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History of Restoration: The Old Testament Age

THE FOUNDATION OF RESTORATION

MARTIN BUBER (b. 1878-d. 1965)

wrote:

...when God created man, he set the mark of his image upon man's brow and embedded it in man's nature, and that however faint God's mark may become, it can never be entirely wiped out.

According to Hasidic legend, when the Baal-Shem conjured up the demon Sammael, he showed him this mark on the forehead of his disciples, and when the master bade the conquered demon begone, the latter prayed, 'Sons of the living God, permit me to remain a little while to look at the mark of the image of God on your faces.' God's real commandment to man is to realize this image.¹

¹ W. Herberg, ed., *The Writings of Martin Buber*, Meridian Books, N.Y., 1956, p. 269. The Baal-Shem (1700-1760) was the founder of Hasidic Judaism.

His commandment to man, and the hope of man, is the realization of his original nature, according to Unification theology; and notwithstanding error, frustration and failure, God has worked since the Fall to restore this promise. The record of that work distinguishes ancient Hebrew literature from others of its time: whereas the Egyptians and Babylonians focused their attention upon nature, Israelites were peculiarly attracted to history.

Professor G. Ernest Wright of McCormick Theological Seminary describes it thus:

Biblical theology is first and foremost a theology of recital, in which Biblical man confessed his faith by reciting the formative events of his history as the redemptive handiwork of God. The realism of the Bible consists in its close attention to the facts of history and of tradition because these facts are the acts of God.²

The Israelites concentrated not merely on the individual exploits of great warriors and powerful kings, or the recitation of court annals, but rather on the "unity and meaningfulness of universal history from the beginning of time until the end of time."³

Scripture records the central action of God in a specific history, presenting to all history the certainty of its redemption. The Bible is the chart of God's involvement and direction, His divine dispensation of restoration.

A. Adam's Family

Since man was created an eternal being, God could not leave him to exist forever in his fallen state; God is obligated by His purposive, loving nature to work for man's resurrection, and cannot be truly satisfied until all have returned to him. Adam

² G.E. Wright, *God Who Acts*, Alec R. Allenson, Chicago, 1952, p. 38.

³ *Ibid*, p. 39. Wright has repeatedly insisted that the Old Testament should be understood *against* its environment.

and Eve, created good in the image of God, became a blend of good and evil as a result of their voluntary alliance with Satan. Thus, neither God nor Satan could completely claim them.

Because of the unprincipled relationship between Satan and Eve, *Divine Principle* claims that the father of evil was able to get a grip on man. But God cannot reclaim man unless man voluntarily sets a condition for his return by demonstrating his faith. Through such an act, the offering of an acceptable sacrifice, man demonstrates his rejection of Satan and a foundation for restoration can be established. For some contemporary Christians and Jews the original significance of the sacrificial offering has been lost; frequently it is only considered as an obsolete, primitive, form of worship without relevance to man today. However, the point behind the temple sacrifices is as valid as ever: man's offerings were visible signs of his dedication and devotion to God. Adam, a virtual battleground between the power of God and the legions of Satan, was unable to offer a sacrifice because he was no longer thoroughly committed to God.

Note: For more than a century the Old Testament accounts from Adam to Abraham have been the subject of considerable debate. Parallels to surviving Babylonian stories are frequently cited to discredit the value of the Genesis narratives. Scholars since 1900 have generally favored some form of the Graf-Wellhausen theory that our Pentateuch (the first five books of the Bible) represents an interweaving of several distinct documents produced at different times and representing varied religious outlooks. These literary sources are commonly identified as J, E, D, P and have been dated roughly 850, 750, 621, 500-450, and the redactor (R), 400 B.C. For our purposes it is important to note that the Creation story of Genesis comes from P, the latest source, and the Eden narrative from J, a much older tradition. The Flood story

as we have it is a fusion of two documents quite easily separated. For a thorough treatment of the literary sources, the reader should consult R. Pfeiffer, *Introduction to the Old Testament*, Harper, N.Y. 1948, pp. 129-292.

B. Cain and Abel

In his book *The Religion of Ancient Israel*, the Dutch Old Testament professor T.C. Vriezen dates the Cain-Abel story and the rest of the Yahwist document between the period of the Hebrew judges and the first kings, and thus it reflects a period of transition from a semi-nomadic to an agrarian way of life. The semi-nomadic shepherd is felt to live in closer fellowship with Yahweh than the farmer; cities are condemned as dens of sin and pride. While Abel is the shepherd, the murderous Cain is the first builder of cities. Therefore, in Vriezen's view this early Hebrew chronicle comes from the circle of those for whom life in the city was still something totally alien.⁴

Robert Graves and Raphael Patai think differently. This narrative, where the offering of Abel is preferred to that of Cain, explains the origin of the camel-herding bedouin with tribal tattoos, who entered Palestine later than the goat-and-sheep owning semi-nomads. According to Hebrew tradition these desert raiders were sons of Cain for whom murder came naturally. Their tattoos were really marks that God put on them as a sign of His punishment of their fratricidal ancestor.⁵

Without necessarily denying the sociological interpretation, Professor H.H. Rowley prefers to emphasize the moral aspect of the Cain-Abel account. Vriezen interprets the Cain-Abel story sociologically. Graves and Patai come to slightly different conclusions from the same standpoint. Each of these methods of

⁴ T.C. Vriezen, *The Religion of Ancient Israel*, Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1967, p. 166.

⁵ R. Graves and R. Patai, *Hebrew Myths: The Book of Genesis*, McGraw-Hill, N.Y., pp. 91-97. This book contains much useful information about Jewish and Christian elaboration of the Biblical text plus non-Jewish parallels.

exegesis is in a sense from a purely horizontal perspective. *Divine Principle* looks at Hebrew history and Biblical literature from a vertical, and oft mystical, perspective as the process of restoration. Because Adam was a mixture of good and evil and sacrifice had to be made for the foundation of restoration to be laid, God separated good and evil in Adam's children, so that one could offer his sacrifice from the position of relative goodness. However, this meant that the other could be claimed by Satan, in the position of evil.

Eve had fallen through two unprincipled acts of love: her relationship with Satan and after, with Adam. Of the two, the first was relatively speaking, more evil; the second, which would have been natural in their maturity, was relatively good. As the firstborn, Cain, who should have belonged to God, symbolized Eve's first act of love, and stood in Satan's position. As the second son, Abel represented relative good, and the position of Adam before the Fall, and God.

Yahweh accepted Abel's offering and rejected Cain's. Why? Some have posited that Cain's offering was meager and that he kept the choicest of the harvest for himself; some suggest that he did not observe the proper ritual; others claim that Yahweh was the God of nomadic shepherds and would be highly offended by the sort of worship offered to an agricultural god of the soil, Baal. *Divine Principle* asserts that God rejected Cain's offering because of his position as a representative of Satan and that Cain had to establish a condition of "indemnity" to be accepted by God. That is, he had to make restitution by reversing the process of the Fall of Satan. Jealous of Adam, Satan had abandoned his proper position in order to dominate man. To reverse this, Cain should have to be in a position to serve Abel and love him as the archangel should have served and loved Adam. He had to show love for Abel in a situation where he could be equally jealous.

Cain also had to humble himself to Abel by waiving his superior position as elder brother and receiving God's favor through Abel. In this act of humility Cain would have made

restitution for Satan's act. Had he been successful, he would have rid himself of his fallen nature with the result that through him all of Adam's family could have been restored. Then God would have accepted Cain's offering. God required that Cain come to Him through a mediator, Abel. However, Cain failed. Just as Satan had killed Adam spiritually, Cain in his jealousy killed Abel physically. Because of this, God's dispensation for Adam's family was frustrated and effectively nullified. The foundation of faith could not be laid in Adam's family and 1600 years elapsed before another family, that of Noah, was chosen.

The Cain-Abel story illustrates how often younger sons were chosen by God and uniquely blessed rather than their elder brothers. For example, God loved Jacob and "hated" (the Hebrew word for "loved less") Esau while they were still in the mother's womb. Similarly, when Joseph brought his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim, for blessing Jacob crossed his hands and laid his right hand upon the head of Ephraim, the younger, and his left hand upon the head of his older brother (Genesis 48:14). This indicated that Jacob gave a greater blessing to the younger son than to the elder. In these instances, the position of the elder son represented that of Cain whereas the position of the younger represented that of Abel.

Unification theology points out that the restoration of the Cain-Abel relationship of sibling jealousy will be a key to sociological reconstruction. Cain who represents all that is unacceptable to God must be subjected with love to Abel who symbolizes all degrees of goodness. Cain-like individuals, families, churches, nations and ideological factions can approach God only through their Abel-like counterparts. However, at the same time, Abel cannot come to God alone; he has the responsibility to bring Cain with him, to win him over, to show him the clearer way. Human history can be seen as countless variations of this struggle.

C. Noah's Family

Reverend E. Basil Redlich, Canon Theologian of Leicester,

provides a typical liberal Anglican interpretation of Noah and the flood.⁶ By unraveling the Biblical text and placing the P and J sources in parallel columns, Redlich finds it easy to show the fundamental discrepancies between the two stories. In J, Noah brings to the ark seven of each clean animal and a pair of the unclean. In P he saves two of every kind. In J the flood lasts $7 + 40 + (3 \times 7) = 68$ days whereas in P it continues for a whole year and ten days. The Anglican canon next points out that whereas J and P both declare that the flood was a universal calamity, we can assume that this is an exaggeration of a particularly disastrous flood in Babylonia. Sir Leonard Woolley, the archeologist, unearthed proof of a flood about 3200 B.C. which covered Sumerian villages over an area of 40,000 square miles with eight feet of clay and rubble. This disaster may have given rise to the Biblical flood story even if it did not destroy the walled cities built on mounds in the Babylonian plain. (The American expedition which claimed to have found half-fossilized timbers of Noah's ark near Mt. Ararat in Armenia dates its discoveries at 1500 B.C. which means what they uncovered has nothing to do with Woolley's flood 1700 years earlier.)⁷

Redlich also connects the Genesis account with a flood tale found on clay tablets in the library of Ashurbanipal. Though there are striking differences, the resemblances are remarkable—Utnapishtim is warned by the god of wisdom that the other gods plan to destroy mankind in a great flood. He built a six-decked ark in seven days in which he, his family, servants and animals managed to live during a seven day storm. When the rain stopped he sent out a dove and then a swallow but both returned for want of a resting place. A raven was released which found carrion to eat so never came back. Utnapishtim left his ark which had become grounded on a mountain, offered a sacrifice, and was blessed by the creator god who placed him and his wife in Paradise.⁸

⁶ E.B. Redlich, *The Early Traditions of Genesis*, Gerald Duckworth, London, 1950, pp. 98-115.

⁷ Graves and Patai, *Ibid*, p. 117.

⁸ A detailed account of the Akkadian legend found in the Gilgamesh Epic can be read in Graves and Patai, *Ibid*, p. 116.

Professor Theodore H. Robinson, a Biblical scholar who taught at the University of Wales, agrees that there is a connection between the Noah story and older Babylonian sources but insists that the differences are more significant than the resemblances. If this is folklore, it is consecrated folklore, he declares.⁹ This would also be the conclusion of R.A.F. MacKenzie. This Jesuit Biblical scholar illustrates the general approach to the Noah story now accepted in Roman Catholic circles.¹⁰ In lectures at the University of Minnesota in 1960, he admitted that we cannot tell if the flood story had some historical foundation in a particular catastrophe in Mesopotamia; but for him this has little interest. The Hebrews transformed a common Near Eastern myth into an impressive portrayal of Yahweh's reaction to sin. The God who sends the flood is a God touched to the heart with sorrow, but cannot let sin go unpunished; God vindicates justice yet preserves those faithful to Him.

Traditional patristic exegesis of the Noah story tries to transcend the purely literal meaning of the Biblical text. Christians have interpreted the ark as a symbol of the Church which Christ provides so that believers may escape the wrath of God directed against the flood of sin. For *Divine Principle*, the ark was the symbol of a new beginning and its three decks symbolized the three stages of creation. Inside the ark, Noah assumed the position of God, his family represented mankind, and the animals represented the rest of creation. Noah was a descendent of Seth, who inherited the position of Abel after his death. By constructing the ark, he made a condition of indemnity for Adam's fall, and laid the foundation of faith for God to recommence restoration. On this basis, Noah was also placed in Abel's and thus, Adam's position. The forty days of the flood is symbolic; forty is derived from the four positions Noah was called upon to restore plus the cycle of ten generations from

⁹ T.H. Robinson, "Genesis," *Abingdon Bible Commentary*, Abingdon Press, N.Y., 1929, pp. 226-227.

¹⁰ R. MacKenzie, *Faith and History in the Old Testament*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1963, pp. 68-71.

Adam to his own. The primary goal of creation was to establish a base of four positions consisting of God, Adam, Eve and their children. What do the ten generations signify? The number ten here represents full union with God or perfection. The number forty refers to the time intervals used to separate man from Satan and restore the four position foundation. Other illustrations are given in scripture: the 400 years from Noah to Abraham, the four centuries of slavery in Egypt, Moses' forty years in the Pharaoh's palace, his four decades in Midian and in the wilderness, the forty day fast at Mt. Sinai, 40 days of spying on Canaan, the four centuries of rule by the judges, the 40 year reigns of Saul, David, and Solomon, Elijah's 40 day fast, Jesus' 40 day temptation, and the 40 generations from Abraham to Jesus.

Alfred Lapple, the German Catholic scholar, in his *Key Problems of Genesis* places himself among those who recognize the fact that the chronology in the Biblical proto-history prior to Abraham is not always to be understood as arithmetic measures. To a great extent, he claims, these quantities are based on the number symbolism of the ancient Near and Middle East. In genealogies, even in the New Testament, the authors did not intend an exact chronology. The numbers are rather a symbolic means used in salvation history to interpret and highlight certain important points.¹¹

The eight members of Noah's family—Noah and his wife, their three sons and their wives—were equivalent to the eight in Adam's basic family—Adam, Eve, the three sons and their wives. Adam's family of eight was lost because of Cain's failure. The eight members of Noah's family signified the start of a new creation (after the first seven days of creation, the eighth started another cycle), free of Satan's control as a result of the faith manifested in the building of the ark. But another episode occurs.

Noah became a farmer and planted a vineyard. One day as

¹¹ A. Lapple, *Key Problems of Genesis*, Deus Book, Paulist Press, Glen Rock, N.J., 1967, pp. 121-125.

a result of drinking too much wine he fell asleep naked in his tent. Ham, his second son, saw the nakedness of Noah and felt shame. Ham told his brothers, Shem and Japeth, who then took a garment, walked backward so as not to face his nakedness, and covered their unconscious father. When Noah awoke and learned what Ham had done, he cursed Ham's son, Canaan, to be a slave to Shem and Japeth (Gen. 9:20-25).

In Gerhard von Rad's commentary on Genesis he finds difficulties in combining this story with the flood account, but concludes that it could not take place prior to the flood because if Canaan were cursed he would not have been allowed on the ark.¹²

T.H. Robinson writes that this passage contrasts the mockery of Ham with the modest piety of Shem and Japeth. He notes that the Semites were peculiarly sensitive to the shame of nakedness and that none but a drunken man would allow himself to be exposed. He feels that the text indicates that Ham insulted his father by laughing at his nakedness.¹³

For *Divine Principle*, though this text may have been confusing to some scholars, it is nevertheless part of the story of divine restoration, a unified theme connecting separate incidents in the Bible. The fact that this Satanic sense of sexual embarrassment and shame appeared in Noah's family was a devastating blow to God's hope that the innocence of Adam and Eve before the Fall could be recaptured and preserved. Ham's behavior thus proved that Satan still could claim a member of Noah's family. Therefore, not being completely separated from Satan, this family could go no further as a vehicle for God's dispensation.

D. Abraham

The call of Abraham has always marked a major turning point in the study of the Old Testament. Jewish and Christian tradition alike have seen this man as the father of the Hebrew

¹² G. von Rad, *Genesis*, Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1961, pp. 131-133.

¹³ T.H. Robinson, *Ibid*, p. 226.

people and a pivotal figure in the development of the Jewish faith. When Rabbi Isidore Epstein wrote his informative 4000 year history of Judaism, he quite naturally began with the migration of Abraham from Ur of the Chaldees to the land of Canaan. The Biblical story prior to Abraham is usually termed proto-history. With Abraham the secular historian sees the clear light of day, and Biblical history can be read with the invaluable aid of the archeologist.

Fundamentalist writers like Professor Leon Wood¹⁴ of Grand Rapids' Baptist Bible Seminary lay particular emphasis upon recent archeological research. They claim it supports their concern for the historical accuracy of the patriarchal narratives. He notes that equivalents of the Biblical names Jacob, Abraham, Benjamin and Terah appear in texts from the first half of the second millenium B.C. and that archeological excavations in Palestine tend to confirm social conditions reflected in the patriarchal stories. Further, Abraham's journey of more than a thousand miles from Ur to southern Canaan is now known to have been not at all uncommon in his age, as is shown in Hittite, Assyrian and Akkadian records.

For Wood, God's call of Abraham represents a significant change in the divine program. God had previously dealt with all men in a general way. Abraham marked the end of this worldwide approach. God decided to choose one man from whom He could rear a special nation. Beginning with Abraham, redemption was focused upon Israel and her alone.¹⁵

Epstein explains that Abram and his family were probably refugees from the destruction of the capital of the Sumerian Empire at Ur when that prosperous city was taken and sacked by Elamite invaders in 1960 B.C. Terah and Abram wanted to re-

¹⁴ L. Wood, *A Survey of Israel's History*, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, 1970, pp. 27-46.

¹⁵ L. Wood, *Ibid*, p. 30. Relying on the Biblical chronology, Wood dates the birth of Abraham at 2166 B.C. As he admits, scholars are by no means agreed on this point and date Abraham from the latter half of the fifteenth century to somewhere in the twentieth century B.C.

move themselves from a center of great political unrest and believed the secluded hill country of Canaan would provide an ideal refuge. Terah was a polytheist probably worshipping the moon god Sin among others; Sin was the chief deity at both Ur and Haran. In Epstein's view Abram was an ethical monotheist who realized God had saved him to found a new nation, which was to bring knowledge of God to the world. Canaan offered not only hill country where Abram could serve God in comparative peace, but also, as the crossroads of important trade routes, provided him with a unique center for spreading his faith.

Epstein explains that Yahweh made a covenant with Abram by which the elect people were "chosen for the sake not of domination, but of universal service".¹⁶ In fact, the visible mark of this covenant, the circumcision of all male Hebrews, had a two-fold significance: one, it was a national rite as a mark of special consecration of all Hebrews to the service of God; two, it was universal because foreigners willing to join the Abrahamic nation were included in this communion of service. To emphasize this, the patriarch's name was changed to Abraham, "father of a multitude (of nations)".

There are three points that the Jewish scholar makes which have been debated: 1) that Abram was a monotheist, 2) that his religion was ethically quite different from that of his contemporaries, and 3) that he was very much interested in converting others. Though Epstein's argument is appealing some Biblical scholars think that a nationalistic interpretation of the chosen people was the original one, and that the universalist view was a later addition accepted—if at all—only after a bitter struggle in the age of the prophets. Historians deny too that the rite of circumcision set Hebrews apart from their neighbors because the Egyptians, Moabites, Edomites, Ammonites and Arabians likewise practiced the custom.

Many Old Testament critics have claimed that the basic covenant of Yahweh with Israel originated with Moses. Begin-

¹⁶ I. Epstein, *Judaism*, Penguin Book, Baltimore, 1959, p. 14.

ning with J the tendency was to push this Mosaic covenant back into earlier Hebrew history—the days of Abraham or even the time of Noah. Was there no covenant prior to Moses? Professor Ronald Clements of New College, Edinburgh was one to study this complicated problem. He concludes that when Abraham migrated into Canaan he naturally worshipped the Canaanite El-gods established at the sanctuaries of the land. In order to obtain the title deed to land around Hebron, he agreed to remain loyal to the god at the shrine of Mamre and promised to give the deity a tithe. This god may have been called El-Shaddai meaning god of the mountain or god of the field. Abraham's descendents treasured the thought that their title to the land around Hebron was divinely-given and centuries later the Yahwist historian J incorporated the story into his account of Hebrew beginnings. Clements' typical attempt to get behind the written sources yields the idea that Abraham was not a monotheist.¹⁷

Historical considerations aside, Jewish commentators insist that their special election is for service rather than domination. A commonly repeated Rabbinic tradition is that Yahweh offered His covenant to every nation to no avail before He forced it upon Israel which was too weak to refuse. Professor Abraham Heschel, speaking to a Quaker conference in 1938 at Frankfort-am-Main, explained:

There is a divine dream which the prophets and rabbis have cherished which fills our prayers, and permeates the acts of true piety. It is the dream of a world, rid of evil by the grace of God as well as by the efforts of man, by his dedication to the task of establishing the kingship of God in the world. God is waiting for us to redeem the world. . . . The martyrdom of millions demands that we consecrate ourselves to the fulfillment of God's dream of salvation. Israel did

¹⁷ R. Clements, *Abraham and David*, Studies in Biblical Theology, second series, Allenson, Naperville, Illinois, 1967, 96 pages.

not accept the Torah of their own free will. When Israel approached Sinai, God lifted up the mountain and held it over their heads, saying: 'Either you accept the Torah or be crushed beneath the mountain.'¹⁸

For Unification theology the appearance of Abraham signalled the time that all the conditions were met for God to continue his program of restoration. Four centuries (ten generations) after Noah, God chose Abraham to lay a foundation of faith. Through Abraham, God sought to restore the positions of Adam, Noah and Ham. Abraham left his homeland, representing the Satanic world, and went to Canaan. Since there was a famine in Canaan, Abraham continued on to Egypt. Before entering the land of Pharaoh, however, the patriarch told his beautiful wife to pretend to be his sister, whereupon Pharaoh later took Sarah into his harem. But before the Hebrew could become one of the Egyptian's wives, God inflicted upon the Pharaoh's household a terrible plague. Realizing the cause of the affliction, the ruler returned Sarah and ordered the pair out of the country.

Christians are often troubled by the action of Abraham in this incident. Consequently, various explanations have been offered. One is that the Hebrew patriarch of 2000 B.C. should not be judged by modern standards: in the ancient Near East, a wife was considered the property of her husband to be used in any way which was to his advantage. Another is that the story was treasured to show that Hebrew women were far more beautiful than those of any other nation. A third hypothesis is that the narrative illustrates how shrewd Abraham was in being able to outwit the powerful and proverbially wise Egyptians.

Since the Pentateuch contains three different stories on this same theme, one involving Abimelech rather than Pharaoh, another about Isaac rather than Abraham, scholars often con-

¹⁸ A. Heschel, *Man's Quest for God*, Scribners, N.Y., 1954, p. 151.

clude that Genesis preserves three separate traditions about a single event.¹⁹

Like the incident with Ham in Noah's family, *Divine Principle* sees this situation in light of God's attempt to reverse conditions of the Fall. While Adam and Eve were still as brother and sister, Eve was taken. Abraham and Sarah had to face a situation having the same potential as that which Adam and Eve had encountered with the archangel. Sarah had been sought by the Pharaoh, but remained untouched and returned to Abraham safely. By taking back Sarah, as well as Lot and all their goods, Abraham symbolically restored the wife, children and dominion that Satan had taken from Adam, and emerged from Egypt victoriously, having restored the position of the first family.

E. Abraham's Covenant with Yahweh

Genesis chapter 15 dealing with Abraham's covenant with Yahweh poses almost insurmountable obstacles for the literary source critic and historian.

The actual covenanting rite has parallels among other ancient peoples but some of the meaning here is obscure. Von Rad explains that when the slaughtered animals are halved and laid opposite each other, the partners to the covenant stride through the path that has been created. By doing so they solemnly lay a curse upon themselves if the pact is ever broken.

A covenant establishes a legal relationship between two parties. In the older conception the more powerful partner grants a pact of alliance to the weaker. By means of a covenant, a great king, say of Assyria or the Hittites, promises support to a tribal chieftain or petty prince who becomes his vassal. According to von Rad, Yahweh Himself enters into such a legal contract with Abraham. In the most literal sense, Abraham promises to be the ever-faithful ally to his divine Lord.

Von Rad thinks that the birds of prey descending on the bloody carcasses could be an evil omen. Are they demonic

¹⁹ Abraham and Sarah in Gerar (Gen. 20:1-18), Isaac and Abimelech (Gen. 26:1-11).

powers who try to thwart the final ratification of the covenant? he asks. The vultures or ravens may point to obstacles which stand in the way of the success of the mutual oath-taking. In any case, with nightfall Abraham falls into a deep trance-like sleep to prepare him for a mystical revelation of Yahweh's presence.²⁰

Professor Cuthbert Simpson notes that in the Biblical text no conditions are attached to the covenant. He believes that before a preface was added to the original narrative it mentioned as conditions Abraham's faith in leaving his Babylonian homeland and the magnanimity with which he had treated Lot. He also thinks that the covenant idea came from the Canaanite cult of Baal-berith (lord of the covenant) which means that it did not go back as far as Abraham.²¹

T.H. Robinson suggests that missing from our text is the fact that Abraham too walked between the slaughtered animals in order to fulfill his part of the covenanting ritual.²² He explains that in the life taken from the slain creatures, the patriarch and Yahweh found a unifying force which bound them one to another. God and man were no longer separate entities but became sacramentally united. Against Robinson's view one might insist, as some commentators do, that the point of this Biblical narrative is that God acts unilaterally. His covenant is made with man unconditionally and on the divine initiative alone. Abraham is a mere spectator in an action which is exclusively God's.

Professor Nahum M. Sarna of Brandeis University agrees that this Genesis story utilizes the outward forms of an ancient ritual, the precise meaning of which eludes us in regard to details.²³

²⁰ G. von Rad, *Genesis*, Westminster, Philadelphia, 1961, pp. 176-185, 194.

²¹ *Interpreter's Bible*, Abingdon, N.Y., 1952, I, p. 603. C.A. Simpson assigns this chapter to J with a secondary elaboration (vs. 8-18), an editorial gloss (vs. 19-21) and a later prefix (vs. 1-6).

²² T.H. Robinson, *Ibid*, p. 230.

²³ N.M. Sarna, *Understanding Genesis*, McGraw-Hill, N.Y., 1966, p. 126.

The covenant-making incident has strong mystical overtones, so it is not surprising for *Divine Principle* to suggest a hidden meaning behind the literal text. According to this interpretation the ritual Abraham was to conduct could have provided the foundation of faith for the restoration of mankind. The animals slain symbolized the three stages of restoration: the turtledove and pigeon represented the formation stage; the she-goat and ram, the growth stage; and the heifer, the perfection stage. But Abraham failed to complete his offering by cutting the turtledove and young pigeon in two as he had done with the heifer, kid and lamb. Though other commentators neglect to mention this significant detail it means that the patriarch failed to carry out the proper liturgical procedure in regard to the solemnization of the covenant. Looking at the matter theologically, *Divine Principle* points out how Satan thus came to establish a base for nullifying the intended covenant. Abraham should have cut each of the animals in two, one half representing Cain's position and the other half, Abel's. In order to carry out the dispensation of restoration, a complete separation between good and evil had to be made. Abraham's carelessness in this regard meant that he and Yahweh were not truly united. As a later Hebrew editor of the tradition realized, the lack of a complete covenant between God and the patriarch would lead to the most dire consequences, namely four centuries of slavery in Egypt. Representing the formation stage, the doves were the foundation of the entire covenanting rite. The ominous appearance of the "unclean" birds of prey clearly suggests that something had gone wrong with the covenanting ceremony.

F. Isaac

Abraham's failure to lay the foundation of faith was the third such unsuccessful effort to restore mankind. The dispensation had twice been unfulfilled: first through Adam's family and then through Noah's. Three is the number of completion. Because Abraham was the third to be chosen by God, it was imperative that he succeed.

God gave him a second chance. His new opportunity would naturally be more difficult than the first, to make restitution for his earlier failure. The way open to him involved Isaac. God commanded Abraham to sacrifice his only son. Isaac was particularly precious to his father because he was his only heir and an almost miraculous product of his old age. Isaac too was the only guarantee Abraham possessed that his descendents would be as numerous as the stars. By accepting this mandate, the patriarch would demonstrate his devotion to be incontrovertible.

Some commentators interpret this story (derived from the Elohistic chronicler, E) solely in the context of the history of religious development in the Near East. At the time the narrative was written, to say nothing of the much earlier age of Abraham, human sacrifice was a normal part of religion. Prisoners of war, slaves and children were regularly offered up as signs of devotion to the gods. Some of the ancient deities like Moloch, the Carthaginian god of war, were particularly thirsty for human blood. For the chronicler, the point of the story was not that Abraham would sacrifice his son—that sort of devotion was taken for granted. Rather the Hebrew historian was emphasizing that the God of Israel would accept an animal sacrifice in place of a human one, thus representing a great forward step in man's understanding of religion. Protesting against the cultic practices of the surrounding peoples who accepted human sacrifice without question, it prepares in a very important way for the prophetic insistence that God prefers a humble and contrite heart above any sacrifices, human or animal.

For other commentators, Abraham's unquestioning obedience to God's command should be given the chief emphasis. Actually, the story contains no explicit condemnation of human sacrifice. It rather assumes that such practices were known and sanctioned in patriarchal times among the Hebrews as well as other peoples. Abraham did not argue with God. He received a divine command and he proceeded to carry it out. The patriarch was that kind of believer. He had pulled up his roots and left Mesopotamia because God asked him to do so. Similarly, he did

not hesitate to kill and burn his only son as an offering if that was what God wanted. All ordinary ties and sentiments were freely cast aside in a life of utter commitment to the divine will.

Soren Kierkegaard uses Abraham as a typical knight of faith in his book *Fear and Trembling*. He speaks of the sacrifice of Isaac as an example of "the teleological suspension of the ethical" which is a primary characteristic of faith in its purest form. Kierkegaard also dwells upon the human feelings of the patriarch when he is called upon to offer up his child, which is actually looking at the story from a modern and somewhat romantic perspective. The Biblical account, however, is bare of such psychologizing. There is no suggestion of doubt, anguish or despair on the part of the patriarch. God commands; Abraham obeys.

Professor Sarna, looking at the trial of Abraham from a Jewish perspective, sees three important lessons which this anecdote was supposed to teach. First of all, faith is not merely intellectual assent to certain ideas about God but an active expression of the believer's trust in Him. Belief means concrete proof of one's steadfast loyalty to Yahweh. Secondly, Abraham's inner motivation was as important as his visible action. Yahweh valued the readiness of the patriarch to perform the sacrifice as much as if the deed had been carried out. Thirdly, this event shows how far Abraham had progressed in his spiritual odyssey. When he left Mesopotamia at God's command he did so in part at least because he had been promised a reward: a numerous progeny from whom would be born a great nation. This time he obeyed God even though it seemed to mean the complete nullification of the covenant and the tragic end of his hope for descendants. Abraham now exemplified disinterested loyalty to God.²⁴

For *Divine Principle*, Abraham, by his whole-hearted obedience, succeeded in partially reestablishing the foundation of faith in accordance with the divine command; and as a result

²⁴ N.M. Sarna, *Ibid*, pp. 162-163.

of his cooperation, Isaac became one with his father and succeeded him as an instrument of God's will. The Abraham-Isaac story then transcends its importance as a protest against human sacrifice or as an example of zeal, and marks a major accomplishment of God's overall efforts to carry out the original intent of creation.

G. Jacob and Esau

Yahweh is referred to as the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Yet when one reads the Jacob stories in Genesis he is quite apt to be shocked by that patriarch's cunning. He tricks his brother, deceives his father and takes advantage of his uncle. For Jewish scholars like Sarna this side of Jacob's character is a cause for concern. How can one justify Jacob's heartless exploitation of the suffering of his own brother and the crafty deception practiced upon his blind old father? Sarna argues that Jacob has a claim on the birthright solely because of the predestined act of God and not at all because of any moral worth on his part. Furthermore, the Bible itself implicitly judges Jacob's behavior and shows how his later life was an unrelieved series of trials and tribulations. An explicit denunciation, the scholar reminds us, could hardly have been more scathing. (Some readers, however, may doubt whether Genesis really contains the implicit moral judgment which Sarna sees; there is, they say, no apparent Biblical connection between Jacob's early opportunism and his later troubles.)

T.H. Robinson is one of many scholars who sees more in the Jacob-Esau stories than biographies of two individuals.²⁵ For him the exchange of the birthright and the theft of the blessing were created to explain the hostility between the nations of Israel and Edom and the fact that for much of the monarchic period the latter was subject to the former. The stories contrast the wild, hairy Esau who lives by his prowess as a hunter with the nomad shepherd Jacob who quietly and patiently cares for

²⁵ T.H. Robinson, *Ibid*, pp. 236-237.

his flocks. Such utterly different types must have fought each other in their mother's womb, we are told.

For Unification theology, the hostility between Jacob and Esau is comparable to the sibling rivalry between Abel and Cain. If Abraham had not acted maladroitly in the covenanting rites, Ishmael, his first son, and Isaac would have been in the positions of Cain and Abel. By subjugating himself to Isaac, Ishmael could have made a condition of indemnity and the two brothers could have overcome their fallen human nature. Since this was not accomplished, God gave Isaac twins to carry out the roles of Cain and Abel. Esau (wild like Ishmael), the first son, was in Cain's position and Jacob (a shepherd like the first Abel) served as a new Abel.

Because Satan asserted his dominion over man, he stole man's birthright to be lord of all creation. God used Esau and Jacob to reverse this situation. The Jacob stories hence illustrate a major victory for God and man against Satan. Rebekah's part too is of great dispensational significance. Without her Jacob could never have received from his father the blessing which would ordinarily have been bestowed upon Esau. The fall of Adam's family began with Eve and was completed by Cain. Evil came into the world by way of a mother and son. By an act of restitution, the cooperation of another mother and son, the effects of evil in Adam's family were blocked and the downward direction of human life was reversed.²⁶

According to our earliest source, as a result of Esau's wrath Jacob had to flee to Haran. A later source is said to try to cover up the reason for his hasty departure, claiming that Jacob left to find a wife from the family of his kinsman Laban. It has been suggested that this was also designed to illustrate opposition among the exclusivist faction of Yahwists to intermarriage with the Canaanites.

²⁶ Significantly this pattern of cooperation of mother and son is also demonstrated in the families of the other major figures of Moses and Jesus; in each case, like Jacob, the mother saved the son from a certain ill fate.

Something very mysterious occurred to Jacob at the River Jabbok twenty years later when he was returning home; the result of which was the changing of his name to Israel. According to one possible reading of the account he wrestled all night with Yahweh Himself, succeeded in overpowering Him and only let Him go back to heaven after literally forcing Him to bestow a blessing. Another reading of the account finds Jacob struggling and overcoming an angel rather than Yahweh Himself, though some claim that this was an alteration by later Hebrew theologians who thought the idea of a man wrestling with God was highly offensive. Or was the patriarch grabbed by a demon with whom he had to wrestle throughout the night? Perhaps worried over what might take place when he encountered Esau, Jacob had a nightmare in which he struggled against his bad conscience. There is no consensus among the Old Testament scholars as to what took place at Jabbok.

According to *Divine Principle*, Jacob wrestled with an angel and prevailed over him. Thus he made indemnity for the restoration of man's dominion over the angels which had been lost at the time of the Fall. By winning a new name Israel, "he who strives with God", Jacob laid the foundation on which to form the chosen nation. Simpson points out that what occurred at the River Jabbok transformed the whole character of the patriarch. The "crafty rogue" becomes "the patient old man."²⁷

Rebekah had assured Jacob that after a time Esau's fury would subside. She was right; when the two brothers finally did meet, they reunited in overwhelming love.

Unification theology explains that representing the positions of Cain and Abel, Esau and Jacob paid restitution by acting exactly opposite to the way their predecessors had done. By forgiving his brother, Esau obtained God's favor and his life in Canaan was blessed with prosperity. By slaying Abel Cain had taken his brother's birthright. Esau, Cain's representative, lost his birthright to Jacob, Abel's representative. With the restora-

²⁷ C.A. Simpson, *Interpreter's Bible*, I, p. 726.

tion of the heavenly birthright, Jacob was at last able to bring God's blessing to himself and to Esau as well. What looked like indefensible behavior on Jacob's part from a purely horizontal perspective turned out to represent something quite different from the vertical perspective.

Divine Principle notes that twelve generations passed from the time of Noah before the foundation of faith could be established by Jacob. Significantly, for the restoration of the twelve generations God gave twelve sons to Jacob. God's dispensation with Abraham was fulfilled in three generations of his family. Because of this the Israelites prayed to the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Since God's will had at last been accomplished through Abraham's grandson, the Hebrews called themselves the house of Jacob. In Jacob the positions of Adam and Abel, Noah and Ham, Abraham and Isaac were now all restored. Therefore, the blessing originally given to Adam was extended to Jacob.

Jacob had succeeded in laying the foundation on the family level. The next step was for God's work to embrace a tribe. Jacob's posterity, the people of Israel, were chosen for this mission.

Joseph was the first son born of Jacob's marriage with Rachel, his favorite wife. He naturally represented Abel and his ten older half-brothers, the sons of Leah, were collectively in Cain's position. Since the epic of Joseph is well-known there is no need to retell it here. The very charm of the Joseph biography as literature has often made it suspect in the eyes of the critical historian.²⁸ How much is fact or based on fact and how much is ancient legend? From what we now know of Egyptian history certain conclusions seem tenable. That a fairly sizeable

²⁸ Von Rad suggests that our written version of the Joseph epic may be related to the Hebrew Wisdom literature of the united monarchy. Its original purpose then was to illustrate model behavior for a well-bred young courtier who wished to advance his position in the royal household. Because it was so popular as a manual of proper etiquette, von Rad asserts that a later compiler found it useful to conclude his collection of tales about the lives of the patriarchs.

number of Hebrews moved from Canaan into Egypt seems certain. That a talented individual like Joseph could rise to a position in the Egyptian court second only to the Pharaoh is not at all unlikely during the Hyksos period, especially since that group of invaders would consider the Hebrews as their kinsmen. And that the expulsion of the Hyksos usurpers might well have led to reducing resident Hebrews to the position of slaves is a reasonable assumption.²⁹ The Joseph story seems then to be built upon a solid substratum of historical fact.

As has been stated, for Unification theology God's will is predestined. So, to a certain extent, is the course of a central figure in His restoration history. Therefore, though the pattern for Jacob, Moses and Jesus is predestined, the course for each is built on the successive achievements of the past and the stages of history that intervene. With each course of the central figure (in the Abel position) a refinement as well as a broader level of enactment is unfolded. These differences, as well as further distinctions due to the unpredestined character of the figure and the unforeseen response of the people, exist, but striking parallels also can be seen—though oft hidden—in the Biblical account.

For example, on the level of the restoration of relationships there are the restored Cain-Abel relationship of Esau and Jacob (on the individual level), Aaron and Moses (on the national level), and the bond that should have been established between John and Jesus (on the international level). John should have supported Jesus as Aaron had supported Moses, according to *Divine Principle*. Also, the relationship of the cooperation between the mother and son, most dramatically similar in the fact of each mother's prominent part in saving her son from death (Jacob from Esau, Moses from the Pharaoh, Jesus from Herod), also provides an interesting parallel. Further, we see each cen-

²⁹ B. W. Anderson of Princeton Seminary connects the entry of the Hebrew tribes into Egypt with the Hyksos invasion and the later oppression to the Egyptian revival during the XVIII and XIX dynasties. *Understanding the Old Testament*, Prentice-Hall, N.J., 1966, pp. 30-32. Siegfried Herrmann, *Israel in Egypt*, Allenson, Naperville, 1973, pp. 7-18, disagrees.

tral figure having to overcome a tremendous spiritual assault in order to make a condition for the spiritual dominion lost to Satan. Jacob encountered an angel, Moses was assaulted by God, and Jesus was attacked by Satan in the desert.

The Bible also records the seven days of creation were lost to Satan when he became the "god of this world"; thus Jacob had to set up a condition of indemnity to separate Satan based on the number seven. Jacob had 70 family members (Gen. 46:27); Moses, 70 elders (Ex. 24:1); Jesus, 70 disciples (Luke 10:1). In this each group played the central role in each respective course. The significance was similar in the twelve disciples of Jesus and twelve tribes under Moses, coming from the twelve sons of Jacob.

According to *Divine Principle*, the new phase of the course of restoration was guided by Joseph. His half-brothers in the position of Cain, became jealous and threatened to kill him, as Cain had Abel, and as Esau had desired to do to Jacob, but like Jacob, he sought refuge in a foreign land, and his half-brothers were later reconciled to him. From this point seventy people of the house of Jacob, including his twelve sons, started the course of indemnity on a tribal level.

HISTORY OF RESTORATION: MOSES TO MALACHI

A. Moses

For more than a century Biblical scholars have labored to get behind the late Hebrew texts to discover the historical Moses, an effort at least as difficult as the quest for the historical Jesus. The results have been somewhat inconclusive. The Old Testament narratives about the great Jewish law-giver are a compilation of many different sources which were subject to revision and expansion until the time of the Babylonian exile. Within the Pentateuch our oldest source was written in the age of the united monarchy. If the Exodus took place during the reign of Pharaoh Raamses II, several centuries of oral tradition preceded the appearance of the Yahwist history (J). The actual events thus were subject to interpretation and reinterpretation as

one can easily see by comparing J, E, D and P. If J did with the oral traditions what E, D and P did to his record, the task of recovering the historical Moses is indeed formidable.³⁰

The Christian interpretation of Moses has generally followed a method of exegesis practiced since the time of St. Paul. He found in the Torah clear signs of the later ministry of Jesus. For example, the rock in the Sinai desert which gave water to the thirsty Israelites really pointed to the saving work of Christ (I Cor. 10:1-4). Looking beyond the literal meaning of the Old Testament text Paul discovered a spiritual message unknown to rabbinic Judaism. Tradition thus gave scripture an esoteric meaning and mystical significance. Behind the history of the Jews the eyes of faith revealed various "types" of Christ. The Old Testament was thereupon read in the light of the New.³¹

The typological interpretation of scripture was brought to perfection in the Church of Alexandria. Philo, the learned Alexandrine Jew, had earlier employed allegorical exegesis to explain the Mosaic Law to well-educated Greeks. Origen and his successors used a similar method to show the deeper meaning of the Christian scriptures. Naturally, a reaction to the Alexandrine school appeared, particularly among the leaders at the equally famous Church of Antioch in Syria. In fact, the whole history of Christian exegesis could be explained in terms of the conflict between the literal and historical method of the Antiochans and the typological or mystical interpretation of the

³⁰ Ample resources exist for the student to examine the difficulties in the historian's search for the real Moses. The standard modern commentary on Exodus by Martin Noth of Bonn shows how the various sources can be disentangled. Martin Buber's *Moses* and the Exodus commentary by Umberto Cassuto of Hebrew University present two capable Jewish studies. Albrecht Alt of Leipzig prepared a famous monograph relating the faith of Moses to the older patriarchal religion of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, "The God of the Fathers," *Essays on Old Testament History and Religion*, Doubleday, Garden City, N.Y., 1967, pp. 1-86.

³¹ An excellent example of this sort of exegesis is found in the *Epistle of Barnabas*. For text see E.J. Goodspeed, *Apostolic Fathers*, 1950; for interpretation and historical background, see J. Quasten, *Patrology*, Spectrum, Utrecht, 1966, v. I, pp. 85-92.

Alexandrines. Like the Antiochans, the modern historical critics of the Bible insist on sticking to the literal meaning. Unification theology represents a contemporary fusion of the Alexandrine mystical approach and that of the Antiochans.³²

A single sample of allegorical exegesis from the Middle Ages is illustrative. According to medieval theology, Isaac is a figure for Jesus Christ and Abraham represents God the Father. The three days journey Abraham and Isaac took to the mount of sacrifice signifies the three ages of the Jewish people: from the patriarchs to Moses, from Moses to John the Baptist, from John to Jesus. The two servants are the two portions of the Hebrew nation—Israel and Judah. The ass is the unenlightened synagogue. The wood carried by Isaac is the cross.³³

According to *Divine Principle*, during the four centuries after Jacob's family migrated to Egypt, his twelve sons became twelve tribes and the seventy people of the house of Jacob multiplied to more than 600,000. The Israelite sojourn, however, had to be prolonged an additional thirty years because a foundation for the Exodus had not been laid.

Because of Joseph's post of grand vizier the Hebrews had originally been welcomed into the grazing lands of Goshen east of the Nile. But after they had prospered and greatly multiplied, a new Pharaoh began to fear the Hebrews, probably because he considered them an unsafe ally in case of invasion from the Near East. As a result the wandering shepherds were rounded up for slave labor. Then in a desperate effort to curb the alien popu-

³² For the regular use of the typological method of exegesis in the early Church one should consult Cardinal Danielou, *Gospel Message and Hellenistic Culture*, Westminster, Philadelphia, 1973. He illustrates and defends the typological exegesis of Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Hippolytus, Origen and Methodius (pp. 197-302). This Alexandrine technique has returned to Protestantism because of the theology of Karl Barth. A Protestant defense of typology has been made by Professor Wilhelm Vischer, *The Witness of the Old Testament to Christ* (Eng. trans., 1949). G.W.H. Lampe of Birmingham and K.J. Woollcombe of Oxford in *Essays on Typology*, Allenson, Naperville, 1957, point out both the value and weaknesses of this sort of interpretation.

³³ Andre Parrot, "Abraham Iconography," *Abraham and His Times*, Fortress Press, Philadelphia, 1968, p. 144.

lation on the frontier of the Empire, Pharoah ordered that all newborn male Hebrews be killed.³⁴

Although Moses lived amid the splendor of Pharoah's palace he never forgot his Hebrew origins. According to Exodus, he remained deeply attached to the cause of his people, though as a privileged member of the Egyptian aristocracy Moses had every reason to take advantage of his high position and ignore the plight of his despised countrymen.

As Professor Umberto Cassuto of Hebrew Univerity wrote:

Moses showed the qualities of his spirit, the spirit of a man who pursues justice and is quick to save the oppressed from the hand of the oppressor, the spirit of love of freedom and of courage to rise up against tyrants. A man possessed of these attributes was worthy to become God's messenger to deliver Israel from the bondage of Egypt.³⁵

Having unmistakable proof of Moses' great love for the Hebrews and his opposition to their oppressors, the Israelites should have rallied around him and accepted his leadership. His forty years in the royal palace could then have been the foundation for their deliverance. Moses could have led the Hebrews out of Egypt and into the promised land of Canaan within the course of a 21-day march. The Israelites made no move to unite behind Moses and so to escape the wrath of Pharoah he fled to Midian. God's first plan for the Exodus was not carried out and

³⁴ Epstein believes that Joseph became viceroy of Egypt when the Hyksos ruled the country (c. 1730-1580 B.C.). Pharoah Thothmes III (1485-1450 B.C.) oppressed the Hebrews in order to complete his vast building program but this became more ruthless under his son Amenophis II. Moses may have been the adopted son of Hatshepsut, the sister of Thothmes III. Epstein dates the Exodus at 1447 B.C. (*Judaism*, pp. 15-17). J. Coert Rylaarsdam of the University of Chicago thinks Seti I was the oppressor (1319-1301 B.C.) and Raamses II (1301-1234 B.C.) the Pharoah of the Exodus. (*Interpreter's Bible*, I, p. 836).

³⁵ U. Cassuto, *A Commentary on the Book of Exodus*, Magnes Press, Jerusalem, 1967, p. 22.

Moses had to prepare another foundation which took forty years.

In the Exodus account, Moses is credited with unusual powers, which were put to the test. Egypt, considered by both Greeks and Romans the storehouse for the highest esoteric wisdom, provided the background for the strange contest. Like the Alexandrine exegetes, *Divine Principle* attributes mystical significance to the nature of the three signs which God gave to Moses, foreshadowing the word (rod) of the Messiah, the recovery of God's children to His bosom, and the revitalization of the lifeless fallen world.

Since Moses was not a persuasive speaker, he asked God for someone to serve as his spokesman. Yahweh recommended that Aaron, his older brother, accompany him to the palace of Pharaoh. Exodus puts it, "He shall speak for you to the people; and he shall be a mouth for you, and you shall be to him as God" (4:16). Historical critics feel that this was inserted into the original story in order to legitimize the functions of the Jewish priesthood in the later temple of Solomon. In temple Judaism the priests considered themselves the successors of Aaron and the recognized interpreters of the Mosaic Torah.

Even if this incident did serve such an historical purpose, according to *Divine Principle* a deeper significance is inherent in it. Exodus reports that Aaron's sister, the prophetess Miriam comes to play a part also. Adam and Eve as brother and sister would have formed an original trinity with God; with Moses in the position of God, Aaron and Miriam formed a trinity through which God could manifest His power. In some such way, of course, this was later carried out through God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit. With this base, Moses was equipped to battle Satan.

In mystical theology, Canaan has always represented the heavenly world. Canaan was the land which God had blessed and by comparison with the desert of Sinai and Transjordan it looked to the Hebrew nomads like a land flowing with milk and honey. Jacob returned triumphant to Canaan after his struggle in

Haran; by this victory Jacob fulfilled the dispensation of personal restoration. Moses was to lead his people from Egypt into Canaan, his mission being on the tribal level. Consequently, his work followed the pattern set by Jacob. The ten times Pharaoh deceived Moses corresponded to the ten times Laban deceived Jacob.

The miracle of the sea dividing for Moses and contracting on the hapless Egyptians in pursuit has been variously interpreted in order to make the event a little more reasonable. Cassuto thinks that whatever happened took place not at the Red Sea but at a sea of reeds, a marshy area at one of the Bitter Lakes north of Suez.³⁶ Buber mentions the Sirbonian Lake of the Gulf of Akaba.³⁷ Rylaarsdam doubts that Lake Sirbonis on the coastal highway is the correct location and prefers the marshy area north or south of Lake Timsah.³⁸

What took place is again a matter of conjecture. Rylaarsdam gives a typical liberal Protestant explanation. He contends that the actual event was lifted out of its setting in the context of natural process by means of communal embellishment until the account took on a supernatural dress.³⁹ The factual basis, he says, is that God used an east wind to drive back the water enabling the Israelites to cross over safely. Buber speaks of unusual winds causing tremendous tides and the possible effect of distant volcanic phenomena on the movements of the sea.

From early Christian times the miracle of the Red Sea has been given a mystical interpretation considered far more important than what took place at the level of history. In his study of the typological meaning of the crossing of the Red Sea, Cardinal Danielou pointed out that even in Jewish thought this event became a symbol of the future victory of Yahweh over the powers of evil. Christians applied the Old Testament story to explain the

³⁶ Cassuto, *Ibid*, p. 159.

³⁷ Buber, *Ibid*, p. 75.

³⁸ Rylaarsdam, *Ibid*, p. 930.

³⁹ *Ibid*, p. 936.

spiritual significance of baptism. *Divine Principle* with Tertulian interprets the event as deliverance from the world and leaving behind the devil who tyrannizes man.⁴⁰

After the Israelites overcame the Egyptians, God provided them with quail, manna, and pure drinking water which sprang forth from a rock. Noth explains that great flocks of quail still appear along the Mediterranean coast of the Sinai peninsula on their spring and autumn migrations. As for manna, it is a drop-like formation on the leaves of the tamarisk shrub produced by the sting of a tree louse. Because of its sweet taste manna is still a favorite food of the Arabs who gather it in the early morning because it dissolves in the heat of the day. Noth believes the story about water gushing forth from the rock originated to explain a rock spring familiar to the desert nomads.⁴¹

According to Exodus, the Israelites were also able to drive off an attack by marauding Amalekites.⁴² Then, led through the desert by means of a pillar of cloud by day and pillar of fire at night, the Hebrews reached Mount Sinai. This spot is so important in the development of Hebrew faith that many Christians will be surprised to learn that the experts cannot agree on its location. Since late in the fourth century A.D. the mountain of God has been identified with Jebel Musa, a peak 8,000 feet high near the apex of the Sinai peninsula. Other possibilities are a volcano in Midian to the east of the Gulf of Akaba or at Kadesh-Barnea in the wilderness of Paran southwest of Edom.⁴³ Cassuto feels that it is fitting that we cannot associate the great

⁴⁰ J. Danielou, *The Bible and the Liturgy*, Notre Dame Press, Indiana, 1956, pp. 86-98.

⁴¹ M. Noth, *Exodus*, Westminster, Philadelphia, 1962, pp. 132, 140.

⁴² Up until modern times desert nomads have raided and plundered whenever the opportunity presented itself. For detailed analysis of this particular raid, see Cassuto, pp. 204-207 or Noth, pp. 141-144.

⁴³ See Rylaarsdam, *Ibid*, pp. 836-837 for explanations given in favor of each of these sites. Noth, *Ibid*, pp. 158-160 treats the evidence for the thesis that Sinai was an active volcano. Rylaarsdam prefers the Kadesh-Barnea site. Leon Wood defends the traditional location at Jebel Musa, *A Survey of Israel's History*, pp. 137-138.

theophany of Moses with a specific time or link it with a definite place; this event should remain shrouded in the mists of sanctity.

Scholars have often tried to explain that the God of Israel was originally a storm god or volcano god who was believed to reside on the top of Mount Sinai. Such gods were common enough in the ancient Near East. The Babylonians built their temples on top of artificial mountains called ziggurats and the Canaanites believed that thunder was the voice of Baal. Professor William F. Albright of John Hopkins University, however, has protested the easy identification of Yahweh with a primitive storm god or mountain deity. The God of Moses dwells in heaven from which He may come down to Sinai or any spot he chooses. Quite possibly, the archeologist admits, the picture of the theophany in Exodus was influenced by folk memories of terrific thunderstorms in the Syrian mountains or volcanic eruptions in Arabia but there is nothing in the Mosaic tradition which demands the derivation of Yahweh from an early volcanic deity or storm god.⁴⁴

According to the Exodus narrative, the cloud covered Sinai for six days and on the seventh God spoke to Moses. He remained on the holy mountain for forty days and forty nights. As *Divine Principle* explains, in order to receive God's word of a new dispensation, the Hebrew leader had to establish a forty day period of separation from Satan. During his mystical dialogue with God, Moses received the Ten Commandments and instructions about the building of a tabernacle which would be the Hebrew shrine during the wilderness period.

Emerging from Sinai, Moses became the great law-giver of the Hebrew people. For Judaism religion is primarily conceived of as obedience to the Torah of Moses, the Law he received from God. Albrecht Alt's monograph on the nature of Hebrew law distinguishes between two types found in the Pentateuch:

⁴⁴ W.J. Albright, *From the Stone Age to Christianity*, Doubleday, Garden City, N.Y., 1957, pp. 262-263.

apodictic and casuistic. Casuistic legislation is the more or less common corpus of customary laws very much like the Babylonian code of Hammurabi (c. 1700 B.C.), the Hittite laws of the 14th century B.C. or those of Assyria two hundred years later. All of these go back to the Sumerian jurisprudence of the third millenium. Such laws ascribed to Moses are in no basic way novel.

Apodictic laws, however, are unique to Israel. The Ten Commandments are the most famous examples. These are specific prohibitions which Yahweh Himself makes. Whereas casuistic legislation in the Pentateuch is of the sort that presupposes a settled type of life quite unlike that of the wandering Hebrew tribes, there is nothing in the apodictic laws that conflicts with conditions among the Israelites at the time of Moses. Alt therefore argued that the apodictic code could very well have originated then and was hence considered so sacred that it was later recited annually in connection with the autumn feast of Tabernacles.⁴⁵

According to *Divine Principle*, whenever God accomplishes a significant work, Satan is also very active. When the Hebrews saw that Moses was so long up on the mountain, they gathered before Aaron, made a molten calf by melting down their gold earrings and worshipped the idol. The idol, probably made of wood covered with thin gold plate, was presumably an image of a young bull, whose worship was associated with licentiousness.

As Moses neared the Hebrew encampment on his descent from Sinai and saw what was taking place, he became enraged by both the idolatry and the immoral worship associated with it. He angrily threw down the stone tablets of the Torah and broke them at the foot of the mountain. Striding into the camp, he seized the golden calf, burned it, ground the metal into powder,

⁴⁵ Valuable contemporary studies of the Decalogue have been published by the Scandinavian scholar Edward Nielson, *The Ten Commandments in New Perspective* (1968) and the German Old Testament authority Johann Jakob Stamm, *The Ten Commandments in Recent Research* (1967). Both have been translated into English for the series of Studies in Biblical Theology.

scattered it upon the water and made the people drink it.

After this angry chastisement of his people, Moses implored God to forgive their sins. Cutting two tablets like the first he again climbed up Mount Sinai as God commanded. He stayed on the peak another forty days and nights without eating or drinking. Having prepared himself for a reappearance of Yahweh, Moses once more received the Ten Commandments as a sign of God's renewed covenant with the Hebrew tribes.

The book of Exodus concludes with a description of the tabernacle which was to serve as the focal point of Hebrew worship during the wilderness period (chapters 25-27). Throughout their sojourn in the desert, the Israelites carried a portable sanctuary. It was a simple tent-like affair which Moses pitched outside the Israelite camp and in which Aaron ministered. Like the much later temple of Solomon, the tabernacle had an inner shrine, a Holy of Holies, into which only the high priest could enter once a year. Exodus asserts that when Moses went into the tabernacle, a pillar of cloud symbolizing the divine presence would descend over the doorway and Yahweh would meet the Israelite leader face to face.⁴⁶

For *Divine Principle* the significance of the tabernacle went beyond the beliefs of the Jews at that time and pointed to a more ultimate ideal. The outer area represented the body and the inner part the spirit of the Messiah to come. The most holy shrine represented heaven and the rest of the tabernacle signified the earth; hence, the tabernacle as a whole pointed to Christ, the ideal of perfect man in whom heaven and earth were to be harmoniously reunited.

For *Divine Principle* the ark in the inner shrine symbolizes

⁴⁶ Scholars are agreed as to the purpose of the tabernacle. As Yahweh had revealed Himself at Sinai and covenanted with the twelve tribes, He would continue with them by dwelling in the sacred portable shrine they were to make for Him. As for the description of the tabernacle presented in Exodus, that poses problems. Many Protestant commentators think that the scriptural account derived from the late source P represents an idealized picture of Mosaic worship based on the temple of Solomon (Noth, pp. 199-201, Rylaarsdam, pp. 844-846). Cassuto, however, defends the general historicity of the Exodus account (pp. 319-324).

the entire cosmos. Because the tabernacle as a whole was a symbolic representation of the Messiah, the Israelites were to make it the very center of their life. They united, of course, with Satan rather than Moses when they constructed the golden calf and worshipped it. After their leader's second forty day fast the Hebrews did construct the tabernacle but they remained rebellious to God, complained to Moses, grumbled about the constant diet of manna, and even expressed a desire to return to Egypt.

Moses' dedication was unquestionable but his followers would have to pay indemnity for their faithlessness. Twelve men, one from each of the tribes, were selected to spy in the land of Canaan for forty days. Ten of them brought back a very discouraging report. They believed the Israelites would be unable to enter the Promised Land because of the great strength of the Canaanites and the many fortified cities which stood in the way of a conquest. Upon hearing this, the Israelites became frightened and murmured against both Moses and God. Two of the scouts, Joshua and Caleb, were optimistic. They begged the Israelites to have faith in the God who had promised them a successful entry and occupation of Canaan.

Because the Israelites were so faint-hearted, the forty days spent by the spies were fruitless. Hence, God chastised the faithlessness of His people by letting them wander aimlessly in the wilderness for forty years. According to *Divine Principle*, the Jews should have united with Joshua and Caleb. But because Satan was allowed to invade, this attempted entry to the Promised Land failed. At the end of that time only Joshua, Caleb and the new generation under twenty years of age were allowed to enter Canaan.

B. Joshua

Later Judaism often looked back upon the wilderness period as an almost ideal time in which Israel and Yahweh were remarkably close to each other under the leadership of Moses. Such a romantic view was not held by the Hebrew historians J,

E, D and P. According to the Pentateuch the Israelites were constantly grumbling about the desert life and its hardships. In all of their faithlessness, Joshua almost alone had remained steadfast and confident. God therefore chose him to succeed Moses and lead the people into Canaan.

According to the book of Joshua, this ardent champion of Yahweh and resourceful military leader, invaded Canaan from the east and achieved a series of stunning victories. Old Testament scholars and archeologists have not, however, been able to verify this. Professor M.A. Beek of the University of Amsterdam rather cautiously states that the Biblical records "do not lend themselves to a satisfactory reconstruction of the actual events but that Biblical data are in general agreement with archeological findings."⁴⁷

It is claimed that archeology disproves the contention of Joshua (chapter 6) that he conquered Ai and Jericho. Excavations at Ai indicate that the city was inhabited from 3300 until 2400 B.C. and not again until the Israelites settled there in 1000 B.C. When the Hebrews migrated into Canaan in the thirteenth century, Ai had been deserted for centuries. Albright tries to save the credibility of the Joshua story by saying it meant Bethel rather than Ai. As for Jericho, where no caved-in walls have been found, more than one scholar has rejected the historicity of Joshua 6. The Swiss scholar Ernst Ludwig Ehrlich concludes, "The narratives in the book of Joshua are in part not historical sources but legendary tradition."⁴⁸

⁴⁷ M.A. Beek, *Concise History of Israel*, Harper & Row, N.Y., 1963, pp. 42-44. For detailed evidence, see M. Kenyon, *Digging up Jericho*, London, 1957. General Yadin, the Israeli archeologist, conjectures that the Canaanite city of Jericho had no walls of its own when Joshua attacked it. Y. Kaufman, *The Religion of Israel*, University of Chicago Press, 1959, p. 247.

⁴⁸ E. Ehrlich, *A Concise History of Israel*, Darton, Longman & Todd, London, 1962, p. 21. Bernhard W. Anderson of Princeton says of the Joshua account: "Admittedly the picture is too neat, too simplified, too idealized; but there is considerable archeological evidence to support the tradition that the Israelites made a decisive assault upon the hill country in the latter part of the thirteenth century." *Understanding the Old Testament*, Prentice-Hall, N.J., 1966, pp. 86-87.

According to the Old Testament experts, the main phase of the Israelite conquest under Joshua occurred after 1250 B.C. and before 1219 B.C. and there was no single campaign which wrested Canaan from its original inhabitants. Rather, a few individual cities fell to the Israelites and slow fusion with the Canaanites took place elsewhere. The native population as a whole was not brought into full subjection for three centuries, until the reign of Solomon. Palestine at the time of the Israelite invasion was made up of a large number of squabbling city-states governed by local princes who gave nominal allegiance to the Pharaoh. Because of the internal weakness of the Egyptian empire, the Hebrews were able to establish themselves in the hill country of Palestine and Transjordan. The Canaanites managed to hold the most important towns, control the trade routes and keep the fertile coastal plain.

For *Divine Principle*, Joshua's function was to lay the tribal level foundation for the messianic age to come. As a military hero Joshua served to unify the Hebrew tribes following the death of Moses. Taking a suggestion made by Alt and Noth, Old Testament scholars suggest that a confederation of Israelites was established in the vicinity of Shechem.⁴⁹ While the city itself was not attacked by the Hebrews and therefore could not serve as a capital, probably the ruler of that city-state became their ally and would permit them to assemble in the immediate area. The rather loosely-organized tribal league has usually been described as an amphictyony comparable to those set up in Greece. What bound the Israelites together was their common loyalty to Yahweh.⁵⁰

⁴⁹ M. Noth, *The History of Israel*, Adam & Charles Black, London, 1960, pp. 85-110.

⁵⁰ Adolphe Lods of the Sorbonne published one of the most informative studies of Israelite history and customs with particular emphasis on what Palestine culture was like before the conquest and how it changed as a result of the Hebrew invasion. *Israel*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 3rd printing, 1953.

C. Judges

According to the ancient Hebrew historian, the four hundred years of slavery in Egypt were matched by a second period of four centuries used to complete Israelite occupation of Canaan. For *Divine Principle* both figures are symbolic, indicating distinct phases of God's dispensation.

After Joshua's death, whatever unity the tribes retained was due to a series of administrators and military heroes known as judges. The Hebrew title "shofel" conveys a somewhat more inclusive meaning than our English translation would suggest. While some scholars believe that the judge was a regularly appointed or elected official of the Israelite amphictyony centered at Shechem, the majority feel that he was a charismatic figure who appeared at different critical periods in Israelite history and rallied the followers of Yahweh for self-defense or aggressive action.

Y. Kaufmann of Hebrew University argues that ancient Israel vested authority in two institutions. On one hand, the Hebrews relied on a tribal council of clan heads, a primitive democracy of the elders, supervising all secular matters. Above these from time to time as need arose messengers of God, the judges, appeared. Normally the intertribal council of elders sufficed but at moments of crisis the people looked for an "apostle-savior" to be raised up by Yahweh. Always one came—a prophetess like Deborah, a visionary like Gideon, a fighter like Jephthah, a Nazarite like Samson.⁵¹

⁵¹ Y. Kaufmann, *Ibid*, pp. 256-257. The Hebrew historian clearly states that the age of the judges lasted four centuries but he may have meant this to be a purely symbolic figure reminding his readers of the length of Egyptian bondage because both periods were filled with trouble for Israel. By adding up the years of separate judges, one reaches a total of 410 years. On the basis of archeological evidence and non-Biblical sources, scholars like Ehrlich, *op. cit.*, p. 25, assert that the time of the judges lasted from circa 1200-1020 B.C., about half the deuteronomic figure. Even a fundamentalist writer like Leon Wood (*Ibid*, p. 207) does not try to defend the scriptural chronology. He explains that some of the judges may have ruled simultaneously so one should not simply add up their times to understand the length of the era of judges. *Divine Principle* holds to the symbolic interpretation of the total number of years, so the fundamentalist "problem of chronology" is of little importance.

Gradual and widespread assimilation of the Hebrews and the Canaanites was a characteristic feature of Palestinian life in the period of the judges. For the deuteronomic historian of a subsequent age this syncretism was looked upon with disgust and dismay but the average Israelite of that day was far from hostile to the process of adaptation. All scholars agree, however, that Canaanite religion tended to demoralize the tone of Hebrew culture. Canaanites believed in a chief god El but popular worship was centered on Baal, the storm deity, and his consort Asheroth, a goddess of fertility.⁵² From what archeologists have unearthed we learn that in material civilization the Israelites remained far behind their Canaanite neighbors so it was natural for the more primitive hill tribes to adopt the customs of the more sophisticated city-dwellers. The judges then were remembered because they kept Israel from being swallowed up and were champions of Yahweh against the immoral Baal.

Besides the danger of absorption, the Israelites also faced invading newcomers who sought to occupy Canaan. About 1187 B.C. the Philistine sea-peoples swarmed into Palestine and set up a group of city-states on the coast. Moabites tried to move in from the east; the Midianite camel-riding nomads attacked Israelite settlements from the desert. The stories of the judges depict valiant efforts on the part of the Hebrews to protect themselves and drive back a variety of aggressors. When the Philistines and Canaanites joined forces, a real catastrophe overtook Israel. The ark was captured, the shrine city of Shiloh destroyed and Philistine garrisons were established on Israelite territory. The tale of mighty Samson came from this age of troubles. At such a time of political and military weakness, faith in Yahweh served to strengthen and unify the Hebrew tribes.

⁵² Noth reports that the cults which flourished among the Canaanites were the immemorial rites of the great mother deity, generally called Astarte in Canaan, and of a youthful deity who represented the annual blossoming and dying of vegetation. These cults involved the celebration of a holy marriage at a sacred place with female representatives of the deity and the cultic sacrifice of female chastity. *The History of Israel*, pp. 143-144.

D. The United Monarchy

The deuteronomic history of Israel, based on earlier traditions, claims that as a result of an attack upon the city of Jabesh, a military commander by the name of Saul was acclaimed king at the central Hebrew sanctuary of Gilgal. The reign of Saul is dated from about 1020-1000 B.C. and he was called to his new post to defend Israel against external dangers. The king held his position because of support from the last judge and influential priest-prophet Samuel. Historians today explain that Saul had certain advantages as the first monarch of an united Israel because he came from the relatively minor tribe of Benjamin so would not incur the jealousy of the more powerful tribes. Besides, Benjamin was located in a central geographical position in reference to the other Israelites. Saul subsequently failed, we are told, because of a combination of factors: his suspicious nature and overweening ambition, the opposition of the religious authority embodied in Samuel and the appearance of a rival, David, his former armor-bearer. Already the kingdom was breaking up. At a battle in the plain of Esdraelon which turned against Saul, the king committed suicide and most of his sons fell.

Thus died Saul, the aging champion, battered to his knees, one of the most human and touching figures in all literature. His was a heroic and tragic role in a crucial period in Israel's career. It was his hard lot to bear the brunt of reaction which is always evoked by deep social change. His own tribe of Benjamin, while not the smallest and weakest, was not one of the most influential. His sick nature, moreover, was a scourge. Yet the fact remains that Saul laid the foundation for an effective opposition to the Philistine advance, for an attack on their valuable monopoly of iron, and, perhaps most important, for a measurable degree of unification among the individualistic tribes of Israel.⁵³

⁵³ Harry M. Orlinsky, *Ancient Israel*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1954, p. 66.

The Philistine domination of Palestine seemed assured. God, however, had decided otherwise.

Most scholars believe that we have contemporary sources about the reign of David. The second king was a southerner so could command the loyalty of the Israelites in that sector. As the husband of Saul's daughter he could claim authority over the northern and central area of Palestine loyal to the former monarch. After ruling the southern tribes for seven years, David at Hebron was recognized as the king of all Israel. By defeating the Philistines in two decisive battles, he removed that threat, and by making the newly-captured stronghold of Jerusalem his capital, he established a political and religious center on neutral territory. Henceforth, Jerusalem was the city of both David and Yahweh. Through military conquest and wise diplomacy, the second king carved out for himself a miniature empire which he skillfully ruled for forty years.

What Solomon, David's son, lacked as a military man he made up for as a shrewd politician, builder and merchant. By imposing a levy on all goods crossing his lands, the king accumulated a vast treasure. A large part of his wealth was derived from selling horses from Asia Minor to Egypt. Even so, the costs of his resplendent court and vast construction projects required the ruler to rely on heavy taxation and forced labor from the Israelites.

Solomon's religious policy was rather complicated. As a devout worshipper of Yahweh, he constructed a royal temple at Jerusalem which for centuries served as the center of Jewish activities. At the same time he took many foreign wives and allowed them to worship their gods just outside his capital city. From the standpoint of the deuteronomic historian, such tolerance was a heinous sin. However, for the tragic consequences of the idolatry and syncretism the chronicler ordinarily blames the harem rather than the monarch. As for the temple, while it was an architectural masterpiece for the time, it was "not much larger than a modern village church".⁵⁴

⁵⁴ M.A. Beek, *Ibid*, p. 87.

Unification theology looks at the reigns of Saul, David and Solomon in terms of their dispensational importance. The forty year reign of Saul should have made restitution for the four decades the Hebrews spent wandering aimlessly in the wilderness. Because of Saul's disobedience to God this could not be accomplished so David was anointed to carry out Yahweh's mission. David was willing to build the temple at Jerusalem but was forbidden to do so since he had shed so much blood in the process of establishing his kingdom. The forty years Solomon sat on the throne saw the accomplishment of that task. The erection of a national shrine at Jerusalem foreshadowed the coming of the Messiah. The temple of Solomon followed the design of the tabernacle of Moses described in the Pentateuch. In a mystical sense it was also the symbol of Christ. As one receives Christ, the incarnation of the Word, a mercy seat is formed within him and God is enthroned above it. Anyone uniting with Christ becomes a temple of God. To make the people a tabernacle for the presence of God by drawing them to himself is one way to interpret the purpose of Jesus' coming and ultimate mission. From this standpoint, the lasting significance for Solomon's national sanctuary is central in terms of the dispensation of restoration.

E. The Divided Kingdoms

However, Solomon paved the way for the breakup of his kingdom. By the time of his death the danger from external foes like the Moabites, Edomites and Syrians was matched by internal unrest and popular resentment. Rehoboam was called to replace his father on a very shaky throne. When the brash monarch summarily rejected a formal plea for tax relief and disregarded the policy of moderation advanced by the older courtiers, most of the nation joined an insurgent government organized by the former high official, Jeroboam, and the powerful prophet of Shiloh, Ahijah. Ten of the twelve tribes seceded from Jerusalem and formed a new nation at Shechem. Rehoboam was left with little more than the area surrounding his capital.

Jeroboam ruled for twenty-two years over the northern

kingdom called Israel. He moved his capital from Shechem to Peniel to Tirzah which suggests that it took some time for the new government to get firmly organized. Worse, he ran into religious difficulties. Since the temple of Solomon was in loyalist hands, he made the old shrines of Dan and Bethel the headquarters for the religion of his subjects. To show his devotion to Yahweh and royal support for Dan and Bethel, the king erected two golden bulls ("calves"). For the pro-southern deuteronomic chronicler, the setting up of the golden bulls was sheer idolatry of the most unforgiveable kind.

Few historians would accept the simplistic judgments the deuteronomic editor hands down in regard to the monarchs of the divided kingdoms. Perhaps, however, there is a case to be made in his favor. Even if there was good reason for the protest against Solomon's extravagance and Rehoboam's shortsightedness, the breakup of the Hebrew united monarchy was a tragedy. Even united, the Israelites could only establish their hold over Palestine because the great imperial powers, Egypt and Mesopotamia, were in a period of temporary decline. By dividing, the Hebrews could easily be overwhelmed by any invader. Conquest was almost inevitable as a result of the dismemberment of the Davidic kingdom.

Religiously too, a divided Israel produced unfortunate consequences. The power of the Yahweh party to overcome the temptation to assimilate older Canaanite views and practices was greatly hampered by the lack of political unity. Possibly the secession of the ten tribes made religious centralization in Judah much easier but this came at the price of virtually abandoning most of Palestine to the syncretists. As for the northern region, whatever Jeroboam's original intent may have been in erecting the golden bulls at Bethel and Dan, the long-range effect was to make the worship of Yahweh look like the cult of Baal. Whereas the northern kingdom should have provided resources for religious reformation, in fact, faith in Yahweh had to depend upon what happened to the remnant in the south. In this sense, possibly the most vital one, the Bible was right to conclude that the kings of

Israel did evil in the sight of God.⁵⁵

According to Unification theology, because King Solomon had united with Satan, God divided his kingdom. The northern kingdom of Israel was in Cain's position and the southern kingdom of Judah was in Abel's. Therefore Israel should have come under the dominion of Judah much as Esau came under Jacob in the patriarchal age. Through persistent efforts toward rapprochement and diligence in rooting out the evils in Judah which provoked secession, the southern loyalists could have won the support of their dissident brethren. As it turned out, however, the most that the two nations accomplished was an occasional and temporary alliance. The rest of the time Israel and Judah were rivals and often foes.

The appearance of Assyrian war chariots and the rapid growth of a new empire in the Near East were clear warnings of the fate to befall the mini-states in the Palestinian corridor. Yet at just such a time of international crisis God raised up a series of prophets who initiated a religious reformation. Beginning with Amos Hebrew faith started to emphasize the social responsibilities of political and economic righteousness implicit in the covenant between Israel and her God.

On the basis of a lifetime study of the Hebrew prophets and their counterparts in a variety of cultures, J. Lindbom at the University of Lund describes their essential attributes as follows:

They are entirely devoted, soul and body, to the divinity. They are inspired personalities who have the power to receive divine revelations. They act as speakers and preachers who publicly announce what they have to say. They are compelled by higher pow-

⁵⁵ The scholarly consensus is that syncretism of Baal worship and devotion to Yahweh was common until the Babylonian exile. Yehezkel Kaufmann, *The Religion of Israel*, rejects this view in toto and the conclusions of this Israeli scholar are well worth reading. For the opposite thesis that the scholarly consensus does not go far enough in recognizing the appeal of syncretism in Hebrew religious history, see M. Smith, *Palestinian Parties and Politics that Shaped the Old Testament*, Columbia University, N.Y., 1971.

ers and kept under divine constraint. The inspiration which they experience has a tendency to pass over into real ecstasy. One further attribute may be added: the special call. A prophet knows that he has never chosen his way himself: he has been chosen by the deity. He points to a particular experience in his life through which it has become clear to him that the deity has a special purpose with him and has designated him to perform a special mission.⁵⁶

Lindbom recognizes the marked differences between the early prophets and their far greater successors but also insists on the similarities. Kaufmann tends to stress the unique features of what he calls "classical prophecy". In the work of the literary prophets, he reminds us, Israelite religion reached a new height. Beginning with Amos, these men were the first to realize the primacy of morality in religion, and that the essence of God's demand is ethical rather than cultic.⁵⁷

F. Babylonian Exile

The northern kingdom was invaded by the Assyrians and destroyed in 721 B.C. The southern kingdom was invaded by the Babylonians in 597 B.C. In spite of opposition from the prophet Jeremiah, King Zedekiah joined a rebellion against the Babylonian empire. Chaldean armies entered Palestine to suppress the insurrection and approached the gates of Jerusalem. They withdrew temporarily to attack an Egyptian army but soon returned to besiege the Judean capital. Jeremiah repeatedly urged surrender. In 586 B.C. the victorious Babylonians stormed the city, pillaging and burning at will. Zedekiah tried to flee across the Jordan but was captured. As an example to future rebels he was forced to witness the execution of his sons and was then blinded by his captors. Mass deportations were or-

⁵⁶ J. Lindbom, *Prophecy in Ancient Israel*, Blackwell, Oxford, 1963, p. 6.

⁵⁷ Y. Kaufmann, *Ibid*, pp. 343-347.

dered, beginning a whole new period in Israelite history: the Babylonian exile.

Y. Kaufmann points out the decisive effect of this tragedy:

The fall of Jerusalem is the great watershed of the history of Israelite religion. The life of the people of Israel came to an end, the history of Judaism began. To be sure, the people lived on and were creative after the fall, but the form of their life and the conditions of their existence and creativity were radically transformed. Israel ceased to be a normal nation and became a religious community.⁵⁸

Scholarly opinion has shifted in regard to the extent of the deportation carried out by Nebuchadnezzar. The common opinion now is that the deportation involved not more than 45,000 including women and children. What this means is that the conquerors exiled the governing class and a sizeable percentage of the Judean army while leaving most of the inhabitants alone.⁵⁹ S.W. Baron estimates that one-third of Judah was exiled,⁶⁰ but that guess is on the high side.

Once the exiles reached their destination, the journey in itself a harrowing experience, their new life was not an exceptionally difficult one. Jewish scholars like Baron admit that the policy of Assyrian and Babylonian monarchs toward deported nations was very favorable. The Hebrews rather quickly entered the active industrial and commercial life of the empire. One family earlier exiled from Israel was in charge of the greatest private banking firm in Assyria. Within a century Hebrews had become landowners, merchants, contractors and rent collectors. Some at least gradually won high administrative positions in the Assyrian, Babylonian and Persian governments. Religious toler-

⁵⁸ Y. Kaufmann, *Ibid.*, p. 447.

⁵⁹ W. Foerster, *From the Exile to Christ*, Fortress Press, Philadelphia, 1964, p. 12.

⁶⁰ S.W. Baron, *A Social and Religious History of the Jews*, Columbia University Press, N.Y., 1952, vol. 1, p. 105.

ance was taken for granted by the great empires so there was no hostile interference with the spiritual life of the Jews. They could pray, sing psalms or study the Torah as they pleased. And they did.

In 538 B.C. Cyrus the Great of Persia captured Babylon and made it the capital of his far-flung empire which at its height extended from India to the Balkans. Babylonian Jewry had decided against the building of a temple in their new home. Like all refugee groups, they idealized and romanticized their past. It was natural therefore for the Jews to treasure everything which reminded them of the old days so a large part of our Old Testament was collected, edited and written down during this exilic period. Persian tolerance provided an opportunity for peaceful, undisturbed concentration on religious problems for Jews who remained loyal to their heritage.

Cyrus, with typical Persian broadmindedness, ordered the rebuilding of the temple at Jerusalem at government expense and returned to the Jews some of the sacred treasures taken by the earlier Babylonians. Darius I and Artaxerxes I (or II) even instructed the provincial governors to defray part of the cost of sacrificial worship at Jerusalem. A number of exiles returned at this time, more came with Nehemiah and third group with the priest Ezra. Most of the Jews, however, stayed where they had settled. They sent their best wishes, prayers and considerable amounts of money but had no interest in the hard life of a pioneer.

Nehemiah, a Jew in high position at the imperial court, returned to Judah to help in the reconstruction of Jerusalem. In spite of considerable local and official interference he succeeded in rebuilding the walls of the city. To Ezra, another former exile and a priest, belongs the credit for sparking a Jewish religious rebirth. Assembling the faithful he read from the Torah and expounded upon its significance for a revitalized faith. One could say he raised the pillars upon which post-exilic Judaism was henceforth built: scrupulous observance of the Law of Moses contained in the Pentateuch, regular study of it in the synagogue

and respect for a new teacher class called rabbis. Ezra planted the seeds for the type of Judaism which was normative in the time of Jesus and persists today.

G. Preparation for the Messiah

Alexander of Macedon succeeded in defeating the Persians and took control of their huge empire. Greek civilization was planted from Egypt to India. Upon Alexander's death, his realm was divided among his top generals. For a century Palestine was ruled by the Ptolemies of Egypt and then it came into the hands of the Seleucid dynasty of Syria. Greek ideas and customs became fashionable even in Jerusalem. Among the young aristocrats, it was common to wear Hellenic-style clothes, shave, exercise in the gymnasiums and adopt Greek names. A Jewish high priest of the period was named Jason. Probably the Hellenization of Judea was limited to the wealthy and educated; if unchecked, it would have spread to the population as a whole.

Antiochus Epiphanes (IV), the Seleucid monarch, vowed to complete the Hellenization of his subjects. Some called him a madman because of his rash actions against the remaining Jewish traditionalists. First he forbade the practice of circumcision and observance of the Sabbath. When those edicts aroused a storm of controversy, he had a pig sacrificed at the altar of the Jerusalem temple and forced the Jewish priests to eat the unclean meat. The Jewish temple itself was converted into a shrine of Zeus. Finally, the Syrian king outlawed the religion of Moses and decreed a death penalty against anyone caught practicing it.

Open rebellion broke out when a village priest killed a Jew offering pagan sacrifice and a royal official in charge of the affair. Mattathias and his sons Judas Maccabeus, Jonathan and Simon organized the Jews to drive out the Syrian overlords. Judas Maccabeus in 165 B.C. was able to enter Jerusalem and rededicate the desecrated temple. Almost a decade later Jonathan became the high priest and king of an independent Judea. But Rome entered the picture in 64 B.C. and the freedom

of the Israelites was again lost.⁶¹

All this served to accentuate the expectation of divine intervention by the Messiah.

By the exile and the disastrous subjugation of Israel by a whole series of conquerors, the Jews also became aware as they never had before of the reality and power of Satan. The priests of Qumran demonstrated that awareness:

From the God of Knowledge comes all that is and shall be. . . . The laws of all things are unchanging in His hand and He provides them with all their needs.

Those born of truth spring from a fountain of light, but those born of falsehood spring from a source of darkness. All the children of righteousness are ruled by the Prince of Light and walk in the ways of light; but all the children of falsehood are ruled by the Angel of Darkness and walk in the ways of darkness.

The Angel of Darkness leads all the children of righteousness astray, and until his end, all their sin, iniquities, wickedness, and all their unlawful deeds are caused by his dominion. . . .⁶²

However, the Jews were not overwhelmed by Satan. No matter how often they had to walk through the valley of the shadow of death, they were confident that at the end of the road a messianic banquet would be theirs. A modern scholar has expressed the Jewish outlook at the end of the Old Testament age:

Israel's life story . . . cannot be told adequately apart from the conviction that God had called this people in

⁶¹ Werner Foerster of the University of Muenster, Germany provides a detailed analysis of the historical situation from the Babylonian captivity to the end of the Hasmonean dynasty, *From the Exile to Christ*, Fortress, Philadelphia, 1964, pp. 11-81. Harry M. Orlinsky, *Ancient Israel*, pp. 118-141, gives a brief Jewish interpretation of the exile and restoration.

⁶² Quoted from the Essene Manual of Discipline (III), G. Vermes, *The Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, Penguin Book, Harmondsworth, 1962, pp. 75-76.

his grace, separated them from the nations for a special responsibility, and commissioned them with the task of being his servant in the accomplishment of his purpose. Because Israel remembered her sacred past, she was able to live in the present with her face set toward the future—the time of the new covenant, the new creation, the Kingdom of God.⁶³

While it is common to speak of the events of Biblical history as “the acts of God”, and while it is likewise common to speak of history as a progression, for Unification theology, the unique aspect of Hebraic history is the constant and clearly defined cycle of indemnity and restoration. Where Israel failed, she was quick to pay. This was not just numerical restoration. A keen spiritual readiness had to be developed to the exclusion of all other attachments. The Old Testament is an account of such a pruning process by God. This was achieved not only by God and man in interaction—but by the forces of God and man in a bitter struggle to overcome the destructive power of Satan.

By the waters of Babylon, there we sat down and wept, when we remembered Zion. On the willows there we hung up our lyres. For there our captors required of us songs, and our tormentors, mirth, saying, “Sing us one of the songs of Zion!” How shall we sing the Lord’s song in a foreign land? If I forget you, O Jerusalem, let my right hand wither! Let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, if I do not remember you, if I do not set Jerusalem above my highest joy! (Psalms 137:1-6)

The passion which is expressed in Psalm 137 as the Jews long for Jerusalem when in a foreign land represents a victory for God in the providence of heart. Nevertheless, though God

⁶³ B.W. Anderson, *Ibid*, p. 559.

would direct history, when man failed He had no choice but to rechannel His directive energies, according to principle. In its attempted unfoldment of the clear lines of this struggle lies the uniqueness of Unification theology. From the prehistoric age to the time of Abraham, to the actual restoration programme begun in his family, particularly with Jacob, it is maintained that there was incisive motion on the part of God as well as fierce opposition from the side of Satan. Treading this path Israel walked between distress and hope. As the age drew to a close that distress—but even more so that hope—was at its height.

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