

CURRENT THEOLOGY

BULLETIN OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

INTRODUCTION

On March 16 of this year a new chapter in the story of the Dead Sea Scrolls opened when four of the seven scrolls found in 1947 were presented to the State of Israel. This gift, made possible by the generosity of an American industrialist, D. S. Gottesman, will be housed in a "Shrine of the Book" on the campus of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. The recently purchased scrolls were the property of the Syrian Orthodox Archbishop, Athanasius Y. Samuel, who brought them to New York and offered them for sale. They include the more important manuscript of Isaiah, the *Manual of Discipline*, the *Habakkuk Commentary*, and the lost Aramaic *Apocalypse of Lamech*; the last mentioned is now undergoing the long and delicate treatment required for its unrolling. The finds continue to multiply and new caves have yielded more manuscripts and fragments, eclipsing in importance even the first discovery. According to a recent estimate, every book of the Old Testament except Chronicles is now represented in the material being prepared for publication or already published.¹

As for the dispute about dating, the combined weight of evidence based upon paleography, literary content, ceramic classification, and Carbon-14 tests, has seriously weakened if not totally destroyed the position of those who still hold out for a post-Christian date. In this and other respects a letter to his local paper by Professor Allegro, who has been working on the scrolls in Jerusalem, is of considerable interest:

The soundly based archaeological evidence published by Père De Vaux, who has been excavating the Settlement at Qumran, allows of no other date for the final abandonment of that site, and thus, presumably, the deposit of the scrolls, than the year 68 A.D., when the Roman legions overran the area. Most scholars now accept that, at any rate, as a fixed point, and the so-called "Battle of the Scrolls," marked with a great deal of bitterness and loss of perspective, is over and

¹ Here it will not be out of place to call the attention of our readers to a splendid survey of the whole question, beginning with the discovery of the Scrolls in 1947. Edmund Wilson's article, "The Scrolls From The Dead Sea," in *The New Yorker* for the week of May 14, 1955, pp. 45-121, proves once again what an intelligent and alert man can accomplish if he takes the trouble to consult reliable sources. By dint of patient study of the published material, first-hand examination of the site, and prolonged consultation with the best authorities, Mr. Wilson has turned out a synthesis which is not only reliable but a delight to read. It is enthusiastically recommended to all who are interested in the Scrolls.

best forgotten. The great work which now faces scholars, and will indeed face generations of scholars yet to come, is the evaluating of this miraculously preserved material in terms of early Christianity and later Judaism.

But this cannot be even attempted until all the evidence is available. The British public still does not seem to be aware that manuscript riches from Qumran of more importance even than those found in the first cave are still awaiting purchasers in the impatient hands of the bedouin of the Dead Sea wilderness. Money has been raised for over twenty thousand pounds' worth, and these scroll fragments are being prepared for publication in the Palestine Museum in Jerusalem. But we know that there is probably another eight thousand pounds' worth in the Ta'amireh encampments, and until these are also in our hands final publication of all the material must be delayed. Rather more serious is the realization that unless these fragments are bought very soon the bedouin will tire of waiting and realise what they can on the tourist market, when they will certainly be lost to scholarship and the world for ever.²

The excavations referred to above have led De Vaux and others to reduce their original date for the sealing of the caves, the latest written material now being placed prior to 68 A.D., when the Community was dispersed. It now seems more than ever correct to say that the caves served as a Genizah, the Jewish-Aramaic word for a repository for discarded manuscripts. The occupation sequence of the entire Qumran Settlement has been succinctly plotted in three stages by the editor-in-chief of the scroll publications.³

Period I: Construction under John Hyrcanus, 135-104 B.C.

Earthquake, spring of 31 B.C.

Abandoned.

Period II: Restoration under Herod Archelaus, 4 B.C.-6 A.D.

Destroyed in June, 68 A.D.

Period III: Military occupation from 68 A.D. to end of century.

Abandoned.

Occupation under the Second Revolt, 132-135 A.D.

Abandoned definitively.

An objective and complete study of the *sensus plenior* has been recently published which will go far towards bringing order into a debate which has occasionally suffered from lack of clarity and precision.⁴ In this dissertation, submitted to the Faculty of St. Mary's University in Baltimore, R. E. Brown has clearly distinguished the various senses of Scripture, briefly chronicled

² *Manchester Guardian Weekly*, March 24, 1955, p. 4.

³ R. De Vaux, *Revue biblique* 61 (1954) 234.

⁴ R. E. Brown, S.S., *The Sensus Plenior of Sacred Scripture* (Baltimore, 1955), xiv + 161 pp.

the history of both Jewish and Christian exegesis, and, in the longest and best chapter, explained and defended the fuller sense.

In accepting the credentials of this sense Fr. Brown calls it "the deeper sense of the text itself (therefore not typical) which was not clearly foreseen by the human author (therefore not strictly literal) but was intended by God." How classify this among the other senses of Scripture? He describes the *sensus plenior* as a "distinct sense from either the literal or the typical, holding a position between the two, but closer to the literal."⁵

The most persistent objection to the *sensus plenior* is derived from the very nature of instrumental causality. Since God is using an intelligent being as His instrument, the argument goes, this instrument must understand and intend all that he writes. Anything which goes beyond this knowledge and intention cannot be called inspired, as we usually understand the term. Accordingly, no text can possess a meaning which, transcending the hagiographer's knowledge and intention, would have its origin in God alone.⁶ Brown concedes that the human writer's understanding and volition must be operative when he functions as an instrument in the composition of Scripture. And this, he believes, is satisfied in the ever-present literal sense which is fully understood and intended by the human agent. We can say, therefore, that the instrument *always* exercises his proper activity of knowing and willing. But does it follow that any deeper meaning, surpassing the understanding of the writer, is excluded? It seems that, once the universality of the literal sense is admitted, there is no reason why God cannot elevate the instrument to produce an additional effect outside the sphere of his own proper activity. Because God is operating with an intelligent instrument it does not follow that He must use this instrument only to the degree that he actually knows all that God wanted to express. Nor does any official document of the Church teach that the activity of the principal cause is restricted in its biblical possibilities by the comprehension or non-comprehension of His intentions by the hagiographer. Brown concludes his admirable study with a discussion of various criteria by which the existence of a fuller sense in the text may be recognized.

The interplay of literal and fuller sense is concretely illustrated in a recent study on the mariological sense of Gn 3:15.⁷ In the *Ineffabilis Deus* of Pius

⁵ Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 122, where a more extended description can be found.

⁶ The most thorough treatment of this difficulty is found in two articles of Manuel de Tuyá, O.P., "Si es posible y en qué media un *sensus plenior* a la luz del concepto teológico de inspiración," *Ciencia tomista* 79 (1952) 369-418, and "El sentido típico del Antiguo Testamento es 'verdadera y estrictamente' sentido de la Biblia," *ibid.* 80 (1953) 625-61.

⁷ Myles M. Bourke, "Papal Teaching on *Genesis* 3:15," *Conference Bulletin of the Archdiocese of New York* 32 (March, 1955) 15-28.

IX and both the *Munificentissimus Deus* and *Fulgens corona* of Pius XII the Popes substantially accept the mariological interpretation of the Fathers without, however, endorsing any particular theory about the sense in which Christ and Mary are present in 3:15. It must be emphasized that in no papal document do we find official acceptance of the view that, in the literal sense, Mary is the "woman" of 3:15 and Christ alone the "seed of the woman." There is, accordingly, no papal insistence on the mariological interpretation in its strictest form.⁸

Confronted with this position of the magisterium Myles M. Bourke argues that, while papal authority obliges us to give this passage a mariological interpretation, we are not forced to surrender the view that Eve is the "woman" in the literal sense and the human race the "seed of the woman." The following propositions summarize his opinion on the mariological import of the text: (1) In the literal sense, Christ and Mary are in 3:15 only as included in the human race, the "seed of the woman." (2) In the *sensus plenior* Christ is predicted in 3:15 as the supreme victor over Satan. (3) In the *sensus plenior*, Mary is predicted in 3:15 as that member of the "seed of the woman" who is uniquely associated with the supreme victor in His triumph. (4) In the typical sense, Mary is foreshadowed by Eve, the "woman," and Eve's relatively imperfect enmity for Satan is verified completely and perfectly in her. I believe that the majority of Catholic scholars will agree with all of these positions except possibly the last, which involves the very obscure and controverted relation between Eve and Mary.⁹

Two years ago a question was raised concerning the liberty enjoyed by a Catholic exegete in view of the Biblical Commission decrees.¹⁰ Since a Catholic exegete is best qualified, apart from official pronouncements, to speak about the force of these decrees A. Dubarle, O.P., sent a courteous and informative letter to the Editorial Board of the *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*.¹¹ This communication should be all the more interesting to American exegetes in that the same question was thrashed out in frank and open discussion at the 1954 Meeting of the Catholic Biblical

⁸ See the appropriate and timely observations of A.-M. Dubarle on papal teaching as it applies to the Catholic exegete: *Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques* 39 (January, 1955) 105-6.

⁹ Against the Eve-Mary typology see the arguments of A. Bea, "Maria SS. nel Protovangelo," *Marianum* 15 (1953) 20.

¹⁰ J. Hempel, "Glaube, Mythos und Geschichte im A.T.," *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 65 (1953) 122, note 1.

¹¹ A.-M. Dubarle, "Lettre à la rédaction," *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 66 (1954) 149-51.

Association.¹² Surprisingly enough, Dubarle, after describing the legislation as intended for public teaching in seminaries and universities, goes on to say that the decrees do not, in themselves, demand an internal assent. It seems to me that, at least, the distinction between doctrinal or dogmatic presuppositions in back of the decrees and the purely literary question should be invoked in assessing the quality of this assent. The Professor of Le Saulchoir is absolutely right in explaining the real, though not unlimited, liberty accorded Catholic scholars and he has no trouble in pointing to the latest Catholic commentaries as the best evidence for the wholesome atmosphere in which Catholics work.

He refers to the new conditions set down for examinations towards biblical degrees and notes that the Syllabus for General Introduction mentions only the encyclicals and omits entirely the decrees of the Commission. But to interpret this as a move to let the decrees slip off into an unregretted oblivion is to forget that the decrees all turn up again in the latest (1954) and official edition of the *Enchiridion biblicum*.¹³ However, the points made by Dubarle are, generally speaking, excellent and will help to clear up misunderstandings about the freedom Catholics enjoy in the science of exegesis.

HISTORICAL BOOKS

To say that the sin of our first parents was one of disobedience does not advance us far in our understanding of the Yahwist narrative. In the past few years repeated efforts have been made to determine more specifically the nature of their transgression. C. Bravo, S.J., Professor at Xavier University of Bogotá, gives an excellent summary of current opinions with full bibliography, after which he presents his own personal solution.¹⁴ He parts company with the majority of exegetes who deal with this problem by fusing

¹² For a summary of this panel see *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 17 (January, 1955) 50-53. I believe that the following conclusions would be accepted by all Catholic exegetes: the decrees are reformable; a distinction is in order between the dogmatic and literary aspects of a problem on which the Church has legislated; and the decrees, though disciplinary, call for an internal assent and external obedience until such time as new evidence warrants a different opinion. Frequently enough the Church, by some such attitude as tacit approval, permits the expression of a different interpretation.

¹³ Nos. 198 and 199 of the *Enchiridion* deal with the nature of the assent demanded when the Church proscribes errors and the reverence to be accorded decrees of the Congregations. On the question of assent it will be profitable to consult the recent article of Joaquín Salaverri, "La potestad de magisterio eclesiástico y asentimiento que le es debido," *Estudios eclesiásticos* 29 (April-June, 1955), 155-95, especially pp. 192-93.

¹⁴ Charles Bravo, S.J., "La especie moral del primer pecado," *Separata de Eclesiástica Xaveriana* (Bogotá, 1954) 1-43.

the Sacerdotal and Yahwistic traditions in his study of the Fall. The specific sin is described in two stages of culpability, internal and external.

They first arrogated to themselves absolute moral autonomy—an opinion advanced by St. Thomas and many subsequent exegetes; and the first consequence of this internal sin was their refusal to obey the first precept imposed by God and found in Gn 1:28: "be fruitful and multiply." The specific sin was one of abstention, the selfish refusal to have descendants. Some may count it a gain that this explanation unites the two traditions, at least from the viewpoint of the last redactor. On the other hand, it is very probable that verse 28 of the first chapter, which Bravo calls a precept binding under grave sin, is a blessing of God in the hymnic style so characteristic of the Priestly recital. In fact, many doubt that there is even the slightest reference to sin and the Fall in the first chapter of Genesis.

While the solution above has a certain attractiveness in its neat harmonizing of the two accounts, the opinion of J. Coppens, recently described and substantially approved by J. L. McKenzie, S.J., in this Review, seems preferable.¹⁵ Coppens sees the Yahwist narrative as a polemic against the perversion of the divinely willed union of man and woman, perhaps the placing of married life under the patronage of heinous fertility cults well known in the land of Canaan. The sin of chapter 3 was, accordingly, a sexual transgression.

In the same article McKenzie goes beyond this problem and offers an original and stimulating explanation of the purpose behind the narrative. Arguing that the woman is the central figure in both chapters (2 and 3), he proposes that the ancient Israelite, reading or hearing these chapters, recognized an idealized account of the origin of sex and of the perversion of sexual life from its primitive integrity. This deplorable state, so evident in the familiar fertility cults, is traceable to the very beginning of the race. For the pride of man led him to reach out for divine prerogatives; and the most perverted manifestation of this pride is his effort to share the divine prerogative of procreation, by joining in the rites of fertility. This interpretation, which is only sketched here, may or may not win wide acceptance. But it is a serious effort to penetrate the thought-categories of the ancient world and its imagery, and any new light on this strange and partly-understood world is welcome.

G. Lambert, S.J., of Louvain, is working on the same problem and also approaching it from the mentality and viewpoint of the ancient Near East.¹⁶

¹⁵ John L. McKenzie, S.J., "The Literary Characteristics of Genesis 2-3," *THEOLOGICAL STUDIES* 15 (1954) 541-72.

¹⁶ I have been able to consult only the first of two articles, "Le drame du jardin d'Eden," *Nouvelle revue théologique* 76 (November, 1954) 917-48.

Hans J. Stoebe rejects all mythological and sexual significance in the two trees of Paradise and ties their imagery into a carefully and artistically formulated plan of the Yahwist.¹⁷ The primal sin consists in the desire to choose, with complete autonomy, what is good for one's own life. The "tree of knowledge" thus symbolizes the drive towards autonomy and independence of God; the "tree of life" symbolizes whatever is good or useful for one's life. Stoebe traces this theme through the Yahwist tradition, pointing out how the Patriarchs, in a given situation, decide for themselves what is good or bad for their lives regardless of God's will in the matter. While Stoebe has perhaps played down excessively the intellectual element implied in the "tree of knowledge," his illuminating essay constitutes a strong proof that this theological concept is a constituent element of the Yahwist tradition.

On a more popular level Irenaeus Fransen, of Maredsous, introduces French-speaking readers to the first eleven chapters of Genesis.¹⁸ Although he devotes only a few lines to the problem, it is interesting to note his position on the formation of Eve. He is writing for a wide and non-specialized audience, and yet he does not hesitate to suggest that some symbolism, whose precise meaning we have not yet been able to determine, underlies the description of Eve's origin from the rib of Adam. Obscurity admittedly remains, and no interpretation yet proposed has won general acceptance. Fransen is inclined to see in the imagery of the rib a euphemism to denote the mysteriously complementary character of the bodies of man and woman. Speaking of the entire second chapter he emphasizes the vigor and delicacy with which the ancient artist-theologian has taught the essential unity of man and woman along with their dependence on God.

Coming to the post-Exilic period we have, in Neh 7 and Ezr 2, the census lists of those who returned to Juda after the Edict of Cyrus. Differences in these lists have long been noted but no completely satisfactory solution for the discrepancies has been offered. H. L. Allrik attacks the problem from a new angle, based on the solidly established fact that the Hebrews of the pre-Hellenic period indicated numbers by symbols rather than by spelling out the words for the numbers.¹⁹

The Aramaic ostraca from Samaria, Phoenician inscriptions of the fourth

¹⁷ Hans J. Stoebe, "Gut und Böse in der Jahwistischen Quelle des Pentateuch," *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 65 (1953) 188-204.

¹⁸ Irenaeus Fransen, "Les onze premiers chapitres de la Genèse," *Bible et vie chrétienne* 7 (1954) 73-88.

¹⁹ H. L. Allrik, "The Lists of Zerubbabel (Nehemiah 7 and Ezra 2) and the Hebrew Numerical Notation," *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research*, no. 136 (December, 1954) 21-27.

century and later, and the Egyptian Aramaic papyri from the sixth to the fourth centuries offer clear evidence of this numerical notation system. There is little reason to doubt that the Hebrews used the same principle, as can be seen from the Hebrew ostraca of Samaria and the Lachish Letters. Following the approved usage of the times, the Hebrews used vertical strokes to denote digits, special symbols for 10 and 5, and, most likely, conventional markings for 100 and 1000. Applying, as an hypothesis, the principles of this numerical notation to the lists of Ezra and Nehemiah, Allrik correctly concludes that most of the discrepancies are satisfactorily explained. On the other hand, the postulate that the numbers were written out with alphabetic letters fails to explain any of the variants. Only later, and under Greek influence, was the system of numerical notation changed to that of indicating numbers by spelled-out words.

Single strokes and signs are easily overlooked or lost on ancient papyrus, which is brittle and often damaged. Since it is easier to account for the loss of a notation than an addition, it is very plausible that Neh 7 preserves the earlier list, since there are more minuses from this to Ezr 2 than in the other direction. The argument of this excellent paper opens up a new avenue towards the solution of chronological problems, especially where synchronizations or parallel lists are available. Instead of juggling the figures on the basis of some such system as antedating and postdating, or spring and autumn new years, we now have a more objective and realistic method for testing the royal or family annals preserved in the Old Testament.

THE PROPHETS

The literature on the Servant Songs continues to multiply and the enigmatic figure of the Songs still puzzles the modern critic as much as he did the Ethiopian eunuch. After reviewing some of these modern interpretations, Henri Cazelles, of the Catholic Institute in Paris, gives a long and detailed explanation of his own view.²⁰ Granting the similarity in vocabulary and ideas between the poems and their context in Is 40-55, the commentators have not sufficiently reckoned with the strict continuity of the entire section. From the beginning to the end of these chapters we have a sustained meditation on a few themes which the author takes up many times until he reaches the climax of chapter 55. It is this pattern or literary form of meditation on selected themes which is sharply broken by the insertion of the Songs. The best proof of such an insertion is found in the fact that we can again pick up the thread of the thought which has been interrupted by the insertion. If this abrupt insertion into a harmonious sequence of thought is recognized,

²⁰ Henri Cazelles, "Les poèmes du Serviteur: Leur place, leur structure, leur théologie," *Recherches de science religieuse* 43 (1955) 5-55.

two difficulties are solved. We can separate the poem from the context and can determine with greater objectivity what precisely pertains to the poem, independently of any theory about its structure or content.

The best example of Cazelles' theory is found in the second poem (49:1-9a), inserted in and interrupting a description of Juda's return from exile, portrayed in the imagery of a new exodus. Experiment discloses that the rest of the poems follow the same pattern, though perhaps not as clearly as in the above example. Cazelles prefers to join the third poem (50:4-9a) with the fourth (52:13-53:12), taking them as two parts of a longer piece in which the theology of the Songs reaches a climax. In the first part, the writer remarks, the poet eulogizes the Servant and then describes his mission to the pagan nations. The more complex and subtle second part announces the establishment of the long-sought Davidic rule which assures, even for the Gentiles, the realization of the messianic hope of deliverance and glory. This deliverance is no longer described as a return to the light, as it is in the first poem, nor a return to the Promised Land, as it is in the second; the deliverance envisaged is an expiatory sacrifice offered through the death of the Servant. Even if we allow that the songs preceding this last poem may be applied to the sufferings and mission of Israel, such an interpretation is impossible in this concluding part (52:13-53:12). For Israel, "my people," is the beneficiary of the Servant's work, and the expiatory sacrifice clearly points to the future, as something not yet realized.

On authorship and background Cazelles reaches these conclusions: there is one writer for all four poems and he is Deutero-Isaiah or a disciple. The poems are possibly an answer to the disillusionment which set in after the Edict of Cyrus, releasing the Jews from their Babylonian captivity. But what the Persian could not bring about, the new David will. Despite the Servant's destiny to share the humiliations and sufferings of his people, there is a real connection between the Servant and the glorious Emmanuel of First-Isaiah. Too seldom have critics noticed the close parallels in vocabulary, imagery, and thought which closely tie up the messianic passages of Is 9 and 11 with the Servant Songs. After listing some of these parallels Cazelles indicates the development of thought between Emmanuel and the Servant, between the child whose miraculous birth alone is a pledge of victory and the somber figure who has achieved the victory and who, as representative and leader of the redeemed community, awaits his exaltation. Whether we take the Servant to be an individual or a collectivity or a harmonizing of both, Lagrange was surely right in remarking that a "revelation of an extraordinary mystery" is incorporated in the Servant Songs.²¹ It is the mystery of the economy of salvation, God's completely gratuitous com-

²¹ M.-J. Lagrange, *Le Judaïsme avant Jésus Christ* (Paris, 1931) p. 168.

munication of His revelation and salvation to the Gentiles. Here is the mystery which Paul will call purely and simply "the mystery of Christ."²²

It has long been recognized that terms from other branches of learning or from different periods of time cannot easily be transferred to the Old Testament without considerable modification. A good example is the word "eschatology" which, whatever its origin may be, denotes a complex of ideas relating to the destiny of individuals and the entire cosmos. As a dogmatic term it is applicable to a consummation within our historical framework or outside of it. In a brilliant essay read before the International Organization of Old Testament Scholars at their 1953 Congress, Th. C. Vriezen balances the loss and gain in the adaptation of later terminology to an earlier situation. The following excerpt ably summarizes the problem and a solution:

In Old Testament scholarship the terminology very often is a most difficult problem, which must always be considered with understanding, but also in a critical spirit. The terms that are employed are by no means always derived from the Old Testament itself, and very often words have to be used that were borrowed from our Western range of ideas, even if they do not sufficiently reflect their Semitic equivalents.

In our scholarly research we stand, partially at least, committed to certain terms borrowed from other branches of scholarship. In studying the Old Testament one has to employ again and again ideas borrowed mainly from systematic Christian theology. Of course this often causes difficulties, and creates short-circuits, because these ideas do not always match with the Old Testament. Though the Christian theological ideas are often derived from the Bible, they have also frequently undergone the influence of Greek or Western thought. It is not possible, however, to leave this existing terminology without more ado, and to attempt a complete modification by introducing a separate new terminology; the phenomena of the humanities do not allow of classification so easily as those of science, where an unlimited number of formulae and sigla is available, for the spiritual phenomena with which the humanities are concerned are of a far more complex and organic nature than those of science, and cannot be denoted adequately by sigla and formulae. Moreover, besides words that give an analytic juxtaposition of things, the humanities in particular also need words that, as general notions, comprise certain complex groups of ideas and that characterize these groups in their complexity.²³

Working independently of Vriezen, but in substantial agreement with his views on eschatology, Professor Lindblom of Lund considers eschatology in the prophetic writings.²⁴ Lindblom had first called attention to the prevail-

²² Ephesians 3:4.

²³ Th. C. Vriezen, "Prophecy And Eschatology," Congress Volume, Supplements to *Vetus Testamentum* 1 (1953) 200-201.

²⁴ Joh. Lindblom, "Gibt es eine Eschatologie bei den alttestamentlichen Propheten?," *Studia theologica* 6 (1952) 79-114.

ing confusion about the term in his book, *The Servant Songs in Deutero-Isaiah* (1951), and returned to the subject in a paper (unpublished) delivered during the Easter Meeting of the Society for O.T. Study, held at the Biblical Institute in Rome during April, 1952. The title of this paper was "The Problem of Eschatology in the Old Testament." With the help of a good summary which he appends to his latest article we can state the conclusions to which he has come.

Apart from the hint of a popular belief imbedded in Is 51:6, there is no trace in the Prophets of eschatology as understood in Christian theology, i.e., an actual end of this world and the inauguration of a totally new order. For the Prophets eschatology means a radical change in the circumstances of this world without going beyond the limits of the present historical order. We find a universal and a national eschatology, the former pertaining to the world and mankind, the latter concerned with the destiny of Israel.

The oldest form of universal eschatology finds expression in the threatening judgment, as in Is 2:10-22, while Hosea offers the earliest example of national eschatology with its reassuring promises of future blessings. The justice of Yahweh is the motive in back of universal eschatology dealing with vindictive judgment. For He is the ruler of a moral world and will punish violations of the established order. The basis for the national hope is Yahweh's election-love of Israel, swift to transgress but convinced that there is something irrevocable in God's choice of this nation. Catastrophe will be followed by a radical renewal in the religious, social, and political life of the nation. With this idea of a restored community coincides the "remnant" theology of the Old Testament.

This sketchy summary hardly does justice to Lindblom's thorough treatment of the many texts he carefully discusses. We should note again that Lindblom keeps eschatology within the framework of history and insists that it is only in later Jewish and Christian apocalyptic, and in Christian dogma, that we can speak of a true end of the world and a termination of human history. Vriezen, as remarked above, believes that the term "eschatology," in its formal notion, means a doctrine of the last things, prescinding completely from the question whether this new period shall be realized within history or transcend it.

If Hosea has earned a place apart among the Prophets as the herald of Israel's ultimate salvation, it is due to his passionate conviction that God's love is so great that He will not—nay, cannot—wholly abandon His people. Professor Robert Gordis tries a new approach to the message of the prophet and his marriage with Gomer.²⁵ The allegorical view of Hosea's marriage is

²⁵ Robert Gordis, "Hosea's Marriage and Message: A New Approach," *Hebrew Union College Annual* 25 (1954) 9-35.

justifiably rejected, as is the opinion of Ewald and Wellhausen that the tragic marital experience preceded and caused his prophetic activity. Nor is he satisfied with a third view which holds that the marriage was commanded by Yahweh and was the result of his prophetic vocation.

Gordis believes that Hosea was a prophet from the beginning and that God ordered him to marry Gomer, "a woman of harlotry," so styled not because of personal impurity but because she is implicated in the sinfulness of the nation. "The land is committing harlotry against the Lord" and Gomer is just as much implicated in this apostasy as Isaiah crying out that he is a "man of unclean lips," surely not because of personal impurity but because of his solidarity with a sinful people. It is unnecessary to prove that this concept of group solidarity was ancient and widespread in Israel. If the reader finds quite disconcerting the shift, in the second chapter, from personal history to the faithless people Israel and her relationship with God, he can attribute this shifting to a characteristic of Hebrew psychology. This was pointed out long ago by H. W. Robinson and O. Eissfeldt and is called the Hebrew concept of "fluid personality," in virtue of which the writer will, without warning, go from the individual to the collective and back again to the individual. Many examples of this can be found in the Old Testament.

How does chapter 3 square with what has gone before? Gordis believes that this section contains a different interpretation of the same incident but given at a different period and under different circumstances. Since both accounts (of chaps. 1-2 and 3) reflect actual historical conditions, the differences between them can best be accounted for by the chaotic state of affairs which prevailed in the Northern Kingdom in its declining years. The first account precedes the fall of Israel in 721 B.C. and consists of a stern warning to the faithless nation rushing on blindly to its awful fate. After the catastrophe of 721 Hosea becomes the comforter of his people, the prophet of Yahweh's tender love. Chapter 3 speaks of the period of penance but moves climactically to the picture of the reunited kingdom under Davidic rule.

The solution proposed by Gordis has an obvious appeal, since it grows out of the text itself, demands no arbitrary excisions, fits the psychology of the Hebrew writer extremely well, and harmonizes with the turbulent background of eighth-century Israel. But every new theory raises questions. The shift in emphasis, on Hosea's part, from threat to comfort need not imply that the punishment has actually been inflicted. Moreover, it is difficult to find in the third chapter any clear reference to the disaster of 721 as already experienced rather than imminent. This is only an argument from silence, to be sure, but it seems to me that we might expect some reference to the catastrophe which Gordis makes the pivot of his interpretation. And apart from

the theory here proposed, it is hard to find any cogent reason for holding that Hosea survived the Assyrian onslaught and remained to comfort his people.

Professor Leroy Waterman opposes any isolation of the first three chapters of Hosea from the rest of the Book.²⁶ In chapters 4-14 Hosea delivers a message which fuses the love of Yahweh with His uncompromising moral demands. The impassioned sentiments of these chapters, as Waterman points out, presuppose a divine love nowhere explained outside of the first three chapters. But if these chapters are seen to be an integral part of what follows, the sentiments become perfectly understandable. The sequel to the first three chapters becomes a reinterpretation of Hosea's tragic past experiences, from which he has gained a deeper knowledge of God's nature. The teaching in the latter part of the prophecy thus has an experiential basis in the life of the Prophet.

This is a constructive contribution to a much-debated problem and, even though there will be disagreement in details,²⁷ it is a solution which respects the unity of the prophecy. One cannot but notice that, despite the amount of work devoted in recent times to the study of Hosea, the differences in approach and particulars remain as sharp as ever. It may be that we have not yet acquired that criterion of general acceptance against which we can check the theories proposed. Only careful experimentation such as appears in the above two works will provide us the key.

BIBLICAL THEOLOGY

Professor Eichrodt, in his epoch-making work on Old Testament theology, built his study around the idea of covenant. For this he has been criticized by scholars who deny that the covenant notion is found everywhere in the Old Testament.²⁸ Still, the covenant is undoubtedly a foundation stone of Israelite history and religion. Professor George E. Mendenhall, of the University of Michigan, traces the growth of covenant forms among the Israelites,²⁹ sharply distinguishing the Abrahamic and Mosaic forms:

Both in the narrative of Gen 15 and 17, and in the later references to this covenant, it is clearly stated or implied that it is Yahweh Himself who swears to certain

²⁶ Leroy Waterman, "Hosea, Chapters 1-3, in Retrospect and Prospect," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 14 (April, 1955) 100-109.

²⁷ The text does not sufficiently indicate that Gomer's sin consisted in serving Yahweh according to base Canaanite practises, as many in Israel were doing. And the root *nkr* is better translated, with Gordis and others, "I married her" rather than "I acknowledged her as mine."

²⁸ R. C. Dentan, *Preface to Old Testament Theology* (New Haven, 1950) p. 38.

²⁹ George E. Mendenhall, "Covenant Forms in Israelite Tradition," *Biblical Archaeologist* 17 (Sept., 1954) 50-76.

promises to be carried out in the future. It is not often enough seen that no obligations are imposed upon Abraham. Circumcision is not originally an obligation, but a *sign* of the covenant, like the rainbow in Gen 9. It serves to identify the recipients of the covenant, as well as to give a concrete indication that a covenant exists. It is for the protection of the promises, perhaps like the mark on Cain of Gen 4.

The covenant of Moses, on the other hand, is almost the exact opposite. It imposes specific obligations upon the tribes or clans without binding Yahweh to specific obligations, though it goes without saying that the covenant relationship itself presupposed the protection and support of Yahweh to Israel.³⁰

A third covenant is described in Jos 24, which became the basis of tribal federation in the Land. In everything except form it was a new covenant adapted to a new cultural situation. Unfortunately, it appears that we do not have all the stipulations of this covenant cementing a religious federation which finally broke down under the blows of the Philistines. With the coming of kingship a covenant form was adopted which was modelled on the Abrahamic covenant. In practice this meant that Yahweh promised to maintain the Davidic line on the throne just as God had bound Himself to Abraham by unconditional promises.

The last historical stage discussed is the Josianic Reform of the seventh century. Mendenhall tentatively suggests that in this Reform the basic nature of the old amphyctyonic covenant reasserted itself as against the prevalent Davidic-Abrahamic covenant which placed all commitments on Yahweh alone. Moses was rediscovered and with it came the realization that the people too had obligations, that the covenant contained curses as well as blessings. Since ideas are not easily changed, there had to be a harmonizing of the two covenants, notwithstanding their basic differences. The work of harmonization was accomplished by putting emphasis on the virtue of divine forgiveness, thus reconciling as far as possible the fact of covenant violation with the well-remembered divine promises (Abrahamic) to protect Israel. The author concludes this stimulating and informative essay with a glance forward to the New Testament:

It is this [divine forgiveness] which is then placed at the very center of both Judaism and New Testament religion. The New Covenant of Christianity obviously continued the tradition of the Abrahamic-Davidic covenant with its emphasis upon the Messiah, Son of David. Paul uses the covenant of Abraham to show the temporary validity of the Mosaic covenant, but in spite of this, the basic structure of N.T. religion is actually, as the early Church constantly maintained, the continuation of the Mosaic religion. It is historical event which established obligation;

³⁰ *Art. cit.*, p. 62.

the preceding act of God which confers a benefit upon the individual and the group both forms the motivation and ground for a lasting relationship by covenant, and at the same time brings about a willing obedience to the divine command. . . . The covenant [of the N.T.] is solemnly established not in the setting of a majestic phenomenon of the power of God in nature, but in the insignificant gathering of a small group in an upper room. The covenant given is not a mythical presentation of a timeless, divine, cosmic process, but is an historical event whereby the disciples are bound together with their Lord as the new Israel—the new Kingdom of God. The new stipulations of the covenant are not a system of law to define in detail every obligation in every conceivable circumstance, but the law of love.³¹

But if Yahweh is a God of love, as the Old Testament consistently attests, He is also a God of justice who cannot remain indifferent to the demands of an absolute moral order. In his Inaugural Address at Western Theological Seminary Professor David N. Freedman surveys, from the standpoint of Ex 34:6–7, the Old Testament portrait of God who can elect and reject, forgive and punish, save and condemn.³² In analyzing God's self-description of His relation to sinful man, Freedman touches the great mystery of divine, steadfast love which binds Him to Israel in an intimate, personal relationship. From Abraham to Jonah the conviction of the Old Testament writers remains: God, creator and sustainer of the universe, is a God of moral truth and steadfast love (*hesed*). By an apparent paradox which runs through the history of Israel, the God who loves His people must also be ready to judge her for her crimes and even drive her into exile because of her apostasy.

But the paradox goes deeper than this when we reflect that the position of Yahweh in relation to Israel is not always pictured as king towards subject, as master towards slave, or as husband towards wife. There is a hint in the Bible of a reversal of the master-servant relation to the extent that God becomes the servant and man the master. In the last section of this important paper the author points to several places where this reversal of roles is suggested. The first is in Gn 15, where God binds Himself to Abraham without commitments or restrictions.³³ The second appears in the figure of the Suffering Servant, silent and submissive, who wins the allegiance of men by suffering and death. Finally, in the New Testament, Paul gives us a third clue in the second chapter of Philippians, when he describes Him who took upon Himself the form of a slave and was obedient unto death. The value of this study lies not simply in grasping the spirit of the Old Testament in all

³¹ *Art. cit.*, p. 75.

³² David N. Freedman, "God Compassionate and Gracious," *Western Watch* 6 (1955) 6–24.

³³ Note what has already been said above by Mendenhall on the Abrahamic Covenant.

its complexity and warmth. Beyond that, it opens up the profound mystery of God's relation to man, whose own unworthiness forces him at times to confess with Job that there are "things too wonderful for me, which I knew not" (Job 42:3).

BIBLICAL ARCHAEOLOGY

Excavations in the State of Israel are either planned by the Department of Antiquities or forced upon it because of unforeseen circumstances. In the latter case it may be the construction of a new road, or the extension of a railway line, or the laying of water pipes, which will turn up ancient remains of Palestine's long history. The Department has wisely organized, in each settlement, a group of interested amateurs who may be relied upon to report immediately any signs of early occupation. Systematic excavation can then begin at the site.³⁴ Most of the archaeological work in Israel, of course, is carefully planned in advance and carried out by trained archaeologists with which the new State is generously blessed. Such men as B. Mazar, S. Yeivin, Avi-Yonah, M. Stekelis, I. Ben-Dor, and Y. Yadin, to mention only a few, are already well known for their contributions to Palestinian archaeology.³⁵

In April of this year a campaign of three and a half months ended at Ramat Rachel on the southern outskirts of Jerusalem.³⁶ Occupation has been traced from the time of the First Temple, roughly the eighth century, to the Byzantine Period, and it now seems probable that the *tell* is biblical Neṭōpha, mentioned in Ezra and Nehemiah. The most important discovery at the site is a fortress dating from the Judean Monarchy, the well-preserved case-mated walls of which were discovered under Byzantine and Hellenistic remains. Work will be continued at the site under the direction of Mr. Aharoni.

In the seventh book of *The Jewish War* Flavius Josephus describes the fortress of Herod in which Jewish military forces made their last desperate stand against the legions of Rome in 73 A.D. A twelve-day campaign in March at the 1000-foot-high promontory of Massada, which overlooks the Dead Sea from the western shore, has convinced Israeli archaeologists that they have discovered this stronghold of Herod the Great.³⁷ These same forti-

³⁴ For example, the people in the collective settlement of Beth-Hashshi, ʿa informed the Department of Antiquities of their discovery of a mosaic in the nearby basalt quarry. Excavation has disclosed a small monastic farming settlement of the Byzantine Period. Cf. *American Journal of Archaeology* 59 (April, 1955) 166.

³⁵ For an excellent summary of work accomplished and in progress see S. Yeivin, "Archaeology in Israel (Nov. 1951-Jan. 1953)," *American Journal of Archaeology* 59 (April, 1955) 163-67.

³⁶ Special report to *Israel Speaks*, March 25, 1955.

³⁷ *Israel Digest*, April 15, 1955.

fications were explored by a German expedition in 1932 and will now undoubtedly be the object of a large-scale excavation, bent on forging another link with Israel's past.

The distinguished British Assyriologist, Cyril J. Gadd, introduces a series entitled, "Some Archaeological Sites and the Old Testament," with two articles on the Mari Letters.³⁸ Of the more than 20,000 clay tablets found in the royal palace of the eighteenth century B.C., some 500 have already been published under the auspices of the Louvre. What a strong and clear light they throw upon the lives of these Semitic princes and their subjects in the early second millennium! Their plottings and reverses, joys, complaints, threats and cajolings, teach us only too well that they were people like ourselves, with all the weaknesses and strength of our common nature. Great men like Hammurabi appear in the Letters; in fact, there are several from and to the great Amorite chieftain himself, and the orthography, grammar, and vocabulary of our Letters are, with few exceptions, the same as the Code which has immortalized the name of Hammurabi.

But the "little people" are there as well. One Letter in particular, that of a woman apparently cast off by her master, is unusually poignant and deserves quotation: "Since the day when I left my lord I have been in need of food and fuel, and the future is more dark than the past. Let my lord write for them to take me back; I am sick at heart more than ever before."

The third article on Mari, by J. N. Schofield, interprets the finds from the biblical viewpoint,³⁹ but it takes little imagination to see how these precious records of an ancient civilization have brought to life the *mise en scène* of the Patriarchal Age, introducing us to people who were of the same stock and culture as Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, and Rachel. To read these Letters is to enter their world.

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³⁸ C. J. Gadd, "The Mari Letters," *Expository Times* 66, nos. 6 and 7 (March and April, 1955) 174-77, 195-98. Forthcoming issues promise contributions by J. M. Allegro (Qumran), John Gray (Ras Shamra), and J. N. Schofield (Mari and Nuzu Sites). If we can judge by the past, this latest series will combine reliable scholarship with clear and interesting presentation and will appeal to the non-specialist.

³⁹ J. N. Schofield, "Mari and the Old Testament," *Expository Times* 66, no. 8 (May, 1955) 250-52.