the Monarchy, and the Exile and Hierarchy of Post-exilic Period there was a

strong emphasis on the punitive concept of suffering. It was discovered that there were more numerous Bible references to this concept of punitive suffering than to any other single concept, and thus this punitive aspect of suffering seemed to be the predominantly accepted view.

The second chapter of the thesis showed that within the concept of punitive suffering there was a certain development of thought. With a few exceptions, the force of the concept seemed to move from the national aspect of suffering in the period of the Theocracy to the individual aspect of suffering as portrayed by the prophets during the period of the Hierarchy or Post-exilic Period.

Social suffering was more evident in the earlier periods and as time and experience passed in review the individual took the stage. Moving from the national or social stress there was an increased emphasis on individual suffering for sin. There was a development from the group consciousness to that of the individual consciousness of punitive suffering for sin.

As new light was shed on the various aspects of suffering new interpretations were set forth in several ways. Although punitive suffering has always been predominantly present in the Old Testament it was seen in the third chapter that there was prevalent also

the higher concept of disciplinary suffering. At the same time there was development from the national to the individual in the punitive concept, so also there appeared to be development or progression within the disciplinary concept of suffering. However, this development showed itself in a progression from the suffering of the non-Israelitish nations to the suffering of a particular people, namely, Israel.

The concept of disciplinary suffering was seen to be present with reference to the suffering of the Egyptians in the period of the Theocracy. Later a greater emphasis was given to the disciplinary effects upon Israel and the remnant of Israel through the period of the Monarchy and the Hierarchy or Post-exilic Period.

As life and experience in relation to God and man produced some effective lessons for the Egyptians as well as the Israelites so also the punitive concept of suffering was always present to give further effectiveness to the disciplinary concept. Apparently punitive suffering did not answer God's desires. God does not punish simply for punishment's sake. Man was not won by punishment as retribution alone. Man's condition needed to be approached in additional ways. In order to be psychologically, mentally and spiritually prepared to learn through disciplinary suffering it was essential that punitive suffering be experienced. It

cannot be said that in any one period only one concept was the accepted view to the exclusion of the other. One concept gave support to the other, as was seen in the general summary of chapter three.

Just as the disciplinary concept of suffering contributed a more advanced interpretation when compared with the punitive concept of suffering, so also in the third chapter of the thesis it was found that the disciplinary concept of suffering was surpassed only by the redemptive concept of suffering.

The punitive as well as the disciplinary concepts of suffering were the foundations on which the redemptive concept of suffering could alone be received and at last partially comprehended. God's desire for man's redemption was understood only as more elementary forms of suffering brought man to a consciousness of his sin and the need of redemption.

The two supporting concepts made it possible for the people of Israel to understand better the message and concept of substitutionary suffering. Developing from the personal and individual redemptive suffering of Genesis three fifteen to the national redemptive suffering of Isaiah fifty-three, the principle of redemptive suffering surpassed all other concepts. Within this phase also there was the self-sacrificial concept of suffering as well as the vicarious concept of suffering.

The redemptive concept of suffering seemed also to develop from the concept of one individual such as Abraham willing to suffer in order to save the physical life of the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah, to the self-sacrificial suffering of the Servant of Isaiah fifty-three, who was willing to suffer even unto death to redeem man from his sin and iniquity.

Thus it has been shown that there is a development not only within the three concepts of suffering but that each one is a contributing factor to the other and that there is development from the punitive concept of suffering to the disciplinary concept of suffering and finally to the highest concept of redemptive suffering.

All three concepts of suffering were simultaneously present with varying emphases by different people at different times. This ideological development was seen to effect higher results in each of the periods of the Theocracy, the Monarchy, and the Exile and Hierarchy or Post-exilic Period.

Therefore, it may be said that there is a development of the concept of suffering in the Old Testament and that this concept was consummated in the concept of redemptive suffering, God's plan and desire to redeem man .

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