

doctrine of *patria potestas* made the father a despot within his own home. Easy divorce had degraded womanhood. Slaves were denied their human rights. It is true that custom and a sense of justice often made these legal provisions less unfair in practice than they were in theory. It is also true that during the period we are studying the laws themselves were being modified in a humanitarian sense. Yet the fact remains that under the early Empire whole classes were deprived of their fundamental rights.

More fundamental than this legal framework was the pagan attitude toward the human person. Pagan Rome had little respect for the dignity of man as such. Romans respected themselves, their own class, their own sex, their own race; but the idea that man *qua* man demanded respect was alien to them and Stoicism had done only a very little to improve matters.

The Christians left the legal framework undisturbed. There was nothing else they could do. But the Christians vigorously attacked the underlying attitude by their doctrine on the dignity of man. According to the Church's teaching, the human personality demanded respect always and everywhere. The unborn child, the slave, the alien, all had their rights and these rights must be scrupulously observed under all conditions. Christians not only preached this essentially democratic doctrine, they practised it. Thus they established a tradition which has been enormously influential ever since, even among those who will not acknowledge their debt to Christian thought.



MONOTHEISM AND THE HISTORICAL PROCESS

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WILLIAM FOXWELL ALBRIGHT, PH. D., LITT. D., D. H. L., TH. D. *From the Stone Age to Christianity: Monotheism and the Historical Process.* Baltimore. The Johns Hopkins Press. 1940. viii-363. \$2.50.

The writer of this important work needs no introduction to students of ancient Oriental history, and his eminence in both languages and archaeology is international. True to its title, his book presents a substantial outline of the history of the Near East from the earliest traces of human occupation down to the first Christian century. The territory is aptly chosen, since religion is at least one essential factor in human progress, and the most dynamic of all religions began its course in Palestine. Thus the world's highest culture can be traced from its sources down the threefold channel of Egypt, Mesopotamia, and Syria-Palestine.

Interest to Catholic theology will naturally focus on the theme of monotheism and on the rôle of the Old Testament as an historical source. Among such sources, however, the chief emphasis here is upon the quantity of new information, philological and cultural, supplied by modern archaeology in its scientific maturity.

As announced from the outset, this book is not only an outline of history, but a plea for a specific philosophy of history. That man's career should be regarded as a constant progress in the aggregate, notwithstanding local and temporary fluctuations, is of course no novelty; but the author's view of ulterior causes of general advance receives fresh emphasis. Albright espouses an "organismic" philosophy of history, but deviates much from the position of former advocates of this view, availing himself of the findings of modern archaeology for both a larger and a sounder construction. In this class of positive research his work is both outstanding in merit and assured of much permanent value, as was to be expected.

Ample notice of earlier studies on every point accompanies both text and notes. Among Neo-Scholastic treatises on the philosophy of history (which, however, are not numerous) one might suggest Sawicki's *Geschichtsphilosophie* (Munich. Kösel and Pustet. 1923). We must confess disappointment in the Index, which fails to name some themes of pivotal distinction in the argument, and does not show the title of a book so significant as Genesis. Errors in typography are extremely rare, in spite of the mass of detail embodied in both text and notes. The book is profoundly and accurately thoughtful, abundantly documented, and free from superfluities. It may be read repeatedly with increasing interest and pleasure, in spite of the close attention required to profit fully by its argument.

Two preliminary chapters discuss the occasion and motives of the author's method of approach. Chapter I, "New Horizons in History," reviews the modern development of archaeology, the discovery and interpretation of ancient writings and of unwritten evidence, and the oral and written transmission of historical data. Chapter II, "Towards an Organismic Philosophy of History," sketches general tendencies in modern philosophies of history, current aspects of historical determinism, and some fundamental principles underlying history itself. It decides against the theory of determinism, and it culminates in the following outline (pp. 82-83):

First Stage	Prehistoric Undifferentiated Culture	Early and Middle Palaeolithic
Second Stage	Prehistoric Partly Differentiated Culture	Late Palaeolithic to Chalcolithic
Third Stage	Historic Differentiated Culture with Center in the Near East	Cir. 3000-400 B.C.
Fourth Stage	Historic Partly Integrated Culture with Center in the Mediterranean Basin	Cir. 400 B. C.— 700 A. D.
Fifth Stage	Historic Differentiated Culture with Different Foci	Cir. 700—1500
Sixth Stage	Historic Differentiated Culture with Progressive World Sweep of West	Cir. 1500—

No follower of idealistic formulas (such as Hegel's) for the *a priori* analysis of history, Albright arrives at this outline by constructive synthesis of the data of record. It is empiric and inductive so far as he can make it so. The body of his work, in four remaining chapters, proceeds to confirm the outline by clothing it with the leading facts available from his sources.

That the outline itself is necessarily open to discussion its author expressly grants, and has doubtless foreseen and considered many particular exceptions. Not to delay upon such points of comment, but to speak rather in general, the reader of Chapter I will naturally reflect that while modern archaeology, both prehistoric and historic, has become a methodical and integrated science, it is not therefore an exact one. The interpretation of unwritten evidence is one uncertain factor. At present, with a view to a sound approximate chronology, the types and stages of the ceramic industry are justly used as norms for dating, but sometimes with a precision which may be premature. Nötscher (*Biblische Altertumskunde*, pp. 225-226) has just observed at some length, and with particular illustration, that parts of the chronology thus constructed may later have to be modified. The same is yet more true of the classification of prehistoric artifacts with a view to dating by their means. Even where these are well identified with strata otherwise established in geochronology, their type may be synchronous here and there, yet not every-

where. And geochronology on its own part must build on deduction from a few cases of determinable formations as applied to others which afford no comparison in cause or process. Again, the postulate of organic palaeontology, "Give us time enough for an imperceptibly graded evolution," may have its influence in prolonging estimates of time independently of the exclusive study of geology. Substantial error in a single premise may vitiate supposed parallels and alter conclusions by whole millennia. Such gaps in present knowledge should not impede the progress of research and induction, but they must still condition our acceptance of approximate chronologies—not only prehistoric, but well into historical times—and keep our judgment in due suspense, even while we thankfully receive what careful investigation can already supply.

Chapter III, "Praeparatio," opens the course of history proper by reviewing the Stone Age, the Chalcolithic, and the rise of an irrigation industry, as undifferentiated cultures. It then traces the religious state of the Early and Middle Bronze (B. C. 3000-1600) in general, and next particularly through Egypt and Mesopotamia. The text of this chapter alone would reveal the weight of our debt to archaeology. As to the conclusions reached, one is of special significance:

To have collected an immense body of data demonstrating the belief in high gods and to have classified pertinent ethnological phenomena as well as conceptions existing with respect to them is the merit of the great Catholic anthropologist, W. Schmidt, in his monumental work, *Der Ursprung der Gottesidee* (1912-36). Fr. Schmidt believes that his data point to a primitive monotheism, which has gradually degenerated, leaving only widely scattered supreme beings and high gods to bear witness to it. He has also worked out an elaborate but subjective system according to which, he believes, primitive monotheism evolved into the various theological patterns found in primitive cultures of today (p. 125).

After summing the division of present opinion upon Schmidt's conclusion, without expressing positive adherence to it, Albright adds:

There can no longer be any doubt that Fr. Schmidt has successfully disproved the simple evolutionary progression first set up by the positivist Comte, fetishism—polytheism—monotheism, or Tylor's animism—polytheism—monotheism. Nor can Marett's correction to pre-animism (dynamism)—animism—polytheism—monotheism escape radical modification.

This is virtually discrediting the whole constructive or historical element in the Graf-Wellhausen theory of Old Testament criticism in its first premises. For it was just such an outline of simple progression in religious ideas which that theory postulated in order to determine, by their doctrinal in-

dications, the relative ages of the alleged documentary sources of the Pentateuch. The linguistic and literary traits originally invoked as distinctive remain objective facts awaiting explanation. To the groups of passages (or "documents") gathered about these diagnostic characters one may refer under the conventional symbols J, E, P, D and their various modifications, for purposes of identification. But their origin and history are not thus prejudiced, and Wellhausen's constructive disposition of them is not supported by his original premises, whatever may be decided on firmer grounds. The possibility of thus challenging his whole positive structure in its first principle once more emphasizes the fact that if a critical history of the Old Testament literature is ever to be written, it must be the fruit of methods more objective than those of Tübingen.

This is not to suggest that Albright adopts an ultra-conservative attitude on this subject. The contrary is perfectly clear throughout. He does regard the Hebrew Scriptures as mainly a trustworthy source of history, an opinion which he has often avowed. But in particulars of the origin, age or meaning of their several parts, the very independence which gives value to his work engenders many views so far from conservative, that in following him here and henceforth the Catholic student needs all his balance to avoid premature dissent on the one hand and radical concession on the other. At this point, therefore, he may profitably remind himself of both the demands and the latitudes of his own fixed principles. For the ideally "open mind" is a pure chimera when positive results are in view. Liberal criticism has its own initially closed questions no less than the research of theologians. Whether a critical scholar has predetermined postulates is never the question, but only how firmly his postulates are founded.

It needs no repetition that the divine inspiration and consequent veracity of the Old Testament is a truth of the revelation made by Christ to His Apostles and solemnly avowed by the Church as received from them. Nor need it be recalled that the said revelation founds the whole intellectual life of the Catholic. To him the word of Christ is past questioning. All his equipment may be enlisted to meet reasoned objection with equally reasoned defence; but his inquiry goes no further. His intellect has once for all offered the supreme sacrifice of faith—the only abdication of its sovereignty which, being founded on extrinsic reason itself, is neither suicide nor dishonor, but the act of adoration proper to man's governing faculty. Should the most confidently asserted fact ever challenge him to reconsider Christ, he knows it at once for a fact misinterpreted, if fact it be at all.

But while the practical principles which flow from this conviction are familiar enough in the obverse, the implications of their reverse aspects may not be realized until brought into definition by controversial issue. They afford many means of effort to harmonize the conclusions of patient criticism with firm adherence to truth revealed. For example, discussion of an author's

identity commonly involves no precaution in the Old Testament, where the Church has received a list of inspired writings, but not of inspired writers. Next, writings in fact inspired may have been original sources, single or multiple, or more probably (in the case of composite works) the finished compilation of some first redactor. Further, the assured veracity of a divine communication belonged to an autograph now forever lost, but attaches to no copy or translation except in the strict measure of its fidelity. This at once authenticates the whole science of textual criticism in its quest of the original text—though some self-styled textual criticism, such as wholesale correction in the mere interest of metrical symmetry, is too subjective to be called scientific. As to the character of original sources, including the question of extraneous influences, the Revealer of final truth may well sanction truth wherever men acknowledge it; and the grace of inspiration to write has never been confused, in Catholic circles, with immediate revelation to the writer. Effectually guided in his judgment of both truth and aptitude (even though unaware of his commission), he might select from personal experience or any source of true information, itself inspired or not, or even pagan—excepting pure myth, which could contain no element of fact. Further, we recall that truth is expressed in Scripture in the mode appropriate to the literary form adopted, whence the aphorism *Non eadem veritas omnibus Scripturae partibus convenit*. Finally, divine veracity resides only in the original writer's actual meaning (as regards its historical message), so that occasion and context may be decisive of an exegesis other than mere face value.

In matters thus determinable by research and reasoning the Catholic holds the way of any prudent man in all affairs of serious import, abiding by the best consensus of opinion in the face of all but certainty against it. That the latter quality is often wanting to the conclusions of liberal criticism, we have only too many demonstrations. Exegetical and historical conclusions, of various degrees of importance, are reached in virtue of evidence which may be far from decisive. Duplicate accounts, in particular, are often alleged without serious reason, and contradiction is affirmed where harmony is demonstrable even in detail. A century or so of these experiences has made us pardonably critical of criticism.

But to resume, it is Chapter IV which first invokes the Old Testament as a principal source, at least for the patriarchal age, the Egyptian serfdom, the Exodus and the Covenant established at Sinai. This chapter, aptly entitled "When Israel was a Child (Hosea 11:1)," discusses the ancient backgrounds of Israelite origins, both political and religious, the Hebrew (more immediate) background of these same origins, and finally the religion of Moses. As regards the theology of the Hebrew Patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, Albright seems to allow them possibly a virtual, but hardly a conscious

monotheism. Certainly (p. 184) "the Israelites recognized that their ancestors, who lived beyond the Euphrates, had 'served other gods' (Jos. 24:2)," and possibly Abraham himself had done so while still with his family in Haran. But when Abraham resigned his whole career to Yahweh's summons to a wanderer's life for the sake of a future he might never hope to see, the terms in which that future was first promised, as much as any words in which we find it afterwards recalled, were clearly expressive of a claim on Yahweh's part to sole and universal sovereignty (Gen. 12: 1-3). Self-devoted as were Abraham and his first descendants to a destiny thus guaranteed, it is not easy to embrace the opinion that "each Patriarch is represented as choosing his God for himself, and as selecting a different manifestation of Yahweh, the later God of Israel" (p. 189)—unless the pre-Mosaic divine names on which this argument is based expressed rather attributes than manifestations of one Divinity accepted as supreme on His own declaration.

In ascribing to Moses the real inauguration of Israel's national career, the author sufficiently justifies this not too popular judgment by a reasonable appeal to traditional as well as written record. But one cannot yet feel that the weight due to a factor in historical evidence is allowed to the public and persistent ascription of the Pentateuch, in substantial integrity, to the authorship or at least the efficient direction of Moses. Albright's opinions on the sources and growth of the Pentateuch are partly summarized in this chapter and partly to be gathered from particular arguments *passim*. In brief, "J and E must reflect two recensions of an original epic narrative, the nucleus of which had presumably been recited by Hebrew rhapsodists before the Exodus." As to further detail:

It is more likely that the whole story of Moses was added to the epic nucleus soon after the Conquest of Canaan and that the combined narrative (whether in verse or prose we can hardly say) was recited by Levites or rhapsodists until the break-up of the amphictyonic organization under Philistine blows in the eleventh century B. C. Thereafter, we may suppose, the two recensions J (in the south) and E (in the north) were separately transmitted, being written down not later than 750 B. C. and combined in the JE recension during the eighth or seventh century B. C. (pp. 189-190).

The Priestly Code is also important as an historical source for the Mosaic period. It is very different in character from the older J and E, but, in contrast to them, it belongs to a scribal circle which was interested in questions of chronology and topography, ritual and liturgy, and which unquestionably had access to early written documents. Moreover, it was also the result of a complex process of collecting and sifting tradition, as is clearly shown by the doublets in the description of the

Tabernacle, etc. Its language and style are, in general, *older* than that of the writings of the Deuteronomic school, though its composition in its present form must be later and can hardly be pre-exilic. . . . In brief, the material preserved in P is more heterogeneous both in date and content than that of JE, and consequently less reliable on the average. On the other hand, some of it, resting on early written sources, is perhaps more dependable for historical purposes than anything in JE. . . . Hypercriticism with regard to the authenticity of much of the material preserved by P is distinctly unscholarly, and its independent attestation of facts given by J and E is a valuable guarantee of their historicity (pp. 192-193).

In approaching D, Albright emphasizes the period of national peril between about 750 and 587, and its psychological effect upon the Southern Kingdom:

Under such circumstances spirits turn with nostalgia to the past and endeavor to recapture the vital element underlying former prosperity and stability. So the men of Judah turned back to the Mosaic tradition, endeavoring to recover it as fully as possible and especially to reorganize the religion of the state on as pure a Mosaic basis as possible. The industrious work of the scribal groups to whom we owe the collection and the writing down of the matter of JE made it necessary for the Deuteronomic reformers to extend their investigations to more remote districts in the search for Mosaic traditions. Hence we find in Deuteronomy much material which has been correctly identified by Welch, Gressmann and others as of Northern, Israelite provenience and as coming apparently from Shechem. This new matter (some of which was already found in substantially the same form in JE) became the nucleus of the Book of Deuteronomy (p. 241).

Thus the conventional sources of the Pentateuch are held to have assumed written form at about the dates assigned by Wellhausen, but with a larger share of dependence on earlier material. While the above opinions are clearly based on more than mere conjecture, they seldom (especially in the paragraph on Deuteronomy) seem to surpass the rank of moderately probable inferences. One would expect the available sources of both history and law to have been intelligently collected and combined in responsible custody when Israel first attained full national consciousness, or else to have perished long before the eighth or seventh century, especially under the fluctuating fortunes of the twelfth and the eleventh. And it must be rather doubtful induction from internal characteristics of traditional fragments to the historical fact of their origin at Shechem.

Even stronger suspicion of inconclusive reasoning attaches to a distinction lying at the root of the author's treatment of the Book of the Covenant. A. Alt has postulated a genetic difference between apodictic laws ("thou shalt" or "shalt not" do thus and so) and casuistic laws ("when such is the case, then," etc.). He finds the casuistic type common to ancient oriental codes; whereas, to quote Albright, "the most striking thing about the apodictic laws is their categorical character, which stands in sharp contrast to their nearest extra-Israelite parallels" (p. 204). The Decalogue, being of the apodictic class, is therefore considered "original in Israel." Incidentally, it heads the four chapters (Ex. 20-23) which are called "the Book of the Covenant" in Ex. 24, and which are there expressly stated to have been ratified by Moses with solemn sacrificial rites. However, as for the contents of 21-23, Albright finds their legal form to be of the casuistic type, and consequently "at home throughout Western Asia" and "of the same class as the Code of Hammurabi (cir. 1750 B. C.)" and others, remarking that "all these codes go back in their basic formulation (provided that . . . then) to the Sumerian jurisprudence of the third millennium." What, then, decides the following selection from among them?

The Book of the Covenant represents the form which the more-or-less common corpus of older customary laws and court decisions took under the special conditions existing in Canaan, and it probably passed into Israelite hands during the period of the Judges. In the form which it takes in the Book of the Covenant it can hardly be dated before the ninth century. However, it is unlikely that the ninth-century form differed appreciably from its Canaanite prototype many centuries earlier, in view of numerous archaisms in practice and terminology which have older Mesopotamian parallels (p. 204).

This would make it hard to distinguish from common Semitic law in Hammurabi's time, and suggest the patriarchal age as fairly as the ninth century. But beneath the whole discussion lies the unsubstantial nature of Alt's distinction. The "basic formulation" is that of legal language governed by the necessities of expression. Apodictic and casuistic laws differ only in facility of definition. Some species of action can be named in a phrase; other and more numerous species of action cannot be divorced from their constituent circumstances, and so require descriptive definition. Such laws, even when arising from precedent, may have a long history. If anyone would test the depth of Alt's distinction, let him read Ex. 20:22-26 and say just where, in this series of regulations about altars, the apodictic passes into the casuistic formulation.

The chapter concludes with some interesting speculations on probable earlier sources of Mosaic religion. Albright finds no clear evidence of Canaan-

ite influence at this initial period. He closes by expressing an opinion that will not pass unchallenged, but will probably be defended as ably as assailed:

In bringing this chapter to a close we have yet one question to answer: Was Moses a true monotheist? If by "monotheist" is meant a thinker with views specifically like those of Philo Judaeus or Rabbi Aqiba, of St. Paul or St. Augustine, of Mohammed or Maimonides, of St. Thomas or Calvin, of Mordecai Kaplan or H. N. Wieman, Moses was not one. If, on the other hand, the term "monotheist" means one who teaches the existence of only one God, the creator of everything, the source of justice, who is equally powerful in Egypt, in the desert, and in Palestine, who has no sexuality and no mythology, who is human in form but cannot be seen by human eye and cannot be represented in any form—then the founder of Yahwism was certainly a monotheist (p. 207).

After a long career of the obsession that the eighth century Prophets were the first Israelites to believe in a sole divine maker and ruler of all things (just when, incidentally, that was hardest to imagine), this considered judgment of a scholar of the first rank seems a symptom of return to clearer and more wholesome thinking.

Chapter V is significantly entitled "Charisma and Catharsis." It embraces the conquest of Canaan, the Judges, the monarchy united and divided, the work of the Prophets, and the final catastrophe of the exile. These periods have been clarified in detail by the findings of excavation. Beginning with "the charismatic age of Israel," Albright thus explains the adjective, adopted from Max Weber and A. Alt:

The "judges" were respected and followed, regardless of tribal affiliations, because there was some special power about them which was believed to represent the direct outpouring of divine grace (*charisma*). A popular military hero was most likely to be considered as a charismatic "judge," but a man renowned for his wisdom and justice might also be placed on a level with the hero, as far as recognition of his divinely granted superiority went (p. 216).

The title thus explained embraces both Judges and early monarchs, David being "the last of the great charismatic figures in Israelite political life." Albright regards the history in Samuel and Kings as largely contemporary record, and some of the additional matter in Chronicles as derived from much earlier sources.

Of the prosperity and activity of Solomon's reign, much is confirmed, and something added by archaeology to the biblical picture. Advance in liberal culture under both David and Solomon, including music, poetry and prose, is noted here. In the building, equipment and ritual of Solomon's tem-

ple Albright remarks the indisputable influence of Canaanite (especially Phoenician) models, and remarks that "most of the ritual preserved in the Priestly Code must reflect the practice of the Temple of Solomon." It would be natural that a ritual code, even though dating from Moses himself, should reflect contemporary or even earlier Canaanite manners in many of its practical details. With these, of course, there was always some danger of the revival of their original pagan symbolism. However, "there is no indication that the Israelite idea of God was permanently influenced by Canaanite conceptions in this age" (p. 226).

Under the Judges political disunion had exposed Israel to lapses into the surrounding Baalism. The division of the monarchy had a similar effect, especially on the Northern Kingdom. The corrective was the ministry of the Prophets, and first, of those whom Albright calls "the ecstatic prophets," whose last and greatest examples were Elijah and Elisha. As regards the title, however, we are reminded that

The ecstaticism of the prophets of the Tyrian Baal, described so vividly in 1 Kings 18, belongs to the Dionysiac type, while that of the early prophets of Yahweh as described in 1 Sam. 10 and 19 has nothing orgiastic about it, but rather reminds one of the activities of certain extreme Pentecostal groups of today. Perhaps the Yahwistic movement arose partly as a reaction against pagan ecstaticism, which must have threatened the religion of Israel as few other movements of history (p. 233).

This movement was soon followed by the literary or canonical Prophets, here entitled "the rhapsodist prophets." Amos, Hosea and Isaiah (not the postexilic seer of that name) are briefly described in their eighth century settings and activities. This inaugurates the age of "catharsis," which closes the pre-exilic history.

Torrey, of Yale, a leading Semitic linguist, has declared that there never was a general deportation of Jews into Babylonia, nor a national repatriation thereafter, and that the prophecies of Ezekiel and the books of Ezra and Nehemiah are therefore mainly fictitious. Albright, who has always dissented from this opinion, here appeals to abundant archaeological witness to a general destruction of the towns of central and western Judah near the beginning of the sixth century B. C. He also affirms the authenticity and influence of Ezekiel, and the historicity of Ezra and Nehemiah, though reversing the chronological order of these two. Discussing Jewish reflection on this age of affliction, he adverts to the suffering Servant of Yahweh as depicted in Isa. 52: 13—53: 12. This figure Albright seems to regard as an idealization or parable: "The Servant is the people of Israel, which suffers poignantly in exile and affliction; he is also the pious individual who atones for the sins of the many by his uncomplaining agony; he is finally the

coming Savior of Israel" (p. 255). But this shifting and elusive identity of subject is not easy to reconcile with notable unity and coherence of theme. The prophet never seems to lose sight of a concrete individuality, which can be neither that of "my people," for whom he is "stricken to death" (LXX), nor that of one who merely makes such reparation as man may make for men, but of one who "assigns his life to an expiation" (*'asham*).

Chapter VI, "In the Fullness of Time (Galatians 4:4)," completes the historical scope of this interesting work. Many inviting subjects of comment must be neglected for lack of space to do them justice.

The first section sketches the rise and diffusion of Hellenic culture throughout the Near East generally. The rapid ascent of Greek thought to speculation about ultimate causes, its skeptical and unethical repercussions, and the reaction against them effected by the crowning achievements of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, are focused in the culture which Alexander's conquests imposed on Western Asia, though not before its path had been smoothed by more than a century of commercial and military infiltrations. The section is extremely interesting. The next part of the chapter treats Judaism in particular and Hellenic influence on its religious thought. This theme is traced through early Greek philosophical impact upon Jewish thought, the aggressive political pressure which provoked the Maccabean revolt, and the rise of the rival religious schools of Sadducee and Pharisee within the intensely nationalistic Judaism of the last pre-Christian century. Albright finds "the first certain traces of the impact of Greek thought on Jewish theology" appearing in the conception of life after death, as influenced, he thinks, by Stoic and Epicurean principles. He first comments on a passage of apparently Stoic flavor, from Antigonus of Socho, who "probably flourished in the second half of the third century B. C.":

Antigonus . . . here expresses the lofty sentiments [of disinterested pursuit of virtue] which animated the best of the proto-Sadducean school, who opposed the growing popular belief in a blissful future life, as well as the traditional view according to which the soul continues indeed to exist, but in a shadowy, inactive state (p. 269).

Pursuit of this theme fails to exhibit the author's usual discrimination. Obviously a positive belief in future resurrection, with reward and punishment, makes a later appearance in Daniel, Wisdom, and Maccabees (of which the last two are not mentioned here). It is equally clear that the still later and properly named Sadducees opposed this belief. But did either they or the proto-Sadducees of the third and second centuries really oppose what Albright well calls "the traditional view" of survival "in a shadowy, inactive state"? So he believes, affirming in support that "Ben Sira . . . at the beginning of the second century, states explicitly on several occasions that there is no resurrection; death is the destiny of all mankind, and when

a man dies he becomes the prey of worms" (*ibid.*). If Ben Sira ("Ecclesiasticus") expected all men to die and their bodies to decompose, no less did the writers of Daniel and Wisdom and the Pharisees themselves; that would not prevent a resurrection. As to the leading assertion, that Ecclesiasticus explicitly states that there is no resurrection, it neglects the world of difference between denial and mere silence. No reference is supplied, but the passage which Albright's wording seems to reflect (Ecclus. 10:11), taken in the aim of its context, simply rebukes the pride of avarice (vv. 7-8) with the reminder that "when a man is dead *he shall inherit* creeping things, and beasts, and worms" (R. V.) instead of the objects of his covetous ambition. This agrees with Ecclus. 17:27-32; 28:6, and other passages which invoke "the common destiny of all mankind" in the same admonition to humility and moderation. Nor did these sentiments deter the same author from writing of Samuel (46:20):

And after he fell asleep he prophesied,
and showed the king his end,
and lifted up his voice from the earth in prophecy,
to blot out the wickedness of the people (R. V.).

Here is the traditional notion of survival endorsed, so far from being opposed. No future resurrection, indeed, is even hinted at; but neither here nor elsewhere do we find it denied. Ben Sira is simply silent on that subject, as one who has no word.

An equally misleading statement is made of Qoheleth, or Ecclesiastes:

Ecclesiastes agrees with Epicurean ideas in his view that reasonable and virtuous enjoyment of life is man's highest good and in his firm belief that there is no future life at all (3:19 ff., etc.). On the other hand he approaches Stoic teaching in his emphasis on man's duty to "fear God and keep His commandments, for this is all of man." Moreover, his statement, "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was, but the spirit shall return to God who made [*sic*] it" (12:7) is certainly not Epicurean but distinctly Stoic, since the latter school taught that human souls were offshoots of the world-soul, to which they returned after death (pp. 270-271).

If Qoheleth had learnt from the Stoics to think of the God of Israel as the world-soul, his writings do not show it. On the other hand, "a firm belief that there is no future life at all" is not evident in even his most pessimistic passages when studied in their contexts. In 3:19 ff. he (like Ben Sira) pursues his theme in v. 18, the lesson of humility to be drawn from universal mortality. In 9:5-6 (again, like Ben Sira) he subscribes in substance to the traditional view of survival, but stresses the exclusion of the dead from any conscious concern in what is "done under the sun," or, as the Psalms express it, "in the light of the living." In 2:24, 5:18, and 8:15 he

shows what Albright calls agreement with Epicurean ideas, exhorting to virtue as rewarded in the present life. But even to say that "there is nothing better" (2:24)—more expressly, "no better thing *under the sun*" (8:15)—is not to express a firm belief that there is no future life. It may be no more than to propose what he considers both the safest and the strongest motive to virtue.

Possibly there is too much keenness to detect Hellenic ideas in the theology of these two writers. Should not their minds be first interpreted from a Jewish viewpoint? Belief in conscious survival after death, or immortality precisely, had in the first place been no popular fancy (nor does Albright so suggest), but a conviction so ancient and universal that necromancy was a danger always imminent. At the same time it is noteworthy that prohibition of this practice in Israel did not appeal to futility in seeking converse with the dead, but stigmatized it as an abomination before Yahweh. In the divine economy of the earlier revelation, any risk of encouraging necromancy may well have been the reason for a long silence on the further subject of the state and condition of the spirits of the dead. The less of that, the better for the time. The "traditional view" of this further subject (hardly as definite as we find it in Homer) persisted unrebuked, as is clear in Job, the Psalms, and elsewhere. But hope of eventual resurrection and final judgment was bound to spring from Jewish consciousness before Christ's revelation should raise it to certainty. It first appears in a few passages in the Psalms (see Gruenthaner, *Catholic Biblical Quarterly*, II, 57-63), becoming clearer in Daniel, Wisdom and Maccabees. However, a Hebrew writer of this latter period who still speaks as if the dead, though surviving in spirit, are less to be envied than the living, does not thereby deny (much less explicitly) that their ultimate resurrection is possible, nor, as it seems to us, is any Hellenic influence upon his personal belief clearly evident on this account.

On the other hand, Hellenic ways in research and reasoning may well have exerted very effective influence on the progress of pre-Talmudic legal tradition and studious method. A "thoroughly Hellenistic framework of Pharisaic thought" (p. 274) does indeed seem evident from the reasons here adduced.

A third section of this interesting chapter discusses the chief non-Hellenic currents in Hellenistic Judaism. The general influence of Iranian conceptions the author finds to have been overestimated: "There is no clear trace of Iranian influence on Judaism before the second century B. C., though the beginnings of this influence may well go back a century or two earlier" (p. 278). Its dualism, however, appears in the apocryphal Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs. Albright concludes:

This type of dualism decreased greatly in importance in later Judaism and seems, in fact, to have been rejected by orthodox rab-

binic circles, though it obtained considerable popular support in still later times. In Christianity, on the other hand, the modified dualism of the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs achieved a signal triumph, since it offers a simpler and more intelligible solution of the problem of evil than any other ever proposed. The very fact that it was rejected by normative Judaism shows that it was foreign to Jewish tradition, and Iranian influence can hardly be denied. . . . (p. 279.)

Yet a much more direct source of Christianity's dualistic solution of the problem of evil is to be found in the third chapter of Genesis, to which Iranian influence can hardly be ascribed. Albright concedes that "the idea of the Last Judgment also has strong Jewish roots, though Iranian conceptions appear to have influenced details" (p. 280). He concludes that "it appears that Iranian conceptions did not begin to influence Judaism until the last two pre-Christian centuries, and even then exerted no effect except where the ground was already fully prepared for them" (*ibid.*).

In turning next to proto-Gnosticism, Albright would "dispose of the alleged antiquity of the Mandaeen and Hermetic literatures, both of which have been erroneously traced back to pre-Christian times" (*ibid.*). In Gnosticism proper (that of early Christian times) he well concludes that the central figure of Sophia, or Wisdom, has a prominence of its own in earlier Semitic beliefs. But he takes the further step of making the Book of Wisdom partly the product of a Gnostic syncretism:

Gnostic thinkers had merely to identify the eternal Wisdom with the Iranian world of good and light, and with the Stoic divine fire and creative reason [*logos spermatikos*]. Since the author of the Wisdom of Solomon already places God over against matter in essentially Gnostic fashion, and since he considers the body as the prison of the soul, which exists before and after life, it is safe to assume that the decisive step toward a Jewish Gnosis had already been taken in the first century B. C. (p. 284).

Hardly safe on these grounds. No references are given. As to the body's restraint upon the soul, possibly Wis. 9:15 was in view. But as to any pre-existence of the soul, Wis. 8:19 refuses to decide the question of priority between body and soul, 15:8d and 16b regard man's soul as "lent" to and "borrowed" by him, and 15:11 explains it as inbreathed into his body by God. Nowhere is its pre-existence clear, so far as we can discover. And when one who writes of the Spirit of Yahweh as "that which holds all things together" (Wis. 1:7b, R. V.), and the author of such passages as Wis. 11:24; 13:1.5.9; and 16:24-25, is represented as placing God *over against* matter, it would seem that distinction has been somewhat confused with opposition, and that the "essentially Gnostic fashion" is rather a typically Jewish one.

As between the formal concepts *Sophia* (Wisdom) and *Logos* (Word or Decree), the author finds that the former completely overshadowed the latter in both Jewish and Gnostic thought, while in early Christianity the latter displaced the former. This seems both true and characteristic. Albright's treatment of the theme is most interesting, especially as traced in the Targums and Philo. He also gives particular attention to the nature and trend of the eschatological literature of the period. The sect of the Essenes is next discussed, with the reserve due to a subject on which so little authentic testimony exists; but "it seems probable that the Essenes represent a sectarian Jewish group which had migrated from Mesopotamia to Palestine after the victory of the Maccabees" (p. 289). Their emphasis on lustration with water seems to Albright to appeal to a long prevalent practice of certain Mesopotamian groups. Of this Essene peculiarity he observes:

In this milieu John the Baptist must certainly be placed, since he combined the zeal of an Israelite prophet with a true soteriological passion for saving souls from the wrath to come (Mat. 3: 7), and since he united an unusually pronounced asceticism with the practice of initiating converts into the kingdom of God by baptism in the Jordan. . . . The view that Christian baptism originated in the Jewish baptism of gentile proselytes, which is attested as early as the first century A. D., . . . is possible, but it is perhaps more likely that both go back to a common source among the Essenes or a similar group (p. 290).

One would not have thought that the Essenes enjoyed such prestige, or even confidence, as to have furnished the source of a rite so very common as Jewish baptism became.

The discussion of the messianic doctrine of this period is summary rather than particular. However, "practically every detail of Jewish messianic expectation may be shown to be derived from the Old Testament" (p. 291). The author believes the title "Son of Man" to be traceable much earlier than Daniel and the apocryphal Book of Enoch (which latter apparently had done most to make it popular):

There are a number of points, into which we shall not enter here, which make it very probable that Atrakhasis, the recurrent Mesopotamian savior of mankind from catastrophe, son of the God Ea, yet explicitly called "man," was actually fused in Jewish-Aramaic tradition with the figure of the Messiah, as reconstructed from messianic prophecies in the Old Testament. On the basis of the attested Jewish belief and its probable prehistory it is, therefore, practically certain that Christian tradition was correct in recognizing the term "Son of Man" in the Gospels as explicitly stating the messianic rôle of Jesus (p. 292).

This brings the work at length to its culmination in "Jesus the Christ," that fathomless theme of men's most earnest thought. It is treated here with

a historian's directness, but with all the dignity and even delicacy due to a subject so momentous.

Two lines of inquiry are followed: the documentary sources of information, and the religion of Jesus. The first begins by sketching the history of the synoptic problem down to the recently advanced hypothesis of *Formgeschichte*. Albright's estimate of the latter system is summed up in the following passages:

In practice it becomes a complex case of the logical fallacy known as *argumentum in circulo*, except where it can be controlled by entirely independent outside facts. In New Testament studies such outside facts are seldom available and many of those which have at one time or another been thought to exist, have been disproved by the progress of archaeological and papyrological research. From the standpoint of the objective historian data cannot be disproved by the accidental literary framework in which they occur, unless there are solid independent reasons for rejecting the historicity of an appreciable number of other data found in the same framework.

However, form-criticism has yielded some very valuable results, first by classifying the material found in the synoptic gospels under such heads as apothegm-stories (sayings of Jesus for which the rest of the narrative serves as a framework), miracle-stories, parables, and various types of *logia* (sayings), and secondly by pointing out a number of blocks of material which may be traced directly back to Jesus in their present form. . . . A number of scholars, notably C. F. Burney and B. S. Easton, have discovered striking phenomena characteristic of Hebrew and Aramaic verse in some of these blocks, and have thus enhanced the probability that we are dealing with original matter (p. 294).

Next follows a critique of Torrey's recent theory "that the whole of Mark and Matthew, most of Luke, and the entire Gospel of John were written in Aramaic, from which they were translated into Greek." Albright sketches the controversy thus provoked, defends Torrey's competence as an Aramaic scholar, and (discussing his reference of Greek passages which differ from standard Hellenistic prose to Aramaic models, which, reconstructed, may account for the former's peculiarities) decides that "judged by the severest standards, it must be said that Torrey has proved a respectable proportion of his examples" (p. 295). On the other hand, he points out radical flaws in the argument's first premises: absence of a contemporary literary Greek of precisely comparable type; lack of examples of Palestinian Aramaic in consecutive texts between B. C. 50 and A. D. 70; arbitrary judgment of the original text. He concludes that the Greek Gospels had a more extensive

Aramaic substratum than heretofore commonly allowed, but that it probably did not exist in writing. He concludes, in general:

We must rather admit the existence of oral collections of material, which assumed slightly differing forms as they were circulated among early Christian communities. With our present evidence it seems rather hopeless to try to reconstruct the exact development of the synoptic Gospels from the Aramaic form in which substantially all of the pericopes and categories which have been isolated by form-critics must once have been circulated, to the final form which they assumed not later than about 80 A. D. All we can say is that a period of between twenty and fifty years is too slight to permit of any appreciable corruption of the essential content and even of the specific wording of the sayings of Jesus. . . . The beneficial effect of oral transmission more than outweighs the slight historical loss through refraction, combination, and formation of doublets. However, only modern scholars who lack both historical method and perspective can spin such a web of speculation as that with which form-critics have surrounded the Gospel tradition. The sureness with which early Christian leaders distinguished between normative and aberrant sayings of Jesus becomes very clear when we analyze the so-called *agrapha*, or apocryphal *logia*, collected from extant and from recently excavated documents. The *agrapha* generally express gnostic or antinomian ideas which are foreign to the Gospels (pp. 297-298).

After mentioning a recent discovery which proves that the Fourth Gospel cannot be later than the first century, Albright expresses dissent from "the usual critical view that it mainly reproduces ideas of its author and cannot claim to reflect the thought of Jesus." Its personal allusions are not of the nature of pious fiction.

One cannot, of course, place John on the same level with the synoptic Gospels as a historical source, but one is quite justified in maintaining that it does reflect a side of Jesus which was too mystical for the ordinary man of that day to understand and which He presumably held in reserve for a few intimates (p. 299).

Remarking that this same economy of reserve in teaching as addressed to different capacities is approved in Hebrews, 1 Peter and the Pauline letters, and that it appears in the method of Christ Himself, Albright adds that nothing in the Fourth Gospel is clear evidence of an origin later than the first century. Furthermore, "practically every motif in the Gospel of John can be paralleled in the synoptic Gospels; it is only the rich accumulation and development of ideas which is different" (p. 300).

Regarding the testimony of the Gospels as a whole, the closing paragraph of this section on documentary sources merits reproduction entire:

In dealing with the Gospels the historian cannot but see a profound difference between their contents and typical examples elsewhere of matter which has been long transmitted by oral tradition. What we have in them is rather a reflection of reports of eye-witnesses who were overwhelmed by the profound experiences and the extreme tension of mind and body through which they had passed. Men who see the boundary between conventional experience and the transcendental world dissolving before their very eyes are not going to distinguish clearly between things seen in the plane of nature and things seen in the world of spirit. To speak of the latter as "hallucinations" is quite misleading, since nothing like them is otherwise known either to historians or to psychologists. Here the historian has no right to deny what he cannot disprove. He has a perfect right to unveil clear examples of charlatanry, of credulity, or of folklore, but in the presence of authentic mysteries his duty is to stop and not attempt to cross the threshold into a world where he has no right of citizenship (p. 300).

Whether or not the Gospel accounts of extraordinary events are influenced by failure on the part of their recorders to distinguish clearly between two different modes of apprehension (a suggestion which we cannot embrace), the concluding principle of this passage is profoundly true. If science, conceived of as pure empiricism, cannot establish the supernatural causation of observed phenomena, neither can it prove the intrinsic impossibility of such causation, nor, by merely assuming this, can it profess to refute in advance every human report of such phenomena themselves, however well attested. This radical fallacy of rationalistic criticism is opposed to any adequate philosophy, and merely condemns its adherents, while boasting of mental freedom, to endless labor in a treadmill which knows no issue into final truth.

This brings us to the closing section of the history. "The religion of Jesus" is most naturally approached in its contrast to official Judaism, and it is equally natural that the Pharisees appear as the exponents of the latter. But Albright's estimate of the Pharisees is too much influenced by a prominent group of modern scholars, Jewish and Christian, whose induction is not conclusive. From Talmudic sources they construct an edifying Pharisaic system of the second or third Christian century. Assuming first that it must have flourished in Jesus' time, and further that practice may be inferred from precept, they strive to exhibit His unscrupulous murderers as good men self-deceived by righteous zeal. One reads with surprise:

Yet we may whole-heartedly accept the rehabilitation of the Pharisees, who were God-fearing men with views which closely approximated the standard Christian theological positions with respect to the attributes of God, the question of predestination and free will, and the problem of the after-life (p. 301).

Whatever their views, Jesus lived with them, and He affirmed that "they say, and do not." He denounced no other class of men, but to Him the Pharisees were "an evil and adulterous [apostate] generation," whose doctrine was not merely laden with human inventions, but tended directly to violation of the Decalogue itself. He accused them of justifying themselves before men while God knew their hearts to be perverse. He denounced them as conscious impostors, prolonging their prayers "for a pretence" while exploiting defenceless widows. This is the least that can be said of His judgment of the Pharisees of His time, taken, of course, on the whole. It is no description of conscientious men; and it is either correct or wholly unlike Him.

As to the substance of His reaction against them:

His hostility to the Pharisees as a body was based mainly on His profound sympathy for the poor and suffering, to whom the Pharisees as a group showed charity but scant sympathy, feeling in typically puritanic fashion that their misery must somehow be the result of sin. . . . He fully recognized the close relation between sin (i. e., violation of natural and moral law) and suffering, but to Him suffering was not only the normal divine punishment of sin but a potent requisite for salvation, putting the unhappy and disoriented soul into a state of receptivity to divine grace. . . . This exaltation of the value of suffering had no ultra-ascetic nor encratic aspect, since Jesus did everything possible to alleviate the sufferings of others, at the same time that He showed His own willingness to eat and drink with friends and hosts. In this respect, as in others, we can only admire the exquisite balance of Jesus' ethical teachings. . . . (p. 302).

In ethical teaching, however, the true greatness of His ministry does not consist. Albright thinks this evident from the existence of Jewish parallels to the chief ethical precepts of the Gospels. Here again we wonder how early in fact are these "early rabbinic parallels," and how many of them may not have flowed from Christian sources into rabbinic tradition before the latter was committed to writing. However, the ethical element in Jesus' teaching still has a distinction of prominence:

It is, however, true that in no pre-Christian or Jewish source do we find the same accumulation of lofty ethical injunctions in brief compass. Nor do we find elsewhere that astonishing balance with regard to fundamentally non-religious and societal questions such as the relation of master and servant, of state and subject, and such as the place for resistance and non-resistance, etc. (p. 303).

This same quality of balance Albright finds in Jesus' doctrine of God. Early Israelite theology had advanced to a "rarefied ethical monotheism" in

postexilic prophecy, and had also "become spiritualized in the process." Thus, when danger of polytheism was no longer acute, the one God of Israel "appears in different hypostases or aspects"—which, however, are not identical terms, but perhaps offered as alternatives. The author remarks that "the trinitarian idea of God has immeasurably enriched the concept of monotheism, without in the least detracting from its unified character" (p. 304).

Excepting Jesus' doctrine of the Deity, the quality of balance in His teaching, several times emphasized, is now ascribed to "the profound effect of Hellenism in the formation of Jesus's other religious ideas." The author proceeds:

In them there is a fine Hellenic sense of balance and of proportion which are foreign to contemporary Judaism. Even in reacting against the exaggerated emphasis laid by the Pharisees on the Torah and against their essentially Hellenistic dialectic, . . . Jesus replaced this form of Hellenism with a far wider and deeper one: Hellenistic universalism and philanthropy, which underlie the whole subsequent history of Christianity (p. 304).

That Christianity should transcend the national and racial, and prove itself designed for all humanity, was due to Hellenic influence on its Founder's ideals, since contemporary Judaism offered no such background! Was he unacquainted with the Prophets of earlier and undiluted Judaism? This strange opinion seeks other confirmation:

It has often been stressed of late that He was born and reared in a land (Galilee) where Jews, Syro-Phoenicians, and Greeks rubbed shoulder to shoulder, and where cosmopolitan influences were stronger than anywhere else in Jewish Palestine (*ibid.*).

This seems to prove too much. Tiberias and Capharnaum were fully as cosmopolitan as Nazareth or even Sepphoris; and Jesus' social opportunities did not surpass those of His first pupils from the shores of Genesareth. Yet in nothing were they so slow to comprehend His mission and their own as precisely in its pan-human design. Hellenic universalism and philanthropy had not prepared their minds even to learn it from Him.

In an interesting and well reasoned paragraph Albright next affirms what has so often been denied, that "Jesus's messianic consciousness was the central fact of His life" (p. 305). Of His eschatology, closely involved in this, the "central features are the belief that the Messiah is both Son of Man and Son of God, . . . and that He is to suffer abasement and eventual death at the hands of His own people, for whom He will shed His blood as a vicarious and expiatory sacrifice" (*ibid.*). Such features, it is observed, cannot have originated in early Apostolic teaching, since the vigor of the dispute over Jewish

initiation of Gentile converts shows a disposition which would have tolerated no such significant changes in Christian estimation of Christ Himself. As for another source to which Christian messianism has sometimes been ascribed,

All that can be proved from a detailed study of the mystery-religions of the Roman Empire is that there was widespread spiritual discontent and deepseated yearning for salvation in the first century A. D., and that St. Paul seems to have adopted a number of expressions and points of view which had originated with adepts of the mysteries (p. 306).

A long final paragraph deals well with certain cyclic motifs in older Near-Eastern religions which offer parallels to cardinal events in the life of Jesus. Conceding that some are trivial, Albright rightly feels that enough direct parallels remain to justify inquiry, but that their actual relationship to the evangelical mysteries can only be matter of reasonable theory. He finds a link in pre-Christian eschatological literature, whose content he reduces to two main elements: a number of Old Testament passages then for the first time treated as messianic prophecies, and an accompaniment of original apocalyptic visions. The details of this visionary element, he believes, show reminiscences of Near-Eastern pagan literature "through which apocalyptic imagery was greatly embellished," and which may have imparted some of its accidental flavor to Gospel citations of messianic prophecy as fulfilled in Jesus. As to the messianic element itself, one wonders whether the multiplication of prophecies really began with the eschatologists. Albright writes, on this point:

It is, we maintain, through the channel of Jewish eschatological literature, most of which has inevitably perished, that the field of messianic prophecy was extended to cover many verses which were not recognized as properly messianic by orthodox Jewish tradition (p. 307).

But how far can we identify this orthodox tradition for the period just before Christ? For if we must take it from Talmudic sources, it will be hard to find an Old Testament passage claimed as messianic in the New, which has not been given messianic connection by some respectable Jewish authority. Indeed, the only notable exception seems to be that of Isa. 7: 14. By the time it acquired a literature, orthodox Jewish tradition abounded in messianic exegesis of the Old Testament. How late had this begun?

Continuous with the last extract quoted above is the following conclusion from the combined influence of both of the elements of eschatological literature:

This principle would both explain how many passages of the Old Testament which have no original messianic application were so in-

terpreted and how the messianic framework of the Gospels came to bear such a striking, though quite superficial, resemblance in details to the corresponding framework of the cycles of Tammuz, Adonis, Attis, Osiris, etc. . . . The new religious content of this ancient framework was, however, as different as light is from darkness. The Church Fathers saw truly when they represented these aspects of paganism as part of the divine preparation for Christianity (p. 307).

Naturally so, since they regarded these aspects of paganism as human per-versions of earlier divine revelation, which, in the custody of Israel, a special providence had preserved incorrupt. Albright continues:

We can never know to just what extent details of the messianic framework of the Gospels are *literally* true. Because of their highly intimate and personal character some of them are set forever beyond the reach of the critical historian. . . . In other words, the historian cannot control the details of Jesus's birth and resurrection and thus has no right to pass judgment on their historicity. On the other hand the historian is qualified to estimate the historical significance of the pattern and its vital importance for the nascent Christian movement as embodied in the person of its Master. A number of coincidences between a literal sequence of events and a traditional pattern are necessary before the former can be appropriated and modified by the latter. . . . It follows that the historian must recognize the presence of an important factual element in the Christian adaptation of the messianic tradition. Since, accordingly, there can be no complete factual judgment and since the historian cannot settle questions which are outside of his jurisdiction, the decision must be left to the Church and to the individual believer, who are historically warranted in accepting the whole of the messianic framework of the Gospels or in regarding it as partly true literally and partly true spiritually—which is far more important in the region of spirit with which the Christian faith must primarily deal (pp. 307-308).

Notwithstanding the balance between tolerance and reservation so manifest in this passage, one cannot accept its reasoning entire. History itself shows (e. g., in the phrasing of the Creeds) that the Christian faith deals primarily with facts, unparalleled and of tremendous moment, precisely because it consists in accepting the report of these facts as literally correct and not "partly true spiritually." Their spiritual value lies wholly in their objective reality. If the choice of alternatives offered here were valid, it would place implicit faith on an equal footing with a selective skepticism or even with the subterfuge called Modernism. For it simply concedes the essence of indifferentism. The last found no sanction in the teachings of Paul, Peter,

and John, who were well enough qualified to verify the historical basis of their message. No rational warrant exists for accepting the Gospel records otherwise than as wholly literal. There are not two norms of Christianity.

Even the critical historian commonly accepts as historically certain the attested parentage of a public character, although the highly intimate and personal testimony of one parent, on which the whole depends, cannot be critically controlled. If he is pledged to suspend judgment concerning all such matters, he must in principle reject all *conscious* human testimony, written or traditional, to any past event, and rest all historical truth on a comparatively slender supply of undesigned evidence empirically and inductively weighed. This is both to cripple history itself and also to undermine the mutual credit on which alone civilization can survive. No assent to a principle of philosophic skepticism can finally advance the cause of truth.

Admittedly the details of Jesus' birth and resurrection cannot be independently verified. But they do not lack the indirect evidence supplied by the competence of their recorders, the proof of which is cumulative and fully sufficient, not only for faith, but for normal historical certainty. And those details of their record which possess a highly intimate and personal character, at least exhibit perfect harmony and integration with thousands of other details which a critical public for a whole generation could control by its own vivid recollections.

Moreover, if "the messianic framework of the Gospels" means that class of events which the Evangelists recognized as evidence of Jesus' messiahship, we need more than theory to maintain that their very description of these events was suggested, even in detail, by a traditional pattern. On the contrary the first witnesses had to be shown how to recognize the ideal in the fuller complement of the actual—or so they have recorded. If not the very reverse of the true historical relationship, it is at least against the only positive evidence at hand, to suggest that a messianic tradition had taught His followers what to see in Jesus' career or how to record what they had seen.

If compelled to dissent in part from the attitude just discussed, we are in much fuller accord with the thoughts expressed in the author's epilogue. This claims the last three pages of his continuous text, and maintains his whole position at its highest level. It begins by noting that in the preceding pages religious tradition has been checked by history in three of its claims: the monotheism of Moses' original system; the reforming, and by no means innovating, mission of the Hebrew Prophets; and the acceptance of Jesus of Nazareth as the Christ of faith. On the first two subjects, history has been found to confirm tradition as preserved in the Old Testament; on the third subject, the identity and mission of Jesus, "historical and literary crit-

icism, assisted by the evidence of Near-East religious history, finds that there is nothing against the tradition—except prejudice” (p. 309). These are not overstatements of what has been fairly established.

In appreciation of the historical process in general, Albright writes:

A double strand runs through our treatment: first, the ascending curve of human evolution, a curve which now rises, now falls, now moves in cycles, and now oscillates, but which has always *bitberto* recovered itself and continued to ascend; second, the development of individual historical patterns or configurations, each with its own organismic life, which rises, reaches a climax, and declines. The picture as a whole warrants the most sanguine faith in God and in His purpose for man. In detail it does not justify either fatuous optimism or humanistic meliorism. Contrary to the favorite assertion of the late J. H. Breasted, man has *not* raised himself by his own boot-straps. Every human culture has risen and has fallen in its turn; every human pattern has faded out after its brief season of success. It is only when the historian compares successive configurations of society that the fact of real progress makes itself apparent (pp. 309-310).

In spite of the comprehensive nature of the subjects involved, the very moderation and poise of these opinions help to carry conviction. Touching the purpose of God and our justification in trusting therein, Dr. Albright deserves our thanks for words as reasonable as they are heartening.

His next paragraph is of deep significance. All readers of the Old Testament have noticed how, in Israel's moral infancy, the rewards and punishments promised in sanction of the Law were temporal success or adversity. Gradually, however, Israel was divinely led to wrestle with the conundrum of innocent suffering in the doctrines of some of the Psalms, of Ecclesiastes, Job, and postexilic prophetism. Something of a solution had been granted even before the Christ had come to call His followers to the king's highway of the Cross. Yet ever since there have been those among us who, in His own prophetic phrase, “for a while believe, but in a time of testing fall away.” Every time of stress and crisis fills the public press with the petulant and shallow complaints of those who, as Albright here observes, are swept from their religious moorings—the worldly Catholic, of course, among them. To such as these, prosperity is the reign of God, adversity His dethronement. Whereas, on the contrary,

Real spiritual progress can only be achieved through catastrophe and suffering, reaching new levels after the profound catharsis which accompanies major upheavals. Every such period of mental and physical agony, while the old is being swept away and the new is still unborn, yields different social patterns and deeper spiritual insights. Our own

age is witnessing a true catharsis which will, we believe, bring profound spiritual rebirth and will prevent man from destroying himself as man has every apparent intention of doing (p. 310).

The truth of the opening sentence is a philosophic mystery. Man, the only animal of nature's myriad species whose very life-principle is rational and therefore essentially a thing of spirit, can accept no lower norm of absolute progress than that of moral integrity. But if this is the end his very nature assigns him, why should violence to his nature be an indispensable means? Other sentient creatures are not, indeed, capable of progress at all, but neither does their stable welfare demand repression of their natural bent. All of them at least maintain the perfection of their species by simply following its appetites. Only man cannot do so except under peril of degeneration. The riddle is not solved by answering that opposition exercises and develops by challenging to effort, for real catastrophe cripples or paralyzes instead of stimulating. The recurrence of such disaster has indeed, to all appearance, prevented man from destroying himself; but why the need of this deterrent in man alone? It is of his nature that reason should recognize good and set it before the will as an object of pursuit. Why should some equally natural appetite warp the reason's judgment, lead it to mistake mere means for ends, and set apparent good in the place of real? And why, again, may spiritual appetites be no more trusted without restraint than carnal ones? For there is no deeper moral degradation than the highly respectable vice of intellectual pride, or that of avarice, or lust of power.

Here, then is a species of animal whose natural appetites unchastened tend to ruin it. Yet no nature can be destined to self-frustration; that were intrinsic contradiction. In this specific nature there is obviously something out of order; and the disorder, being universal, must be inherited with the nature itself. As someone has remarked, the situation is "not a total depravity, but rather a depraved totality." Between man's faculties there is a lack of adjustment, which cannot be normal to his nature, yet must have intruded into its earliest history. Original Christianity knew the cause of this radical disorder, a cause now repudiated not only by humanists but by nearly all except Catholics. The latter know it as original sin.

Hence the peril to mankind of unimpeded growth in any device of matter or of mind. Such fruits, one and all, would unerringly contribute to genuine spiritual progress if human nature had remained in balance, with every appetite ministering to an impartial intellect and an uncorrupted will. As matters are, the disastrous consequences of his own perverseness can serve to destroy man's unworthy objects of pursuit or to expose the error of his false philosophies. But it should be clearly perceived that disillusionment only leaves its victim destitute, and cannot show him the way to new and worthier achievement. It is one thing to recognize an idol when prostrate

in the dust, and quite another thing to discern the truer object of allegiance. The reasoning of Albright seems to need a connecting link between catharsis and spiritual rebirth. The former clears the way for the latter, but has no power to effect it.

Catharsis does, however, bereave mankind of its false gods, while the witness of the true God is ever at hand to supply the positive themes of deeper spiritual insights. When all that we have lived for has been swept away, we begin to remember that genuine good should be imperishable. As we turn in feeble hope to seek a prize that cannot disappoint us, a permanent twofold need becomes critically keen. The will needs power to pursue the object, when found, at every cost; the reason needs light by which to find it. Both needs are once for all supplied in the grace and truth which came by Jesus Christ. Neither of these aids will force itself upon us. Neither will magically insure us against newer self-delusions. Both together will save us so long as they are cherished at their supreme worth and faithfully followed. But without either, we are fruitless and doomed to an endless line of failures.

Considering the general self-consistency of Albright's argument, it would be unreasonable to demand faultless precision in each detail. At its root, however, there seems to lie an insecure transition from less to greater in a certain argument from analogy, which appears at the conclusion of Chapter II. The author believes that "the sympathetic student of man's *entire* history can have but one reply: there *is* an Intelligence and a Will, expressed in both History and Nature—for History and Nature are one" (p. 87). The reply is framed to meet the following question:

If microcosmic man, who alone of created beings is able to think consciously and purposively, is forced by circumstances over which he may have little control to become one of a group which plays a definite rôle in a larger pattern, itself perhaps a unit in a still larger configuration, does not the human microcosm have its analogy in a macrocosmic thinker who is above these configurations of human societies? (*ibid.*)

The reply is admirable in itself, and possibly justified by the reasoning implied in the question. But how far do both together lead us towards an organismic philosophy of history, the theme of both chapter and present context? A progressive career of the human race, to be strictly organismic, should owe its perennial springs of action to some principle or source intrinsic to the race itself. It is hard to see how a directive principle which is above the configurations of human societies can be ranked among man's own innate tendencies. In itself the organismic conception of history (within certain discernible limits) strikes a wholly sympathetic chord. Scholastic philosophy maintains that a "perfect" (self-sufficing) human society, such as the civil state, is very really an organism in virtue of man's innate social

tendencies. Its likeness to a biological organism is imperfect, since society is not necessary to the individual's absolute survival (as is the natural body to the subsistence of each organ), but only to his normal development. Necessary to this, however, it is by nature, and hence society acquires endowments in its own right. As truly as the good of the member is in many respects distinct from that of the community, and may even have to yield it precedence, so truly does the community possess a corporate mind to discern the common good and a corporate will to pursue it. These faculties are obviously manifested in the functions of government, and their intrinsic character entitles their operations to be considered those of an organism. For they are potentially innate in each individual member, though formally actuated only in the association to which they are naturally destined.

But argument from the individual to the nation is not so easily extended from the nation to the league, and still less easily to all mankind. International alliances are brief, since they seek some mutual advantage born of transient circumstances. Exchange of cultural influence is usually unconscious on at least one side, and is again governed by quest of advantage. In neither case are the parties actuated by a conscious aim to benefit the world at large. A motive so high may animate the artist, the man of research, the teacher, or the missionary; but it does not transcend such limited classes and claim the purpose of a nation or a race. For the dominant aim of the perfect society is to promote the common welfare of its own members. They themselves would not tolerate its subordination of this end to any other. National altruism would be national suicide. That all men together must have a common good is as certain as their specific unity. But an intelligence and a will to direct the whole species to its common end is not so clearly innate in the world of nations as it is in the nation of men. Hence one feels that a strictly organismic explanation of the historical process may be a plausible hypothesis in prospect, but hardly an accomplished fact in retrospect.

But this is not to question the superior Intelligence and Will to which Albright bears true witness. Together they constitute that Divine Providence which would direct mankind to lasting happiness at every cost save that of coercion, but which must often chasten it by permitting the fruit of its errors to mature unhindered. The author of this excellent work does not lose sight of history's lesson. He concludes:

Jesus Christ appeared on the scene just when occidental civilization had reached a fatal impasse. The civilization of that day was in many respects comparable to what it is today. Philosophy ranged over just as wide fields of speculation; men's religious attitudes varied from the loftiest monotheism to the most benighted superstition, just as today. Moreover, the modern world had, a quarter of a century ago, almost

achieved comparable unity under the sway of a culture which was the lineal offspring of Graeco-Roman civilization; a few years later the same world achieved partial unity of political life under the League of Nations; there seemed to be no end to mechanical progress or to the advance of knowledge, employing the tools which had been forged so successfully by the Greeks. Yet today we see Occidental civilization tottering; we see intellectual activity declining with unexampled speed over a large part of the globe; we see a sensational revival of such pseudo-sciences as astrology (Babylonian in origin), Neo-Gnosticism ("New Thought" in all its varied forms), racial mysticism, etc. . . . In short, we are in a world which is strangely like the Graeco-Roman world of the first century B. C. We need reawakening of faith in the God of the majestic theophany on Mount Sinai, in the God of Elijah's vision at Horeb, in the God of the Jewish exiles in Babylonia, in the God of the Agony at Gethsemane (p. 311).

