

# RECORD AND REVELLATION

ESSAYS ON THE OLD TESTAMENT  
BY MEMBERS OF THE SOCIETY  
FOR OLD TESTAMENT STUDY

Edited by

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## CONTENTS

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION. By the Editor . . . . .	vii
I. THE NEW SOURCES OF KNOWLEDGE. By J. A. MONTGOMERY, Ph.D., D.D., Professor of Hebrew in the University of Pennsylvania, U.S.A. . . . .	1
II. THE LITERATURE OF ISRAEL	
1. The Forms of Oral Tradition. By D. DR. JOHANNES HEMPEL, Professor an der Universität Berlin . . . . .	28
2. The Contents of the Literature. By D. DR. JOHANNES HEMPEL . . . . .	45
3. Modern Criticism. By D. DR. OTTO EISSFELDT, Professor an der Universität Halle-Wittenberg . . . . .	74
III. THE HISTORY OF ISRAEL	
1. The Imperial Backgrounds. By W. I. WARDLE, M.A., D.D., Reader in Old Testament, Manchester University . . . . .	110
2. The Crises. By THEODORE H. ROBINSON, M.A., D.D., Litt.D., Professor of Semitic Languages, University College, Cardiff . . . . .	135
3. Political and Economic. By H. H. ROWLEY, M.A., D.D., B.Litt., Professor of Semitic Languages in the University College of North Wales, Bangor . . . . .	160
IV. THE RELIGION OF ISRAEL	
1. Origins. By ADOLPHE LODS, Professeur à La Sorbonne, Paris . . . . .	187
2. Prophecy. By NORMAN W. PORTNOUS, M.A., B.D., Professor of Hebrew and Semitic Languages in the University of Edinburgh (New College) . . . . .	216
3. Worship. By NORMAN H. SMART, M.A., Tutor in Old Testament Languages and Literature, Wesley College, Headingley, Leeds . . . . .	250
4. Ethics. By W. A. L. ELSMIRE, D.D., Principal of Westminster College, Cambridge . . . . .	275
V. THE THEOLOGY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT	
1. The Philosophy of Revelation. By the Editor . . . . .	303
2. The Characteristic Doctrines. By the Editor . . . . .	321

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new covenant written in the individual heart, for which Jeremiah and the unnamed prophet had longed. The difference between the system of the Jewish Law and Christian morality turns on the inexhaustible significance for faith in God, and for realization of what is divine righteousness, which has been given to mankind in Jesus Christ Himself.

W. A. L. ELMSLIE.

## THE THEOLOGY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

### V

#### 1. THE PHILOSOPHY OF REVELATION

LAWRENCE of Arabia once said of the Semites, "To the end of the world will they go for loot, but if an idea crosses their path, they forget the loot and follow the idea."<sup>1</sup> That is not a bad synthesis of realism and idealism in their popular meanings, and it was a synthesis of this realism and idealism that produced the theology of the Old Testament—the theology of an intense realism, which sometimes seems to subordinate God to the goods of life, yet eventually shows Him escaping from the bondage of that captivity into the realms of romance, to awaken passionate devotion to an ideal.

The Hebrews were realists, which means that they were not pessimists, nor ascetics, nor pacifists, nor intellectualists. Life for them was good, and worth the living, though nothing lay beyond it—the only case of suicide in the Old Testament seems to be that of Ahithopel. The appetites for food and drink and sexual intercourse were divinely implanted, and therefore had a divine blessing on their satisfaction (Ps. cxxviii). They were ready to fight their enemies, and the sword of Gideon was the sword of Yahweh. If such a people were to know God, it would be through the concrete experience of living, rather than by any intellectualistic construction.<sup>2</sup> Life to them was a unity, and volition lay at its heart—in fact, the 'heart' in Hebrew psychology was the seat of the will, and not specifically of the emotions. They were virtually pragmatists in their theory of knowledge.

<sup>1</sup> T. E. Lawrence, ed. by A. W. Lawrence, p. 232.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. p. 67.

They were continually adjusting their ideas of God to the events of life. Few statements could be more perverse than to speak, as a recent writer has done, of 'the essential Platonism' of the Hebrews.<sup>1</sup> Yahweh revealed Himself first to the Hebrews in a series of events, which received an *ad hoc* interpretation by a prophet—Moses. The subsequent course of the religion ran true to this, its first type. The strong sense of corporate personality amongst them, combining ancestors and descendants with the present generation in the unity of the bundle of life, helped to make history the supreme revelation of God, since Yahweh had chosen this people, through all its generations, for His own purpose. The philosophy of revelation is, for the Hebrews, primarily the philosophy of history.

#### A. *The Record as Revelation*

The record constituted by the Old Testament is itself dominated by particular theories evolved in the course of the development of the religion.<sup>2</sup> These theories—such as the prophetic doctrine of retribution which has shaped the 'Deuteronomistic' view of the history, and the Jewish conception of the Torah as given completely and once for all through Moses at the very beginning—have affected both the elements of which the Old Testament is composed and their final arrangement. The work of critical scholarship, as previous pages of this volume have indicated, is to get behind these theories to the original history of both events and ideas. This, so far as we can reach it, is the datum for a philosophy of revelation. Only when we have decided on a probable series of events, and a parallel series of human reactions to those events, can we usefully begin to ask how far and in what way they both in their blended unity serve to reveal God.

<sup>1</sup> D. B. Macdonald, *The Hebrew Philosophical Genius*, p. ix; his argument is that 'the fundamental philosophical ideas' of the Wisdom literature went back to the Hebrew beginnings.

<sup>2</sup> See II. 2, pp. 45 ff.

This critical procedure has removed many of the difficulties which former generations have felt concerning the Old Testament as revelation. The critical student is no longer puzzled by differing accounts of the same event, or by crude anthropomorphisms, or by moral and religious inconsistencies. He expects to find them as a necessary part of a long historical development; they are confirmations, not contradictions, of the genuineness of the history. But that which has removed the old difficulties has created new ones, at least for those who believe that the Old Testament is a divine revelation. We can gather them up by saying that the very phrase 'a historical revelation' is a paradox, according to conventional ideas of revelation. History implies dynamic movement of some kind, whether or not it can be called progress; revelation implies static and permanent truth. How can absolute truth be relative to each of a series of generations? How can human transiency express divine eternity? How can free human activity be made to serve fixed divine purpose? All such questions are different forms of the perennial problem of the philosophy of history, viz. the relation of time and eternity, of which, perhaps, the only solution is a *salvatur vivenda*.<sup>1</sup> That, at any rate, is the characteristic Hebrew answer.<sup>2</sup> Here, more clearly than anywhere else, we may claim that the actuality of living is implicitly regarded as a category of reality, a category with a quality to which no merely intellectual construction can attain. The Hebrew says in effect, 'God knows me, and I know God in the experience of living. Clouds and darkness are round about Him, but righteousness and justice are the (visible) foundation of His throne. Where shall wisdom be found? The fear of the Lord, that is wisdom.'

Admittedly, this leaves us with the theological problem of the

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the approach to this problem in II. 2, § iii, p. 67.

<sup>2</sup> It is true that 'Judaism in the Dispersion had already faced the difficulty of fitting a specific historical revelation into the scheme of a philosophy which was primarily concerned with the timeless and eternal' (W. L. Knox, in *Judaism and Christianity*, II, p. 109). But this was due to Philo's debt to Plato.

Canon of the record. A purely historical answer, tracing the stages by which this body of literature acquired the authority which it has exercised over Jew and Christian, leaves the real problem of canonicity untouched. Nor do we advance much farther when we claim that this literature is classical, the unique record of origins without which neither Judaism nor Christianity can ever be understood. But we get a hint towards the right solution when we remember that both Judaism and Christianity have made *selective* use of the literature of Israel. Emphasis on the Torah implies one principle of selection; emphasis on the Prophets and the Psalms implies another. From the beginning, therefore, there have been what we call to-day 'value-judgements'. The authority of the Old Testament Canon has rested from the very beginning on value-judgements made by the Synagogue and accepted by the Church. No Tridentine decree can eliminate that historic fact and its theological significance. But to recognize it does not entangle us in the slough of subjectivity. Revelation has always been and still remains the unity of the subjective and the objective. As the unwritten word of the prophet became revelation only when it found intelligent and obedient response from his hearers, so the objective fact of the Old Testament as literary record still awaits the response of the reader through what theology has called the *testimonium Spiritus Sancti internum*. Such authority, in its unity of the objective and subjective, is in no way inferior to the authority of truth and goodness and beauty wherever they are found. Divine authority must always rest at last on the authority of intrinsic character—what God is in Himself. Secondary authority may rightly belong to the living tradition of the Church or to the written record of the life that went before it, but only as guides to a goal, that goal being the direct and individual knowledge of God.

Yet to say this—even to admit that the precise boundaries of the Canon have no more than an historic interest, since there are

apocryphal or pseudepigraphical books which carry more intrinsic authority than do some now included in the Hebrew Canon—does not diminish the real authority of the Old Testament. The recognition of this authority by Jew and Christian does not ultimately depend on the theories of origin which they may connect with it. It depends on the penetrating character of the intuition of the prophets—which made men cherish their oracles from the beginning (Isa. viii. 16; Zech. i. 4; Dan. ix. 2); on the rich variety of the religious experience recorded through a thousand years of changeful history; on the simple but searching vocabulary of worship evolved or shaped for use in the Temple, a vocabulary which remains indispensable and incomparable; on the picturesque character of the language and the thoughts behind it, a quality which goes back to the particularity of the Semitic genius; on the dynamic quality of the record, so well expressed in the Pauline *apokaradokia*, or 'earnest expectation' (Rom. viii. 19; Phil. i. 20)—the dynamic record of a dynamic God.

#### B. *The Personality of God*

The *quality* of any idea of God is always more important for religion than its *quantity*, i.e. the precise extent, at any period, of the material or spiritual realm over which God is held to be supreme. The dynamic quality of the Hebrew idea is obscured by the present order of the Old Testament. Much that was the result of a long development has been thrown back to the beginning, e.g. the successive legal codes which have been ascribed to Moses.<sup>1</sup> But 'the living God' of the Old Testament finds His most impressive revelation in the actual history which this attribution conceals. That history and development is controlled by His constant activity; the idea of Him is never static in quality and is always being enriched. One form of this enrichment is the extension of the idea from the narrowly localized

<sup>1</sup> See II. 2, pp. 45 ff.

God of Sinai to the God of Zion and ultimately to the God unto whom all men shall come (Ps. lxxv. 2). In the times of Jephthah (Judges xi. 23, 24) and of David (1 Sam. xxvi. 19) He was the God of Israel only, and the Israelites recognized the existence of other gods for other peoples. It was the moral quality of the idea of Him that led to the extension of His dominion over other peoples (Amos i. 3—ii. 3), until an explicit monotheism was reached by Deutero-Isaiah (Isa. xliii. 10). Yet the very term 'monotheism', together with all other metaphysical attributes, such as omnipotence, omnipresence, immanence, and eternity, can be misleading. Such terms suggest modern and intellectualistic categories. They conceal the gradual development of an intuition, and substitute for it a process of ratiocination never found in the Old Testament. Even the opening words of the *Shema*' (Deut. vi. 4), which have become the primary Jewish confession of a monotheistic faith, were not necessarily monotheistic in their original meaning; it seems likely that they should be rendered, as in the third marginal of the R. V., 'The Lord is our God, the Lord alone.'<sup>1</sup>

The personality of Yahweh is sharply and vividly conceived—so vividly that it would hardly be an exaggeration to say that He is the most clearly drawn figure in the portraiture of the Old Testament. The predominance of the proper name, Yahweh, which is applicable only to an individual person, is the most cogent proof of His clear-cut individuality. This rules out all thought of anything allied to pantheism. But, not less, the conception of Yahweh's relation to His people and (ultimately) to the world of men and things amid which they live, is such as to rule out deism. This God of Israel is not a detached and remote figure, conceived after Epicurean fashions; He is for ever active in this world, in it, though not of it, and controlling it to His purpose: 'I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the rendering of the Hebrew *'ehād* in 1 Chron. xxix. 1, and the recognition of other gods for other peoples in Deut. vi. 14. See also IX, p. 444.

that is of a contrite and humble spirit' (Isa. lvii. 15), words of which Volz says, 'This mighty king lodges at the smallest cottage.'

Just how such intercourse was conceived is a more difficult question to answer, and in fact, owing to the great variety of the media of revelation (as shown in the following section), no generalizing answer can be given. But an early conception is illustrated in the story of the visit of three strangers to Abraham (Gen. xviii), one of them being Yahweh. Does this represent the normal way of conceiving Him? Was He, at an early period, conceived as having a quasi-physical form similar to that of man? The most explicit passage is Gen. i. 26, 'Let us make man in our image (*selem*), after our likeness (*demuth*), and the obvious meaning of the terms—that they relate to visible resemblance—seems to be confirmed by Gen. v. 3, where it is said that 'Adam begat in his likeness (*demuth*), after his image (*selem*)'. As Adam's son was like his father in form, so man, *mutatis mutandis*, was like God in form. Sometimes this conclusion is evaded by saying that the similarity was psychological rather than physical. But this betrays an inadequate knowledge of Hebrew psychology, which ascribes psychological characteristics to physical organs. As Skinner (Genesis, ad loc.) says: 'The idea of a corporeal resemblance seems free from objection on the level of O.T. theology. . . . God is expressly said to have a "form" which can be seen. . . . the O.T. writers constantly attribute to Him bodily parts; and that they ever advanced to the conception of God as formless spirit would be difficult to prove.'<sup>1</sup> The difference between God and man is of substance rather than form. God is *ruach*, spirit; man is *bāsar*, flesh (Isa. xxxi. 3). So the later visions of God, however shrouded in mystery, conceive Him in human form (Ezek. i. 26, 27; Dan. vii. 9). That God is invisible to man (Exod. xxxiii. 20; cf. Deut. iv. 15) does not

<sup>1</sup> Cf. 'Adam and Eve', xiii. 2. 'God blew into thee the breath of life and thy face and likeness were made in the image of God.' (1st cent. A.D.)

mean that He is formless, but that the vision of His fiery substance is unbearable by mortal eyes.

The 'humanity' of God is seen also in what theology calls 'passibility'. The human emotions of jealousy, anger, love, hate, and the like are freely ascribed to Him throughout the Old Testament, even though He is exalted above the defects that often attach to these human emotions (Num. xxiii. 19; 1 Sam. xv. 29). He carries Israel as a burden (Isa. xlv. 1-4); He feels sorrow over the desolation of His invaded land (Jer. xii. 11); He invites Baruch to share His sorrow (Jer. xlv. 4, 5); love overcomes righteous wrath in His heart (Hos. xi. 8, 9). Just as the God of Israel is not an Epicurean, so is He not a Stoic. The emotions of a Jeremiah, after all allowance has been made for his divided heart, do represent on earth, however imperfectly, the emotions of Yahweh in heaven.<sup>1</sup> The validity of this human 'sympathy' with God has rightly been made by a recent writer (Heschel) the basis of the prophetic consciousness.

How far is man able to understand God? how far is God capable of rationalization, especially according to ethical norms? That man can, in part, know God is obviously essential to the very possibility of revelation. His secret counsel is revealed to his servants the prophets (Amos iii. 7), which means that they are at least partially capable of understanding it. The true prophet, as distinct from the false, is he who has stood in the council of Yahweh, to perceive and hear His word (Jer. xxiii. 18). Nevertheless, God's thoughts are higher than man's thoughts, and He cannot be reduced to the limits of man's reasoning, even in regard to morality and 'righteousness'. In the earliest days the idea of Yahweh gathered up into itself some of the older demonic conceptions, as in the story of Jacob's wrestling (Gen. xxxii. 24 ff.) or in the Zipporah incident (Exod. iv. 24 ff.). That 'numinous' quality survives into the latest periods. It is

<sup>1</sup> Thus Isa. lxiii. 9, 'In all their affliction he was afflicted', is true to Old Testament theology, though probably not the original text; see the commentaries.

well marked in the general atmosphere of Ps. xc; it is made explicit in the typical 'Wisdom' argument of Yahweh's reply to Job's challenge, or of the closing verse of Job xxviii, which contrasts the humble reverence of religion, which is man's wisdom, with the unsearchable 'wisdom' of God.

Even so, however, it is not Yahweh's intellectual grasp of either nature or history, but His effective purpose displayed in both realms, His volitional activity, which is most characteristic of Him. When man has described the greatest wonders of God, he must always add:

Lo, these are but the outskirts of His ways,  
And what a whisper of a word do we hear of Him!  
But the thunder of His mighty acts who can comprehend?  
(Job xxvi. 14: S. R. Driver.)

The God of Israel, like the Israelite, is at His strongest in volition. From that springs the divine initiative, the characteristic of 'grace'. In the purpose of God is the fullest revelation of His being. Indeed, we may usefully see a modern philosopher's interpretation of history particularly illustrated in the Hebrew idea of revelation: 'The eternal view of a time-process is not the view of all its stages simultaneously, but the view of them as elements or members of a completed purpose' (Pringle-Pattison, *The Idea of God*, p. 358). The Old Testament is the revelation of eternity, because it is the revelation of the divine purpose.

To such an interpretation of Hebrew 'theology' the objection is sometimes raised that, where such statements are not conscious personification, they are no more than primitive anthropomorphism, without value for the philosophy of revelation. The answer is twofold, viz. that personification is quite inadequate to explain the scope and intensity of the Old Testament presentation of divine personality, and that 'anthropomorphism' itself contains a profound and necessary truth.<sup>1</sup> The majesty

<sup>1</sup> Cf. IV. 4, p. 285.

of God over against the lowliness of man is constantly recognized, as in the eighth psalm; yet there is felt to be such a kinship between God and man as may enable man to understand, from his own nature and experience, what God may say unto him. God is the ideal father (Ps. ciii. 13, cf. Matt. vii. 11) and mother (Isa. lxvi. 13), which means that human fatherhood and motherhood have some spiritual kinship with the divine nature. We may grant that human ideas must always veil God, however consonant they may be with His real nature; yet that applies even more truly to the abstract language of metaphysics than to the concrete language of Hebrew religion. We may say more—that the conception of the divine personality in the Old Testament has supplied a foundation, not only to the three great theistic religions, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, but also to any and every philosophy of theism which is worth consideration to-day.

### C. *The Media of Revelation*

The principle of mediation—in the largest sense of the term—is of cardinal importance in the characterization of any type of religion. In fact, it could be argued that all religions might be classified according to the way in which contact is established between the divine and the human. The nature-religions, e.g. the popular religions of Egypt and Greece, regard natural phenomena as the chief media of contact with the spirits or gods who are revealed in nature; this basis remains as a limiting condition, even though the higher forms of religion may develop ethical principles, as in Egypt, or philosophical solvents, as in Greece. The religions of India, on the other hand, fundamentally reject the principle of mediation, whether physical or psychical. Life is not a blessing to be enjoyed, but a curse from which escape is to be sought, whether by Brahmanic absorption or by the Buddhistic and Jainistic Nirvana, and 'God' becomes the negation of the positive. There is a third class of religions,

including all those which have found their chief medium of contact with God through the prophetic consciousness, i.e. are fundamentally psychical in type. Here we have Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. It is significant that in this class, and only in this, do we find monotheistic religion. The unity of the prophetic consciousness is needed to create the conception of monotheism. These also are the characteristically ethical religions, which make morality essential to worship and service.

The Old Testament impresses us by the great variety of the media which its successive phases of religion employ. We can see there the divine control of physical events—the roll of the thunder, the flash of the lightning, the plague of locusts, the wind that drives back the waves, or again the divine control of psychical events, such as the panic of an army, the insane rage of an individual, the consciousness of a prophet. We see human custom coming to be regarded as divine and divinely revealed law, and the written record eventually replacing the spoken word. We pass from the casting of lots, the primitive oracle continued in the priestly Urim and Thummim, to the majesty of the conception of a divine control of all human history. We find, also, in collaboration or contrast, the mediation by an elaborate and unalterable sacrificial system, through which man approached God, and God answered man, and by varied types of human mediators, prophet, priest, and king. It is the rich variety of these media, from the lowest to the highest, that has so largely helped to give the Old Testament its outstanding place in religion. They have not been left in mere juxtaposition. Lower practices have been taken up into higher forms of religion, bringing their vivid concreteness to the service and expression of a controlling idea. Even such fossil survivals as the ordeal of jealousy (Num. v. 11-31), which in some of its features is the sheer magic of a witch-doctor, have been made to minister to the majesty of a holy God, who will tolerate no 'uncleanness' amongst His people. Even the demonism of the Azazel rite on the Day of Atonement



(Lev. xvi. 8 ff.) declares the grace of Him who so drives forth the sin of His people.

This unification, however, on which the ultimate value of the medium depends, is due to the emergence and final predominance, as an interpretative principle, of one particular type of mediation—the prophetic. We must not, of course, believe that there was ever, in the Old Testament times, a popular religion of the prophetic type. The prophets were individuals, sometimes gathering a little group of followers around them, but never carrying the nation with them. Their principles did profoundly influence the life of the nation, but chiefly as they worked indirectly in the compromises of the Torah, or in the language and ideas of the ritual psalmody, or in the moral teaching of the Wisdom writers. All these contributions to the future Judaism and Christianity owe their most essential elements to the prophets, whatever material was appropriated from internal or external sources. This means that when we would trace the most essential part of the Old Testament religion back to its most essential element, we find a man standing in the presence of God, and so wrought upon by Him that he comes away from that presence ready to declare in the teeth of all opinion and all persecution, 'Thus hath said Yahweh'. There is a psychology of that prophetic experience, very different from our own, which made the experience more easily credible than it would be to ourselves, and gave authority of a unique kind to the prophet. But this psychology is like the survivals in Israel of Babylonian and Canaanite mythology and ritual; it is simply the form in which a particular generation or period interpreted its experience or expressed its consciousness. There still remains the metaphysics of the prophetic consciousness—the question of the validity and verity of that which the prophets declared in the name of God. That must turn upon the whole issue of the philosophy of revelation in general, in particular, whether man can know God, and whether God does disclose Himself to man. If He

does, then we may expect the highest revelation through the highest and noblest form of mediation, i.e. through the consciousness and especially the moral consciousness of man, made in His image. This is what mediation by the prophetic consciousness claims to offer to us, and on this claim the seal of history has been set. Here (apart from the unique position of Jesus for the faith of Christians) is historically the most important, and intrinsically the most convincing instance of the contact of personality, divine and human, the best ground of all on which to fight a test case.

If we are to win that case, we must not prejudice it by impossible claims. We must not ignore the fact that the divine communication is always coloured by the character and historical conditions of the recipient—in other words that human mediation is always present. Whatever God reveals is revealed as part of the prophet's own consciousness and outlook. The prophet himself might draw an absolute line between the divine oracle and his own reaction to it, but *we* certainly cannot. Further, we must not ignore the nature of the relation in which the prophet stands to the general providence of God in nature and history. The orderly ways of nature and the disorderly motions of men's hearts went on their courses in such independence of the prophet as often to hide their secret from any eyes but his. That 'event' which he was led to interpret as divinely controlled might mean something else to other eyes; there was nothing inevitable in its interpretation. The prophet's faith in God was needed, to blend with the event of nature or history and so to make the primal fact for religion—the miracle that revealed God, in His goodness, rather than His power. But if God takes up man's thoughts, words, and deeds into His own orbit of revelation, the result is not a partnership capable of analysis, but a blended unity, which can be regarded as both human and divine, but not as partly human and partly divine. Men may believe or may disbelieve that God of old time spoke unto the fathers in the prophets by divers portions and in divers manners, but what we cannot do

is to establish the claim of the prophets on something wholly external to their own activity, whether on a psychical event within or a physical event without. In the last resort, it will be the intrinsic truth of the prophetic utterance, undivorced from its environment, which must establish its authority. This was, in fact, ultimately, the way in which the message was received. We get a glimpse of this in the very striking words of Jer. xv. 19: 'if thou wilt take the precious from the common, thou shalt be as my mouth', which implies a value-judgement on the part of the prophet—as, indeed, does the *intuitive* basis of the New Covenant (Jer. xxxi. 31-4) for every Israelite.

#### D. *The Revelation in Law and Morality*

The Old Testament, however, includes other elements besides that prophetic oracle in which we see revelation in its simplest and most direct form. Both legal ordinance and moral teaching also claim to be revelation. The nature of that claim is illuminated when we consider the meaning and development of the term 'Torah', inadequately rendered 'Law'. The word properly means 'direction' or teaching; its root is seen in Mic. iii. 11, 'the priests *teach* for hire'. That which they taught was a 'torah', a decision, and the original meaning of the verb was probably the 'casting' of the lot (cf. Joshua xviii. 6, 11) by which the priestly oracle was given (cf. Deut. xxxiii. 8-10 and the LXX of 1 Sam. xiv. 41 ff.). The term is extended, however, to the decisions of judges and the teaching of the prophets, beyond the oracular decisions of the priests. Thus Moses gives *torah* (the plural of *torah*) in the desert like those of a sheikh (Exod. xviii. 16, 19),<sup>1</sup> and a court of appeal was established at Jerusalem in later days (Deut. xvii. 8-11, cf. 2 Chron. xix. 10). Such decisions were not distinguished as 'secular' from those given by priests and prophets; the judge, and especially the supreme judge, the

<sup>1</sup> On the quasi-priestly functions of Moses here, see G. Buchanan Gray, *Sacrifice in the Old Testament*, pp. 204 ff.

king, shared in the 'charismatic' qualities of priest and prophet (2 Sam. xiv. 17). It is, however, these latter with whom we are here concerned, for through them the revelational quality of *torah* is most clearly seen. One of the primal functions of the priest was to give *torah*, for it was he who handled the sacred lot given by Urim and Thummim. In long succession the prophets blame the priests for their failure to *teach* (Hos. iv. 6; Zeph. iii. 4; Jer. ii. 8; Ezek. xxii. 26; Mal. ii. 8, 9), and it is to the priests that people turn for decisions as to the divine will (Jer. xviii. 18; Hag. ii. 11). That such decisions included moral as well as ritual teaching is clear from Hos. iv. 6-8, compared with verses 1, 2; they were the depositaries of traditional truth (Mal. ii. 6, 7: 'they should seek the *torah* at his mouth'). That such teachings were collected in written form from an early date we might infer from Hos. viii. 12,<sup>1</sup> even apart from the existence of a collection of them in the Book of the Covenant (Exod. xx. 22-xxiii. 19), dating from the early monarchy. The way in which a 'custom' might become in time a *torah* is seen by comparison of 1 Sam. xxx. 24 with Num. xxxi. 27, as also in the ascription of agricultural lore to divine *torah* (Isa. xxviii. 26, 'teach' being the corresponding verb).

As we have seen, the *torah* of the prophets had a different origin, though they were equally ascribed to God (Isa. i. 10, the 'teaching' being that of verses 11-17; viii. 16; Jer. xxvi. 4; Lam. ii. 9; Isa. xlii. 4; Zech. vii. 12, &c.). The prophets were by no means always in opposition to the priests (cf. Zech. vii. 3), and prophetic oracles appear to have been given in the temple, in connexion with the priestly ritual.<sup>2</sup> But the great prophets were opponents of much of the priestly tradition, in ritual and morality, as is amply illustrated by Hosea. They claimed to draw from fountains of living water, instead of the broken cisterns of tradition (cf. Jer. ii. 13). Their antagonism shows the peril of fixed

<sup>1</sup> 'Though I write for him the myriads of my Torah, they are accounted as a strange thing.'

<sup>2</sup> See Mowinckel, *Psalmenstudien*, iii.

rules in religious practice, and anticipates the later criticism of 'legalism', when the oral *torah* had been committed to writing and gave rise to most of the Pentateuch. This is an issue which no form of religion can avoid. Rules are needed, if only for pedagogic purposes, but rules are dangerous as always tending to limit the freedom of intercourse with the living God in a generation which has outgrown the age for which the rule was framed. So it was in Judaism that a new oral tradition came into existence to explain and adapt the written Torah to new needs (cf. Mark vii. 3). In this whole process of the acquisition of authority by 'tradition' we see how 'revelation' attains a new character and finds a new sanction, social rather than individual in origin.<sup>1</sup>

Before this fixity was reached, however, even in regard to the Pentateuch, and after it was reached, there was a wider conception of *torah*, which is to be found in the Wisdom literature (including some Psalms). Here it denotes the teaching of Wisdom, the moral teaching exemplified in Proverbs (i. 8, iii. 1, iv. 2, vi. 20, 23, vii. 2, xiii. 14, xxviii. 7, xxxi. 26) and in related Psalms (xxxvii. 31, lxxviii. 1). Elliphaz, a typical 'wise man' of the older school opposed by the author of Job, claims divine inspiration for his 'teaching' (Job xxii. 22), much in the manner of a prophet (cf. iv. 12 ff.). The 'wise men' derived their conception of morality as the *torah* of God, the revelation of His will, from the earlier prophetic teaching, though they also drew on many non-Israelite sources for the actual content of their teaching. The recognition of sagacity, morality, and piety as the marks of true Wisdom was not confined to Israel, as Fichtner<sup>2</sup> has well brought out. But as with Canaanite or Babylonian mythology, so with this international morality. That which was appropriated was lifted to a new level by the ascription of such morality to Yahweh, and the consequent derivation of all morality from Him. The personified Wisdom of Prov. viii can say,

'By me kings reign and princes decree justice' (ver. 15). The human conscience is depicted as a lamp kindled by Yahweh which reveals to moral judgement the secrets of the inner life of man (Prov. xx. 27). The essential step had been taken by the prophets when they claimed admission to the heavenly council of Yahweh (Jer. xxiii. 18). Our modern way of saying the same thing would be that they dared to make their own moral judgement hold good for God's. Their successors, the wise men, extended that principle to the maxims of a sane experience. But even at this lower level the religious quality remained, to receive its ultimate apotheosis when the words of 'wise' men were made the words of God by the canonization of their written record, though at a lower level than that of the Torah. The unifying idea is that all that is essentially true is a revelation of Yahweh's will; as ben Sira says, 'In all wisdom is the doing of Torah' (Ecclus. xix. 20). Along this line of development we can see how even the ceremonial injunctions of the Torah could acquire a moral value. In a very suggestive passage ben Sira (xxxv. 5), after explicitly asserting that mercy is a true sacrifice, goes on to say, 'Appear not with empty hands in the presence of the Lord, for all this is to be done *because it is commanded*.' The 'Torah' psalms (i, xix. 7-14, cxix) remind us of the glow of religious enthusiasm with which this moral obedience was invested, at a period when the emphasis had already been taken off the sacrificial system and transferred to the 'Torah'—the written Pentateuch—as the foundation of religion.

Through all this process of historical revelation we have taken for granted, just as the Hebrew did, the coexistence of human freedom and divine control.<sup>1</sup> Human freedom is implied in the prophetic demand which is summarized in Deuteronomy (xxx. 19), 'I have set before thee life and death, the blessing and the curse: therefore choose life, that thou mayest live.' But the Old Testament is equally emphatic about the divine control of

<sup>1</sup> The process is admirably summarized in Professor Hempel's essay, II. 2, pp. 45 ff.

<sup>2</sup> *Die altorientalische Weisheit in ihrer israelitisch-jüdischen Ausprägung*.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. p. 290.

human life, which seems (to us) to leave no room for such moral freedom. 'O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter? . . . as the clay in the potter's hand, so are ye in mine hand, O house of Israel' (Jer. xviii. 6). If it be said that the parable of the potter expressly leaves room for repentance, what are we to make of God's hardening of Pharaoh's heart, i.e. of his will? (Exod. iv. 21 ff.). But here again we notice that it is also said that Pharaoh hardens his own heart (Exod. viii. 32). The Old Testament does not take us farther than that—the assertion of the duality in unity of coincident willing, divine and human. Even the earlier Jewish theologians do not attempt to take us farther, though they see the antithesis. R. Akiba is content to say, 'Everything is foreseen and free will is given. And the world is judged by grace, and everything is according to work.' Indeed, it was not until the tenth Christian century (cf. Moore, *Judaism*, i, p. 454) that Jewish theology began to face the problem which still remains unsolved. The same unresolved duality is found in relation to the divine foreknowledge of human actions, though the problem of divine foreknowledge is not so difficult as that of divine predestination.<sup>1</sup> Deutero-Isaiah claims that God knows the future, yet invites men to obedience (lv. 3). The wise man can say: 'the plans of the heart belong to man; but the answer of the tongue is from Yahweh. . . . the lot is cast into the lap; but all its decision is of Yahweh' (Prov. xvi. 1, 33), even whilst his whole appeal depends on the genuine capacity of his hearers or readers to will the good. The truth is that Israel will have no limitation of the divine power and no mechanical determination of the human will, since the one would destroy religion and the other morality. The chief contribution of the Old Testament towards their practical reconciliation came from the prophets of Israel, who found true moral freedom in the willing surrender of human personality to the divine.

H. WHEELER ROBINSON.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. H. Wheeler Robinson, *The Christian Doctrine of Man*, pp. 288 ff., 333 ff.

## 2. THE CHARACTERISTIC DOCTRINES

### A. God

God, as we have seen, is taken for granted in the Old Testament, though this is far from meaning that the conception of Him is a fixed quantity. The *growth* of the idea, bound up as it is with the history of the people, is a most significant feature of the revelation. But when we try to systematize the idea, this feature of it renders our task very difficult. At the beginning we see the emergence of Yahweh of Israel, as one god among other gods (for other peoples). He is localized at Sinai as a storm-god, and accompanies His people as a war-god in their desert-wanderings, whilst already He is concerned with the social life of His people. His jealousy (Exod. xx. 5, xxxiv. 14) is aroused only by the invasion of Israel's loyalty by other gods. At the end the God of the Psalmists is the only God of all the earth, all other gods being reduced to shadow-names, or absorbed into His angelic court, whilst the highest moral and spiritual attributes are now assigned to Him. It is the result of this development which chiefly concerns us, though we must remember throughout that any attempt to fix it in static form contradicts the essentially dynamic character of the God of Israel.

(a) *Names and titles.* The names by which He is known yield little by way of etymology, though more by usage. First in importance is the *personal* name, Yahweh, which occurs more than twice as often as the generic term *'Elohim* (6700: 2500 according to Köhler, p. 23)<sup>1</sup> and is also very frequent as an element in human proper names. It seems doubtful whether the name Yahweh is actually found outside the Old Testament before the Moabite Stone of the ninth century B.C.,<sup>2</sup> but it may

<sup>1</sup> See the Bibliography for title of book.

<sup>2</sup> G. R. Driver, *ZAW*, (1928), p. 22. For a criticism of his view that the original form is *Yah*, see E. Dhorme, *La Religion des Hébreux nomades*, pp. 355 ff.

be of Kenite origin. In any case it is very improbable that the name was not already in existence when Moses as the prophet of Yahweh gave to it the national significance of redemptive personality. As a personal name it is the favourite for devotion and worship (cf. the shortened form, Exod. xv. 2 and in *Halleluyah*, 'Praise ye Yah!'), as we may see from the Psalms. (The fact that in Books II and III of the Psalter this personal name has been largely altered by editors to the general name, Elohim, may be due to the growing transcendence of God—the same cause which ultimately led to the substitution of 'Adonai, 'Lord', for Yahweh.) The frequent phrase 'Yahweh (the God) of hosts' perhaps more often refers to the stars of heaven than to the armies of Israel, in view of its predominantly prophetic use.

The general term, Elohim, is certainly a plural form, possibly linked to 'El, and may be the so-called 'plural of majesty', an intensive form denoting a unity, since it usually takes a singular adjective (e.g. Ps. vii. 9) and in this sense is paralleled in the Amarna period (Eichrodt, i, p. 90).<sup>1</sup> The singular 'El may have denoted 'might' or 'lordship'; its special relation to the patriarchs (cf. e.g. Gen. xlix. 25) has been brought out by Alt (*Der Gott der Väter*),<sup>2</sup> who finds the idea of 'election' already involved in this usage. The name *Shaddai*, translated 'Almighty' in Num. xxiv. 4, 16, is now usually connected with the Babylonian *shadu*, 'mountain',<sup>3</sup> and is thus a parallel to 'Elyon, translated 'Most High' in verse 16, a term represented within the pantheon of Ras Shamra (*ZAW*, 1933, p. 96).

The title 'Adonai, 'my lord', like Elohim, is an intensive plural, which also passes into a regular name for the God of Israel (LXX, κύριος). Köhler rightly puts this term in the forefront of his discussion of Old Testament theology: 'Religion is, in the Old Testament, the relation between command and

obedience . . . on the one hand the Lord who gives orders, on the other the servant who obeys them' (p. 12). 'That God is Lord is the backbone of Old Testament theology' (p. 17). In this connexion comes the title 'King', as in the kingship over Israel assumed by Yahweh at Sinai (Deut. xxxiii. 5), in the humble recognition of His kingship by Isaiah at his call (Isa. vi. 5), and in the throne-accession psalms (xlvii, xciii ff.).<sup>1</sup>

There is no more suggestive name than 'The living God', though it is not very prominent. It is implied in the ancient oath 'by the life of Yahweh' (Judges viii. 19 and often; cf. 1 Sam. xxv. 29), and may have arisen in contrast with the nature-gods who die and rise again, but it acquired much fuller content. It was the living God whose voice was heard at Sinai (Deut. v. 26). Israel is proud to be called 'the sons of the living God' (Hos. i. 10); to scorn her is to reproach the armies of the living God (1 Sam. xvii. 26); it is part of Jeremiah's accusation against the false prophets that they have perverted the words of the living God (Jer. xxiii. 36). God has the fountain of life (Ps. xxxvi. 9); for the living God the religious man thirsts (Ps. xlii. 2). Just because Yahweh is a living God, He remains adequate to the growth of the spiritual demands upon Him in the life of the successive generations, ever challenged to new songs of praise (Ps. xcvi. 1).

(b) *Characterization as holy, righteous, and gracious.* The majesty of God finds clearest expression in the use of the terms 'holy' and 'holiness' (*qādash* and *qōdesh*), which seem to have denoted originally the sacred as separated or withdrawn from the secular. This usage is found in general amongst Semitic people, but the designation of the inner nature of deity by it, according to Sellin, has no parallel beyond Israel. The primitive use of the term is illustrated by 1 Sam. xxi. 4, where 'holy' bread is contrasted with 'common' (*hol*); also by the law that the Nazirite

<sup>1</sup> See the Bibliography for title of book.

<sup>2</sup> On the general thesis of this book, see E. Dhorme's criticism in *La Religion des Hébreux nomades* (1937), pp. 344 ff.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. E. Dhorme, op. cit., p. 344.

<sup>1</sup> The title 'Father' (of Israel, Deut. xxxii. 6, or of David, 2 Samuel vii. 14) is of smaller importance, though frequent in proper names (*Ab*).

is 'holy' unto Yahweh during his 'separation' (Num. vi. 8). Only with the fuller moralization of the conception of Yahweh do we reach the exalted and ethicized usage which made 'the Holy One of Israel' Isaiah's characteristic name for Yahweh (i. 4, &c.). This new moral content, added to the majesty of the divine 'separation' from man, finds emphatic expression in the account of Isaiah's call (vi), i.e. in the moral reaction of the prophet to the vision of God; cf. also v. 16, 'the Holy God hath shown Himself holy in righteousness'. When God swears by His holiness (Amos iv. 2), He pledges Himself by the majesty of His essential nature, now seen to be moral. But the older conception of Yahweh as the 'numinous' (1 Sam. vi. 20) still remains part of the new conception as its sanction, and enforces due reverence before Him. Isaiah's poem on the Day of Yahweh (ii. 6-21), with its description of the terrible majesty of Yahweh before which Israel and all men will shrink away to hide in the clefts of the rocks, shows how the older non-moral meaning of 'holiness' can reinforce the new insistence on social morality which constitutes so much of the prophet's message. The voice of God uttered through the great prophets has still, like the 'voice' of Sinai, the sound of thunder, the potential wrath of the Holy One of Israel.

The 'righteousness' of God (*śēdeq*, *śēdāqāh*) is primarily that forensic quality which makes Him a just judge; thus it can be said of Him (Ps. xcix. 4), as of David (2 Sam. viii. 15), that He executes righteousness and judgement (*mishpāt*, the sentence of the *šōp̄het* or judge). Such a judgement may award the status of 'innocence' as opposed to 'guilt' (Ps. xxxvii. 6). The fundamental meaning of 'righteousness' seems to be conformity to the proper norm or standard, as of true weights (Deut. xxv. 15), right paths (Ps. xxiii. 3), and true speech (Ps. lii. 3). The norm may be that of social custom and obligation or of enlightened conscience; whatever it is, the righteousness of Yahweh is contrasted with 'deviation' from the conduct that is right for Him

and true to His nature and obligations (Zeph. iii. 5, where the idea of 'deviation' underlies the term '*awlah*, 'iniquity'). The most comprehensive obligation of Yahweh is His 'covenant' (*berith*) with His people (cf. Ps. lxxiv. 20 ff., 'Look upon the covenant . . . plead thine own cause'). In reliance on this, His true worshipper looks for vindication (Ps. iv. 1), and 'righteousness' is a parallel to 'salvation' (Isa. xlvii. 13), though it also involves the punishment of the guilty (Isa. x. 22). The 'righteousnesses' of Yahweh (Judges v. 11, &c.) are those acts by which He intervenes to save His people and ensure their welfare ('peace', Isa. xlviii. 18). It will be seen that the divine righteousness is no abstract quality; it is the essence of His personal character as seen in the concrete experience of life under His control. Neither ought His righteousness at any point to be contrasted with His graciousness; Isa. xlv. 21 describes Him as 'a righteous God and a saviour', i.e. He is a saviour *because* He is 'righteous'. This is the element of truth in Köhler's remark (p. 17) that righteousness in the Old Testament is not a juristic but a social idea. It would be more exact to say that the juristic term is filled with a social content, through the relation of Yahweh to Israel, and because of His essential nature.

The 'graciousness' of God is chiefly expressed in the term *hesed*, inadequately translated 'lovingkindness' since it includes the moral obligation represented by the covenant-bond.<sup>1</sup> Thus in reference to David, God says:

My *hesed* will I keep for him for evermore  
And my covenant shall be faithful unto him

(Ps. lxxxix. 28), whilst a companion term is 'truth' (*emeth*) in the sense of fidelity to obligation:

All the paths of Yahweh are *hesed* and '*emeth*  
Unto such as keep His covenant and His testimonies.

(Ps. xxv. 10.)

<sup>1</sup> We may compare *ἀγάπη* as interpreted in 1 Cor. xiii for this moral obligation, whilst the New Testament *χάρις* expresses the divine *hesed*, as taking the

The saving grace of God, seen in deliverance from peril (Ps. xxxi. 16) or death (Ps. vi. 4), or from the consequences of sin (Ps. li. 1), are due to His *hesed*, which is abundant (Ps. lxxxvi. 5), extensive (Ps. lvii. 10), and everlasting (the refrain in Ps. cxxxvi). It is in the Book of Psalms in particular (as these references suggest) that this characteristic of Yahweh is most emphasized, both because the long history of revelation is now unrolled before the eyes of these psalmists and because their sense of dependence upon God has been deepened by political and social circumstance and moral and spiritual growth. Just as the chief outer and visible mark of religion in the Old Testament is *obedience*, so the chief inner and invisible character is *trust*, a trust which depends at last on the *hesed* of Yahweh. From the nomadic times (Exod. xv. 13) onwards, He is the faithful God, keeping the covenant and the *hesed* (which is its inner core) for them that love Him and keep His commandments (Deut. vii. 9).

(c) *Relation to Israel and to the world.* A humanistic approach to the experience of living instinctively regards nature and history as the realms of *man's* opportunity. But for the religious outlook of the Old Testament they are far more the realms of *God's* opportunity, and He has created and controls them for the accomplishment of His divine purpose. From this standpoint history is primary and nature secondary, and the recognition of Yahweh as active in history chronologically precedes that of His creative work, though the present arrangement of the Old Testament literature disguises this fact. But both history and nature, in the unity of His absolute control, are made the sphere of His providence, and as J. H. Newman said (*Grammar of Assent*, p. 57), 'What Scripture especially illustrates from its first page to its last, is God's Providence.'

This is strikingly brought out in the Book of Genesis, as it now lies before us. After the first eleven chapters (a general initiative. See pp. 237, 243, 336, and the article 'Ham and Hesh in the Old Testament' by W. F. Lofthouse (*ZAW*, 1933, pp. 29-35).

introduction to the history of the world, showing its failure to achieve the divine purpose), we see the divine choice of an individual, Abraham, and we follow the fortunes of his family in increasing concentration until that family becomes a nation. The next phase is the deliverance of that nation from bondage and its settlement in the Promised Land. The third phase comes much later, in the doctrine of a righteous remnant (Isa. vii. 3, viii. 16-18; cf. x. 22; Mal. iii. 16, 17) which shall accomplish the mission which the nation as a whole has failed to perform. All this is directly ascribed to the divine initiative; it is due to the undeserved grace of God (Deut. vii. 7, ix. 5) that He has adopted Israel as His son, His firstborn (Exod. iv. 22), and called him out of Egypt (Hos. xi. 1).

We have here, then, the doctrine of 'election', as to which Schechter has rightly said, 'it is difficult to see how any revealed religion can dispense with it' (*Some Aspects of Rabbinic Theology*, p. 62). In one form or another this doctrine is as essential to Christianity as to Judaism, for it is the mandate to a minority to persist in their purpose as being the purpose of God. The particularism it involves belongs to every high mission, and is no mark of provincialism in religion. The imperial rule of God which we call His Kingdom can be achieved in no other way, if men are to be brought, of their own free will, to do the will of God. So, as Marti long since reminded us (*Geschichte der israelitischen Religion*, p. 150), we are not, as students of the Old Testament, to ask the question, how the universal God became Yahweh the God of Israel, but how Yahweh the God of Israel became the one and only God of the whole world (see V. 1).

The divine election of Israel finds its clearest expression in the use of the term *berith*, or 'covenant', a term so important in its connotation that Eichrodt finds it possible to write the whole theology of the Old Testament around it. This covenanted relation between Yahweh and Israel is never (as the word might suggest to us and the general pattern of Roman religion would

illustrate) of the nature of a bargain.<sup>1</sup> The covenant would be far better described as a growing fellowship of purpose between man and God, expressed and confirmed by the 'bond', which the term originally seems to have meant, i.e. some form of ratifying ceremony. Thus the covenant at Sinai (Exod. xxiv. 3-8) was a blood-communion between God and man, by which Yahweh became the God of Israel and Israel the people of Yahweh. The covenant in Deuteronomy (xxix. 1, cf. xxvii. 17, 18) is a mutual engagement to the reformation of religion, inspired by the prophets of the eighth century. The covenant with Abraham, as described in the priestly narrative of Gen. xvii. 7-8, was conceived to be a divine promise, requiring human observance of the many institutions of priestly law. (The change in the verb here used of 'making' the covenant throws a new emphasis on God.) Whatever the emphasis on this or that feature of the covenantal idea, confidence in it forms the background of every hope and prayer for divine redemption. In fact Deutero-Isaiah constantly conceives Yahweh as the *gō'el* or redeemer, the divine kinsman pledged to keep His covenant with His people. When a written Torah, ratified by solemn ceremony, failed to raise national religion to the height of the divine covenant, Jeremiah daringly conceived a new and inner covenant of God with Israel, by which His law would be supernaturally written on their hearts—i.e. taken up by their wills (Jer. xxxi. 33, cf. Isa. li. 7, lix. 21)—a covenant which Ezekiel expresses as the giving of a new heart and a new spirit to prompt a new and hitherto unfulfilled obedience (xxxvii. 26, 27).

This persistence of the divine purpose constitutes the real unity of the Old Testament. It may be remarked, incidentally, that from this conception has come that of the unity of history

<sup>1</sup> The misconception which makes 'covenant' equivalent to 'contract' is illustrated in Lord Macmillan's recent remark about the Old Testament that "The whole conception of the relationship between God and man is legal" (*Law and Other Things*, 1937, p. 64).

in general, which inspires the modern historian. The prophets who interpreted contemporary events in the light of the divine purpose found their heirs in the apocalypticists, with their conception of periods of world-history all subordinated to the final achievement of the divine will. Charles seems warranted in saying:

'The Old Testament prophets dealt with the destinies of this nation or of that, but took no comprehensive view of the history of the world as a whole. No more did any of the Greek or Roman historians. Hence Daniel was the first to teach the unity of all human history, and that every fresh phase of this history was a further stage in the development of God's purposes' (*The Book of Daniel*, p. cxiv).

The prophetic transformation of the historical 'event' into the religious 'fact' has its parallel in the realm of nature. Here we see the transformation of the (chiefly Babylonian) mythology which was the conventional explanation of the world, into the doctrine of its creation and conservation by Yahweh. The resultant picture of the world was that of a flat earth (surrounded by water) with the solid vault of the 'firmament' above it, set on mountain pillars, and with the caverns of Sheol beneath its surface. It is a three-storied house, with the 'shades' below, the heavenly beings above (where Yahweh has His palace), and with the earth itself as the arena of man's life. The creation of this structure is still described in terms drawn from the ancient mythology (as e.g. in Ps. lxxiv. 13 ff., lxxxix. 10 ff.), but they are used to exalt the creative majesty and unique character of the one real God, Yahweh. In the earlier of the creation-stories (Gen. ii. 4 b-24) Yahweh creates the animals and man within an already existent framework of heaven and earth; in the later (Gen. i), the whole ordered universe is the result of His commanding word. The poetic parallel to this more developed conception is seen in Ps. civ, which also gives us (vers. 27-30) the Hebrew equivalent to a doctrine of conservation—all living things depend on Yahweh's life-giving spirit, and when it is



withdrawn they expire. This constant dependence on God is as true for nature as for man; the prophet Jeremiah sees a vision of the return of the primeval chaos through Yahweh's anger (iv. 23-6; cf. Isa. li. 6). There is no conception of nature with automatic 'laws', such as were imagined in the nineteenth century and still dominate so much popular thought. Yet the absence of such independent executive *in* nature does not exclude a divine legislation *for* nature, to be seen in its orderly ways (Gen. viii. 22; Hos. ii. 21 ff.; Jer. viii. 7, xxxi. 35 ff.; Isa. lv. 10 ff.; Job. xxxviii. 8 ff. &c.). The result of this direct dependence of nature on God is that the conception of 'miracle' is very different from that current to-day. 'God, who in every rain pours out the pitchers of heaven, simply left its windows open somewhat longer in the time of Noah.'<sup>1</sup> Ancient Jewish teachers tell us that the rain is a greater miracle than the resurrection of the dead, and that the bread which a man puts into his mouth is a more difficult thing to produce than the deliverance of Israel (Moore, *Judaism*, i, pp. 378-9). It is the goodness of God, rather than His power, which is displayed in the so-called miracle. The Hebrew word for 'miracles' (*mirphlaith*) is applied to both ordinary and extraordinary events. Thus (Job v. 9 ff.; cf. Exod. iii. 20) after it is said that God 'doeth "miracles" without number', the example immediately given is, 'Who giveth rain upon the earth' (cf. Matt. v. 45). 'In the oriental world, it is the rain that is reckoned as the chief gift of the gods.'<sup>2</sup> In the Book of Job the whole of nature becomes the panorama of divine providence; in Deutero-Isaiah the divine control of nature is made a ground of confidence in the divine control of history.

It will be seen, therefore, that the Hebrew view of nature cannot be reconciled with either modern science or modern philosophy. It interprets natural phenomena in naïve ways and has little place for 'second causes'; its account of creation as an

<sup>1</sup> Lobstein, *Realencyklopädie für protestantische Theologie und Kirche*, xx, p. 744.

<sup>2</sup> Dhorme, *La Religion des Hébreux nomades*, p. 188.

event in time would be difficult to assimilate to any well-thought-out metaphysic. Yet the Old Testament doctrine of creation, accepted as a general principle without regard to its anthropomorphic and mythological details, does express a necessary truth of theism—the ultimate complete dependence of the world on God—a dependence which theism would now prefer to interpret as that *constant* outflow of the divine activity which expresses and reveals the divine nature and purpose.

#### B. Man

(a) *His place in nature and his constitution.* God formed the earth to be inhabited (Isa. xlv. 18); man is central in His purpose. That thought inspires the eighth psalm with its contrast of the majesty of the starry sky and the apparent insignificance, yet real importance, of man amongst God's other creatures. So in Ps. civ the description of nature as the handiwork of God is a framework for the recognition of man as going forth to his work and to his labour day by day, one amongst other creatures yet able to know God and praise Him (as no other inhabitant of the earth can). The subordination of nature to the purpose of God in history, as seen in nature-miracles, indirectly illustrates this central place of man in the creation.

The constitution of man is essentially that of a body animated by a breath-soul (Gen. ii. 7), and the miracle of the creation of Adam is renewed in each birth (Job x. 10, 11; Ps. cxxxix. 13-16; 2 Macc. vii. 22; Ps. xxii. 9; Eccles. xi. 5). Man is made in the image of God (Gen. i. 26; cf. v. 3), i.e. he has a physical form like that of God, however different be his substance ('flesh' and not 'spirit', Isa. xxxi. 3; cf. Jer. xvii. 5). This physical form, however, is not set in contrast with psychological attributes (as by ourselves); the whole animated body, whether bones and flesh, or the peripheral and central organs, have psychological and therefore moral qualities, by a sort of diffused consciousness. Another important difference from our way of thinking about man is that