CURRENT THEOLOGY

BULLETIN OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

INTRODUCTION

In the latter part of August, 1952, reports of some Ta'amire bedouins who roam about the western area of the Dead Sea led to the discovery of a new group of manuscripts. This latest addition to the Dead Sea Scrolls comes from the caves of the Wadi Murabba'at, about eleven miles south of Khirbet Qumrân. Besides Hebrew and Aramaic documents, there are Greek fragments of the Minor Prophets, among whom Micah, Jonah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zechariah, and Zephaniah are represented. These ancient fragments are now the property of the Palestine Archaeological Museum, but Père Barthélemy of the Dominican Biblical School in Jerusalem has received permission to make them known to biblical scholars.[1] A plate accompanying the text shows a beautifully preserved uncial fragment of Habakkuk, dating from the end of the first century A.D. In this provisory study Père Barthélemy claims that these ancient Greek fragments supply an important missing link in the history of Septuagint transmission.

It is well known that Justin Martyr, in his *Dialogue* with the Jew Trypho, which took place shortly after the abortive Revolt of Bar Cocheba, complained about the perverse rabbinic interpretations of the Old Testament. In the course of the debate Justin cites, at some length, passages from the Septuagint which he claims the rabbis have falsely interpreted. In order that there may be no quibbling about the text, he says in several places that he will quote from a text of the Septuagint which is accepted by all, his adversaries included. It has been customary to say that, if we could place full confidence in Justin, we would have, in these quotations, a witness to the Greek text accepted in orthodox Jewish circles at the beginning of the second century A.D. But, for a number of reasons, scholars for the past thirty years have thought it best to be very chary of Justin's quotations.[2] From a comparison of these newly-discovered fragments with the quotations of Justin, it now turns out that he was citing the text of the fragments and not the standard Septuagint known to us. More important still, the evidence seems to indicate that Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion knew and depended upon this ancient Palestinian recension of the Septuagint.

[1] D. Barthélemy, O.P., "Redecouverte d'un chainon manquant de l'histoire de la Septante," *Revue biblique*, LX (1953), 18–29.

[2] See A. Rahlf's study of Justin's biblical text and his caution, *Zeitschrift f. die NT Wissenschaft*, 1921, p. 198.

The wide diffusion of this ancient text is even more remarkable. By a comparison with the Coptic text of the Minor Prophets the writer argues that this Palestinian recension must have spread as far as Egypt. Père Barthélemy also introduces evidence from the "Quinta" of Origen which points to its having been known even in Greece. A brief report such as this leaves many questions unanswered and only full publication of the fragments will allow Septuagint scholars to test this challenging hypothesis. If it is established, the fragments of Wadi Murabba'at will have made a priceless contribution to the study of this venerable version of the Old Testament.

Prof. Henry Gehman of Princeton published a study in which he traced the influence of Hebrew idiom, syntax, and vocabulary on the Septuagint.[3] Coming to particular applications, he now studies the telltale marks which the Hebrew translator has left on his Septuagint version of Genesis.[4] His inductive study shows how the Jewish translator rendered his conjunctions, prepositions, pronouns, and other parts of speech in such a way as to give a Hebraic shade of meaning to a Greek word. The Hebrew background of the translator is unmistakeable in the version. This does not mean that the Greek Genesis could not have been understood by a native who knew only Hellenistic Greek. It was a translation which was to be read independently, and was not merely a commentary on the Hebrew text.

Since this kind of scientific work on the Septuagint offers almost limitless possibilities, a word should be said about the Gehman School. Pupils of this scholar will apply his methods to the other books of the Old Testament. To give but one example, Dr. J. W. Wevers has studied the Septuagint translation of III Kings 22:1 to IV Kings 25, and has succeeded in isolating certain points of view or presuppositions of the translator.[5] The viewpoints which emerge stamp the translation with an individuality; among them we note the high esteem in which such institutions as the kingship and prophecy are held. Moses and David, great traditional heroes of Israel, are exalted; reverence for the cult and the Temple is evident on every page. The idea of God reflects Jewish theological positions of the period in which the translation was made. This idea stresses His transcendence rather than His immanence; His faithfulness and mercy stand out, and finally His concern with universal as well as Israel's history. God's own name should not be

[3] "The Hebraic Character of Septuagint Greek," *Vetus Testamentum*, I (1951), 81–90.

[4] "Hebrewisms of the Old Greek Version of Genesis," *Vetus Testamentum*, III (1953), 141–48.

[5] "Principles of Interpretation Guiding the Fourth Translator of the Book of Kingdoms," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly*, XIV (1952), 40–56.

put in the mouth of the heathen, and human feelings should be deleted from the portrait of God.[6]

The Septuagint occupies a place of honor among the ancient versions of the Old Testament. Since no other version equals it as a textual tool in the study of the Massoretic text, it is essential that the version should be used correctly. In the past, textual critics have been too ready to assume that, where the Septuagint disagrees with the Massoretic text, a different Hebrew *Vorlage* lay before the Greek translator. Studies by the Gehman School and others have proved that this is not so. The translator was not an arbitrary individualist but he usually approached his work with definite exegetical and theological prepossessions which determined his choice of words, omissions, and insertions. Each book, therefore, presents a special problem and the critic can use the Septuagint profitably only after he knows the particular dispositions and tendencies of the translator, and the extent to which they influenced his translation.

In spite of the deadlock on the senses of Sacred Scripture,[7] several laudable efforts have been made in recent years to break down the opposition between a purely philologico-historical exegesis and one which would take fuller account of the theological content of Scripture. Fr. Mouson sums up a few of these attempts.[8] Among the most successful efforts along this line must be reckoned C. Charlier's *La lecture chrêtienne de la Bible* (1950). He tries to unite the two approaches in that higher unity which Scripture possesses in virtue of its divine inspiration. The following paragraph gives us an idea of the solution he proposes:

> The divine sense of a biblical text corresponds exactly to the thought of the writer. Yet this writer has not grasped the full significance of his own thought, for he was unable to encompass the breadth of the inspired thought, of which his own is only one component part. But God sees far more than man, even inspired man.

[6] For similar studies, which reveal the individuality of the Septuagint translator, see H. S. Gehman, "Exegetical Methods Employed by the Greek Translator of I. Sam.," *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, LXX (1950), 292–96; I. L. Seeligmann, *The Septuagint Version of Isaiah* (Leiden, 1948); G. Gerleman, *Studies in the Septuagint*, I: Book of Job; II: Chronicles (Lund, 1946); L. Prijs, *Jüdische Tradition in der Septuaginta* (Leiden, 1948); Donald H. Gard, *The Exegetical Method of the Greek Translator of the Book of Job*, JBL Monograph Series, VIII (1953).

[7] See Raymond E. Brown, "The History and Development of the Theory of the Sensus Plenior," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly*, XV, no. 2 (1953), 141–62. This article summarizes chronologically the contributions of Catholic scholars for and against the *sensus plenior*. The bibliography is extensive and omits none of the important studies which have appeared during the three decades of the controversy.

[8] J. Mouson, "De fundamento sensus 'spiritualis' Veteris Testamenti," *Collectanea Mechliniensia*, March, 1953, pp. 183–87.

. . . He sees the precise role which He has assigned to each inspired author in the complex of the Bible, and the fragment of divine truth which He confides to him corresponds to the role which has been allotted him in the general economy of the revelation.[9]

From this it would appear as if a given text had a certain duality of meaning. Although the human author has given the text its full meaning in a particular passage, the text is still part of a whole, a stone in that mosaic which will ultimately portray Christ. It thereby enjoys a special significance, takes on an added but homogeneous meaning, by reason of its insertion in this greater whole. This seems to be a reasonable solution to the conflict which has arisen between the advocates of a technical, scientific exegesis and those who incline towards a more theological interpretation. The exigencies of both methods, valid within their own limits, are recognized and the primacy of the literal sense is safeguarded.

This effort at a Christological interpretaion of Scripture has led scholars to reconsider an ancient patristic method, the *theoria* of Antioch. P. Ternant, of the White Fathers in Jerusalem, devotes a long and sympathetic study to this method which the Antiochene School applied to some of the Old Testament texts.[10] In the first of two articles he seeks to determine the nature of the *theoria* and its relations to the senses of Scripture. All of us are familiar with the distinction between prophecies which are directly and exclusively Messianic, and those which are only typically Messianic. In the latter case we use the word in the technical sense and presuppose that the author is unaware of the prefiguration. But let us suppose a situation in which the hagiographer writes about a person or event in Israelite history and, at the same time, knows and intends that person or event to prefigure or typify a future New Testament reality. The simultaneous perception of the twofold object of his assertion is the *theoria* in action. The relation between the two objects is homogeneous; it is that of the lesser to the greater, David to Christ in Psalm 17, Solomon to Christ in Psalm 71, Israel to Christ in Psalm 15. The *theoria* differs from typology in that the author's thought comprehends both the historical type and its Messianic fulfillment. In the *theoria* of Antioch the adequate sense is therefore literal precisely because both objects, the historical and the Messianic, are within the ambit of the author's knowledge and intention.

What is the relation of the *theoria* to the *sensus plenior*? Fr. Ternant answers that question by refusing, with de Vaux and others, to classify the

[9] C. Charlier, *La lecture* etc., pp. 300–301.

[10] "La *theoria* d'Antioche dans le cadre des sens de l'Ecriture," *Biblica*, XXXIV (1953), 135–58 (à suivre).

latter under the literal sense, since the author is presumably unaware of this fuller meaning. Accordingly, what separates the *theoria* from both typical and fuller sense is the author's state of mind, his comprehension of the import of his statement at both the historical and Messianic levels. We hope that in a later article Fr. Ternant will deal with criteria and show us by what means we can be sure that the sacred writer enjoyed such knowledge, and to what extent he transcended his own historical environment by this knowledge of the Messianic fulfillment.

Robert C. Dentan, editor of the *Journal of Biblical Literature*, reminds American scholars that they will be obliged, sooner or later, to face up to the typological method as a hermeneutic instrument in biblical studies.[11] After clearing the air of the mistaken idea that typology is allegory run riot, he indicates its advantages as well as its hazards. Prof. Dentan expresses the underlying idea of typology in this manner:

> If, then, as Christians believe, the Bible is an account of the work of God in history, a single story with one chief Actor, the same 'patterns' or types may be expected to recur in various parts. The whole of biblical history is the result of the continuous impact of the unchanging God upon the life of His people and it would be surprising indeed if the essential patterns of His dealings with men were not visible throughout. This is the philosophy upon which typology is based.[12]

After giving several examples of legitimate typological interpretation, he cautions against arbitrariness and false emphasis in handling this method. To Dentan's sound contribution to a valid but often abused technique of interpretation, I would simply add that it is essential to fix criteria for disengaging the typological sense. Catholic scholars have made progress here, using the following criteria. (1) The ultimate criterion is revelation. The typological sense need not have been understood by the author; only through later revelation has the reader been able to see the objective connection established by God between type and antitype. (2) Particular types should harmonize with the general typology of the Old Testament. (3) The consent of an imposing number of the Fathers points to the existence of a true type.

Fr. Peter Nober, redactor of the "Elenchus bibliographicus" in *Biblica*, has set on foot a new and worthwhile enterprise which deserves wholehearted support. Acting upon a suggestion made in 1949 by Hempel, he has just published his first installment of emendations to the biblical text.[13] The

[11] "Typology, Its Use and Abuse," *Anglican Theological Review*, XXXIV (1952), 211–17.

[12] *Ibid.*, pp. 212–13.

[13] "Elenchus emendationum," *Biblica*, XXXIV (1953), 125–31.

emendations include those suggested, not only for the Massoretic text, but for the Septuagint, the Greek New Testament, the Vulgate, and the Peshitta. To keep the list within reasonable limits, emendations which appear in books and articles which are exclusively philological will not be registered. What he is seeking out is the occasional emendation, often tucked away in a footnote or in book reviews, which easily passes unnoticed. A work such as this speaks for itself; it is doubly welcome, now that biblical literature is pouring out in a steadily mounting flood. The task of collecting this material is beyond the capacity of one man; for this reason, Fr. Nober has asked the cooperation of scholars throughout the world. By postcard or offprint they are invited to send emendations noted to the Pontificio Istituto Biblico, Via Pilotta 25, Roma 204. In the interest of greater usefulness I should like to suggest that discrimination be exercised in the choice of emendations to be recorded. The chaff must be separated from the wheat if the "Elenchus" is to fulfill its purpose and not mislead the student. Just how the weeding-out is to be done is a matter which must be left to the tact and the good judgment of the redactor.

HISTORICAL BOOKS

V. Laridon analyses the first creation narrative of Genesis.[14] His aim is (1) to fix its literary form through a study of its artistic structure, (2) to subject the passage to a careful exegetical analysis, and (3) to draw certain doctrinal and practical conclusions which follow from this study. Like most modern Catholic commentators he draws a distinction between the definitive redaction of a book, and the earlier elements which went into its composition. In this Genesis creation narrative, which is characteristic of the sacerdotal tradition, he finds an artificial and systematic structure which he schematizes in two charts.

Let us note some of the conclusions of his exegetical study. He takes the first verse of the chapter as a superscription which the sacerdotal redactor prefixed to the whole creation narrative. He admits the grammatical possibility of other constructions which join verse 1 with 2 and 3, as in other ancient cosmogonic narratives, but rejects them as too involved and awkward in the sacerdotal narrative. Although the word *bara'* does not necessarily denote creation in the strict sense, Fr. Laridon believes that the doctrine of creation in the full philosophical sense is at least implied in the text. I would admit that the total dependence of all, chaos included, on the one God is a fundamental theme of the narrative. But the problem still remains:

[14] "De narratione biblica creationis in Gen. 1:1—2:4," *Collationes brugenses*, Jan.–Feb., 1953, pp. 3–29.

Did the Hebrews raise a question which was only formulated centuries later by the Greeks?

The author closes with a few practical hints on the presentation of this narrative to students, at different stages of their formation. The teacher must first get clear in his own mind the distinction between the rich doctrinal content and the literary form in which it is clothed. He must never forget that the authors of the Old Testament have not hesitated to use the raw material of ancient traditions and popular notions as a means of teaching sublime truths about the transcendence of God, His justice and providence.[15] What Fr. Laridon is saying can, of course, be extended to the first eleven chapters of Genesis. Once that distinction has been made, the pedagogical emphasis should be on the doctrinal truths of permanent value; in dealing with beginners especially, the teacher should transmit, as far as possible, lengthy digressions into the literary forms which are a means to the end. Questions will arise concerning these forms and ways of expressing the truth, and they will have to be answered. But this should not sidetrack us from the main objective of presenting permanently valid and relevant theological truths which are the core of the narrative.

The long way which Catholics have come in their understanding of the first eleven chapters of Genesis is evident in a study by Roderick A. F. Mackenzie of Toronto.[16] Classifying these chapters as "religious prehistory," Fr. Mackenzie clearly distinguishes the truths, "facta quae christianae religionis fundamenta attingunt," from the ancient imagery and modes of expression, whose source must be sought outside of and prior to Israel of the Patriarchs. His explanation of the transformation of this material, its radical modification and creative reworking within the framework of a strictly monotheistic theology, takes full account of both the complex and frequently obscure background of these chapters and the exigencies of Catholic teaching on inspiration.

This old Mesopotamian material is taken up and retold for a didactic purpose, to show that Yahweh had always been the one supreme God, Creator of heaven and earth. In retelling these ancient stories, the Yahwist writer, guided by revelation, was showing his readers the real forces at work when the universe began to exist. The "gods of the nations" were dispossessed; all must be ascribed to Yahweh. There are many other excellent and stimulating observations in this conscientious effort to get at the *genus*

[15] On the use of mythical elements in the creation narrative, especially from the Mesopotamian *Enuma Elish*, see now L. Johnston, "Genesis Chapter I and the Creation Myth," *Scripture*, V, no. 6 (1953), 142–45.

[16] "Before Abraham Was . . . ," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly*, XV, no. 2 (1953), 131–40.

litterarium, and thus at the purposes of the sacred writer in these often misunderstood chapters.

Canon H. Hilaire has published a brochure intended to assist teachers of Genesis.[17] After recalling certain principles which will safeguard students against posing pseudo-problems in Genesis, he sets down seven tableaux for what he believes are seven narrations ("récits") in the first three chapters of Genesis. In each tableau the reader will find three columns. The first contains the doctrinal teaching and dogmatic facts of the passage; the second, the literary devices employed, which are not to be interpreted in a strictly literal manner; the third, a warning as to what the reader should *not* look for in the passage.

While the method followed seems unnecessarily artificial, such blunt schematization may be the only way to bring home effectively what Catholic scholars have been saying for the past ten years about the early chapters of Genesis. The ideas he proposes are neither original nor bold, since he follows the road marked out by de Vaux, Hauret, Chaine, and other French exegetes. It is gratifying to see that a consensus on these problems is growing rapidly among Catholic scholars.

Origins, both of the universe and man, are a subject of unusual current interest. Natural science has taught us much about the age and structure of man and his earth. It is not surprising that the Christian asks what the sources of revelation have to say on this topic. Père Lambert of Louvain tries to give us an answer by examining what the Bible teaches on the subject of creation.[18] He makes the interesting preliminary observation that God does not first reveal Himself to Israel as the Creator of heaven and earth, but as the God who delivered His people from the captivity of Egypt and who brought them into the Land of Promise. He then goes on to survey the biblical texts, from the old Yahwist creation narrative of Genesis 2:4b to 25, which he dates tentatively in the ninth or eighth century B.C., up to the Sermon on the Mount. I was struck by the number of poetic passages in which creation, in one way or another, is taught. Psalms 8, 73, and 103 are cited, along with poetic sections from Job, Isaiah, and Proverbs. It is noteworthy that the Hebrew writer could express his ideas of the Creator without discarding the poetic imagery of the Oriental world and the dim traces of myths which once fired the imagination of those people. The notion of cosmic

[17] *Comment enseigner l'histoire sainte. Les origines: Livre de la Genèse* (Chez l'auteur, curé de Satillieu, Ardèche, 1953; pp. 90).

[18] "La création dans la Bible," *Nouvelle revue théologique*, LXXXV (March, 1953), 252–81.

combat seems to have been one of the most familiar of these ancient traditions.

Coming back to the first point which Lambert made, he makes it clear that the great achievement of the Old Testament is to have identified the God who saves with the God who is omnipotent Creator. That done, all tragic fatalism is ruled out; the destiny of the universe and man is not controlled by a blind and capricious force but by a personal God who was first known as a Savior. On this foundation, deepened and illumined by the mystery of the Incarnation, the Christian faith would build its idea of the world and the destiny of man.

This article has the great merit of bringing us back to the oldest sources of a revealed truth which is the cornerstone of Judaeo-Christian civilization. Scattered through the pages are many excellent observations on the nature of Old Testament texts, and the proper use of them in constructing an authentic biblical theology. Professors of dogmatic theology, especially those who handle the tract *De Deo creante et elevante*, will be amply repaid by a careful study of this article, which so happily combines the exegetical and theological methods.

Humphrey J. T. Johnson, author of many studies in anthropology, takes up the papal teaching on the origin of man.[19] There is no question here of the creation of the human soul, which is a datum of revelation. But Pius XII treats the origin of the human body with great reserve. Under certain conditions and presupposing the readiness of a Catholic to submit unreservedly to any decision of the Church, properly qualified Catholics are encouraged to discuss the problem and search for an adequate solution. At one time, ultraconservative Catholics saw only an irreducible opposition between the biblical account in Genesis and even a modified evolutionary hypothesis. To these "integrists" Fr. Johnson answers that the creation narrative certainly indicates in no way an evolutionary origin for the human body; but neither does it exclude the possibility that the human body represents the last stage of a finalized series of modifications in a sub-human precursor. From the fact that the Pope himself leaves the question open Fr. Johnson asserts that the second chapter of Genesis should not be cited apodictically against the possibility that pre-existing living matter was used by God in the formation of man's body. A major part of this instructive essay contains a summary of evidence from the science of paleoanthropology. The remains of paleolithic man have been found in Europe, Asia, and Africa, and one

[19] "The Encyclical *Humani Generis* and the Origin of Man," *Dublin Review*, 4th quarter, 1952, pp. 12–29.

certainly human type, the Kanam Man from Africa, belongs demonstrably to the Lower Pleistocene Era, about 900,000 years ago.

Fr. Johnson closes with a few remarks on polygenism. Granted that the narrative in Genesis, taken by itself, does not rigidly impose the origin of the whole human race from a single pair, there is no doubt that the magisterium, safeguarding the revealed truth of original sin, obliges us to interpret Genesis in this way. It seems to me that we have here a good instance of the inadequacy of a merely historical and philological exegesis of a text. Sometimes this must be supplemented by an authentic interpretation of the magisterium. The Church, aware of its own teaching on original sin as a sin traceable to a single man, reminds us that polygenism, in the two forms hitherto proposed, is incompatible with revealed doctrine on the nature and transmission of that sin. In evolution and polygenism we are walking on ground where natural science and theology meet. For this reason, professional Catholic scientists cannot lose sight of or neglect the theological implications of their work; much less may they treat lightly the authentic declarations of the magisterium which must guide them in their research. On the other hand, the biblical scholar, though he may not enjoy professional competence in the field, has no right either to disregard the established facts of the anthropologist or to ridicule hypotheses honestly set up to test known facts.

It is a dull decade which does not produce at least one adventurous spirit who is determined to find the Ark of Noah. It was a Russian aviator, Roskovitsky, flying over Mt. Ararat in 1916, who claimed to have seen vestiges of an ancient ship on the slopes of the great Mount. Since that discovery, in which the Russians must be credited with another "first," at least three expeditions have set out to find the Ark. The French expedition of 1952 to Ararat was, to be sure, different from its predecessors. A team of trained geographers and ethnologists made up the expedition, but the mention of Ararat is usually enough to raise up hopes that the Ark will be found. In September of 1952 the expedition returned with a rich harvest of new geo-ethnological information—but no Ark![20]

Before any "Ark" results were published, A. Parrot, chief curator of the National Museums, had expressed his skepticism in a little book which inaugurates a new French archaeological series.[21] Parrot is the foremost Mesopotamian archaeologist of our day, best known for his excavations at Mari on the Middle Euphrates. He does not for a moment doubt that the

[20] See "L'Arche de Noé n'a pas été retrouvée sur le mont Ararat," *Le Monde*, Sept. 10, 1952. I owe my information about this episode to Abbé Gelin's notice in *L'Ami du clergé*, Jan. 29, 1953, pp. 65–77.

[21] *Déluge et arche de Noé* (Cahiers d'archéologie biblique, No. 1; Paris, 1952; pp. 62).

biblical deluge reflects a great Mesopotamian disaster. The literary and epigraphic documentation for a flood can be traced back to the beginning of the third millenium. But Wooley at Ur and Langdon at Kish went too far, in my opinion, in claiming to have found traces of the flood. At best, their evidence is contestable.[22] In any case, one of those disastrous inundations which periodically scourged the plain between the two rivers, gave rise to a flood narrative in Sumerian and later Mesopotamian literature.

The account in Genesis 6–9 undoubtedly owes something to these ancient traditions which the ancestors of the Hebrews brought from their Mesopotamian homeland in the Patriarchal Age. Apart from the inevitable similarities which are due to common origin, the theological orientation of the biblical narrative is radically different from its predecessors in Mesopotamian literature. In Genesis there is not the slightest trace of polytheism, no disedifying scene of loud and brawling gods gathered around a sacrifice like flies. The biblical flood-story is a profoundly religious document which expresses not only the purest monotheism but the concept of a moral order in which man must answer to a just God for his sins. The biblical writer has purged the old Mesopotamian flood-story of its crudities and transformed it into a religious lesson of God's judgment on sin. The time, place, and extent of the deluge are of little or no importance and there is no need to waste our time on these idle questions. They only divert us from the all-important theological truth, and at the same time reveal a serious misunderstanding of the nature and purpose of this ancient and inspired narrative.

What does the Old Testament tell us of the Hebrew notion of God and nature? John L. McKenzie, of West Baden College, sets about an investigation of this problem against the background of ancient Near Eastern concepts of God and nature.[23] With fine and accurate discernment the author clearly distinguishes between the Hebrew and the Egypto-Mesopotamian attitudes towards God and nature. To state this in terms which are perhaps more familiar to a theologian, he describes the Hebrew notion of Yahweh's relation to nature as midway between the nature religions of the ancients and the Aristotelian-Thomistic scheme of the Catholic theologian. The Hebrews profess unequivocally the transcendence of God; in common with other ancient Near Eastern peoples they had no philosophy (in the Greek sense) of nature.

[22] See John Bright, "Has Archaeology Found Evidence of the Flood?", *Biblical Archaeologist*, V, no. 4 (1942), 55–62. Bright concludes that archaeology gives no certain evidence of the flood.

[23] "God and Nature in the Old Testament," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly*, XIV (1952), 18–34, 124–45.

Beginning with the distinctive idea of a Creator who was distinct from and supreme over the world, the Hebrew regarded the phenomena of nature as so many manifestations of Yahweh's sovereignty and creativity. Nature has even been integrated into the moral and religious order, so that it becomes the theatre of God's judgment on the conduct of men. Connecting this with Old Testament Messianism, Fr. McKenzie points out that the fulfillment of the Messianic hope will demand a renewal of the earth, a recreation of the world which will show forth the fulness of His glory. The task the writer has undertaken is not an easy one, and few Catholics have put their hand to it. The result is the integration of Israel's nature ideology into the categories of ancient thought without sacrificing the uniqueness of Yahwism. I believe that Fr. McKenzie has succeeded in the task and has made a worthwhile contribution to biblical theology.

Genesis 23 tells of the protracted negotiations between Abraham and Ephron over the purchase of the Cave of Machpelah. Manfred R. Lehmann has advanced our knowledge of the puzzling transaction by relating it to the Hittite legal system.[24] The Hittite Code was discovered at Boghazköy in Asia Minor and has already been translated several times into English.[25] Paragraphs §46 and §47 are pertinent to the Genesis episode, for they concern the obligation of the landholder to perform the *ilku* or feudal services for the king. What the services were, in detail, we do not know. But the clause that fits the Machpelah transaction is the one which decrees that ownership of *all* the property, whether acquired by inheritance or purchase, carries with it the *ilku* duties. This explains why Abraham asked to purchase only "the Cave of Machpelah which is *at the edge of* his field" (verse 9). Aware that full ownership entailed the obligation of rendering feudal services, Abraham wanted to buy only that part of Ephron's property which he intended to use. Ephron, naturally, wanted to unload the entire property, and with it his obligation to render these services. Looked at in this light, the argument between the two men had nothing to do with an attempt to extract an excessive price, nor did Ephron ever pretend to offer it as a gift. It was simply a question of who was going to assume the *ilku* obligations, Ephron or Abraham. Purchase of the entire property would have transferred those duties from the former to the latter.

One further detail strengthens the argument that we are here dealing

[24] "Abraham's Purchase of Machpelah and Hittite Law," *BASOR*, no. 129 (1953), 15–18.

[25] Information on the Code is conveniently gathered together in J. B. Pritchard's *Ancient Near Eastern Texts* (Princeton, 1950). Goetze's translation is followed in Lehmann's article.

with a Hittite background. Verse 17 mentions the trees on the land which has just been sold. Now it has often been noted that in Hittite real-estate transactions the exact number of trees is listed. It seems reasonably sure that the deed of sale, whether written or oral, mentioned the number of trees on Ephron's piece of land. Lehmann notes that, once the Hittite capital was destroyed in 1200 B.C., the laws were forgotten. But the Genesis narrative has preserved a perfectly authentic account of the Middle Bronze period in Palestine, when the Hebron area, at least, lived according to this old Hittite legal system. This excellent study demonstrates once again the thoroughly reliable character of the biblical tradition and makes a late date for this chapter unthinkable. Within the last decade we have seen how the Hurrian material from Nuzu has brought to life more than one incident in the Patriarchal narratives. Now the Hittite documents are beginning to offer equally illuminating parallels to Patriarchal practices described in Genesis.

The range and variety of precepts in Mosaic legislation are bewildering. Hermann Bückers looks for the basic ideas in back of this codification.[26] Granted that the laws come from different times and situations, and that additions and changes have been made, Fr. Bückers carefully studies the text of the legislation and believes that he can detect certain basic goals sought in the Mosaic system. Above all else, it sought to secure personal rights to life, freedom, bodily integrity, and property, and to further the national stability and religious purity of the people of God. Quite apart from humanitarian convictions, much of the social legislation was motivated by religious considerations, above all by the conviction of God's supreme dominion and unique claim on His people. Add to this the covenant relation between Israel and Yahweh, and the holiness which God demanded as a consequence of this election. Finally, there was the remembrance of the past, when they were strangers and unprotected in the land of Egypt. The religious orientation of Israelite law is fundamental and gives it a distinctive character. Reverence for the human person and his rights has no sure foundation except in God, the Creator of men. In the law code of Israel God asserted His claims on men, from whom He asked a voluntary moral conduct in harmony with the divine law.

THE PROPHETS

Otto Eissfeldt closed his brilliant essay on the Prophets with the observation that the background of the prophetic movement now stood in a much clearer light, owing to the wealth of monuments and documents of every

[26] "Die sozialen Grundideen der alttestamentlichen Gesetze und Einrichtungen," *Divus Thomas* (Freiburg), XXXI (March, 1953), 61–89.

sort, regained during the last half-century from the Near East.[27] It is not surprising that he singled out the Mari texts of the eighteenth century B.C. as particularly illuminating in this regard. Although the complete dossier of Mari Letters is far from published, and the work of evaluation has only just begun, a number of passages have already revealed interesting antecedents of Israelite prophecy. The likelihood of similarity between the Israelite institution of prophecy and that of early Mesopotamia becomes even more plausible when we recall that the origins of Israel are to be sought in the Fertile Crescent, between Ur and Harran.[28]

Prof. Noth uses three of the Mari texts which have already been published to highlight some of the characteristics of pre-Israelite prophecy. The Mari prophet considers himself an ambassador of a god, and even his commission is reminiscent of Old Testament passages: "Go, I send thee to Zimri-Lim; thou shalt say as follows. . . ." Note the self-accreditation of the divine messenger in the words: "The god Dagan has sent me. . . ." But Noth is quick to remark that, whereas there are formulaic similarities between the two institutions, the differences are essential. In the message of Dagan which is communicated to the Mesopotamian king, the prophet deals with cultic and political matters of limited and ephemeral importance. But the prophetic message of the Old Testament rings with the timeless themes of guilt and punishment, the responsibilities and failings of the chosen people, the interpretation of the great historical events which convulsed the ancient world. Nothing is trivial, nothing purely *ad hoc*. The prophets of Israel are on a level incomparably higher than the messengers of Mari.

When M. E. L. Mallowan excavated Nimrud (Kalḫu) in 1950, he found a clay tablet with an account of Tiglath Pileser III's sweeping campaign

[27] "The Prophetic Literature," in *The Old Testament and Modern Study*, ed. H. H. Rowley (Oxford, 1951), pp. 115–61.

[28] The following articles describe some of the early, pre-Israelitic traces of prophetic activity in the Mesopotamian area: M. Noth, "History and Word of God in the Old Testament," *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, XXXI (1950), 194–206; W. von Soden, "Verkündigung des Gotteswillens durch prophetisches Wort in den altbabylonischen Briefen aus Mari," *Die Welt des Orients*, I (1950), 397–403; A. Lods, "Une tablette inédite de Mari, intéressante pour l'histoire ancienne du prophétisme sémitique," *Studies in Old Testament Prophecy*, ed. H. H. Rowley (Edinburgh, 1950), pp. 103–10. In *Orientalia* for Jan., 1953, Fr. Pohl's "Personalnachrichten" mentions an article by Dossin, "Nur-Sin, ambassadeur de Zimri-Lim à Alep," read at the twelfth Deutscher Orientalistentag, held at Bonn from July 29 to Aug. 2, 1952. On page 108 of his report, Pohl says of these latest letters from the Mari archives: "Darin geht es oft über Propheten und Orakel." René Follet, "De prophetismo semitico non hebraico adnotationes," *Verbum Domini*, XXXI (1953), 28–31, emphasizes the professional and honored status of the Mesopotamian prophet, who acted as a public intermediary between the gods and the ruler.

through Syria and the coastal plain of Palestine in 734 B.C. The text, now known as ND 400, makes the subject of an interesting study by John Gray of Manchester University.[29] The event, recalled by the tablet, is contemporary with the ministry of Isaiah. Among its interesting features is reference to certain officials attached to the cult, whose duty it was to transmit to the rulers of the state messages which they had received from the gods. Superficially, at least, their mediation of supernatural guidance in the affairs of state resembles a function of the prophets of Israel. But Prof. Gray subscribes to the conclusion of Noth, pointing out that the analogy does not extend to the nature and content of the messages.

The four Servant Songs in the second part of Isaiah continue to attract scholars. In 1950 Canon Coppens of Louvain published a study in which he remarked on a growing unity among scholars on three points: (1) the prophetic character of the Songs, (2) their individual rather than collective interpretation, and (3) their royal character.[30] Coppens believes that the failure of Cyrus to live up to Jewish expectations might well have occasioned these Songs, which are calculated to buoy up the flagging hopes of the exiles. He further suggests that the Fourth Song was composed first, and reflected the sufferings of Zedekiah; the other three pertained to the young King Jehoiachin. Later, Deutero-Isaiah took these individual poems, inserted them into his larger work, and gave them a more direct prophetic and Messianic meaning. Putting the first Song in the last place, he foresaw the ideal king of the future accomplishing his goal through vicarious suffering and final resurrection.

V. de Leeuw argues persuasively for the royal character of the Servant depicted in the Songs.[31] His chief arguments are based on the titles and functions of the Servant. Both titles, " 'ebed" and "elect," pertain to the literature of kingship, not only in Israel, but throughout the ancient Near East. The activities and privileges of the Servant have a royal coloring, with kingship as the underlying idea. The Servant enjoys the divine assistance; he receives a share of the divine spirit; God calls him from the womb of his mother and later takes him by the hand. His functions are those of a king. He establishes justice in the land, frees prisoners, delivers the country from its enemies, promulgates his law to the nations.

[29] "The Period and Office of the Prophet Isaiah in the Light of a New Assyrian Tablet," *Expository Times*, LXIII (1952), 263–65.

[30] "Nieuwlicht over de Ebed-Jahweh liederen," *Analecta Lovaniensia bibl. et orient.*, ser. II, fasc. 15 (Desclée, 1950).

[31] "De koninklijke verklaring van de Ebed-Jahweh-Zangen," *Ephemer. theol. Lovan.*, XXVIII (1952), 449–71.

His final argument is taken from the context in which the Songs are found. Apparently influenced to some extent by the Scandinavian School, he sees this context in the so-called royal enthronement psalms of Yahweh, patterned after the royal Babylonian liturgy of Marduk. He concludes that, just as the god Marduk had an earthly representative, an " 'ebed," so Yahweh has, in the king of Israel, His own earthly representative as His " 'ebed." I do not find his argument convincing, inasmuch as it leans heavily on the very questionable hypothesis of a royal enthronement festival in Israel. I believe that Fr. de Leeuw has made too radical a concession to certain members of the Scandinavian School. In concluding his study, the writer leaves the door open to the "prophetic" interpretation of the Servant Songs, which sees his character and work delineated in terms of a prophet.

Duhm was the first to isolate the Servant Songs from their context, and attribute them to an author who lived in the first half of the fifth century B.C. Having detached them from the Book of Consolation, he interpreted them without reference to their context. Many exegetes have travelled the same path, interpreting the Songs as an independent literary cycle. Reacting against that approach, Fr. Tournay, of the Biblical School of St. Stephen in Jerusalem, argues that these Songs are an integral part of the Book of Consolation (chaps. 40–55) and can only be understood within that context.[32]

Among his conclusions we find the statement that no solid arguments, either from style or ideas, can be urged against the unity of authorship of these Songs. Also, the numerous contacts between the Songs and the context oblige us to leave their traditional order undisturbed, and give up the textual displacements which have been proposed in the past. Coming to a more positive solution, Fr. Tournay holds that each of these Songs represents a peculiar, *sui generis* development of a general "servant" theme. The theme is polyvalent and cannot be reduced to any simple, homogeneous scheme.

We have to do with a synthetic portrait whose features are both soteriological and eschatological. The figure is described, not in the colors of the Davidic royal Messiah, but in terms of the group from which he issued. Gradually the physiognomy of teacher, prophet, and savior is individualized; he is no longer a simple personification of Israel, nor of the remnant which is destined to return to Zion. Rather there is a compenetration of collective and individual traits in the picture of this innocent sufferer, whose full significance has been realized only in the Person of Christ. In Him alone are united the multiple elements which go to make up the ideal, and in Him they are perfectly personified. Tournay observes that, in this convergence, we have

[32] R. Tournay, "Les chants du serviteur dans la seconde partie d'Isaie," *Revue biblique*, LIX (1952), 355–84, 481–512.

a good example of the "fuller sense," in which a revelation, obscure in the Old Testament, achieves its full intelligibility in the New.

The opinion of Canon Coppens on any disputed passage in Scripture is always received with great interest. This time he returns to the Messianic text of Isaiah 7:14, and, after surveying most of the Catholic efforts at interpretation in modern times, offers his own solution.[33] Coppens treats the prophecy as literally Messianic. The thoroughly supernatural climate of the passage, the over-all portrait of the "woman" and the "child," apart from purely etymological considerations, the normal progression towards, and unity of this mysterious passage with, 9:5–6 and 11:1–5, in which most commentators recognize the "child" as the Messianic king of the future, all these arguments lead Coppens to defend the literally Messianic interpretation of 7:14. Objections to this solution, especially from recent literature, are answered and the weaknesses of some arguments hitherto proposed for the literal interpretation are indicated. Bibliographical information, as we might expect, is complete.

Coppens admits the chronological difficulty of the literal interpretation, which seems to take the verse right out of its historical setting. His answer is that the difficulty must yield to the well-established law of prophetic perspective, in which events of vastly different periods are put together on the same canvas. He admits that the fulfillment has given us a better understanding of the text. On the lips of Isaiah it was dark and mysterious, a kind of first draft of the plan which would later be fully realized. But, Coppens continues, from first draft to fulfillment we are face to face with the same mystery, the same reality, the same providential work.

Not by any stretch of the imagination would anyone number Canon Coppens among what he calls "les exégètes catholiques de l'école timorée." All the more noteworthy is it, then, when an exegete of his calibre endorses the traditional, literal interpretation of this controverted text. Will that settle the question among Catholics? I doubt it very much. Coppens appears to me to carry much more conviction when nailing down the weaknesses of opposite views than in positively establishing his own. Aside, perhaps, from a more adroit and persuasive marshalling of the arguments, I find little that has not already been said in favor of the literal interpretation. Coppens is aware of the tentative character of his arguments when he graciously states that he will consider continued debate a sufficient recompense for the work he has put into this article.

[33] "La prophétie de la 'Almah," *Ephemer. theol. Lov.*, XXVIII (1952), 648–78.

THE WRITINGS

Hermann Gunkel began a new era in the study of the Psalms when he set out to classify them according to objective literary criteria. It was not the least of his merits to have emphasized the oft-forgotten fact that ancient poets, Hebrews included, adhere closely to well-established patterns in both form and language. Only with Gunkel and his followers did the strictly formal element in ancient poetry receive deserved attention.[34] Along with the study of literary categories went the effort to find the life situation, the *Sitz im Leben*, of the Psalms. Since it was quite impossible to find an adequate situation for the majority of the Psalms in the post-exilic period, the tendency of this generation has been to date most of them in the pre-exilic era. The stimulating work of Mowinckel, to whom we owe the most highly-developed study on cultic influence in the Psalms, has contributed much to pushing the Psalms back into the royal period of Israel's history.[35]

From quite another direction comes another and, in my opinion, more objective approach towards the early dating of the Psalms. The discovery and publication of the Ugaritic literature from Ras Shamra is largely responsible for this new and revolutionary approach to the Psalms. While many scholars saw almost immediately the applicability of this new material to biblical problems, the most consistent and fruitful application of Ugaritic to the Bible has come from the Baltimore School of W. F. Albright. In addressing the Catholic Biblical Association almost a decade ago, Prof. Albright outlined the great relevance of this new literature to biblical poetry.[36] His latest study of the Psalms is an original and illuminating application, not only of Ugaritic, but of our new knowledge of early Hebrew orthography, to Ps. 68, one of the most difficult in the Psalter.[37] The author takes the Psalm as a collection of *incipits*, or first lines of ancient poems, whose composition goes back to a period between the thirteenth and the tenth century B.C. The collection and writing down of this string of *incipits*

[34] The influence of Gunkel's work on literary types is discernible in Fr. Tournay's *Les Psaumes*, in the collection *La sainte Bible de Jérusalem*; see especially the appendix, where he classifies the Psalms according to their literary types, pp. 57–59.

[35] See Mowinckel's *Psalmenstudien*, II (1922), where he develops at length the theory that, on each New Year's Day, Israel celebrated a feast of Yahweh's Enthronement. In the elaborate cult of that feast the hopes of the coming year were dramatically portrayed. Mowinckel believed that, out of the repeated failure of these hopes to materialize, Israelite eschatology developed. Others prefer to explain the rise of eschatology by revelation.

[36] "The Old Testament and Canaanite Language and Literature," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly*, VII (1945), 5–31.

[37] W. F. Albright, "A Catalogue of Early Hebrew Lyric Poems," *Hebrew Union College Annual*, XXIII, Part I (1950–51), 1–39.

would date from the Solomonic period, tenth century, or a little later. This date should be compared with Podechard's proposed date of 320 B.C. for the same Psalm.[38]

Many attempts have been made to determine the situation implied in Ps. 22. Ernest Vogt, Rector of the Biblical Institute in Rome, finds previous attempts unsatisfactory and offers a new solution to the problem.[39] Using as his framework a liturgical act of thanksgiving performed in the Temple of Jerusalem, he believes that the participation in the sacrificial banquet which climaxes this liturgy has provided the occasion of the Psalm. Fr. Vogt holds that verse 5 is, literally, a description of that banquet, witnessed by the enemies who pass by in the Temple court. The Temple, he continues, is described figuratively in verses 1b–3a, comparing it to a rich pasture, or an oasis to which the Shepherd leads His flock. Verses 3b–4 are taken to mean that God has preserved the Psalmist from misdeeds which are liable to prosecution. More specifically, it is a prayer of thanksgiving offered for his acquittal in a suit brought against him.

This is only the skimpiest outline of the author's interpretation, but I think it gives the reader an idea of the direction the author is taking in his reconstruction. Many parallels to the Psalm are adduced, especially from the Hymns of Thanksgiving.[40] Very few changes are made in the text and none of them is drastic. Some questions remain unanswered, such as the date of the Psalm, its philological character, and the possibility of extra-biblical parallels. But Vogt has worked out an ingenious and plausible *Sitz im Leben* for this masterpiece of religious poetry. Until a better explanation is forthcoming, this will stand as the most satisfactory solution of the Shepherd Psalm's background.

T. Piatti, O.M.I., has published the first installment of what promises to be a full critical study of the Song of Songs.[41] This introductory article is taken up largely with a history of interpretation. The bibliographical apparatus, at first glance, seemed quite impressive until I noticed that the author has not even mentioned Père Robert of the Catholic Institute in Paris, whose edition of the Canticle in the Jerusalem Bible is probably the

[38] E. Podechard, *Le Psautier*, Traduction littérale, I (1949), 295.

[39] "The 'Place in Life' of Psalm 23," *Biblica*, XXXIV, no. 2 (1953), 195–211. This paper was read at the meeting of the Society for Old Testament Study, held in Rome during Easter Week of 1952.

[40] See Pss. 32, 34, 117, and 65. In the last mentioned, note verses 13–15, where the liturgical ceremony of thanksgiving is mentioned.

[41] "Il Cantico dei Cantici alla luce de libro di Geremia," *Divus Thomas* (Piacenza), XXX (Jan.–March, 1953), 18–38.

best modern Catholic study of the work.[42] That Fr. Piatti had overlooked A. Feuillet[43] is perhaps understandable, but the omission of Robert, so long associated with studies of the Canticle, is incomprehensible.

Following Ricciotti and others, Piatti explains the Song by a confrontation with parallel biblical passages. These are principally four: Psalm 44; Isaiah's parable of the vine, 5:1–7; Psalm 118; and the marriage symbolism of the Prophets. He believes that the Canticle is a symbolic exaltation of the love between Yahweh and Israel, and, with less assurance, that it is the manual of a religious sect similar to the extra-biblical scrolls recently discovered near the Dead Sea. To what literary genre does the Song belong? Piatti calls it a *hîdah*, the Hebrew word for an "enigma." This, he believes, is the key to the obscure and puzzling character of the work. The suggestion that the Canticle is the official manual of a particular religious sect and was intended originally for initiates of the group, while not impossible a priori, strikes this reviewer as a tour de force without foundation. Nor is there a shred of positive evidence that the Song is a *hîdah*. In future installments of his work it is to be hoped that he will not neglect Robert's penetrating study, which correctly places the Song of Songs in the known literary and theological traditions of Israel.

In closing this section it will not be out of place to mention an incident which took place at the twelfth Deutscher Orientalistentag, held at Bonn.[44] Vinzenz Hamp, of the Catholic Faculty of Freising, presented an extended report on the sapiential literature of the Bible. His conclusions were directed against Gunkel and Humbert, who tend to reserve an important place for sapiential writing in the pre-exilic period, stemming probably from a class of "wise men." While not denying that collections of proverbs go back as far as Solomon, Hamp insisted that the Exile is the place to look for the bulk of sapiential literature. On this point he was immediately challenged by Alt and Eissfeldt, who believe that, from the beginning of the royal period, "wisdom" was most likely introduced as a cultural element at the royal court and in the aristocratic families.

To that argument can be added the need of setting Wisdom literature against the vast and ancient background of the wisdom of the Near East. Much is now known about Egyptian Wisdom literature and, to give but one

[42] A. Robert, *Le Cantique des Cantiques* (La sainte Bible de Jérusalem; Paris: Editions du Cerf, 1951).

[43] "Le Cantique des Cantiques et la tradition biblique," *Nouvelle revue théologique*, LXXIV (1952), 706–33.

[44] I learned of this incident from the "Chronica" of *Ephemer. theol. Lov.*, XXVIII (1952), 594.

example of literary dependence, most scholars now accept Erman's opinion that the prototype of Proverbs 22:17—23:11 is found in the Sayings of Amen-Em-Ope. It is only in recent years that substantial progress has been made in the study of Sumerian Wisdom literature. This is due, not only to the publication of over half a dozen volumes of literary texts, but to S. N. Kramer's research on the still unpublished Nippur Tablets in the museums of Istanbul and the University of Pennsylvania.[45] All these studies are helping to round out our picture of Oriental Wisdom and to give us a greater respect for the antiquity of Wisdom in Israel.

BIBLICAL THEOLOGY

The problem of Messianism, its origin and development, is recognized by all as one of the most vital in the Old Testament. Catholics have been notably active in this field, which promises fruitful results to those who work in it.[46] Our greater knowledge of the biblical world, along with more exact ideas on the nature of inspiration, especially as it touches the psychology of the human author, has induced Catholic scholars to give up some of the more rigid and unrealistic views of Messianism which prevailed a generation ago. Among non-Catholic scholars the greatest contribution to the study is due to the tireless work of the Scandinavian School. Dozent Ringgren of Uppsala summarizes the results which are generally accepted by this School.[47]

They believe that the Messianic idea has grown out of the ancient Oriental idea of kingship, which was shared by Israel. Dhorme, in 1910, was the first to point out the similarities between things said of Mesopotamian kings, and Messianic expressions in the Old Testament. Since the Israelite king supposedly fits into the Oriental pattern of the "divine king," the theory

[45] See S. N. Kramer's preliminary survey of Sumerian wisdom literature in *BASOR*, no. 122 (1951), 28–31. He groups the literature under five categories: (1) proverbs; (2) miniature essays; (3) instructions and precepts; (4) essays connected with the Mesopotamian school and scribe; (5) disputes and debates. To this may now be added the brief report of Kramer's work in Istanbul during the past year, as given in *Orientalia*, XXII, no. 2 (1953), 190–93. In this same report we learn that Kramer read a paper entitled "Forty-eight Sumerian Proverbs and Their Translation" at the third Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale, held at Leiden in the summer of 1952. This paper was prepared with the cooperation of eight leading European cuneiformists.

[46] Typical examples of this research are found in the following recent articles: J. Coppens, "Où en est le problème du Messianisme?", *Anal. Lov. bibl. et orientalia*, XXI (1951); A. Robert, "Considérations sur le Messianisme du Ps. II," *Recherches de science religieuse*, XXXIX, nos. 2–4 (1951), 88–98; A. Colunga, "El mesianismo en los salmos regios," *Studia Anselmiana*, XXVII–XXVIII (1951), 208–30.

[47] Helmer Ringgren, "König und Messias," *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*, LXIV (1952), 120–47.

goes on to say that the Davidic king becomes the starting point of the Messianic hope. Ringgren then goes through the royal Psalms, 2, 20, 44, 71, and 109, showing how they portray a king who is the anointed of Yahweh, proclaimed as His son, a dispenser of justice, and the means of ensuring for his people such material blessings as rain and fertility. Aided by divine power, he tramples his enemies, rules over the whole world, and sits upon a throne which will last forever. From this ideology the expectation of a Messiah has grown. It is not difficult to see a relation to the theory of Mowinckel that Old Testament eschatology grew out of the hopes and blessings which were connected with the annual Enthronement Festival.

Coming to the Prophets, Ringgren sees the same king-ideology at work in their Messianic oracles. In Isaiah 7, 9, and 11, and especially in the Servant Songs, in Micah 5, in Jeremiah 23 and 33, and in Zechariah 9, Ringgren holds that the old Israelite king-ideology, built around the cult of the Enthronement Festival, has now been transformed by the pressure of catastrophic events into hope for great blessings in a distant future. The third and last part of the essay is devoted to a closer study of the Servant Songs. Here Ringgren believes that the Israelite people, the king, and the Messiah are so intertwined that it is no longer possible to distinguish sharply between the three. It is interesting to note his observation that nowhere else in the Old Testament is vicarious suffering so clearly portrayed. The Scandinavian position on the origins of Messianism in the Old Testament has been clearly summarized by Ringgren in this essay. With some of the points we can agree, and Catholic scholars have already profited by their insights. Other points are questionable, especially when they rest upon the dubious foundation of an alleged Enthronement Festival in Israel. None of their arguments can be ignored.

In 1915 F. Nötscher devoted a long study to the justice of God in the pre-exilic prophets.[48] H. Cazelles finds two weaknesses in his work.[49] Nötscher had made little or no appeal to comparative material from the ancient world, which cost the work something in perspective. Fr. Cazelles hastens to add that this shortcoming is excusable when we recall how little was known, at that time, about the ancient world. The second defect lay in his analysis of the texts from the viewpoint of our modern notions of justice, instead of from the mentality of the milieu in which they arose.

Cazelles then takes up five texts which are ordinarily used to illustrate the juridical and vindictive character of divine justice, and attempts to prove

[48] *Die Gerechtigkeit Gottes bei den vorexilischen Propheten* (Munster i.W., 1915).

[49] "A propos de quelques textes difficiles relatifs à la justice de Dieu dans l'A.T.," *Revue biblique*, LVIII (1951), 169–88.

that they represent an altogether different concept, namely, God's disposition to pour out benefits upon His creatures. The texts selected are Deut. 33:21, Amos 5:24, Isaiah 10:22 and 28:17, Psalm 50:6. With very few changes in the text, he finds in these passages a notion of justice which is not equivalent to divine punishment for sin, but the realization of promises made by a beneficent Providence. Justice is identified with the goodness, not the wrath, of God. A work along very similar lines has been done in the New Testament by Père Lyonnet, who in 1947 published a study on the justice of God as we find it in the Epistle to the Romans.[50] As students of the New Testament will recall, the thesis was that in Romans the "justice of God" did not stand for vindictive and punitive justice, but for the fidelity of God to His promises of salvation. While a number of theologians and exegetes have hesitated to accept this thesis, Cazelles now finds the same thing true of the Old Testament notion of divine justice.

Although Cazelles insists that preoccupation with the juridical is a characteristic of the nineteenth century, we cannot overlook the profound part played by the Covenant idea in Israel from the earliest period. It is only natural, then, that their religious life should take on a juridical coloring, since right conduct was judged by conformity to the will of God as revealed in the terms of the Covenant. Again, God's justice certainly brings with it blessings, but is this the essence of His justice or a corollary of it? Reward and punishment are the result of man's observance of a revealed norm, which is certainly a juridical notion.

Cazelles adduces several examples from Canaanite which seem to support his argument. On the other hand, in the Aramaic inscriptions of Panammu and Zenjirli, the word *ṢDQ* signifies the proper course of action to follow, and is extolled as a virtue to be prized by kings.[51] In Phoenician, Zellig Harris attaches the meaning "be just" to the verb *ṢDQ*; in the Ifil form it means "to vindicate."[52] For the noun he assigns the meanings "justice, legality." While it is difficult to agree entirely with his thesis, Cazelles justifiably deplores the error of accommodating Old Testament ideas to our modern categories of thought. As a caution against an exclusively juridical interpretation of *ṢDQ*, especially in a Messianic context, the article will serve a good purpose.

[50] S. Lyonnet, "De 'Justitia Dei' in Epistola ad Romanos," *Verbum Domini*, XXV (1947), 23–24, 118–21, 136–44, 193–203, 257–63. These articles have since been published in a convenient brochure.

[51] See Franz Rosenthal's recent study, "Ṣedaḳa, Charity," *Hebrew Union College Annual*, XXIII (1950–51), 411–30.

[52] *A Grammar of the Phoenician Language*, p. 140.

Sheldon H. Blank delivered the presidential address at the 1952 meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature and Exegesis.[53] He examines that type of prayer in which a character of the Old Testament stands up boldly before God and pleads his case with all the vigor and the forthrightness of a lawyer before a court. These are the "Promethean" personalities, who defy God without denying Him, and cling to God the while they question His decrees. From Jeremiah 15 and Ezechiel 14 we learn that there were six men whose intercession was singularly powerful with God: Moses, Samuel, Jeremiah, Noah, Daniel, and Job. What were the arguments used by these men who stormed heaven with prayer that is urgent, sometimes impatient, always persistent?

Dr. Blank surveys three of their arguments. The first consists in an appeal to God's self-interest, to act for His Name's sake.[54] This is no trivial appeal to vanity but rests upon the concept that universal salvation must wait upon the universal acceptance of God's sovereignty. The second argument consists in a reminder that God has, in a certain sense, "restricted" His liberty by His choice of Israel. This comes to an appeal to the divine promises, which are thought to be binding upon the will of God. The final motive is best expressed in the words of Abraham's plea for Sodom: "Will you indeed sweep away the just with the wicked?"[55] It is an appeal to the justice of God, which is one of His essential attributes. There are many other valuable observations in this essay, which describes an important aspect of biblical prayer. We might add that countless parallels in Christian prayer of all ages could be cited, and that a Teresa of Avila could well appreciate the familiarity which is implied in this "Promethean" prayer. God does not listen only to the quietly submissive. And there is a passage in the New Testament reminding us that the Kingdom of Heaven suffers violence, which should make us sympathetic with the importunate prayer of these men of faith in the Old Testament.[56]

Is the resurrection of the body taught in Job 19:25–27? Maximilian Cordero, professor of Old Testament at Salamanca, studies the text minutely,

[53] "Man Against God—The Promethean Element in Biblical Prayer," *Journal of Biblical Lit.*, LXXII, no. 1 (1953), 1–13.

[54] Jeremiah 14:17; Ps. 25:11; 79:9. [55] Gen. 18:25.

[56] Very relevant to this question is the paper delivered by Prof. Ovid Sellers at the same meeting. Entitled "Seeking God in the Old Testament," it demonstrates that the Old Testament, far from discouraging the effort made in prayer, urges man to seek God with all his strength. Sellers' essay is a timely answer to a group of Protestant theologians who so accentuate the omnipotence of God and the impotence of fallen man that recourse to God in prayer is judged futile. Such a theology can claim no support from the Old Testament.

sets it in its proximate and remote contexts, and concludes that this hope is not expressed in the words of the suffering Job.[57] Fr. Cordero justifiably rules out the Vulgate translation, describing it as a paraphrase in which the literal meaning has been overlaid with New Testament ideas. Jerome himself admitted, in his Prologue to the Pentateuch, that he sometimes translates texts in the light of their fulfillment. Cordero believes that Job merely affirms, in a solemn manner, his deep conviction of the justice of God, who watches over the rights of the afflicted, and who will eventually restore the innocent Job to the state of well-being he enjoyed at the beginning of the drama. The Epilogue describes the realization of this conviction, when Job's fortunes are restored twofold.

Along with Kissane, Sutcliffe, and many others, I would agree with Cordero that Job does not express a belief in the resurrection of the body after death. That is the substance of his essay and there is no doubt that he has proved his case. On the precise interpretation of the passage in question, there is still room for debate. We may recall the view of Msgr. Kissane, who takes the crucial verse 26 as a conditional clause: "did I but see Him. . . ."[58] If Job were to see God after death, he would see Him as friendly and no longer hostile. Whatever opinion we follow, the text is extremely difficult and we may never know precisely what the author intended. The last section of Cordero's article briefly surveys patristic opinion on 19:25–27. Since there is no unanimity among the Fathers on the meaning of the verses, he concludes that full liberty is granted the exegete in his interpretation of the text.

BIBLICAL ARCHAEOLOGY

It would be impossible to summarize here the swelling flood of literature on the Dead Sea Scrolls.[59] The new material presents us with problems which are archaeological, paleographical, textual, historical, and theological. With new scrolls turning up as these lines are being written, it is evident that the study and interpretation of this precious material will keep a generation of scholars busy. One or two late contributions deserve notice. Roland de Vaux has published a preliminary report on the first campaign of excavation (Nov.–Dec., 1951) at Khirbet Qumrân.[60] The work was undertaken as a joint enterprise between the Jordan Department of Antiquities, the French

[57] "La esperanza de la resurrección corporal en el libro de Job," *Ciencia Tomista*, Jan.–March, 1953, pp. 1–23.

[58] E. Kissane, *The Book of Job* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1946), p. 21.

[59] The most adequate picture of the situation, up to 1952, will be found in H. H. Rowley, *The Zadokite Fragments and the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1952; pp. xii + 133).

[60] "Fouille au Khirbet Qumrân," *Revue biblique*, LX (1953), 83–106.

School of Archaeology in Jerusalem, and the Palestine Archaeological Museum.

Much publicity has already been given to the retractations which Père de Vaux made in his communication to the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres, after completing his first campaign.[61] The correction of his views touches three initial mistakes. He admits he was wrong (1) in assigning the jars, in which the scrolls of Ain Feshka were found, to the pre-Roman period; (2) in holding that the jars were manufactured expressly as containers for the scrolls; and (3) in attributing the Roman pottery of the Ain Feshka Cave to a later intrusion. What has not been sufficiently publicized is de Vaux's assertion that these concessions do not in the least prejudice the early dating of the manuscripts. Père de Vaux still maintains that the manuscripts were deposited in the Caves of Ain Feshka and Khirbet Qumrân before 66–70 A.D. Furthermore, the scrolls are older than that date, and the texts from which they were copied older still. The excavations of this first campaign also support the hypothesis that these scrolls belong to an Essenian sect. The site corresponds exactly to a geographical description of the Essenian settlement left by Pliny the Elder. Père de Vaux, in conclusion, ventures the opinion that the final picture of these Essenes will be quite different from that left by Philo and Josephus, and much closer to the Ḥasidim of the Maccabean era.

From one of the caves along the steep and dangerous slopes of the Wadi Murabba'at comes a fragment which has been published in facsimile in the *Palestine Exploration Quarterly*, Oct., 1952, plate XXVIII, no. 3. In a communication from Oxford, dated Dec., 1952, O. A. Lehmann has identified the fragment as belonging to a third Dead Sea Scroll of Isaiah.[62] The text is Isaiah 1:4b–14a. Lehmann describes the formation of the letters and concludes that the script "gives the definite impression of being later than the second century A.D." He adds that the orthography, which follows the Massoretic text very closely, points in the same direction. The author proposes the designation "DSIc" for this third Isaiah Scroll, in keeping with current terminology.

G. Vermès returns to the problem of determining the historical background of the Scrolls. His two articles attempt to fix, as closely as possible, the upper and lower limits of the situation reflected in these documents.[63]

[61] *Le Monde*, April 9, 1952.

[62] "A Third Dead Sea Scroll of Isaiah," *Journal of Jewish Studies*, IV, no. 1 (1953), 38–40.

[63] "Le cadre historique des manuscrits de la Mer morte," *Recherches de science religieuse*, XLI, no. 1 (1953), 5–29; no. 2 (1953), 203–30.

The first article concerns the upper limit, the *terminus a quo* of the Scrolls, and the author reaches the following conclusions. (1) The origin of the community, presupposed in the Scrolls, is to be placed between 200 and 160 B.C., during the Jewish struggle against aggressive Hellenism. (2) The Teacher of Justice began his ministry during the reign of Antiochus Epiphanes. This opinion will obviously affect the interpretation of the Habakkuk Commentary. (3) In line with de Vaux's opinion, this community is very close in belief and practice to the Ḥasidim, with one exception. The Dead Sea community considers the Zadokite priesthood sacred and inalienable; the Ḥasidim regard it as secondary. (4) At this early, Maccabean date the community was not yet a genuine sect. Later, probably because the Hasmonean family assumed the high priesthood and threw out the Zadokites, it crystallized into a sect.

The second article deals with the *terminus ad quem*, or lower limit, of the Scrolls. Giving up an earlier view that the Habakkuk Commentary referred to events in the second half of the first century A.D., Fr. Vermès now raises his lower limit to a period shortly before the taking of Jerusalem by Pompey, preferably between 65 and 63 B.C. In no case, he claims, can one go below 37 B.C., the end of the Hasmonean House, for the situation implied in the documents. The "last priests of Jerusalem" of the Habakkuk Scroll are the successors of Simon Maccabee, ranging from John Hyrcanus I (134–104 B.C.) to Aristobulus II (67–63 B.C.). The "Kittim" would be the legions of Pompey moving irresistibly towards the Holy City. In short, the events of that turbulent century between the persecution of Antiochus Epiphanes and the Roman Conquest under Pompey underlie the Dead Sea Scrolls. It would be premature to accept as definitive any theory on the historical background of the Scrolls; too many textual obscurities and enigmatic concepts still stand in the way. Certain personalities in the texts simply resist convincing identification. It should also be noted that the reconstruction of Vermès leans heavily upon only one of the documents, the Habakkuk Scroll, and it still leaves its share of problems unsolved. On the credit side, it is modestly advanced with solid reasons, and is compatible with the findings of the archaeologists and the paleographers.

This report closes on a note of sadness. From Jerusalem word has come of the death of Felix-Marie Abel, on March 24th of this year. With the passing of Père Abel the Church has lost one of its most learned and productive scholars in the field of Sacred Scripture. Born in a tiny village of southern France in 1878, he entered the Dominican Order at an early age, and after pronouncing his religious vows in 1898, was assigned to the Biblical School of St. Stephen in Jerusalem. Only a few years before, M.-J. Lagrange had

founded the School, and the young Père Abel became one of his first pupils. For over fifty years Abel lived and worked in the Holy Land, teaching regular courses in the Biblical School, directing student expeditions to biblical sites in Palestine and the neighboring countries, all the while turning out articles for the *Revue biblique*, the *Journal of the Palestine Oriental Society*, and other scientific periodicals.

The work by which he will be longest remembered is his series of contributions to the Collection "Etudes bibliques," begun by Père Lagrange in 1903. In this Collection appeared his two-volume *Géographie de la Palestine*, the *Grammaire du grèc biblique*, his commentary *Les livres des Maccabées*, and his most recent work, in two volumes, *Histoire de la Palestine*. Volumes such as these have assured him a permanent place among the great biblical scholars of our time. Right up to the day he died, the indefatigable scholar was at his desk, working laboriously on a large Commentary to the Book of Joshua, whose knotty historical and topographical problems always attracted this master of things Palestinian. A little incident which occurred during a month's residence at the Ecole Biblique in 1949 comes back to mind, and I recall it as revealing something of the man. Two days before I left St. Stephen's, Père Abel, then in his seventieth year, set out by local bus for the long and exhausting trip from Jerusalem to Damascus, there to work for a period of two weeks in the new Museum of Greco-Roman Antiquities. Fatigue and discomfort meant nothing to this dedicated scholar who seemed to move on almost impatiently to the conclusion of his work, before God called him to his reward. May he rest in peace!

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