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CONFLICT OF RELIGIOUS CULTURES:
A STUDY IN THE RELEVANCE OF
UGARITIC MATERIALS FOR THE
EARLY FAITH OF ISRAEL

A Thesis Presented to the Faculty
of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis,
Department of Exegetical Theology
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Theology.

by

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June 1962

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Doctor of Theology

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














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SIGLA FOR THE TRANSLITERATION
OF HEBREW AND UGARITIC

Ugaritic	Hebrew	Symbol
		'a
		'i
		'u
		b
		g
		d
		ð
		h
		w
		z
		ḥ
		ḅ
		ṭ
		ẓ
		y
		k
		l
		m
		n
		s
		ṣ
		'
		š

Ugaritic	Hebrew	Symbol
		p
		s
		q
		r
		e
		s
		t
		e
Long vowels		a
		i
		u
Short vowels		a
		i
		u
Indistinct vowels		a
		e
		u

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Since 1929 scholars have been concerned with the interpretation of certain Canaanite literary materials found at Ras Shamra in North Syria. The site of the discovery was known as Ugarit in ancient times. Accordingly the Canaanite dialect spoken by its inhabitants has been designated Ugaritic. The attention of the scholarly world has also been drawn to a number of linguistic and cultural parallels between this corpus of literature and sections of the biblical record. Nevertheless, despite the numerous treatments of isolated points of contact between Ugaritic and biblical thought, one major question has not yet received an adequate answer. How and to what extent are the Ugaritic texts relevant for an appreciation of the fundamentals of the Israelite religion? It is the purpose of this study to answer at least part of this question by considering the major religious beliefs of Israel from the pre-monarchic period in the light of the Canaanite materials from Ugarit.

Every student of the Bible pursues his research into the literature of that book with certain a priori presuppositions. Hence, it is fitting that the present writer state his presuppositions and principles at the outset. Moreover, throughout the subsequent discussion the term "faith," in expressions such as the "faith of Israel," is used to designate the content of religious beliefs and convictions inspired by Jahwe and

discernible from the records of Scripture. In this connection the writer assumes that the Israelite faith, like its complement the Christian faith, involves the historical and revelatory activity of God. This being granted what principles of research can be employed for a deeper understanding of this faith?

First, if this faith is historical then it will be advantageous to study it in the light of its own historical and cultural milieu and to seek to comprehend its meaning on the basis of its own historical and cultural terms. Further, assuming the demonstrability of historical contact between the religious culture of Israel and that of its pagan environment, any communication or meaningful conflict between the two presupposes a mutually intelligible circle of cultural concepts.

Again, granting the plausibility of this presupposition, it is possible that comparative religious concepts from non-Israelite cultures may be discernible in the biblical record. The contextual usage of such concepts would then be relevant for an appreciation of the biblical attitude toward or meaning of these ideas.

Finally, such an analysis of biblical usage should provide pertinent information for defining the distinctive characteristics of Israel's faith within its cultural environment and for determining the relevance of this cultural milieu for that faith. The subsequent research will be pursued according to these elementary principles.

The immediate goal of the present analysis is to define

the relevance of the Canaanite religious culture for an understanding of the early faith of Israel. In chapter two the presence and prominence of certain early conflicts between the Israelite religion and its cultural environment will be demonstrated and the significance of these conflicts for an understanding of the covenant faith of Israel will be discussed. In the course of the chapter the essentials of Israel's covenant faith will be defined on the basis of Exod. 19:3-8. No attempt will be made at this point to determine the precise date of all the literary materials which incorporate these conflict traditions or the various covenant pericopes.

In chapter three, however, it will be shown that the same fundamental beliefs of this covenant faith are prominent in those poetic materials of Scripture which, according to recent scholarship, are demonstrably archaic. This archaic poetry will provide the major biblical source material for comparison with the Canaanite literature.

Specific religious patterns, imagery, concepts, terminology and practices from Canaanite usage will be treated in chapters four to six and the nature of their relationship with comparable biblical thought and practice will be analyzed. In so doing the essentials of Israel's covenant faith will also become more sharply defined and the antiquity of the conflict tradition more strongly affirmed.

Thus in chapter four a comparison of the respective concepts of divine kingship in the Baal myth and in Exod. 15:1-18 leads to a deeper understanding of the magnalia of Jahwe's

saving activities. In chapter five a consideration of Baal's self-disclosure in the storm and of Jahwe's theophanic self-revelations accentuates the sovereignty of Jahwe. And in chapter six a comparative analysis of Baal's role as the god of fertility and of Jahwe as the God over nature underscores the avid jealousy of Israel's God.

Finally, the plausibility and correlation of the major conclusions in the presentation will be further demonstrated by applying them to the text of I Sam. 12:1-15. In addition, certain definite conclusions are drawn about the way in which the biblical writers treated the relevant Canaanite religious concepts and what cautions need to be observed in determining the significance of this Canaanite material.¹

In brief the major thesis of the present work is that any interpretation of the pre-monarchic faith of Israel must take into consideration the conflict between the religious culture of Israel and that of its historical environment, and that the Ugaritic materials, in particular, are relevant for an understanding of the conflict between the religious cultures of Israel and Canaan, for an appreciation of the distinctive features of Israel's covenant faith and for a clarification of those areas where Canaanite religious influences are thought to be present in the biblical record.

¹Suitable transliterations of the Ugaritic texts appear in C. Gordon, Ugaritic Manual (Rome: The Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1955), and in G. R. Driver, Canaanite Myths and Legends (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1956). The textual nomenclature and numbering of the latter will be followed in this work.

CHAPTER II

THE CONFLICT TRADITION IN THE COVENANT

FAITH OF ISRAEL¹

One of the maxims of history might be designated "the law of reciprocity," that is, the action and interaction of culture with culture, the conscious and unconscious communication of traditions and ideals or the penetration and repulsion of religious forms and secular mores. Moreover, the God of history does not necessarily suspend this law in the life of Israel either in connection with His saving activity on its behalf or in the opus alienum of His wrath. For even the self-revelation of Jahwe is seen, at one and the same time, in, through and above this law of history. In a sense, then, this law is a law of the Kingdom of God and the legitimate subject of theological investigation.

The immediate objective of this chapter is to consider several illustrations of this phenomenon of history in the early years of Israel and thereby underscore the relevance of the conflict traditions for the faith of this historical people. The materials of the early biblical traditions will be taken seriously, and the most serious clause of that

¹The term tradition is used here in the sense of that complex of material concerning a specific subject or living issue which was handed down as a vital part of the religious faith of Israel and which is recorded in the biblical texts.

corpus, to wit, the covenant crisis, will now be examined.

The covenant is a sine qua non of Israelite faith. Hence, the early covenant renewal situations should prove pertinent for an appreciation of the critical moments of Israel's life. Furthermore, it is conceivable that these recurrent situations may involve either a specific religious conflict or a conscious religious polemic. Accordingly, the subsequent discussion will demonstrate that just such a conflict motif is an integral part of the covenant faith of Israel. Moreover, the biblical record at times represents such conflict as a battle of the gods. Covenant commitment, then, would be the Israelite's acknowledgment of the Victor.

It must be stated at the outset, however, that the covenant itself and the covenant renewal traditions of Israelite history depict specific historical events and are not merely the echoes or reflections of some bold polemics from the prophetic age or simply a cultic poet's imaginative presentation for the annual covenant renewal festival under the late monarchy or the exilic priesthood. Baal Peor in Transjordan is not the burden of Jeremiah amid the pits and prisons of Jerusalem. The Mount Sinai incident cannot be interpreted as the mere historicization of a covenant renewal on Mount Zion. It is the living conflict behind this Sinai incident which must first be considered.

The Sinaitic Covenant²

The persistent conviction that Jahwe hails from the South is a bold testimony to its own authenticity. Thus the ancient oracles acclaim Jahwe as "the One from Sinai" (Judg. 5:5) and as the "dawn" of Israel which rose from the mountains of the South (Deut. 33:2; cf. Hab. 3:3), and His advent in Israel's humiliating history as a theophany. Such a demand stands in direct antithesis to the Canaanite mythology in which the holy ones of a multifarious pantheon abide upon the heights of Şapon.³ Sinai was sanctified by a moment in time; Şapon was the timeless residence of the Baal myth.

The prelude to the Sinai covenant includes the various plague cycles, the crossing of the Red Sea, the initial trials of the wilderness and the reunion with Jethro. Throughout this prelude the combat motif is paramount, for the theological perspective of the biblical account observes more

²The following discussion presupposes the historicity of the Sinai event and its immediate connection with the Exodus event, despite the fact that the ancient credos make no explicit reference to the former. See especially J. Bright, A History of Israel (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1959), pp. 114-116. Furthermore, inasmuch as the entire faith and history of Israel as a twelve tribe league is inexplicable without the covenant structure as its foundation, it is legitimate to regard the essential features of the covenant pericopes and traditions, many of which reflect an archaic and stereotype literary format, as clear reflections of the earliest faith revealed to Israel.

³This does not exclude the motif of Jahwe's association with the North in later Israelite literature. See Ezek. 1:4; 28:14; Isa. 14:13.

than a mere trek of nomads from one locale to another. There is a battle on a higher level. First and foremost, it is Jahwe versus Pharaoh; ultimately it is Jahwe or the gods of Egypt who must stand victorious. One plague follows another as the tension mounts, and each plague becomes an ominous act of Jahwe (mōpēt), a sign ('ōt), a glorious deed of judgment (šepet).⁴ Or as the climactic words of the passover memorial read: "On all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment; I am Jahwe" (Exod. 12:12). It is this same Jahwe, who in jealousy for His name, also interferes to rescue and protect. For the victory is on behalf of Israel, over whom He will stand guard (psh), and as a witness against Egypt, over whom the angel of death passes ('br) to vindicate the Name (Exod. 12:21-28).⁵

The immediate issue between Moses and Pharaoh is the right to celebrate a certain feast in the desert. The real question, however, is one of authority. The Egyptian magicians represent the power of Egyptian deities while Moses

⁴See Exod. 7:3,4; 11:9-10; 12:12. Compare Deut. 3:34; 28:46; Isa. 20:3; Ezek. 12:6,11 et passim.

⁵It is inadequate to translate psh as "pass over" for it obscures the distinction between this word and 'br which is also used in this section. 'br is employed when the angel passes over to destroy, but psh is used when Jahwe is present to save Israel. Further, in the light of the parallel with nsl "to deliver, spare" in verse 27, and the parallel with gnn "to cover, protect, defend" in Isa. 31:5, it seems preferable to translate psh as "protect" or "stand guard." It is a term then which further underscores the jealousy of Jahwe.

strikes in the name of Jahwe.⁶ It is unnecessary to equate each of the plagues with a specific polemic against a particular Egyptian god, as some have done. The situation is clear as it stands; Israel must behold the absolute victory of Jahwe so that its belief might be without reserve (Exod. 14:30f.). Accordingly, the humiliation of Pharaoh and the Egyptians must be complete (Exod. 12:36; 14:28) as Jahwe vindicates His supremacy (Exod. 14:4). In addition, this conflict tradition is not only an integral part of the exodus narrative, but is common to each of the literary strata which, in the opinion of scholars, is represented there.

Once the spectacular excitement of the exodus triumph dies the struggle demands a more intimate and personal involvement on Israel's part. The child "Israel" is now on trial (Exod. 15:25). The conflict is still Jahwe versus Egypt, but the choice is now one of faith. For every rumble of discontent is tantamount to a breach of faith which makes the offender liable to the same fate as that of the Egyptians (Exod. 15:26). Whether the need of the hour is simply one of

⁶See S. R. Driver, The Book of Exodus in The Cambridge Bible for School and Colleges (Cambridge: The University Press, 1953), pp. 59f.; C. J. Rylaarsdam, The Book of Exodus in The Interpreter's Bible (New York: Abingdon Press, 1952), p. 894.

bread or water the "murmur" motif predominates.⁷ It is a question of returning to the "fleshpots of Egypt" or of seeing "the glory of the Lord" (Exod. 16:3,7), and in the final analysis of whether "Jahwe is among us or not" (Exod. 17:7). In the jeopardy of present need Israel was often tempted to look back to "the good old days," and the gods who had apparently blessed Egypt so bountifully.

In direct contrast to the attitude of Jahwe's own people is that of the Midianite priest Jethro, whose joy is unbounded as he responds to the news of Jahwe's redemptive acts in the Exodus. In fact, as far as Jethro is concerned the conflict is resolved. "Now I know that Jahwe is greater than all other gods," he cries (Exod. 18:11). For the moment the pantheon of Egypt and the gods of Midian have fallen into disfavor, and this moment provides the setting for the Sinai covenant. However, as the statement at the end of the covenant code warns, the gods of Canaan present the next challenge for the faith of Israel (Exod. 23:23f). A new conflict is imminent.

Within this literary and historical framework the Sinaitic covenant receives its true theological appreciation. This

⁷Note especially Exod. 15:24; 16:2,7,8,9,12; 17:3 for the "murmur" motif in Exodus. The same root (lwn) is found in Numbers (14:2,27,29,36; 16:11,41; 17:5) where murmuring implies breach of covenant. Compare also G. Mendenhall, Law and Covenant in Israel and the Ancient Near East (Pittsburgh: The Biblical Colloquium, 1955), p. 39.

conflict throws into bold relief both the covenant formulation and the attendant legislation. The covenant of Sinai is not born at an arbitrary moment of time, but in an hour of contention and decision. It is the victory pledge of Jahwe.

The apodictic demands of the decalogue and the covenant code bear a distinctive character.⁸ Admittedly similar formulations have been cited from Hittite law and West Semitic curses.⁹ However, in the covenant code they receive a pronounced cultic and religious emphasis,¹⁰ while in the decalogue the same is true of at least the first three debarim which set the tone for the ten words as a whole. This emphasis is not surprising if one recognizes that the narrative structure of Exodus seems to present them as the categorical demands of the victorious King. Here there is no room for casuistry, for the theological comment upon the first "word" reads, "I, Jahwe your God am a jealous God" (Exod. 20:5). Accordingly, "No other gods besides me" is the necessary complement of the

⁸A. Alt, "Die Ursprünge des israelitischen Rechts" in Kleine Schriften zur Geschichte des Volkes Israels (München: C. H. Beck, 1953), I, 278-332; W. F. Albright, From Stone Age to Christianity (New York: Doubleday & Co., 1957), pp. 267-269. The latter writer, among others, has underscored the archaic character of both the decalogue and the covenant code.

⁹G. Mendenhall, "Ancient Oriental and Biblical Law," Biblical Archeologist, XVII (1954), 30; S. Gevirtz, "West Semitic Curses and the Problem of the Origins of Hebrew Law," Vetus Testamentum, XI (1961), 137-158.

¹⁰Exod. 20:22-26; 22:27-30; 23:1-19; 22:17, 19, 20, 21.

absolute "Thou shalt not . . ." from a God who would disdain an image of Himself as much as He would of any of His created worlds (Exod. 20:3-5). Such words by themselves do not explicitly affirm or deny the existence and living reality of other gods than Jahwe, but they do suggest the potential claim, at least in the mind of the Israelite, of those so-called gods and powers with whom Jahwe must contend. Such gods, by the very temptations which they effect, become a reality for Israel and thereby evoke this apodictic demand from Jahwe the suzerain overlord. In a word, apodictic law is thoroughly consistent with the conflict tradition and points to its authentic and archaic character. In such a conflict there could be no compromise, no rival deities could be tolerated!

The apodictic laws are, of course, but part of the legislation which is appended to the Sinai covenant. Such a corpus of legislation, as G. Mendenhall has shown, is typical of archaic covenant structure and corresponds quite closely to the stipulations which form an integral part of the ancient Hittite treaties, in which no relationships with powers outside the Hittite Empire were permitted.¹¹ The analysis of these restrictive laws as they pertain to

¹¹Mendenhall, Law and Covenant, pp. 31-41. For the connection of these laws with the covenant cultus of Israel see H. J. Kraus, Gottesdienst in Israel (München: Kaiser Verlag, 1954), pp. 43ff.

the earliest history of Israel is not the immediate concern of this study. Suffice it to say that they serve to underscore the significance of the Sinaitic covenant as a historical treaty, a relic of the culture of its time, and a channel of divine communication. It is the essentials of this covenant pericope (Exod. 19:3-6)¹² which will now be delineated against the background of the foregoing "conflict" tradition. Accordingly, these essentials from the earliest covenant consciousness of Israel will provide a suitable outline with which to compare the basic propositions of the Canaanite religion in Palestine. This comparison is the burden of later chapters of the present work.

The Essentials of the Sinaitic Covenant

An outline of the essential features of the covenant faith of Israel found in Exod. 19:3-6 now follows.¹³

(a) The Witness Impact. "You, you have seen . . ." is

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¹²Mowinkel classifies this passage as part of the ancient E Stratum of tradition. S. Mowinkel, Le Decalogue (Paris: Felix Alcan, 1927), pp. 117, 128f; likewise G. Beer, Exodus in Handbuch zum Alten Testament (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1939), pp. 96f; and many others. The present writer agrees with the arguments of James Muilenburg, "The Form and Structure of Covenantal Formulations," Vetus Testamentum, IX (1959), 346ff, that this passage is not to be considered a deuteronomic addition as certain scholars have maintained.

¹³The literary and stylistic questions have been treated by Muilenburg, op. cit., pp. 351-354.

the initial thrust of this election formula.¹⁴ The "House of Jacob" is Jahwe's witness; his was both an observation with the eyes of faith and an experience in the course of events. Something happened within the confines of history and time that was both unique and visible; it was not the mock encounter of ritual. From the beginning Israel's faith rested upon a given historical act as the foundation of its grace relationship with Jahwe.¹⁵ The impact of this primal act left an indelible imprint upon the heritage of "the sons of Israel" for, according to the refrain of Deuteronomy, "your own eyes have seen" the magnalia of the Lord.¹⁶ The persistence of this theme is in itself a testimony against the suggestion that these events are the historization of some myth. Accordingly, the great conflict and victory of Jahwe is not merely a matter of record; it is a question of personal historical involvement on the part of one generation of Israel.

As is well known, the witness motif is common to many

¹⁴For the same technical expression in similar contexts see Exod. 20:22; Deut. 1:31; 29:2; Josh. 23:3.

¹⁵Compare the approach of G. Wright, The Old Testament Against its Environment (London: SCM Press, 1950), pp. 20-22.

¹⁶Deut. 3:21; 4:39; 7:19; 10:21; 11:2,7,29; 29:3; Josh. 24:7. Compare also Isa. 43:8-13 where Israel plays the role of Jahwe's star witness as the court of all the nations appears before Jahwe.

ancient Near Eastern covenants and treaties.¹⁷ However, the witness concept in the pericope under discussion differs significantly from that of its pagan counterparts. Here Israel itself is witness while in the Hittite treaties the various cosmic gods and deified forms of nature testify to the conditions of the pact.¹⁸ This difference is pertinent inasmuch as it highlights the impact of Israel's revelation consciousness and the irrelevance of any other god or power for the faith of the 'am Jahwe. There is no other court of appeal for Israel. Or as Joshua later remarks, "You are witnesses against yourselves that you have chosen the Lord to serve Him" (Josh. 24:22). For what Israel had seen was its own salvation. Such a witness is in obvious antithesis to the mythological faith of Israel's neighbor's.

(b) The Magnalia of Jahwe. "What I did to Egypt" is the kerygma to early Israel in nuce. It reproduces the main

¹⁷Mendenhall, Law and Covenant, p. 34. See the treaty between Suppiluliumas and Mattiwaza for a typical illustration. A good translation appears in James Pritchard, Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1955), pp. 204f.

¹⁸It is apparent, however, that inanimate objects are employed as witnesses to certain covenants and oaths in the Old Testament, but never pagan gods. Gen. 31:48-52; Deut. 4:26; Mic. 6:1; Josh. 22:34; 24:27. The above objects are not considered capable of reprisal in any way should one party break the oath. They appear more as memorial objects than as gods or powers comparable to the witnesses of pagan treaties. The pillars of Exod. 24:4 can well be understood in the same way. For Jahwe as witness see I Sam. 10:12; Judg. 9:7; Mic. 1:2; I Sam. 20:23-42; Zeph. 3:8.

thrust of the conflict and victory which was surveyed above; it stands for the exodus operation with all its attendant glory. Egypt, moreover, represents great world might and authority, the symbol of exalted gods and men. But above all it is a historical name and neither a creature of chaos nor a perennial adversary of nature. In a word, Egypt in that day and age was the foe par excellence,¹⁹ and what Jahwe did to Egypt was nothing short of magnifique et terrible. Accordingly the characteristic identification formula of Jahwe reads, "I am Jahwe, your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt."²⁰

The nice survey of mighty acts in Exod. 19:4 includes a poetic description of the miraculous intervention and jealous protective hand of the wilderness Guide in terms of a mighty vulture transporting young to safety, and an intimate reminder that Jahwe alone had brought them to Sinai, into the awful presence of the Holy Mountain. Behind these expressions lie the various conflicts and trials noted above; through them the listener is brought to the miracle of the moment, the Sinaitic covenant.

¹⁹The role of Egypt as the classical enemy of Israel and consequently of Jahwe is apparent throughout the Old Testament. See for example Num. 3:13; Deut. 1:29f.; 4:20; 6:21; 7:7,17-19; Judg. 6:8-10,13; Isa. 19:1ff.; Jer. 2:16f.; 11:4; 46:1ff.; Ezek. 30:1ff.; Zech. 14:19; Ps. 81:5.

²⁰Exod. 16:6; 18:1; 20:2; Lev. 11:45; 26:13,45; Deut. 6:12; Judg. 2:12; Ps. 81:10; et passim. A similar formula serves to underscore the saving activity of this God in the life of Abram. See Gen. 15:7.

Magnalia of grace such as these are fundamental to the faith of Israel from the earliest times. They are the divine credentials, the vibrant acts of jealous interference, the šidqōt Jahwe. It is their recital and appropriation by each succeeding generation that reveals the knowledge of salvation to the Israelite, and in the final analysis, that constitutes the theology of God's activity in time.²¹ Any suggestion of a speculative religion is excluded.

(c) A Jealous Overlord. If it is true that the witness impact of Israel's personal historical experience in Egypt was unique and that the saving deeds of Jahwe are abnormal intrusions of God at given moments in time, then Th. Vriezen does well to emphasize that the covenant "relationship between Jahwe and Israel is not looked upon as natural but as placed in history by Jahwe."²² It is Jahwe who offers the covenant, states the terms of the covenant and establishes the covenant. And all of this is but the "giving" of grace, the option of the suzerain overlord. "If you hearken to my voice . . . and if you keep my covenant," is no cruel imposition. Allegiance is the natural response of those upon

²¹For an appreciation of Biblical theology as the recital of the saving acts of Jahwe, see especially G. E. Wright, God Who Acts (London: SCM Press, 1950), pp. 33-76. For the presence of these acts in the archaic poetic materials see infra pp. 57ff.

²²Th. C. Vriezen, An Outline of Old Testament Theology (Wageningen: Veenman & Zonen, 1958), p. 140. Compare also Wright, God Who Acts, p. 58.

whom the witness has made its ultimate impact. "If" means quite reasonably "if you are willing." And the decision of acceptance inevitably involves the subsequent blessing of jealous and persistent love for a personal people. Here there is none of the caprice of Anath and her ilk. The attendant stipulations present the relevant way of life in the kingdom of the suzerain overlord. Thus, Torah is a living element within the covenant communion as revealed at Sinai, and a suitable medium with which to express faith in the immanent activity of Jahwe through the hearts and lives of those who had experienced the reality of the Sinai revelation.

Such is the specific berit later ratified with blood at the holy mountain of Sinai (Exod. 24:5-11).²³ If its forthright 'attā (Exod. 19:3-6) emphasizes the urgency of the decision at that hour, then its 'im plus the infinitive absolute heightens the seriousness and absolute nature of Israel's

²³Studies on the suggested etymologies of berit and the various nuances of meaning associated with the term in its wider contextual usage are numerous. See for example, E. Jacob, Theology of the Old Testament (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1958), pp. 209-217; J. Beggich, "Berit. Ein Beitrag zur Erfassung einer alttestamentlichen Denkform," Zeitschrift für alttestamentliche Wissenschaft, LX (1944), 1ff.; note also the extra-biblical form TAR beriti (cut a covenant) in the Qatna documents, W. F. Albright, "The Hebrew Expression for Making a Covenant in Pre-Israelite Documents," Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research, CXXII (1951), 21-22. Cf. also H. S. Gehman, "The Covenant--The Old Testament Foundation of the Church," Theology Today, VII (1950), 26ff., and W. Eichrodt, Theology of the Old Testament (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1961), pp. 35f.

allegiance.²⁴ For Israel must respond to a "jealous" overlord. It must remember and learn that all other gods are in opposition to Jahwe. Hence the attendant "conflict" traditions and the precise formulation of the subsequent oath of allegiance, "All that Jahwe has commanded we will do" (Exod. 19:8; 24:7) are relevant for the immediate crisis. Under these conditions Jahwe reigns supreme; He alone is King in Israel.

(d) A Sovereign Choice. Perhaps the most arresting statement of the present pericope is that which provides the very basis for the sovereign claim of Jahwe over Israel. "For all the earth is mine" (Exod. 19:5b) has as its inevitable corollary "all the peoples of the earth are under my control." Since such a statement implies a universal supremacy, many have sought to explain it as an editorial reflection of a later age.²⁵ Nevertheless, in addition to the fact that heroic gods of the ancient Near East have made somewhat

²⁴It is significant that both these literary expressions were preserved as technical marks of the covenant Gattung. For 'attā in similar contexts see Gen. 31:44; Exod. 32:32; Deut. 4:1; 10:12; Josh. 24:14; 24:23; I Sam. 12:7,13,14; et passim. 'im plus infinitive absolute appears in typical contexts such as Exod. 15:26; 19:5; Deut. 8:19; 11:13E; 11:22; 15:5; 28:1; Josh. 23:12; I Sam. 12:25; Jer. 7:6; 12:16; 17:24; 22:4; Zech. 6:15. 'im is, of course, a characteristic introductory particle in covenant contexts even where the infinitive absolute is not explicit. In this analysis the writer agrees with the findings of Millenbourg, op. cit., pp. 354-356.

²⁵For example, H. Holzinger, Exodus in Kurzer Hand-Commentar zum Alten Testament (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1900), pp. 64, 67.

similar claims,²⁶ the preceding "conflict" tradition makes this divine assertion totally relevant and legitimate. Jahwe has just defeated the mightiest powers. In fact the same theological perspective is apparent in the plague "battle" for example (Exod. 9:14,16,29), the exodus encounter (Exod. 14:4,18; 18:10f) and the persistent motif of the humiliation of the mighty Egypt.²⁷

If Jahwe can give Egypt as a ransom for Israel then His authority and domain are unlimited (cf. Isa. 43:1-7) and His choice is a sovereign election. This inevitably means that "the chosen one" is holy, that is, peculiar and unique by virtue of that choice (Exod. 19:6), selected as "the one" from among many. Furthermore, while it is in a sense correct that "Jahwe God of Israel and Israel people of Jahwe is a cliché without real content which mutatis mutandis could be used for other folk religions,"²⁸ the distinguishing features of Israel's choice as the 'am Jahwe are the divine initiative within the historical and cultural moment of conflict and the specific covenant structure within which this election is

²⁶Compare the title of Enlil, "Lord of heaven and earth," in Hammurabi Code, line 2; or Baal who is exalted as "Prince, Lord of the Earth," Baal V i 3f. These titles, of course, do not rule out the existence of lesser gods.

²⁷Refer also to Exod. 34:10 and Josh. 3:11,13. For the development of this concept in Deuteronomy see Deut. 4:39; 7:6; 9:5; 26:19; et passim.

²⁸Wright, The Old Testament Against its Environment, p. 15.

exercised. These features emphasize the major peculiarity of the choice motif of Israel over against that of its neighbors. Jahwe chose Israel at a precise and particular hour in his-
 tory. He need not have done so; He did not need Israel; He was not necessarily bound to Israel as His people. But He "became" bound, or rather He bound Himself to Israel, and the form of that bond was a covenant treaty. Israel's neighbors were bound to their gods either because of local circumstances or because they were powers of cosmos and nature which in the ageless mythology of their faith were an integral part of their cycle of existence. Their history had not been disrupted by a covenant decision, for their conflict tradition was but the perennial cycle of creation and fertilization.

The technical terms segullā, mamleket kōhanīm and gōi qādōš express the "holy" aspect of Israel as a chosen people. Segullā emphasizes the patient and cherished selection of divine love,²⁹ mamleket kōhanīm delineates Israel's role as that of priest and mediator among the various Staaten of earthly nations,³⁰ while gōi qādōš stresses the "other"

²⁹For an appreciation of the concept of segullā see Deut. 6:6-8; 14:2; 26:18f.; Ps. 135:4; Mal. 3:17. Note how it stands in parallel relation to bāhar in Ps. 135:4. Compare also Mosche Greenberg, "Hebrew segulla: Akkadian sikiltu," Journal of the American Oriental Society, LXXI (1951), 172-174.

³⁰For the appreciation of mamleket as "staat" in the present text see M. Noth, Das zweite Buch Mose in Das Alte Testament Deutsch (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1959), p. 126.

separate character of Israel within its cultural environment.³¹ As such the nation Israel was born from the womb of conflict and endowed with this peculiar character in order that it might survive the imminent crises and temptations of youth.

In brief then, the essential features of the Sinai covenant which are brought into clearer focus through an awareness of the framework of a conflict tradition are the inculcation of Israel's acute sense of personal involvement in a particular historical act of revelation, its insistence upon the divine magnalia as redemptive acts of a victorious God, its portrayal of the Tatcharakter of the covenant communion at the hand of a supremely jealous suzerain lord of history, and the emphasis on its own abnormal choice and its role as the privileged people of an almighty sovereign. These elements must be kept in mind in the following treatment of the history of the covenant amid conflict during the early days of Israel, and in the subsequent analysis of the archaic poetic materials of Israel. This "given" nucleus of revelation will provide the necessary basis of comparison and point of departure for an investigation of the impact of Canaanite

³¹The expression gōi qādōš militates against regarding this passage as a deuteronomic addition. The equivalent in Deuteronomy always appears as 'am qādōš, e.g., 7:6; 14:2,21; 26:19; 28:9. A later editor would hardly have invented a hapax legomenon if he wished to achieve uniformity of tradition in an earlier manuscript. Compare also the position of E. Jacob, Theology of the Old Testament (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1958), p. 204.

culture upon the faith of the Israelite. The first test of that covenant faith came at Sinai itself.

The Covenant Renewal at Sinai

The golden calf incident is the expression of an internal religious crisis, the outburst of skeptical people. However, it may be argued that this account of Israelite faith on trial (Exod. 32) is hardly a legitimate tradition to support the contention that the "conflict" motif provides a necessary background for an appreciation of the early faith of Israel. Can the golden calf crisis be considered in any sense historical? Is not its very raison d'être the aberrations of Jeroboam I in I Kings 12:28?³² In view of the numerous literary and exegetical problems commonly found in this section, can any of it be considered part of an ancient tradition?³³

In addition to the argumentation of Georg Beer³⁴ that

³²This is virtually the position of Noth, op. cit., pp. 200-202. For an analysis of Noth's position, see S. Lehmann, "Versuch zu Exod. XXXII," Vetus Testamentum, X (1960), 16-50.

³³S. R. Driver, op. cit., p. xcvi for example, regards Exod. 32:1-8 as part of the E Strata; G. Beer, Exodus in Handbuch zum Alten Testament (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1939), p. 153, considers Exod. 32:1-6 as E; however, the most recent analysis of the chapter presents Exod. 32:1-4 and 6b as part of the J Strata, I. Lewy, "The Story of the Golden Calf Re-analyzed," Vetus Testamentum, IX (1959), 318-322. Similar differences of opinion characterize the analysis of the remaining verses of the chapter. The present study treats Exod. 32:1-6 as early, the literary style being quite secondary for an appreciation of the major force of the passage.

³⁴Op. cit., p. 156.

this is historical ground, the following facts need to be borne in mind before one discredits the possibility of Aaron having made a golden calf. The first problem concerns the question of how Jeroboam could readily gain support for the introduction of bull images in connection with the worship of Jahwe, especially within the official priesthood, if there had been no such precedent from the past.³⁵ Further, to hail the bull image with the exclamation, "Behold your god (or gods) O Israel, which brought you out of the land of Egypt" would hardly be applicable and effective for Jeroboam's desired goals if the imagery was derived from some contemporary bull cult. By such an exclamation, it would seem, Jeroboam is linking his bull cultus form with a specific "exodus" tradition, thereby giving it an air of respectability and cogency. Moreover, if the Exodus story of the golden calf is a polemic against the action of the Northern Kingdom, one wonders why Israel as a whole stands condemned and not merely certain tribes from the North.

A second cogent argument concerns the weakness of character displayed by Aaron.³⁶ The representation of the hero of

³⁵Note also W. Albright, Archeology and the Religion of Israel (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1953), p. 219, footnote 100 where he emphasizes that Jeroboam "posed as a reformer."

³⁶Cf. Beer, op. cit., pp. 147ff., and M. Buber, Moses (New York: Harper & Bros., 1946), p. 148. This also militates against the position that the references to Aaron are secondary, Noth, op. cit., pp. 201f. Compare the treatment of Lehmgung, op. cit., pp. 40-48, in which he sees an antithesis between the Levites of v.26 and Aaron in v.5.

the Aaronide priesthood in such a disgraceful light cannot reflect any later documented historical development, unless, of course, it is assumed that this is circulated by an anti-Aaronic party, in which case the acceptance of such an account within the official circles is difficult to explain. The assumption that the polemic is against a false priesthood of Jeroboam³⁷ which claimed to be the legitimate sons of Aaron goes beyond the evidence and ignores the fact that the story reflects upon the name of all descendants of Aaron, whether in Jerusalem or Bethel.

Moreover, the plausibility of the bull image being in vogue in the Mosaic age cannot be ignored.³⁸ In point of fact there are several indications that this conflict tradition reflects Israel's first major clash with the culture of

³⁷W. Albright, From Stone Age to Christianity (New York: Doubleday & Co., 1957), p. 299.

³⁸Ibid., pp. 298-301; Wright, The Old Testament Against its Environment, p. 25. The arguments against regarding the calf representation of Exod. 32 as being that of an Egyptian deity seem plausible, Driver, op. cit., p. 348. Compare, however, the Rabbinic tradition in the hymn for the seventh day of Passover which says that the Israelites camped "before Baal-zephon, the last of their idols, spared as it were for their own undoing;" quoted from W. Heidel, The Day of the Lord (New York: The Century Co., 1929), p. 130, who investigates further possible associations between Baal-zephon and Egyptian deities, pp. 447-449.

Canaanite mythology in which the bull motif is quite common.³⁹ Apart from the probable fertility rites suggested by Exod. 32:6 and the fact that the "ritual decalogue" of Exod. 34:10-28, with its anti-Canaanite bias, is linked with the golden calf complex of traditions, the widespread influence of Canaanite culture and the possible role of outlying shrines such as Kadesh Barnea in the preservation of these traditions must be taken into account.⁴⁰ A name such as Baal-Zephon immediately suggests the worship of the Canaanite Baal in this area.⁴¹ In fact the crossing of the Red Sea is located by the writer ". . . in front of Baal-Zephon"

³⁹Both El and Baal are associated with bull imagery. Baal actually copulates with a heifer, Baal I v 18-22. For the illustration of Baal standing on a bull see G. E. Wright, Biblical Archeology (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1957), p. 148. Baal is quite frequently represented as having horns. For the concept of El as Bull see M. Pope, El in the Ugaritic Texts (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1955), pp. 35-42.

⁴⁰Rylaarsdam, op. cit., p. 1064. Compare also R. Brinker, The Influence of Sanctuaries in Early Israel (Manchester: University Press, 1946), pp. 136-142.

⁴¹For recent discussions of Baal-Zephon see W. Albright, Baal-Zephon in Festschrift Bertholet (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1950), pp. 1-14, who cites a text to show the possibility of Baal-Zephon worship in Egypt also; O. Bissfeldt, Baal Zephon, Zeus Kasios, und der Durchzug der Israeliten durchs Rote Meer in Beiträge zur Religionsgeschichte des Altertums, (Walle: Max Niemeyer, 1932), I. That Baal-Zephon is to be identified with the Canaanite storm god Baal seems clear from the title of Baal in Keret II i 6f, which reads in the translation of Driver, "The valleys of Baal-Zephon weep for thee, father, the district of Kadesh does groan." Further, the home of Baal is in the North, Baal V iva 37f; II iv 18f; et passim. See also A. S. Kapelrud, Baal in the Ras Shamra Texts (Copenhagen: G. E. C. Gad, 1952), p. 57.

(Exod. 14:2ff). Accordingly, Baal associations (and therefore the bull cultus) may well have impressed the Israelites from the very beginning, and have been actually related to the exodus as the action of Jeroboam seems to imply. In any case there is no valid argument against the possibility of an Israelite reaction taking the extreme form depicted in the golden calf incident, a reaction which was never repeated in this particular form during the forceful regime of Moses and Joshua, despite the subsequent rebellious inclinations of the people.

The precise nature of the sin of the Israelites must now be clarified. One thing the context makes quite clear. This act was nothing short of rebellion against the Sinai covenant, and therefore an offense to the Jealous One. Accordingly, it seems plausible that this offense involves more than simply making a pedestal for Jahwe comparable to the ark, although this may well have been true in the case of Jeroboam's calf.⁴² Cherubim seem to have constituted the base of Jahwe's throne over the ark. The cherubim symbols prevalent in Palestine and Syria were apparently winged sphinxes.⁴³ If the dilemma of Aaron was simply the choice of a symbol for the divine

⁴² Albright, From Stone Age to Christianity, pp. 298-301; Wright, Biblical Archeology, pp. 147f.

⁴³ Note I Sam. 22:11; Ps. 18:11; I Kings 7:36; I Sam. 4:4. W. F. Albright, "What were the Cherubim?" Biblical Archeologist, I (1938), 1-3.

throne, then the alternative could simply have been a winged sphinx or a winged bull (similar to those in Assyria). If this were the case, the choice of the latter would hardly have induced the harsh condemnation of Exod. 32:30-33. For what Israel actually experienced was the terrifying probability that Jahwe might Himself annul the covenant (32:10).

The fall of the house of Israel was serious on three counts. First, the demand of the impatient crowd to ". . . make us gods who will go before us," involves more than the rejection of Moses as its wilderness guide. The fabrication of gods immediately involves a polytheistic attitude and the degradation of Jahwe. Although the cry of Jeroboam could be translated, "Behold your God, O Israel . . ." (I Kings 12:28),⁴⁴ the confession of Aaron in Exod. 32:4 must be rendered, "These are your gods, O Israel . . ." Such an exclamation is nothing short of flouting the sovereign claim of Jahwe the covenant Lord. This is true despite the fact that the attendant feast was supposedly in honor of Jahwe (Exod. 32:5).⁴⁵ Accordingly, it is no longer Jahwe alone who is credited with the exodus redemption. And this is intolerable hypocrisy.

The second count against Israel was the bull image itself. As noted above the presence of an image in a subordinate role as a throne base would hardly have evoked such fierce

⁴⁴Wright, Biblical Archeology, p. 148.

⁴⁵The apparent conflict in thought between verse 5 and the preceding verses has led men such as I. Lewy to regard this verse as part of a secondary tradition, Lewy, op. cit., p. 319.

condemnation. If on the other hand this image is a representation of Jahwe Himself it would prove misleading to say the least. The most obvious associations are with the Baal religions of Canaan. Whether Jahwe is humiliated by being forced into the attire of Baal, or whether this was an early equation of Jahwe with Baal, the implications are outrageous for the God of Israel. That the bull image was actually an idol and therefore obnoxious is supported by the divine comment, ". . . they have worshipped it and sacrificed to it" (Exod. 32:8), and by the subsequent reflection of Deut. 9:6-21.

In the third place it must be recognized that there is a pagan element connected with the worship ritual itself. Eating and drinking are the normal ways of expressing intimate communion with the divine, but the additional remark that ". . . they rose up to play" appears somewhat abnormal (Exod. 32:6). It would seem highly probable, then, that Canaanite fertility rites of some kind were associated with the feast.⁴⁶ In fact the comment of Exod. 32:19 states that the anger of Moses was roused by both the calf and the dancing. In other words, pagan polytheism, pagan idol imagery and pagan cultic practices are depicted in this portrait of defection. The conflict between the worship of Jahwe and the fertility religions had begun.

⁴⁶Rylaarsdam, op. cit., p. 1064. Noth, op. cit., p. 204, points to Gen. 26:8 as an illustration of the conjugal associations of the Piel of *šhq*.

This particular conflict tradition underscores certain additional features of the early faith of Israel. From the outset any visible representation of Jahwe was taboo (cf. Exod. 20:4).⁴⁷ The only manifestations of Jahwe that were permissible were those which He Himself injected. Israel was to know its God through His unconfined acts and not through the restricted vantage point of a measurable image. The sovereignty of Jahwe's person could not be limited in any way. This is the lesson which even Moses had to learn when in a presumptuous manner he demanded to see the kābōd Jahwe. The face of Jahwe is not that of a calf but a forbidden glory (Exod. 33:17-23). To represent that terrible "unseen" with the forms of pagan culture meant breaking the covenant between Israel and Jahwe. The only recourse was back to the sovereign grace which first tendered the covenant option. Only then could the covenant be renewed.

It is necessary to observe further that this conflict was serious in the extreme. The influence of rival cultic aberrations reached the very priesthood itself. Aaron stood condemned and the fate of Israel as the 'am Jahwe was left hanging in the balance of divine jealousy and love. The radical nature of the conflict helps to underscore the

⁴⁷ Compare G. E. Wright, "How did Early Israel Differ from her Neighbors," Biblical Archeologist, VI (1943), 16. Also Wright, The Old Testament Against its Environment, pp. 24f. It is noteworthy that no image of Jahwe has been discovered through archeological research. In fact very few male figurines (deities) of any kind have been found in Israelite sites.

unlimited mercy of the suzerain overlord who can "repent of the evil" His jealous wrath demands. Forgiveness of sins is possible with the God of Israel (Exod. 32:7-14). All of this is totally consonant with the portrait of early Jahwism outlined above (cf. Exod. 34:6f).

The broken and duplicate tables of stone symbolize the broken and renewed covenants respectively. The tables of testimony ('ēdūt) (Exod. 31:18) are the tables of the covenant. In spite of proposed literary analyses of Exod. 34:1-28, however, these tables of stone pose a problem of interpretation.⁴⁸ Both Exod. 34:1-4 and 34:28 seem to refer back to the original ten debarim formulated on the first tables. Why then is the so-called "ritual decalogue" (Exod. 34:11-26) introduced at this point and made part of the covenant renewal situation?

If one takes seriously the preceding conflict tradition of the golden calf as outlined above, there seem to be two plausible answers to this problem. It is immediately apparent that this legislation is concerned with the crises of life for the Israelite in Canaan. Hence it is precisely the Canaanite culture and religion, of which the Israelites toasting the golden bull had received a foretaste, that these stipulations label as poison. All Canaanite cultic symbols are to

⁴⁸ Many scholars would assign the major portions of Exod. 34:1-28 to the J Strata. See Driver, op. cit., pp. xxviii, 363-365; Noth, op. cit., p. 214.

be shattered, all Canaanite sacrifices are to be boycotted, all Canaanite women are to be spurned⁴⁹ while Canaanite agricultural festivals are to be modified to conform to the cultus of Israel.⁵⁰ In fact there are certain simple Canaanite customs that are inexpedient for weak Israelites (Exod. 34:26).⁵¹ Accordingly, the insertion of these religious demands at this point is both logical and topical.

A second suggestion would point to the cultic or liturgical connection with the context. Apart from the technical

⁴⁹Exod. 34:11-13, 15-16. These verses are quite generally regarded as a deuteronomistic edition, as for example, Beer, *op. cit.*, pp. 159f., and Noth, *op. cit.*, pp. 215ff. The above observations, however, are still in order. The danger of Israelites forming a covenant with Canaanites existed from the very beginning (cf. Josh. 9). Furthermore, this situation can only be relevant to the period when the inhabitants of Canaan were a force in the land. In later periods it was possible for Israel to make covenant with Canaanite gods, but not Canaanite inhabitants.

⁵⁰The Feast of Weeks, the Feast of Ingathering and the offering of first fruits of the ground are clearly agricultural in nature and not a natural part of the nomadic heritage of Israel. They correspond closely to those included in the covenant code (Exod. 23:14-19). See E. Auerbach, "Die Feste im alten Israel," Vetus Testamentum, VIII (1958), 1-18; N. Snaith, The Jewish New Year Festival (London: SPCK, 1947), pp. 23ff.; J. Pedersen, Israel (London: Oxford University Press, 1940), III-IV, 415ff.

⁵¹The injunction not to boil a calf in its mother's milk is now to be linked with the Canaanite religious practice illustrated in the agricultural fertility ritual texts of Shachar and Shalim 1:13f. Cf. Exod. 23:19; Deut. 14:21. Note also A. de Guglielmo, "Sacrifice in the Ugaritic Texts," Catholic Biblical Quarterly, XVII (1955), 77f. Rylaarsdam, *op. cit.*, also accepts this position. The ritual element of this practice is emphasized by T. Gaster, "A Canaanite Ritual Drama," Journal of the American Oriental Society, LXVI (1946), 61f.

cultic terminology of the text,⁵² the very juxtaposition of the festivals with the renewal of the covenant at Sinai would suggest that the festivals and cultic acts of Israel are the provided means of communion whereby Israel can regularly maintain and renew its covenant with Jahwe. Theoretically then, all festivals could be considered covenant renewal festivals.⁵³ This does not mean that the various covenant renewal incidents of Israelite history are but later historizations of a cultic ceremony. On the contrary, it is precisely these historical conflicts which explain the nature of the covenant and the covenant faith of Israel, and in this present instance the event illustrates the theological connection between the covenant and the cultic festivals. In fact it might be added that by binding each of the festivals to the covenant Israel was given the direction and the impulse to "de-Canaanize" these festivals, just as the removal

⁵²One might point to the "holy" locale (v.2), the liturgical usage of yqb in the Mithpael (v.5), the "passover" of Jahwe (v.6), the Intercession of the covenant mediator (v.9), among others.

⁵³In practice it seems that the Festival of Sukkoth was most frequently associated with covenant renewal, Deut. 31:9-11; I Kings 8:2ff; Neh. 8:13ff. The passover seems to be connected with covenant renewal in I Kings 23, while I Sam. 12 presents a covenant renewal on the day of "wheat harvest" which would logically correspond with the Feast of Weeks. For the covenant renewal festival question see Kraus, op. cit., pp. 49ff. Cf. A. Weiser, Die Psalmen in Das Alte Testament Deutsch (Gottingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1959), pp. 14ff. On I Kings 23 see G. Widengren, "King and Covenant," Journal of Semitic Studies, II (1957), 2ff.

of "Canaanite" images (Exod. 34:17)⁵⁴ was a regular feature of major historic covenant renewals in later times.⁵⁵

Exod. 34, then, is a concrete example of one stage in the conflict of Israel with its Canaanite environment.

If the relevance of this "ritual decalogue" be granted, then the significance of the covenant renewal at Horeb can be emphasized further. Its unity with that of Exod. 19:3-6 is striking. The witness impact is prophetic, however, and the mighty acts are described as the "marvels" of tomorrow (Exod. 34:10). These terrible acts of grace will provide the impetus for renewal of faith and covenant when living among the Canaanites (34:10). Moreover, the stipulations of the jealous overlord, "whose name is Jealous" (Exod. 34:14)⁵⁶ outline a relevant and living worship pattern that will strengthen the bond of covenant communion. By virtue of this precise legislation Jahwe is advancing His sovereign claim of Lordship over agricultural as well as pastoral society. Total separation and total purification then, remains

⁵⁴It is interesting to note that the image forbidden in Exod. 34:17 is a massēkā, the very term used of the golden calf (32:4) while the parallel stipulation in Exod. 20:4 forbids the use of a pesel.

⁵⁵II Chron. 29:10ff; 31:1-3; 34:31-33; cf. 14:1-5.

⁵⁶The expression "His name is Jealous" in 34:14 argues for the authenticity of this verse as part of the "ritual decalogue," since it is a hapax legomenon and totally consistent with the earliest covenant characteristics of Jahwe. Cf. Exod. 20:5; Deut. 4:24; Josh. 24:19.

the jealous obligation for the new life and land. Such an obligation involves the cultus wherever the conflict persists and a resolution of that conflict must be found. Alas what happened at Baal Peor proved this point only too well.

The Incident at Beth Peor

Beth-Peor is the scene of another "battle of faith" that must be revisited. It is noteworthy, to say the least, how little attention scholars have paid to the relevance of this encounter for the faith and history of Israel. Nor has the probable association of this event with the covenant renewal occasion on the Plains of Moab been adequately investigated.⁵⁷ The present analysis of that conflict at Beth-Peor is designed to remedy at least one phase of that weakness.

Israel's harlotry at Shittim or Beth-Peor was no mere peccadillo. It was tantamount to a fall from grace. "Israel yoked himself to Baal of Peor" reports the biblical tradition (Num. 25:3). That the term "yoked" (*yisṣāmēd*) represents a euphemism for cult prostitution cannot be demonstrated absolutely.⁵⁸ Nevertheless, the context points the finger of

⁵⁷Lehmung, *op. cit.*, pp. 28-31, for example, suggests that Num. 25:1-5 and the kernel of the Golden Calf narrative arise out of the same historical milieu within the Israelite amphictyony. Its significance for Deuteronomy is ignored.

⁵⁸G. Ricciotti, *The History of Israel* (Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Co., 1955), I, 225. His description of the incident portrays a Canaanite cultus replete with phallic symbol.

guilt at the daughters of Moab and characterizes the subsequent corruption as religious harlotry (znh),⁵⁹ all of which leads to the same conclusion, the following reference to a loose Midianite maiden (Num. 25:6-9) tending to support this conclusion.

The seriousness of this atrocity was long remembered by those prophets whose oracles recalled Israel to the desert covenant of yore. Hosea claims that Israel's persistent attachment to Baal only adds to the disgrace of Shittim (Hos. 5:2), for on that black day of Israel's youth the excitement of Jahwe's discovery of Israel as "grapes in the wilderness" turns to sour disgust. "Israel consecrated themselves to Baal" (Hos. 9:10)! Why they even "ate sacrifices offered to the dead" on that occasion replies the psalmist (Ps. 106:28). Such a revolting apostasy can hardly be regarded as insignificant.⁶⁰

Who then was Baal of Peor? There is no undisputed answer to this query. Hosea links this Baal with the Canaanite Baal of his own time, while it is true that ba'al can be applied as a general term meaning "Lord," in those instances where Baal stands alone it seems probable that the Canaanite Baal, the "Lord" par excellence of this region, is usually

⁵⁹That the "harlotry" of Israel was associated with cult prostitution seems evident from Hosea. See for example 1:2; 2:1-13; 4:11-14; et passim. Note also Deut. 23:17f.

⁶⁰cf. Mic. 6:5; Joel 3:18; Deut. 4:3.

meant. In fact the preceding Balaam oracles are located on the high places of Baal (Num. 22:41). It is possible that Baal-meon, built by Mesha in Moab, was dedicated to the Moabite god Chemosh, but not necessarily so.⁶¹ More often, it seems the god of Peor is classified by scholars as one of the so-called local agricultural baals, and therefore less significant. It can be argued, however, that there were not many be'ālm but rather many manifestations of the one Baal.⁶² Peculiar characteristics of Baal may have been emphasized by the needs of a local cultus, but ultimately it was the same Baal. Recall the numerous titles for Baal in the Ugaritic texts! Baal-Zebul, Baal-Kanap, Baal-Sapon and Aliyan-Baal are not distinctive deities but names which emphasize a particular aspect of Baal as he is "revealed" in Canaanite mythology. Furthermore, the fertility rites alluded to above are consistent with a Baal cultus, while the Psalmist's (106:28) reference to sacrifices to the dead may well refer to the sacrifices to Baal in the underworld.⁶³ In fact the

⁶¹The Moabite Stone records this incident, but in describing a later herem incident refers to the Moabite god as Ashtar-Chemosh. This name, in itself, may well imply a Moabite-Canaanite syncretism.

⁶²We would suggest further that be'ālm may be a so-called plural of majesty similar to Ashtaroth (Deut. 1:4, etc.) and Elohim. See G. E. Wright, "The Temple in Syria Palestine," Biblical Archeologist, VII (1944), 69f. Compare however, Eichrodt, op. cit., p. 205.

⁶³Ps. 106:28. For sacrifice at the burial of Baal see Baal I i 15ff.

sin of Peor persists even after the entry of Israel into Canaan itself, presumably because a conflict with the same Baal prevails there (Josh. 22:17).

The fertility rites encountered at Baal Peor were an integral part of the agricultural society and agrarian culture of Canaan. The forces of sex most vividly expressed the feeling of life and worship designed to arouse the sympathetic participation of the gods of nature. Here Israel had come into contact with the very heart of Baal worship. They had forgotten, or at least were yet to learn the full meaning of the oneness of Jahwe demanded by the Sinaitic Covenant. For in Him there is no duality of male and female, no natural experience, no desirable image, no sex. The vast number of figurines of female fertility goddesses discovered throughout Canaan only serves to magnify the everpresent danger of corruption from this quarter.⁶⁴ Accordingly the Deuteronomic cry, "Hear O Israel, Jahwe is our God, Jahwe is One" is immediately applicable at this juncture (Deut. 6:4).

How then is this notorious downfall related to the covenant motif? Deuteronomy offers an answer which has, in the main, passed unnoticed. The overall covenant structure and

⁶⁴Compare Wright, The Old Testament Against its Environment, p. 23; Eichrodt, op. cit., pp. 223f.; E. O. James, The Cult of the Mother Goddess (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1959), pp. 69-84.

covenant theology of Deuteronomy,⁶⁵ as well as its ultimate purpose of effecting a covenant renewal is widely recognized.⁶⁶ The striking feature which must be emphasized, however, is that side by side with the recurrent mention of a momentous assembly under Moses on "the other side of the Jordan"⁶⁷ there are several references which place this event opposite Beth-Peor (Deut. 3:29; 4:26). Furthermore, there is nothing inherently improbable in the claim that a renewal of the Sinaitic covenant took place in the Transjordan and that Beth-Peor provides a significant location for such an event.⁶⁸ On the contrary, the fourth chapter of Deuteronomy tends to confirm this claim.

⁶⁵Kraus, op. cit., pp. 49ff.; Mendenhall, Law and Covenant, pp. 31ff.

⁶⁶See Deut. 5:2f., 22-33; 11:26; 26:16-19; 27:9f.; 29:1; 30:15-20.

⁶⁷Num. 33:50ff.; 26:1-4; Deut. 1:1,5; 9:1; 31:1 et passim.

⁶⁸Bright, op. cit., p. 145 insists that ". . . a league of clans of some sort must be presumed to have antedated the conquest." An assembly of these clans under Moses before the moment of entry and a renewal of the covenant with the transference of leadership would almost seem to be demanded (cf. Josh. 1:12-18). In the same work (p. 126) Bright goes a step further in stressing the probability of a tribal center East of the Jordan and the conversion of transjordanian tribes to Jahwism. The latter factor may suggest a covenant renewal involving the incorporation of new tribes, which was comparable to that suggested in the case of Josh. 24.

After the writer has summarized the saving deeds of Jahwe he specifies Beth-Peor as the location of the assembled league of Israelite tribes (Deut. 1-3). These glorious deeds are an extension of the magnalia of grace so basic to the covenant faith of Sinai already outlined. The initial we'attā of Deut. 4:1 defines the urgency of the covenant renewal moment (as in Exod. 19:5 above). This is a question of survival, and the new statutes of the renewed covenant will provide the needed way to life. In the forthcoming conflict with the forces of Canaan the very existence of Israel as a "holy" people was at stake (Deut. 4:1-2). Hence the witness impact on Israel (as in Exod. 19:4) must be sharpened. Thus Israel is reminded, "Your eyes have seen what Jahwe did at Baal-Peor; for Jahwe your God destroyed from among you all the men who followed the Baal of Peor; but you who held fast to Jahwe your God are all alive this day" (Deut. 4:3f.).

It is this revelatory act of interference on the part of Jahwe which the hearers had experienced personally, which corresponds precisely to the experience of the redemptive act of the exodus in Exod. 19:4. And these are the witnessed events which are designed to produce the necessary response of faith and obedience! In other words, the breach of covenant and the covenant curse, namely the plague,⁶⁹ at

⁶⁹That the plague represents a conscious polemic against another Canaanite deity is not demonstrable. It is of interest, however, that Rešep, an infrequent companion of Baal, is a god of pestilence. Cf. Hab. 3:5 and W. Albright, The Psalm of Habakkuk in Studies in Old Testament Prophecy (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1950), p. 14.

Baal-Peor provide the unfortunate occasion and the desired impetus for the renewal of the covenant on the other side of the Jordan. The activities at Baal-Peor then, supply the relevant "conflict" tradition needed to elucidate the original deuteronomic covenant renewal.⁷⁰

The elaboration of this theme in Deut. 4, which forms a prelude to the repetition of the statutes of the decalogue (5:1-21), and the formal conclusion of the covenant, is also intimately connected with the specific motifs and terminology of the Sinaitic covenant (in particular Exod. 19:3-6). In fact the very Sinai covenant revelation is recalled (Deut. 4:9-14). There is a consistent repudiation of all idolatrous forms on the grounds "that Jahwe your God is a devouring fire, a jealous God" (Deut. 4:15-24).⁷¹ And again it is this jealous overlord whose sovereign choice of Israel as His precious possession and whose salvation of this people from the mighty Egypt is so unique that it presupposes the uniqueness of Jahwe (Deut. 4:20,32-39). Accordingly,

⁷⁰The martial spirit discerned in Deuteronomy by G. von Rad would fit quite admirably in the period immediately preceding the entry into Canaan; G. von Rad, Studies in Deuteronomy (London: S.C.M. Press, 1953), pp. 45ff. Even if it is assumed that much of the material in Deuteronomy receives its final form in the period of the judges or even later the relevance of the preceding discovery remains unaffected.

⁷¹That astral worship was prevalent within the Canaanite religion itself from the earliest times seems highly probable in the light of recent studies. Accordingly, to make Deut. 4:19 a criterion for dating this chapter is out of place. See J. Gray, The Legacy of Canaan (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1957), pp. 123ff.

with due solemnity the covenant witnesses of heaven and earth⁷² are charged with a solemn testimony to the warning of this jealous King against any corruption comparable to the golden calf or the Baal-Peor incident (Deut. 4:25f.). In short, the events of Baal-Peor offer a notable example of the conflict motif of Jahwe versus the gods of the land. The conflict of this account is totally relevant for a living covenant renewal ceremony beyond the Jordan. Its intensity is still apparent at the diet of Shechem on this side of that river boundary!

The Diet of Shechem

The famous covenant renewal ceremony of Joshua (24:1-28) has been aptly termed "The Diet of Shechem." By this designation Martin Noth wishes to point up the nature and significance of this momentous occasion in the life of the twelve-tribe league, and the role of Shechem as a major amphictyonic center in the Israelite society of tribes. It is within this society that Joshua appears as the charismatic hero par excellence and consequently a noteworthy formulative factor.⁷³ And as Noth points out further, the worship of the specific

⁷²Compare the similar custom in the Hittite treaties.

⁷³Noth, op. cit., pp. 91-97. Compare Bright, op. cit., pp. 143-147, and M. Noth, Das zweite Buch Moses in Das Alte Testament Deutsch (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1959), p. 139.

amphictyonic deity "Jahwe, God of Israel" takes place at Shechem.⁷⁴

Accordingly, the Shechem covenant renewal ceremonies are pertinent for an understanding of the history and faith of Israel. If Martin Noth's research has served to reaffirm the historical force of this tradition, it but remains to spell out the religious crisis which was an integral part of that historical development.

The religious and cultural conflict which provides the background for the Diet of Shechem is scattered throughout the materials of Joshua and Judges. It looms large in the life of the Israelite amphictyony. It confronts the invaders in the very names of the towns and people they must receive as the "gift" of Jahwe. Names such as Baal Berith, Baal Gad, Baal Meon, Baal Tamar, Anath, Beth Anath, Beth Dagon and Beth Shemesh are the order of the day.⁷⁵ The herem of the holy war has its raison d'être, not merely in the prevention of delay and immediate settlement of the conquered territory, but more especially in the jealousy of Jahwe who would thereby demand acknowledgment of His victory on Israel's behalf and would tolerate no symbols or reminders

⁷⁴Josh. 8:30; 24:2,23. Compare Gen. 33:20.

⁷⁵Judg. 8:33; Josh. 11:7; 12:7; Num. 32:38; Judg. 20:33; 3:31; Josh. 19:38; 19:27; 15:10; 13:17 et passim. For a discussion of the frequent use of Baal in later Israelite names such as Jerubbaal (Gideon) see Kapelrud, op. cit., pp. 43f.

of a Canaanite cultus.⁷⁶ Joshua, in his zeal for Jahwe, is even compelled to hamstring the horses and burn the chariots which were so symbolic of Canaanite power (Josh. 11:6-9). However, after the fervor of each of the holy wars was spent, the very prosaic business of survival by settlement demanded new agricultural techniques, Canaanite techniques. And with cultivation there came the lure of fertility rites, the unfortunate snare of the hungry peasant as well as the prosperous wine merchant. Thus, time and again the writer of Judges recalls how the chosen people of Israel "served Baals and Ashtaroth" and forsook Jahwe.⁷⁷ Furthermore, the large number of Astarte plaques and figurines in Late Bronze Age deposits in Palestine indicates the frequency of Israelite contact with this way of life.⁷⁸ Here then was a battle royal, for in the adoption of Canaanite culture the kingship of Jahwe was at stake. Wherever Israel established a compromising modus vivendi with the Canaanites this conflict was destined to continue. In these times the ceremony of Joshua 24 appears as a remarkable bulwark of Israelite faith in Jahwe alone.

⁷⁶Deut. 20:10-18; 7:17-26; Josh. 8:24-28; 11:12,20. The studies of von Rad, op. cit., pp. 45-59, on the archaic character of the holy war passages in Deuteronomy are relevant at this point.

⁷⁷Judg. 2:11,13; 3:7; 6:28-32; 8:33; 10:6,10. Cf. also Noth, The History of Israel, pp. 141-153.

⁷⁸W. F. Albright, Archeology and the Religion of Israel (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1953), p. 114.

One particular tradition, however, which is focused upon the conflict at Shechem itself may bring the background to that scene into clearer perspective. The heros eponymus of that city is Shechem son of Hamor (Gen. 34:2) and the inhabitants are designated "sons of Hamor" (Gen. 33:9) or the "men of Hamor" (Judg. 9:28), the name Hamor meaning ass. It is these latter expressions which have evoked considerable comment. Thus W. F. Albright considers them picturesque characterizations for "Members of a Confederacy."⁷⁹ This conclusion is suggested by the expression "to kill an ass" which is apparently synonymous with making a covenant or treaty among the Amorites of the Mari documents.⁸⁰ The conclusion is supported by the very name of the Shechemite deity "El-berith" (Judg. 9:46), that is, "God of the Covenant," an epithet which strengthens the probability of some Amorite or Canaanite tribal confederacy associated with this shrine at Shechem.

The checkered history of Israel-Canaan relations at Shechem begins in Genesis (34:1-35:4). The rape of Dinah was the unfortunate incident which led to the first intimate association of Israelites and Shechemites, an association

⁷⁹Ibid., p. 113. The main difficulty with this theory is the absence of any reference to killing the animal in question. An ancestor could be called an ass for various reasons, cf. Gen. 49:14.

⁸⁰J. Pritchard, Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1955), p. 482.

which can be described as nothing short of a covenant relationship. The condition and seal of the covenant is that of circumcision (cf. Gen. 17:10); the subsequent communion one of free intermarriage and cultural interchange (Gen. 34:13-17). Alas, the despicable action of Simeon and Levi turned this covenant into a curse.⁸¹ It is at this locality with its covenant associations where Joshua mediates the covenant ceremony of the twelve tribe league, despite the fact that no conquest of Shechem is mentioned in Joshua.⁸² More than likely the Israelites had made a peace treaty with the inhabitants of Shechem which then remained under Israelite jurisdiction until the time of Gideon (Judg. 8:31; 9:1f.). The fact that Shechem existed as a colony of Canaanites is quite consistent with conquest and settlement conditions throughout Joshua and Judges,⁸³ and the objection that Shechem could not have been the site of the covenant with Jahwe, God of Israel, because the god of these Canaanites was Baal Berith is not

⁸¹The writer prefers the arguments of H. H. Rowley in favor of placing this incident prior to the descent into Egypt, rather than to consider it a reflection of the first efforts of conquest after the return from Egypt, as Noth has done. See H. H. Rowley, From Joseph to Joshua (London: Oxford University Press, 1950), pp. 111-129, and Noth, The History of Israel, pp. 70f.

⁸²And it is to Shechem that Rehoboam went for his coronation, despite the fact that the ark and temple were in Jerusalem (I Kings 12:1).

⁸³For example, Josh. 11:13,22; 9:15; 16:10; 17:11f.; Judg. 3:6 et passim.

serious. For if the biblical traditions of lapse and relapse into Baal worship has any worth, the probability of Canaanites within the confederacy defecting to Baal worship is to be expected.

Two features are prominent. First, Joshua chooses a place which has covenant associations, a place at which the worship of Baal Berith, alias El Berith, was known.⁸⁴ This move may in itself be an overture to non-Israelite groups to covenant with Jahwe. Second, the presence of Canaanite Baal worshipers at this former Canaanite shrine reveals a living religious and cultural tension behind the Diet of Shechem. Furthermore, the Gattung of Joshua 24 is that of a covenantal formulation closely related to that of Exod. 19:3-8,⁸⁵ and conforms admirably to the structure of the Hittite suzerainty treaties.⁸⁶ It is within this

⁸⁴Such a statement in no way implies that the very existence of a covenant between Israel and Jahwe is dependent upon the "pre-Israelite cult of Baal Berith of Shechem" as maintained by C. A. Simpson, The Early Traditions of Israel (Oxford: Blackwells, 1948), p. 648. The dependence of Joshua 24 on Exod. 19:3-8 is sufficient to show that the Sinai covenant is anterior. Cf. Bright, op. cit., p. 145.

⁸⁵Cf. Muilenburg, op. cit., pp. 357-360. Even if one holds the position of Noth, History of Israel, p. 92 that this passage has received its present format by virtue of regular repetition of the ceremony described therein, the subsequent conclusions concerning the basic theology of the amphictyonic covenant need not be radically affected thereby.

⁸⁶See the selection of Pritchard, op. cit., pp. 201-206; also Mendenhall, op. cit., and the additional footnote of Muilenburg, op. cit., p. 356.

structure that the religious and polemical motifs become apparent. It is "Jahwe, the God of Israel" (vss. 2, 23) who is claiming complete vassalage over the "mixed multitude" (Exod. 12:38) now assembled at Shechem. The same witness impact for the exodus from Egypt is underscored despite the fact that the listeners, one and all, must needs witness this common heritage with the eyes of faith. The victories of the conquest of Amorite, Moabite and Canaanite territory on the other hand are part of their personal experience of Jahwe as the King who delivers from the enemies' hand "into your very own hand" (vss. 8, 9, 11). Here again we must observe that there is no "revelation" of the divinity by observation of cosmic phenomena, but by the conscious, personal, contemporary, life and death battles against pagans. And this emphasis upon Jahwe as the Warrior Terrible is to be expected in a reaffirmation of the amphictyonic theocracy.

The credo of magnalia⁸⁷ (vss. 2-13) maintains a divine selectivity and bias of grace that is inexplicable according

⁸⁷The significance of the ancient credos in Josh. 24:2-13; Deut. 6:20-25; and 26:5-10 is studied by G. von Rad in Das formgeschichtliche Problem des Hexateuch in Gesammelte Studien (München: Kaiser Verlag, 1958), VIII, 11-20. The absence of any reference to Sinai in these credos has been made a major consideration by von Rad, ibid., p. 15. However, if the Shechem ceremony is a re-living of the Sinai situation it is the recapitulation of the mighty acts, and not of that situation, that is called for in the credo itself, since the credo leads to the covenant situation. For a further evaluation of von Rad's position, see J. Bright, Early Israel in Recent History Writing (London: S.C.M. Press, 1956), pp. 105f.

to any mythopoetic concept of God. For here is a power unhindered by natural boundaries, a "landless" God who gives "the land of Baal" as a trophy for His helpless warriors. Here then the Baal worshiper meets a new kind of God, a God of a people, a personal God, a God who "takes" an Abram (v. 3), "gives" an Isaac (v. 3), "sends" a Moses (v. 5), "extracts" from the mighty Egypt (v. 6) ad infinitum, and all without human inducement.

After the kerygma of saving deeds follows the paranesis. The moment of decision demands immediate resolution of the conflict (Josh. 24:14-18). The paranesis is introduced by the technical conjunction 'attā (v. 14) and the inevitable choice by the subsequent 'im (v. 15). The various powers which precipitate in the conflict are "the gods which your fathers served beyond the River and in Egypt" (vss. 2, 14f.), "the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell" (v. 15), and Jahwe Himself. The precise identification of any of the deities involved is a precarious venture. What pagan deities had been worshiped by the patriarchal families and were still worshiped in Canaan is unknown.⁸⁸ A form of the "bull" god may have been recognized by segments of Israelites in Egypt and later depicted as the golden calf (cf. I Kings 12:28). The Amorite and Canaanite gods of the land would quite naturally include Baal and his consort. Baal Peor in the land

⁸⁸It is commonly suggested that Abram and his forefathers had been worshipers of the moon god Sin.

of "the two kings of the Amorites" (v. 12) had already become a snare to many Israelites. Baal Berit, the local god of Shechem, could not be discounted to say nothing of the parade of deities which could conceivably be represented by the non-Israelite clans within "Israel" itself, clans such as the Kenites, Kenizzites, Jerahmeelites and Gibeonites for example.⁸⁹ One thing is clear; this was a conflict of sizable proportions and with serious implications.

According to our text Joshua claims that the amphictyony could only exist as a divine autocracy under Jahwe. Hence the half-truth implied in the reaction of the people who cry, "Far be it from us to forsake Jahwe to serve other gods" (v. 16), must be countered with the full realization that they had to forsake and remove all other gods as well.⁹⁰ Failure to do so is tantamount to an unforgivable sin. Thus Joshua's answer is an unequivocal challenge: "You are not capable of allegiance ('bd) to Jahwe, for He is a holy

⁸⁹The presence of non-Israelite groups within Israelite society and even within the covenant league is apparent in passages such as Exod. 12:38; Num. 12:1; Lev. 24:10; Josh. 9:14; Num. 10:29-32; Judg. 1:16; Josh. 14:14f.; I Sam. 27:10; and suggested by the very chapter under discussion. Further, if the record of an Abramite clan of 318 soldiers in Gen. 14:14 has any historical worth, then the possibility that many remained in Palestine after the Jacob clans entered Egypt cannot be ruled out. Cf. Bright, History of Israel, pp. 120-124, 145f.

⁹⁰The process of purging false gods at Shechem immediately reminds one of Gen. 35:1-4 where Jacob buries all the foreign gods under the sacred oak at Shechem.

(qādōš) God, a jealous (qannō') God who does not forgive your rebellion (peša') or sin" (v. 19).

This peculiar juxtaposition of Jahwe as 'elōhīm qedošīm' and as 'ēl qannō'' calls for further comment, for it reveals the basic assertion that Jahwe is a unique God and that this is a unique experience. The adjective qādōš, of course, is applied to any within the sacred seventy on Mount Šapon. However, the qannō' of Jahwe's holiness demanded more than the exuberant shout of a festive pantheon. For in this passage we behold Jahwe excluding the cultic and religious recognition of all contending deities, not by some conquest in the heavenly court, but by proclamation in the hic et nunc of a historical moment in Shechem. To the Canaanite mind this must have been both ridiculous and presumptuous. Moreover this divine presumption, this pathos of Jahwe meant more than the recurring conquest of a god such as Mot. In fact, the passionate intensity of Jahwe's zeal had provoked an encounter of particular peoples at a definite place on a specific day. It was an event which happened ephhapax, an event which could have no kinship with the reproduction of a myth in sympathetic ritual. In addition, the subsequent jealous attitude of this God would be dependent upon the moral impulses of the gōi qadōš He had selected through this covenant and not upon the rhythmic impulses of natural and cosmic laws. When considered in this concrete situation as a living issue of ancient history the pristine revelation of

Israel appears as a fervid monolatry and a forceful practical monotheism, for Jahwe is never gadōš or qannō' in abstracto!⁹¹

Finally it can be seen how the jealous overlord of the Sinai covenant reinforces the serious imposition of His will by a witness ceremony (vss. 22, 27) and relevant religious stipulations (v. 25), while the covenant response of the assembly repeats the claim of Mount Sinai, "And we will hearken to His voice" (v. 24). In this covenant Israel is blessed for Jahwe is qannō' not only for His name's sake, but for the sake of His elect. Hence it becomes evident that an appreciation of the historical conflict behind the Diet of Shechem yields a deeper understanding of the theology of the amphictyony as a living faith relevant for its age and in tension with the culture of its age.

⁹¹Some would no doubt argue that Joshua's portrait of Jahwe as the jealous God is based upon later theological developments in Israel. One could counter by pointing out that, apart from the generally recognized E character of this passage, the term qannō' can hardly be a Deuteronomic redaction inasmuch as Deuteronomy always has the term qannā' for "jealous." Moreover, the portrait of Jahwe as a passionate deity and a god of fire is quite consistent with those biblical sources regarded as ancient by most scholars. Noth, Das Buch Joshua, p. 136 maintains that the section 24:19-24 is all deuteronomic. Cf. Wright, The Old Testament Against its Environment, pp. 56f., and Millenburg, op. cit., pp. 357-360.

CHAPTER III

THE EARLY POETIC MATERIALS

The poetic expression of a people's convictions is often just as vital and poignant as that of its creedal counterpart. The archaic poetry of Israel is a particular case in point. Its import, however, has been somewhat neglected by scholars in their search for an appreciation of Israel's beliefs in the pre-monarchic period. The scholars in question have often been hamstrung by a rigid application of the evolutionary principles of the Religionsgeschichte school. Thus, for example, when a specific concept, expression or attitude is ex hypothesi, a late religious development, then the presence of this concept, expression or attitude in a specific piece of poetry is considered proof of a late date for that poem, or at least the relevant passages. If the original evolutionary hypothesis stands there is no rebuttal. On the other hand, if the archaic character of the same poetic material can be established to the satisfaction of most scholars by criteria which are, in the main, non-theological, then the initial hypothesis concerning the concept in question is seriously discredited. Accordingly, the present chapter is an analytical presentation of the religious convictions of Israel found in that corpus of poetic material which is generally considered archaic. In other words, the subsequent discussion is based upon the poetic response of this people to

the earliest self-revelation of its God Jahwe. Wherever convenient, a comparison will be made between the basic religious beliefs delineated in the conflict traditions of chapter two and the essentials of faith in this archaic poetic corpus. The substantial unity of religious concepts will immediately become apparent. Such a consideration of the poetic materials will also answer the charge that by some standards the pre-monarchic conflict traditions outlined above present an anachronistic portrait of Israelite beliefs.

The criteria whereby the poetic traditions in question are dated in the pre-monarchic period fall into the categories of historical or geographical allusions, structural form, poetic imagery, grammatical usage and orthography. The Canaanite materials, primarily from Ugarit, have been a major factor in the establishment of these criteria.¹ A detailed discussion of these categories is beyond the range of our present task, however, and the interested student is directed to the pertinent articles cited in the footnotes.

The relevant corpus of texts which forms the basis of

¹For a discussion of the characteristics of archaic poetry see the articles by F. M. Cross and D. N. Freedman, "The Song of Miriam," Journal of Near Eastern Studies, XIV (1955), 237ff., and "The Blessing of Moses," Journal of Biblical Literature, LXVII (1948), 191, 210. Compare also W. L. Moran, "The Hebrew Language in its Northwest Semitic Background," The Bible and the Ancient Near East, edited by G. E. Wright (New York: Doubleday & Co., 1961), pp. 54-72. Note also D. N. Freedman, "Archaic Forms in Early Hebrew Poetry," Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft, LXXII (1960), 101-107.

the present analysis includes Gen. 49:2-27;² Exod. 15:1-18;³ Deut. 32:2-43;⁴ Judg. 5:2-31;⁵ Ps. 29:1-11⁶ and the Balaam Oracles.⁷ Materials which are assigned to a somewhat later period, but which incorporate much of the same imagery and grammatical usage, are Ps. 68:1-35;⁸ II Sam. 22:2-51 and Hab. 3:2-19.⁹

The specific point of departure will be the text of

²B. Vawter, "The Canaanite Background of Genesis 49," Catholic Biblical Quarterly, XVII (1955), 1-18.

³Cross and Freedman, "The Song of Miriam," op. cit.

⁴Cross and Freedman, "The Blessing of Moses," op. cit.

⁵Although, to the writer's knowledge, no article has appeared in which the archaisms and Canaanitisms of Judg. 5:2-31 have been treated in a systematic way, the archaic character of this hymn was widely recognized even before the discovery of the Ugaritic material, thus G. F. Moore, Judges in the International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1895), p. 129.

⁶F. M. Cross, "Notes on a Canaanite Psalm in the Old Testament," Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research, CXVII (1950), 19-21.

⁷W. F. Albright, "The Oracles of Balaam," Journal of Biblical Literature, LXIII (1944), 207-233.

⁸W. F. Albright, "A Catalogue of Early Hebrew Lyric Poems," The Hebrew Union College Annual, XXIII (1950-51), 1ff.

⁹W. F. Albright, "The Psalm of Habakkuk," Studies in Old Testament Prophecy (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1950), pp. 1-13.

Deut. 32:1-22¹⁰ which, in the light of recent investigation, is also classified as part of the same archaic corpus of poetry. It needs to be emphasized that there are no references in the content of the Song of Moses which presuppose the monarchic period, while certain of the arguments from language once espoused to support its late date must now be relegated to the margin.¹¹ The text itself might be characterized as a poetic affirmation of the covenant faith in terms of Exod. 19:3-5 at a time when the efficacy of the covenant God was being seriously challenged. It is to this affirmation of faith which the subsequent discussion is directed. In addition, this analysis will draw from the whole

¹⁰Recent investigations into the archaic nature of the Song of Moses has been undertaken by W. F. Albright, "Some Remarks on the Song of Moses in Deuteronomy xxxii," Vetus Testamentum, IX (1959), 339-346, and by O. Eissfeldt, "Das Lied Moses Deuteronomium 32:1-43 und das Lehrgedicht Asaphs Psalm 78 samt einer Analyse der Umgebung des Moses-Liedes," Berichte über die Verhandlungen der Sächsischen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Leipzig, Band 104, Heft 5 (1958). Compare also P. Skehan, "The Structure of the Song of Moses in Deuteronomy," Catholic Biblical Quarterly, XIII (1951), 153-163, and E. Baumann, "Das Lied Moses auf seine gedankliche Geschlossenheit untersucht," Vetus Testamentum, VI (1956), 414-424 for the treatment of the psalm from different perspectives.

¹¹See the exhaustive treatment by S. R. Driver, Deuteronomy in The International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1902), pp. 345-348. Driver here speaks of certain words having an "Aramaic tinge." However, homer (wine) for example, appears several times in Ugaritic literature (Baal V i 16; S i 6). Likewise, the use of the verb lhm meaning "to eat" is rare in the Old Testament, it is true, but by no means indicative of a late date, as the very frequent use of this verb in the same sense in Ugaritic would testify. In fact the array of hapax eiremena and uncommon words cited by Driver by no means demands a late date. Further Ugaritic connections will become apparent as the discussion continues.

range of archaic poetry to substantiate and illustrate the points made.

The Character of Jahwe
(Deut. 32:1-6)

The šēm-jahwe is normally synonymous with the character or essence of Jahwe Himself and in numerous places specifies His role as the deus revelatus of Israel.¹² Here too (Deut. 32:3) the "name of Jahwe" is parallel with "our God" the God of Israel. Thus the poet expresses his unabashed intention to attest the character of Jahwe in the present crisis and proceeds with a remarkable character study of the divine personality. It is noteworthy that a comparable archaic understanding of šēm is found in the Ugaritic expression 'štrt-šm-b'l'¹³ and in those Ugaritic texts where the proclamation of the šm is tantamount to a definition of character.¹⁴ The boldness of the poetic exordium to magnify

¹²Compare the treatment of E. Jacob, Theology of the Old Testament (New York: Harper & Bros., 1958), pp. 82-85.

¹³Keret II vi 56. Compare also the Phoenician 'štrt-šm-b'l' cited by G. R. Driver, Canaanite Myths and Legends (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1956), p. 5.

¹⁴Baal III* A 11, 18, 19; S I 21. Note also the parallel use of qr' for the proclamation of the god in S I 1, 23 and in Deut. 32:3 as well as the jealousy for the divine name (qn' šm) in S I 21, and the practice of changing a name upon accession to the throne as in Baal VI iii 13f. Cf. G. R. Driver, op. cit., p. 12, note 5.

the šēm-jahwe on the other hand, underscores the critical need to consider the covenant Name anew. Accordingly, appeal is made to the covenant witnesses of heaven and earth¹⁵ as the witness motif of the former conflict traditions re-asserts itself in this poetic context.

Similar forceful invitations to recognize the divine character appear in Ps. 29:1f. and Exod. 15:1-3, in both cases the šēm defined being understood in terms of the corresponding revelation of the divine personality.¹⁶ It is significant, moreover, that throughout this early poetry there is a persistent effort to describe this divine personality, albeit in the simple imagery of human experience. Thus Jahwe is called the Rock (sūr),¹⁷ the "mountain" God, an image which had a pre-Israelite circle of religious

¹⁵ Compare especially the close of the Hittite treaty between Mursilis and Duppi-Tessub of Amurru which reads, ". . . the great Sea, heaven and earth, the winds and the clouds--let these be witnesses to this treaty and to the oath." J. Pritchard, Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1955), p. 205. Note also Deut. 4:26,32; 30:19, as well as the references in chapter one, footnote 18.

¹⁶ It is noteworthy that the root yhb in the sense of "ascribe" appears only in Ps. 29:1f. (equals Ps. 96:7f. equals I Chron. 16:28f.) and Deut. 32:3. The translation "characterize" would be quite appropriate in both places. In Ps. 29 this characterization is that of the "storm king," in Exod. 15 that of the "warrior king," while in Deut. 32 it is primarily that of the "jealous king."

¹⁷ Deut. 32:4,15,18,30,31. Compare the designation of Jahwe as 'eben (stone) in Gen. 49:24.

associations.¹⁸ The primitive force of the term šūr becomes apparent later in the Song of Moses (vss. 30f.) from the exclamation "Truly our Rock is not like their rock . . . ," and again (v. 37) "Where is their god, the rock in which they took refuge." Furthermore, Jahwe is repeatedly associated with mountains in this corpus of literature and in particular with Mount Sinai,¹⁹ while the ancient appellation of Israel's God as El Shaddai is quite in harmony with His character elsewhere.²⁰ Needless to say there is no

¹⁸The archaic meaning of šūr as "mountain" is apparent from the Ugaritic (gūru). Note especially Num. 23:9 where šūrim is parallel to gebā'ōt (hills). See further W. F. Albright, "The Oracles of Balaam," *op. cit.*, p. 212 and "Some Remarks on the Song of Moses," *op. cit.*, p. 345 where he claims that "in second millenium Syria and Anatolia all important mountains were deities."

¹⁹Deut. 33:2; Judg. 5:4f.; Ps. 68:17. The writer concurs with the arguments of Cross and Freedman, "The Blessing of Moses," *op. cit.*, p. 206 that Deut. 33:16a ought to be rendered, ". . . the favor of the One who tented at Sinai." In addition, the immediate context of Deut. 32:1-6 refers to the wilderness tradition (vss. 10-12) while Deut. 33:4f. makes mention of Moses and the covenant with Israel.

²⁰Hebrew šaddai is frequently associated with Assyrian šadū "mountain." See W. F. Albright, "The Names Shaddai and Abram," *Journal of Biblical Literature*, LIV (1935), 173. More recently N. Walker, "A New Interpretation of the Divine Name," *Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*, LXXII (1960), 64-66, has derived this name from a title of Marduk, ŠHAZU. The ancient character of the name is attested by its presence in Gen. 49:25; Num. 24:4,16. A remarkable phenomenon is the name Zurishaddai in the ancient census list of Num. 1:5-15, a name which clearly means "Shaddai is my rock, i.e., my god." The possible meaning of sd (an orthographically distinguishable sibilant used for the transliteration of foreign words is here employed) as the abode of El is discussed by M. Pope, El in the Ugaritic Texts

discrepancy between this designation of Jahwe as the "mountain" God of Sinai and as the God who reveals Himself through the "mountain" experience of the Sinaitic covenant described above.

If the title šūr designates the formidable strength of Jahwe, then the explanatory tāmīn po'qlō affirms the efficacy of that divine power (Deut. 32:4). In fact most of the titles and attributes predicated of the God of Israel in this poetic corpus are affirmations of the divine activity rather than speculations about the divine essence.²¹ In this present verse (Deut. 32:4) the emphasis lies upon that divine ability witnessed in the exhaustive (tāmīn) reliable ('emnā) and consistent (mišpāt) deeds of Jahwe. For these are the saving acts (šidqōt) of that God who is righteous (šaddīq) on Israel's behalf, these are the magnalia of grace which establish the very basis of the covenant relationship.

The same powerful redemption activity characteristic of Jahwe is apparent throughout the archaic poems of Israel.

(Leiden: Brill, 1955), pp. 66-69. His final conclusion reads, "In spite of the uncertainty as to the meaning of sd and the reading of šr 11, the mountainous character of El's abode is assured by the use of the term hršn in Baal VI ii 23; VI iii 22." The question of a conflict between the Canaanite El and Jahwe will be discussed in a later chapter.

²¹Compare the treatment of the power of God in W. Eichrodt, Theology of the Old Testament (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1961), pp. 228-232. For the definition of po'qlō here in Deut. 32:4 as acts of deliverance see Ps. 44:2-4 and Ps. 77:12-16.

For Jahwe appears not only as strong ('oz), the mighty "man of war," but also as "my salvation" when He rescues slaves from the tyranny of Egypt,²² or preserves a disorganized nomadic people in the desert,²³ or maintains the Israelite amphictyony and fights valiantly on its behalf with all the heavenly weapons at His disposal.²⁴ In fact such glorious deeds (tehillōt in Exod. 15:11) from the "right hand" of the Warrior God of Israel are terrifying to behold²⁵ inasmuch as Jahwe is consistently victorious²⁶ and there is no enchantment or divination that can hinder such a God (Num. 23:22f.). For the prophet Balaam the survival of Israel is proof positive of Jahwe's effective activity. Hence "what God has wrought" (Num. 23:23) aptly describes Israel's character, while the Šidqōt Jahwe is a fitting expression for those saving deeds wrought on Israel's behalf (Judg. 5:11). Moreover, it is precisely these same magnalia of salvation which motivate Jahwe's exaltation as King and covenant overlord

²²Exod. 15:1-3; Num. 23:22; 24:8.

²³Deut. 32:10-12; Exod. 15:13; Ps. 68:8.

²⁴Judg. 5:19-23,31; Deut. 33:2-5,26-29; Gen. 49:22-26. We note the technical amphictyonic title of "Jahwe the God of Israel" also in Judg. 5:3. See the discussion of the Diet of Shechem, supra, pp. 42ff.

²⁵Exod. 15:3,11f.,16; Judg. 5:8,20.

²⁶Exod. 15:7f.; Deut. 33:27-29; Num. 24:8. Cf. II Sam. 22:2-4; Ps. 68:2f.,12f.

in Israel,²⁷ for the "power" character of this God is neither arbitrary nor sinister but the dynamic revelation of the divine bias for an historical people.

Accordingly, there can be little doubt that a vivid "divine interference" consciousness pervades these poetic traditions and that for Israel Jahwe's personal revelation was constantly associated with historically identifiable incidents in its own experience. And by virtue of his hymnic and lyric proclamation of such events each Israelite affirms, in a confessional manner, the character of his God. The religious import of such an affirmation is therefore comparable to that of the credos incorporated in the covenant ceremonies.

From the total range of Jahwe's activity in history (Deut. 32:4) the election events are chosen for special attention. The pertinent section (Deut. 32:6) begins, "Is not He (Jahwe) your father who created you (qnh),²⁸ who

²⁷Exod. 15:18; Num. 23:21; Deut. 33:5; Ps. 29:10.

²⁸The present writer's conclusion that the root qnh may have a second meaning of "create" or "procreate" is supported by the Ugaritic and confirmed by the work of P. Humbert, "Qānā en Hebreu Biblique," Festschrift Bertholet (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1950), pp. 259-266; so also Pope, op. cit., p. 51. See Ugaritic passages Keret I ii 4; Aqhat I iv 58; Baal II i 20, iii 25, 29, 34; IV iii 5. For biblical usage see Gen. 4:1; Exod. 15:16; Ps. 139:13; Prov. 8:22.

made you ('sh) and begat you (kwn in Polel):"²⁹ the attribute "father" is striking, to say the least.³⁰ Nevertheless as the context reveals such an epithet is not merely some metaphor employed to depict God as a graceful patriarch of the pantheon. In His capacity as the 'ab Jahwe elects a people from history,³¹ He begets a son called "Israel,"³² He adopts His "first born," a tribe named Jacob.³³ In the first place then the father love of Jahwe is His elective love (as in Hos. 11:1), not that universal divine impulse

²⁹As Pope, op. cit., p. 50f., has demonstrated, the Polel of the root kwn, when applied to the deity, can mean create or procreate, as the parallelism in Deut. 32:6 already indicates. The parallel verbs found in Job 31:15; Isa. 45:18; Ps. 87:5f. substantiate this. Furthermore, in Baal IV iii 5f. qny is parallel to kwn (with reduplicated nun) in a context which refers to Anat the cow giving birth to a calf sired by Baal the bull. See further Pope, op. cit., p. 51. Compare also Pss. 8:5; 24:2.

³⁰The term 'ab was usually regarded as a late title for Jahwe inasmuch as it appears elsewhere only in Isa. 63:16; 64:7; Jer. 3:4,19; 31:9; Mal. 1:2; 2:10. However, the title is quite widespread in pre-Israelite literature and quite common in the Ugaritic texts.

³¹This is apparent from the present context as well as Isa. 63:16 and Hos. 11:1.

³²In addition to the roots qnh and kwn in v. 6, we note the root yld in the rather incongruous metaphor of v. 18, "You are unmindful of the Rock who begot you . . ." Cf. Isa. 64:8.

³³For the father-son adoption formula see II Sam. 7:14. The same perspective would seem to be reflected in Deut. 32:10. Cf. Exod. 4:22.

whereby all men were created,³⁴ or some detached divine supervision as paterfamilias of the heavenly assembly.³⁵

Jahwe is 'ab only for Israel. For and through Israel the inexplicable mystery of divine love is made personal.

The title Elyon also underscores the creative and elective activity of the divine personality. The full title appears in Gen. 14:19 as 'el 'elyōn qōnē šamayim wa'āreš (El Elyon, Creator of Heaven and Earth). While it is plausible that Elyon may have designated the creator head of the Phoenician pantheon and the grandfather of El,³⁶ this god is totally absent from the Ugaritic texts. Further, even if the term itself suggests the Most High as "the apex of the

³⁴ Compare the broader perspective of the father concept as applied to Nanna "O father begetter of gods and men . . .," also "Father, begetter, who looks favorably on all living creatures," Pritchard, op. cit., pp. 385f. Similarly El is designated ab adm (father of mankind) in Keret I iii 32, 47, vi 12, 31, a title which seems to be synonymous with bny bnwt (creator of creatures) which is found frequently.

³⁵ For the pantheon, the seventy children of Asherah, as the family of El see Pope, op. cit., pp. 48f.

³⁶ For a complete discussion of this problem, the evidence of Philo of Byblos, the reading from Karatepe 'el qn 'rš and the Ugaritic texts see Pope, op. cit., pp. 55-58, and G. L. Sella Vida, "El 'Elyon in Genesis 14:18-20," Journal of Biblical Literature, LXIII (1944), 1-9. Compare the suggested introduction of the term into Israel by E. Jacob, Theology of the Old Testament (New York: Harper & Bros., 1958), pp. 45-47. O. Eissfeldt, "El and Jahwe," Journal of Semitic Studies, I (1956), 29, appears to equate El and Elyon.

pantheon,"³⁷ the parallelism of Num. 24:16 would suggest that, in Israelite thought, Balaam had been overcome by only one God variously designated as El, Elyon and Shaddai. The salient point, however, is that, in the light of Gen. 14:19 and in view of the limited pagan usage of this epithet, it is entirely appropriate for Jahwe inasmuch as it describes His role as God the Creator, the Lord of all destinies, and not as some baal-type deity whose power cannot be divorced from created cycles of nature.

On the other hand the suggested archaic title 'Eli (or 'Ali), which may be found elsewhere in the Old Testament and may be related to Elyon,³⁸ is actually associated with Baal in Keret II iii 4-8. The text may be rendered:

l'arṣ mṯr b'l	Baal rained on the earth
wlšd mṯr 'ly	And Ely rained upon the field
n'm l'arṣ mṯr b'l	The rain of Baal was sweet on the earth
wlšd mṯr 'ly	And the rain of Ely on the field.

There is no clear evidence, however, which would classify

³⁷Eichrodt, *op. cit.*, pp. 181f.

³⁸Some of the biblical passages where the vocalization 'ali (for 'al) is suggested are Deut. 33:12; I Sam. 2:10; Ps. 7:18; 57:3; 91:1; Hos. 7:16; 10:5; 11:8; Isa. 59:18; 63:7, *et passim*. For a detailed discussion see M. Dahood, "The Divine Name 'Eli in the Psalms," *Theological Studies*, XIV (1953), 452-457. For its presence in Deut. 32:12, see Cross and Freedman, "The Blessing of Moses," *op. cit.*, p. 204. See also the comments of G. R. Driver, "Hebrew 'al (High One) as a Divine Title," *Expository Times*, L (1938-39), 92f.

Eli as a separate deity of Near Eastern mythology. Rather, Eli is a general designation for the exalted character of a high god. The character concept 'abir (cf. 'abbir), on the other hand, that appears in Gen. 49:24, where it is commonly translated "the Bull of Jacob,"³⁹ does seem to have been associated with the specific bovine characteristic of the fertility god Baal-Hadad in Near Eastern mythology. In fact Baal sires an 'ibr (bull or buffalo) to the heifer Anat.⁴⁰ This characteristic is equally applicable to El the head of the Canaanite pantheon.⁴¹ Needless to say, however, the title as it appears in this Genesis passage, is a metaphor designed to emphasize the strength rather than the fecundity of Jahwe.

A number of summary observations are in order at this point. The preceding accent upon the dynamic magnalia of Jahwe and His vivid personal nomenclature is indeed significant. In fact it suggests that one may discern in this material not only certain vigorous affirmations concerning the activity of Jahwe but also something of the nature of His divine Being. Two major claims, at least, seem to be made concerning the inherent character of Israel's God.

³⁹See Vawter, op. cit., pp. 7-11.

⁴⁰Baal IV iii 20, 35; Hadad i 32, ii 53-54.

⁴¹See Pope, op. cit., pp. 35-42.

The first claim is that of the powerful and the overpowering. The bold anthropomorphisms according to which this "man of war" appears on the scene with rugged and almost vindictive destructiveness as well as with a peculiar selective creativity, only serve to magnify the superhuman character of Jahwe and His ultimate superiority over every human inadequacy.⁴² But Jahwe is more than destruction power and creation power: He is the Unavoidable. Balaam cannot escape His will nor Israel His visible acts.⁴³

The same accent is apparent in the names Šūr, 'El, 'Eli, 'Elyōn, Šaddai, and 'Abbīr all of which designate the creative powers and supreme authority of Jahwe even though they were also used to refer to certain gods with whom the Israelites may have come into immediate cultural contact. The significant factor, however, is the expurgation of those alien religious connotations incompatible with the power of Jahwe as something unbounded by nature, rites, images, celestial or chaotic entities, higher divine authorities or simply fate.⁴⁴ Accordingly, names such as Baal, Anath, Attar, Yam and numerous others where the power of the deity associated

⁴²Exod. 15:3,6-12 for example.

⁴³Num. 23:7f.,19-23; Judg. 5:23; Deut. 32:6f.; 33:27, et passim.

⁴⁴Deut. 32:21,31; Gen. 49:24f.; Exod. 15:6; Num. 23:19; 24:4; Deut. 32:4; 33:1,26-28; Judg. 5:4f.

with the name is circumscribed and limited in some way, are studiously avoided in this poetic corpus of literature. To Israel Jahwe revealed Himself as the unlimited Power, to Israel's neighbors as the inexorable Power.⁴⁵

The second claim is that of the personal and the personality. In this poetic context the God of Israel is not some nebulous Providence or Destiny, not some spirit-soul or primitive urge for existence, not merely an unconscious Esse or subconscious Nous, but a personality, a God-person with whom there can be intelligible communication of ideas and from whom man can receive person to person revelation. Moreover, the magnalia of Jahwe provide not only the immediate acts for revealing a "private" Savior and Redeemer God at a designated moment in time, but also the impetus for response among an irresponsive mass of survivors at subsequent moments.⁴⁶ Here Jahwe is portrayed as a personal God who finds a people, fights for its tribes, makes Egypt its ransom and Canaan its gift, yes a God who makes one people His very own and goes out of His way to demonstrate this fact by certain decisive historical actions. The supreme act of

⁴⁵Exod. 15:12-18; Num. 23:22-24; Judg. 5:19-21, 31, et passim.

⁴⁶Thus in Exod. 15:1ff. for example, it is because of the triumph of the exodus incident that the faithful worshiper hails the power of Jahwe and in addition calls Him "my salvation" and "my God." He is addressed as a person whose right hand destroys the personal foe, for His victory is on behalf of "thy people."

personal concern was the covenant itself as the conflict traditions of the preceding chapter emphasize.

"Moreover," writes Walter Eichrodt, "by His own act of bestowing a name on Himself, God chooses to be described as the definable, the distinctive, the individual."⁴⁷ Although the revelation of the divine name Jahwe is not alluded to in this material the peculiarity of its defense above any other name or title, and the personal fervor with which this name is exalted, brings into focus the distinctiveness of this name as a name apart, as the character name of Israel's personal God.⁴⁸ "Jahwe" represents the revelatio specialis of God to Israel.⁴⁹ Thus the holiness, the mystery, the Being of this God is not seen primarily in the numinous but in the personal, not in what is but in what happens, and the way it happens, not in the "essential" but the effective presence.⁵⁰ In these chapters Jahwe is "God in operation"

⁴⁷Eichrodt, op. cit., p. 20.

⁴⁸Exod. 15:1-3; Num. 23:21; Deut. 32:1-3; Judg. 5:2-5; Ps. 29:1,2,11.

⁴⁹The debate concerning the origin of the name Jahwe will not be entered here. In any case the testimony of the present text in no way conflicts with Exod. 6:2f. R. Abba, "The Divine Name Jahwe," Journal of Biblical Literature, LXXX (1961), 321, in a recent survey of the subject concludes that "Jahweh appears to have been a name peculiar to Israel and to have been borrowed from Israel when it occurs in the proper names of other tribes."

⁵⁰For the designation of Jahwe as the "effective presence" see Abba, ibid., p. 327.

for Israel. He is the divine "personal concern." And this Jahwe, this "in operation" of God is both the impulse and stumbling block for each generation of those Israelites who have witnessed Him in their heritage but are called upon to testify to His personal activity in contemporary historical events.

The identification of those activities of "Jahwe in operation for Israel" which reveal the divine character in this poetry, with the magnalia of grace from the covenant Overlord discussed in the previous chapter is relatively simple. Jahwe's victory in conflict as the magnifique et terrible corresponds with the powerful and overpowering intervention of Israel's Most High; the God who disrupts Egypt to bring one nation ". . . unto Me" (Exod. 19:4) is the same Person who reveals His personal concern elsewhere; while the "divine interference" consciousness and the character of Jahwe as personal effective presence is apparent throughout. Nor does this present treatment exhaust the character of Jahwe revealed here, for in the subsequent divisions of this chapter other facets are also exposed. Thus, for example, there is the revelation of a supreme will and willingness which accompanies Jahwe's choice of and relationship with Israel. This choice and this relationship must now be analyzed further.

The Sovereign Choice of
Israel (Deut. 32:7-14)

The correspondence between this passage of Scripture

and the basic text of Exod. 19:3-6 treated in chapter one is also discernible. The sovereign claim that ". . . all the earth is mine" is paralleled by the assertion that the Most High God ". . . gave to the nations their inheritance . . . and fixed the bounds of the peoples" (Deut. 32:8). The goi qādōš from among all peoples is here designated "Jacob His allotted heritage" while the precious segullā is now cherished as the 'išōn 'ēnō "the pupil of His eye" (Deut. 32:9f.). The identical metaphor of a protecting eagle in the desert and the Savior guide in a hostile land is also apparent in both. And, moreover, this same revelation of a divine selection is thrown into bold relief by the forceful "election consciousness" found throughout the archaic Hebrew poetry under discussion.

The significant poetic parallelism of the key passage (Deut. 32:8f.) can be seen in W. Albright's rendering which follows:⁵¹

When the Most High distributed lots
 when he separated the children of man,
 He set the borders of the peoples
 like the number of sons of God;⁵²
 But Jahwe's portion is His people,
 Jacob His allotted domain.

⁵¹Albright, "Some Remarks on the Song of Moses," op. cit., p. 343.

⁵²The reading "sons of God" instead of song of Israel is now accepted by the majority of scholars. The evidence of the Septuagint and the Dead Sea Scroll text is published by P. Skehan, "A Fragment of the Song of Moses from Qumran,"

At first reading one might be inclined to accept the position of O. Eissfeldt⁵³ that 'Elyon refers to the exalted head of the pantheon who was later forgotten, and that Jahwe appears on the scene of some drama before time in order to receive His allotted share as one of the lesser deities. Several things militate against accepting this position. In addition to the transparent parallelism of the rendering above and a similar parallelism between Elyon and Jahwe throughout the Psalms, the entire context of this song is concerned with exalting the Name of Jahwe above any other name, and exposing the inefficacy of any "rock" other than Jahwe. Hence it is more plausible to assume that the specific name Elyon was chosen for Jahwe precisely because He is the most exalted God and therefore plays the role of the Lord of destinies. Furthermore the context appeals to "days of old" in a frame of reference which may well include the patriarchal age. If so, the situation may be analogous to the relation between Shaddai and Jahwe in Exod. 6:2f. where a notable distinction is made between the character of God as Shaddai in the patriarchal age and as Jahwe in the age of "Israel." Accordingly, in the present text, the same God is active but

Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research, CXXXVI (1954), 12-15. A discussion of the nature of the "sons of God," the "holy ones," the "heavenly council" is reserved for a later chapter devoted to that specific topic.

⁵³Eissfeldt, "El and Jahwe," op. cit., p. 29.

the character of this God as the great Elyon, the exalted Lord of Destiny known to the generations of yore, is emphasized less than His character as the revelation God who made Himself known to Israel as Jahwe. Nevertheless, the same figure is meant, as the psalmist confesses, "Let them know that Thou alone, whose Name is Jahwe, art Elyon over all the earth" (Ps. 83:19).

Over the total number of peoples⁵⁴ on earth the God of Israel exerts a sovereign claim; from among their number He makes a sovereign choice. The object of His choice is characterized as hebel nahalātō, (Deut. 32:9). Such a term in its immediate context points to this one people as His own peculiar possession by virtue of a prior conscious selection, and not by virtue of some a posteriori incident or accident of history. Thus the divine selection precedes the "historical" election. Moreover, the designation of Israel as the nahalā (inheritance) accentuates the personal, cherished, wanted, segullā character of Israel as His 'am, Israel as His "family property," rather than the concept of some nation handed down at the demise or injunction of a higher god.⁵⁵

⁵⁴For seventy as the sacred number for the totality of gods and of men see Albright, "Some Remarks on the Song of Moses," op. cit., p. 343; S. R. Driver, Deuteronomy in The International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1902), pp. 35ff.

⁵⁵Note the use of nahalā in Ps. 68:10; 83:12; 106:5; Deut. 7:6; 10:34; and also Exod. 15:17.

Therefore, if this sovereign selection is a prior act of the divine will, then the "historical election" does not just happen: it is an act of revelation. This "pre-history" selection of Israel, however, is almost bypassed by H. H. Rowley⁵⁶ in his treatment of election, and Israel's consciousness of its abnormal existence as something deliberately willed and chosen by God is thereby obscured. It is this "pre-history" perspective that corresponds to the purposeful selection of the patriarchs in other portions of Scripture. For ultimately Israel's election is teleological; its goal is the self-revelation of Jahwe.⁵⁷

The "historical election" on the other hand is described with a wide variety of metaphors and imagery.⁵⁸ From the vantage point of Israel's personal experience it was like the sudden discovery of a foundling in the wilderness (Deut. 32:10) or the birth of an infant son (Deut. 32:6,18). The time and the date could be specified. For it was the day

⁵⁶H. H. Rowley, The Biblical Doctrine of the Election (London: Lutterworth Press, 1950), p. 33.

⁵⁷Ibid., p. 39.

⁵⁸Although the technical term bahar is absent, synonyms such as ganah, yalad, masa', pa'al et alii, as well as the nouns denoting Israel as the elect demonstrate the depth and extent of the election motif in less stereotype terminology.

of redemption (Exod. 15:13)⁵⁹ the day of the exodus (Num. 23:21-23), the day of enthronement and the day of the covenant (Deut. 33:2-5). However, as E. Jacob has affirmed, the sovereign choice is not spent at Sinai.⁶⁰ It is found at every moment of historical intervention by God in which Israel is especially chosen to witness an act of revelation from Jahwe, that it may learn ". . . that Jahwe alone did lead them, and there was no other god with them" (Deut. 32:12).

A sovereign choice and historical selection of this caliber inevitably involves a change on the part of the chosen. Israel is surrounded by the isolation of divine intervention. It is different by virtue of this interference; it is gādōš by virtue of this divine choice. And throughout this poetic corpus one can discern this awareness of being different, isolated, gādōš, because of Jahwe's self revelation in the election. The pagan prophet Balaam also senses this characteristic when he exclaims:

How can I curse whom God has not cursed?
 How can I denounce whom Jahwe has not denounced?
 From the top of the mountains I see him;
 From the hills I beheld him;
 Lo, a people dwelling alone
 Not counting itself among the nations. (Num. 23:6ff.)

⁵⁹K. Gallig's classic treatment of the election traditions begins with the exodus event portrayed in Exod. 15 as basic for the election consciousness of Israel, a motif which he then traces throughout the Old Testament. See K. Gallig, Die Erwählungstraditionen Israels (Giessen: A. Töpelmann, 1928), pp. 5f.

⁶⁰Jacob, op. cit., pp. 201ff.

This lebad character of Israel is also apparent by virtue of Israel's being an 'am nōša', a "people saved by Jahwe" (Deut. 33:29). Because of this "given" character they lead a "charmed life." Election inevitably involves protection. In fact protective duties are a commitment of a suzerain overlord in any covenant-treaty relationship. Accordingly, the vivid portrait of the guidance of the "redeemed" and "begotten" to safety (Exod. 15:13-17), the shield for the "saved" in battle (Deut. 33:29), the impenetrable protection for His "workmanship" (Num. 23:21-24) and the marvellous transportation of His new-born child through lands unknown (Deut. 32:6, 10-12), expresses the same election-protection consciousness of Israel as the covenant people in an alien world. Thus, as in the covenant contexts discussed earlier, Israel is acutely aware of its role as something gadoš, different, cherished, selected, historically created and gloriously rescued. It is in and through this role that Israel must recognize its election and exercises its obligations.⁶¹

In general the same basic features of the election motif appear in both the poetic corpus and the covenant conflict traditions. Of these features two are prominent. First, the sovereign choice of Israel involves a divine case history,

⁶¹The absence here of the precise term for divine elective love (ḥb) in no way negates the statement or the preceding discussion. The suggestion that this term implied imagery associated with pagan fertility rites and was accordingly omitted is plausible but not demonstrable.

which is also an experiment in holiness. Moreover, the case history of Israel is strictly a historical case. Though one appeal to the "myth-like" actions of God in the Urzeit (in Deut. 32:8f.), it is the rescue from among masses, the selection from the many, the separation from the non-holy, the loneliness of a superior revelation, and the efficacy of a God-person in history, when experienced in the concrete events and cultural contacts of life which make "holiness" a trying reality for Israel and the necessary consequence and mark of its election and its covenant relationship. For in the case history of Israel the 'ām leḅādād in the desert and the goi qādōš at Sinai are identical.

Second, the sovereign choice of Israel involves a divine communion, an experiment in love. Just such a communion is fundamental to the covenant relationship.⁶² For Israel as the segullā, the naḥalā, the begotten child and the 'išōn 'ēnō is the recipient of a creative love which forms a bond of life, a communion of mutually receptive parties. The chosen ones become His friends (Judg. 5:31). And although the emphasis in the poetic corpus does not fall on the undeserved character of the election of Israel--that character, by the way, which isolates the basic difference between the election of Israel and supposed ancient Near Eastern

⁶²K. Galling terms the Sinai Covenant ". . . das sinnfällige Zeichen und Siegel der Erwdhlung," op. cit., p. 26.

parallels--the initiative is always with Jahwe⁶³ while Israel is but a foundling of the desert wilds. Thus Israel is chosen for a communion experience in which the self-revelation of Jahwe is made an actual part of Israel's life, history and culture. Such condescension in itself implies a higher love, an incomprehensible power, a God of grace who effects Israel's peculiar existence. But the God of grace is also a jealous overlord. Israel must also learn to be a "kingdom of priests." It is to this motif which the reader's attention is now directed.

The Jealousy Relationship between
Jahwe and Israel (Deut. 32:15-22)

The remaining verses of the Song of Moses offer a vivid presentation of the "jealousy" motif, a penetrating exploration of total allegiance to one overlord (cf. Exod. 19:3-5) and a parallel situation to the revelation of "jealousy in action" from Josh. 24:1-28. In fact the main concern of this chapter is the trial of Jahwe on the battle field of the gods. Here there is none of the social, commercial, political, ceremonial and cultic perversions which later disturbed the

⁶³ Rowley, *op. cit.*, pp. 16f. Consider the election of Cyrus: "He (Marduk) scanned and looked (through) all the countries searching for a righteous ruler willing to lead him (i.e., in the annual procession). (Then) he pronounced the name of Cyrus, King of Ashan, declared him to be (come) the ruler of all the world," Pritchard, *op. cit.*, p. 315.

earliest prophets.⁶⁴ This is simply the perennial and archaic conflict tradition presented from a forceful poetic didactic perspective. The historical application of the first of the ten debarim is the issue at stake, and this problem harks back to the initiation of the covenant itself.

The jealousy of Jahwe, in the present context, is that divine vexation or pathos which is aroused when the divine experiment of love stands in jeopardy. Hence this is a jealousy, a divine agitation to preserve the love communion by reinforcing the demand for total allegiance as well as by humiliating all opposition. In the first place, then, we must recognize the reciprocal relationship between the election action and the jealousy reaction. For the provocation on Israel's part is not simply a fashionable change of idols, but the desertion of the One who made ('sh) it a people (Deut. 32:15), the derision of the Rock who rescued (ys')it for a purpose (Deut. 32:15), the indifference to the Father who begat (yld) it for covenant sonship (Deut. 32:18) and the spurning of Him who went through the birth pangs (hul) of election on its behalf (Deut. 32:18). A jealous wrath is the inevitable consequence. Such jealous action is also an elective action and a covenant reaction; here there is none of the selfish revenge or rage of pagan deities

⁶⁴Such an observation is in harmony with the relatively archaic character of the poem maintained above. Supra, footnote 10, chapter III.

who are peeved because of the success of some mortal hero.⁶⁵
 This bears no similarity to the actions of Anat in Canaanite mythology.

Moreover, it is precisely because of Israel's "elect" or "redeemed" character that the reverse side of Jahwe's jealousy suddenly intrudes as a consuming fire, a passionate divine presence which annihilates and overwhelms the foes of Israel. In reality, then, a new elective or redemptive act is evoked by this divine jealousy. Deut. 32:36, for example, describes the inevitable reaction of such jealousy in these words:

For Jahwe will vindicate His people
 And have compassion on His servants,
 When he sees that their power is gone,
 And there is none remaining, bond or free.⁶⁶

Thus Jahwe can never be neutral as far as His people is concerned. Throughout these poetic texts there is always that personal sensitivity to the relationship He has created, whereas the catastrophic wrath of storm gods bound in their climatic cycles of myth leave man the accidental recipient of natural forces. Such jealousy is never arbitrary. On the contrary, it stresses that conscious deliberate assertion of the divine will for a reason which the people ought to

⁶⁵ See Th. Vriezen, An Outline of Old Testament Theology (Wageningen: Veenman & Zönnen, 1958), p. 153.

⁶⁶ Cf. Deut. 32:40-43; 33:11, 29; Judg. 5:31; Exod. 15:13-17; also Hab. 3.

recognize as righteous.

The outward expression of this jealous ire is portrayed in numerous instructive images. One may even detect a polemical note. Thus the fire of His wrath causes disturbances in the realms of Mot (Sheol), brings famine on the earth ('eres) to which Baal lays claim, relegates Rešep, Baal's companion, to the role of a mere firebolt (cf. Hab. 3:5)⁶⁷ and employs the teeth of Behemoth and crawling beasts like Leviathan as his submissive agents (Deut. 32:22-25). And the unseen 'āmā, that paralyzing radiation of divine jealousy apparent in the holy war, creates an awareness that the presence of this divine wrath is both awesome and efficacious.⁶⁸

The second feature of divine jealousy which is exposed by this chapter is the creation of a sensitive responsibility to the total claims of the overlord. The moment the Israelite even experiments with a new god there is an ignition of the divine zeal that executes a relentless course of vindication. "They stirred him to jealousy with strange gods, with abominations they provoked Him to anger," and again, "They have stirred me to jealousy with what is no-god, they have

⁶⁷Compare also W. K. Simpson, "Reshep in Egypt," Orientalia, XXIX (1960), 63-74.

⁶⁸cf. Exod. 15:16; 23:27; Josh. 2:9; Deut. 32:25; and frequently in Job. This almost appears an extension of the divine personality and the supreme psychological weapon of Jahwe.

provoked me with idols" is the unqualified accusation (Deut. 32:16,21) while "I will stir them to jealousy with what is no-people" is the threatened redress (Deut. 32:21). Or as the Song of Deborah summarizes the conflict, "When new gods were chosen, then war was in the gates" (Judg. 5:8),⁶⁹ and any who did not come to the defense of the divine Name had to be rebuked (Judg. 5:15-17,23). Israel must learn that Jahwe can and will maintain His rights to the exclusion of all others. It is the same concept of total allegiance to a jealous overlord which is implied in the covenant response. "Hearing My voice" and "Keeping My covenant" demand the addition, "All that Jahwe has said we will do," which has as its corollary "Only what Jahwe has said we will do" (Exod. 19:4-8).

Side by side with the response of Israel and its immediate sensitivity to this total claim, especially in the day of conflict, there stands the progressive elimination of the efficacy of all rivals. Thus it is that strange gods (Zarin) are designated worthless abominations (Deut. 32:16) and

⁶⁹The wide array of emendations suggested for this verse are of little help. The concept of Jahwe going into battle or of a battle as the consequence of the introduction of new gods, is thoroughly consistent with the conflict traditions of this period. Assuming the archaic character of the text bhr can be vocalized Niphal and 'az employed as Ugaritic idak.

demons (šēdīm)⁷⁰ deprived of any divinity (Deut. 32:17), while the idols are exposed for what they are, namely, "no-gods"⁷¹ (Deut. 32:21). Yet this exposé is not merely a battle of words, for the magnalia incited by His jealousy reveal Jahwe as a God infinitely superior to any other power or name. Jahwe is supreme overlord, the incomparable God.

The recognition of Jahwe as the Incomparable One is peculiarly vivid in this corpus of literature. The Song of Miriam reaches a climax with the words:

Who is like thee among the gods, O Jahwe?
 Who is like thee, terrible among the holy ones?
 Awesome in laudable deeds!
 Performer of great feats! (Exod. 15:11)

Balaam is portrayed as a famous manipulator of the gods who is helpless once Jahwe speaks (Num. 23:8, 19f.). The blessing of Moses is introduced with an awesome theophanic appearance of Jahwe among His myriads of holy ones and concludes with the exclamation:

⁷⁰šēdīm is usually regarded as a late term. Compare, however, the discussions of S. R. Driver, Deuteronomy, op. cit., pp. 362f., and Albright, "Some Remarks on the Song of Moses," op. cit., p. 342.

⁷¹That the technical form "no-god" must be a late term is not demonstrated. The use of the negative with a noun as a unit concept as here is found already in Hosea's "Not-my-people." In any case this is a favorite technique of the author of the song, as v. 21 "No-people" would indicate. Compare the Ugaritic "blmt" (no-death) meaning eternal, or l'šmm (no-heaven) meaning a drought.

There is none like God, O Jeshurun,
 Who rides through the heavens to your help,
 And in his majesty through the skies. (Deut. 33:26)⁷²

Hence all are exhorted to extol His name and to praise Jahwe as the God. For all this revelation of the activity, pathos, and obligation of Jahwe, is at the same time a revelation of His oneness. If Jahwe has demonstrated His absolute claim on Israel, then all other gods are powerless and not gods at all. Accordingly, the height of revelation apparent in Deut. 32:39 is apropos indeed:

Behold now, I am I
 and there is no other God than I
 I kill and restore to life
 after I have smitten I heal
 and none can save from my hand.⁷³

Thus the jealousy of Jahwe involves a defense of His supremacy and a revelation of His oneness.

In brief, the articles of faith embodied in the early poetic materials are forthright affirmations of Jahwe's self-revelation in the powerful and personal acts of Israel's experience, profound responses to Israel's historical

⁷²The suggested emendation of Cross and Freedman, "The Blessing of Moses," *op. cit.*, p. 209 is plausible: "Who rides the heavens mightily, who rides the clouds gloriously," and does little violence to the present text.

⁷³The translation is that of Albright, "Some remarks on the Song of Moses," *op. cit.*, p. 342. Note also the remark on p. 346, "Such virile monotheism belongs to a time when Jahwism was fighting for its life against both external and internal foes--in brief, to the period when Samuel rallied Israel against its hereditary enemy as well as against paganism rampant in its midst."

election through which it has come to know the meaning of divine "holiness" and divine "Love," and dynamic proclamations of that divine jealousy which curbed Israel's sons and crushed Israel's foes. And this proclaims the same character and claim of the covenant God, the same activity and attitude of the God of Israel, the same vision and victory of Jahwe for Israel that is fundamental to the conflict traditions of the previous chapter. For Israel's God is jealous and continues His polemic against all as Israel's religion comes into direct contact with that of its neighbors, for His mighty deeds, His revelatory acts, His self-expenditure on behalf of Israel are without equal. But precisely how is this said in terms which are relevant for Israel in the cultural environment of that day? The subsequent chapters are an attempt to answer that question.

CHAPTER IV

THE KINGSHIP OF BAAL AND THE KINGSHIP OF JAHWE

A comparison of religious affirmations is a legitimate part of research into the conflict of contemporary cultures. Comparisons, however, are often precarious adventures of scholarship while religious analogies are easily overdrawn in the excitement of discovering apparent similarities. The present analysis of the kingship of Baal and the kingship of Jahwe, therefore, must guard against such pitfalls, if at all possible. Accordingly, no attempt is being made, at the outset, to specify any actual borrowing or direct accommodation of religious essentials. The first step is simply to outline the essentials of kingship from textual sequences involving Baal and Jahwe respectively and to show how one adds to a deeper understanding of the other by virtue of comparable activities, striking resemblances, possible conflicts or marked contrasts. By the expression "kingship sequence" is meant that progression or pattern of activity whereby divine kingship is acknowledged. It is the bold outline of this kingship sequence to which the reader is directed in this chapter. This is a study in religious patterns and imagery.

The Purpose and Nature of the Ugaritic Kingship Texts

The hero of the Canaanite pantheon at Ugarit is Aliyan Baal, a name which defines the character of the fertility god

par excellence. But Baal is not the lord of nature by divine right but by divine power. For Baal is Aliyan; he is, as the name implies, "the victorious one," "the valiant warrior" or "the conquering hero."¹ Thus, in the first cycle of texts Baal's character as the warrior king is established,² while in the second the subsequent exercise of his kingship is made effective.³ The purpose of these texts then is the affirmation of this kingship character.

The Baal texts in general present myth in the strict sense of the term for they deal entirely with the interaction of the gods. That these activities have cosmic significance is immediately apparent, but precisely what Sitz im Leben

¹The name Aliyan is derived from the root l'y (Accadian le'u, Hebrew la'ah), meaning "to prevail." See G. Gordon, Ugaritic Manual (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1955), p. 283. Cf. W. Albright, Archeology and the Religion of Israel (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1953), p. 195.

²The first cycle of the kingship texts consists of VI ii-iv; III* C, B, A found in G. R. Driver, Canaanite Myths and Legends (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1956), pp. 73-83. These texts are numbered 129, 137, 133 and 68 in the manual of Gordon, op. cit., pp. 160, 167, 168, 150. Various treatments of these texts are found in J. Gray, The Legacy of Canaan (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1957), pp. 20-27; J. Obermann, "How Baal Destroyed a Rival," Journal of the American Oriental Society, LXVII (1947), 195-208; J. Montgomery, "Ras Shamra Notes IV," Journal of the American Oriental Society, LV (1935), 268-277; and H. L. Ginsberg, Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament, edited by James Fritchard (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1955), pp. 129-131.

³The second kingship text treated infra, p. 94 is Baal V i 1 to V iii 46, text number Anat I 1 - III 27 in Gordon, op. cit., pp. 187f.

such myths had within the culture and cultus of the Canaanites is hotly disputed.⁴ Nothing in the texts themselves specifies the dramatic liturgy or cultic ceremonies which are to accompany the recital or portrayal of the myth. Nevertheless the prominent role which the temple of Baal plays in this sequence makes it highly plausible that these texts played some part in the actual temple cultus. In any case, the religious import of the material is evident, and the character of Baal as the sovereign lord of the cosmos is a legitimate subject of investigation without knowing the precise details of how the Baal temple acknowledged or reenacted the establishment of the same.

Baal's Decisive Battle for Kingship

The initial fragments of the myth depict Yam, with his exalted throne name of Yaw⁵ as a cosmic king who is

⁴For a discussion of this problem see A. Kapelrud, Baal in the Ras Shamra Texts (Copenhagen: G. E. C. Gad, 1952), pp. 13-27. Gray, op. cit., p. 11 stresses the functional character of these texts. Compare this with the very cautious remarks of R. de Langhe, Myth, Ritual and Kingship in the Ras Shamra Tablets in Myth, Ritual and Kingship, edited by S. Hooke (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1958), p. 141, who concludes, "The existence of these 'dramatic performances' needs to be proved, otherwise than by the presence of the cycle in question."

⁵Baal VI iv 14f. is the only place where this name appears. The identification of YW with YHW(H) in the Old Testament is highly improbable. Although Jahwe is sometimes written YW, the characters of the two deities are quite incompatible. See Gray, op. cit., pp. 133f. Note also the

inordinately jealous of his royal status. He gives vent to this jealousy by demanding the surrender of Baal, son of Dagan, from the hands of the pantheon:⁶

tn 'ilm d tqh	Give up, O gods, him whom you guard, ⁷
d tqyn halt	Him, O host, ⁸ whom you protect,
tn b'l w'nnh	Give up Baal and his servants,
bn dgn 'artm pdh	The son of Dagan, that I may inherit his gold. ⁹

Indeed, the jealousy of a cosmic overlord brooks no rivals.

When Baal first appears at the scene of the heavenly council he is cast as the champion of the humiliated, who himself must rise from servitude. Thus, despite the heroic effort of Baal to arouse the convocation which stands terrified before the emissaries of Yam, El as titular head of the

subsequent assertion of R. Dussaud, "Jahwe fils de El," Syria, XXXIV (1957), 237, who uses this reference to support his contention that Jahwe (equals JW) is depicted as the son of El in Old Testament passages such as Deut. 32:8f.

⁶Baal III* B 16-17.

⁷The Arabic waqā "keep, protect" provides a plausible parallel. See G. Driver, op. cit., p. 165; Gray, op. cit., p. 22.

⁸Compare the Hebrew hqmllā, Jer. 11:16; Ezek. 1:24.

⁹There is no need to discard the original suggestion of Gordon, op. cit., p. 312, that pd means "gold," and to appeal to Egyptian loan word parallels as G. R. Driver, op. cit., p. 163 and Gray, op. cit., p. 22 have done. The Hebrew paz, is etymologically related, and Yam's demand for Baal's gold is paralleled by Baal's acquisition of gold (hrs) from his victorious exploits in Baal V iii 61f.

pantheon capitulates to Yam's demands with the reply:¹⁰

'bdk b'l y ymm Baal is your slave, O Yam!

'bdk b'l ʔpt nhrm Baal is your slave, Judge River!

bn dgn 'asrkā The son of Dagan your prisoner.

All of this serves to exaggerate the mammoth task of Baal and the glory of his subsequent conquest. He rises from slavery to kingship. All the odds and the gods are apparently against him. But more important, Yam now plays the role of the giant, he is the great and formidable opponent for Baal, as immovable as the sea whose name he bears. The suggestion that Yam represents the vast unruly powers of Chaos is highly plausible.¹¹ For by the conquest of Yam, Baal establishes an eternal domination over the cosmic waters with which he fertilizes the earth. A. S. Kapelrud on the other hand designates Yam as a Sea Monster, which would make him comparable or identical with Leviathan or one of his ilk. In any case the formidable character of Baal's presumptuous enemy and the ensuing authority of Baal as cosmic overlord are an integral part of this myth which has several counterparts in similar ancient Near Eastern creation

¹⁰Baal III* B 34-35.

¹¹Thus de Langhe, *op. cit.*, p. 138, Gray, *op. cit.*, pp. 9f. and numerous other scholars. For possible Old Testament allusions to Yam in this sense, see H. May, "Some Cosmic Connotations of Mayim Rabbin, 'Many Waters'," Journal of Biblical Literature, LXXIV (1955), 9-21. A discussion of these suggested allusions will follow in a later chapter.

and nature myths, that of Marduk versus Tiamat in the *Enuma Elish* being the most obvious. Accordingly the prowess of Yam is described in rather dramatic terms:¹²

'z ym l ymk	Yam is strong, he never yields,
l tñḡan ptnh	His face does not quiver,
l ydlp tmnh	His countenance does not waver. ¹³

Baal, however, achieves the impossible. A mace fashioned by the heavenly blacksmiths, *Katir* and *Hasis*, soars like an eagle in the powerful hand of Baal and deals the telling blows on the chest and forehead of Yam.¹⁴ The role of this weapon, with its appropriate name and sympathetic power is a distinctive feature of this myth. For it is an object which is created especially for the destruction of Yam rather than for Baal's self-expression as the thunder god as one might assume. But above all it is the strong hand of Baal which gains the victory, the power of Baal concentrated in direct physical contact with the god of the waters.

¹²Baal III* A 17.

¹³For a comparable meaning of the roots *mkk* and *dlp* as "yield, weaken, sink" and "sag, give way, waver" respectively, see Eccles. 10:18, "Through sloth the roof sinks in, and through indolence the house gives way." Further it is preferable to connect *pnt* with the Accadian *pānātu*, "front" as done by G. R. Driver, *op. cit.*, p. 163, and *tmn* with the Hebrew *temūnā* "likeness, form or appearance."

¹⁴The term "chest" renders the Ugaritic *bn ydm*, literally "between two hands"; cf. Zech. 13:6. "Forehead" renders *bn 'nm* literally "between two eyes" as in Deut. 6:8; 11:18.

Furthermore, the victory seems to be final. There is no explicit reference to this battle as a recurrent conflict of these gods. Moreover the issue at stake is the "eternal kingship" among the gods. Hence, this is apparently an epihapax adventure for the ultimate sovereignty of the cosmos.¹⁵ The portentous remarks of the artisans Kašir and Hasis illustrate this fact and underscore the momentous nature of the incident:¹⁶

ht 'ibk b'lm Behold your enemy, O Baal!
 ht 'ibk tmhš Behold you will smite your enemy!
 ht tšmt šrtk Behold you will conquer your opposition!¹⁷
 tqh mlk 'lmc You will take your eternal kingdom
 drkt dt drdk Your everlasting dominion.¹⁸

¹⁵"Jedenfalls wird eine Königsherrschaft verheissen, die zu einer bestimmten Zeit (eben mit dem Sieg über Jam) ihren Anfang nimmt und für die Zukunft unabänderlich ist," concludes W. Schmidt, Königtum Gottes in Ugarit und Israel (Berlin: Alfred Töpelmann, 1961), p. 43. From Aqhat I i 44f. it appears that Baal is indeed lord over the great cosmic deep (that).

¹⁶Baal III* A 8-10.

¹⁷For the use of šmt in the sense of annihilation of a foe see Pss. 54:7; 73:27; 94:23; 143:12. It is not possible to determine whether šrt is feminine singular or plural. Gray, op. cit., p. 24 considers this an abstract noun used as a collective. Gordon, op. cit., p. 318 simply translates "enemy." The use of the feminine to designate an abstract idea is common in Hebrew also.

¹⁸For the concept of "power" associated with the root drk see Hos. 10:11; Prov. 31:3; for the concept of "dominion" or "powerful rule" see Deut. 32:4; Ps. 77:14,16; 138:4f. For a discussion of the remarkable parallelism between the last two lines of this quotation and Ps. 145:13 see Schmidt, op. cit., pp. 44f.; cf. also Dan. 3:33; 4:31; Exod. 15:18.

The finality of the conquest also involves the total humiliation and annihilation of the enemy. The details of this action are apparent from the following translation:¹⁹

yqꜥ b'l wyšt ym Baal drags him forth, he scatters
him!²⁰

ykly ꜥptꜥ nhr He annihilates Judge River!

.....

b'lm ymlk Baal shall reign!

That such "dragging" and "scattering" has any ritual implications is not immediately evident. Rather, these terms emphasize the extent and nature of Yam's extermination.

Thus in the description of Pharaoh's damnation (Ezek. 29:1-5 and 32:2-8), that monarch is described as a great sea monster (tannīn) who is dragged from his natural habitat in the Great River and scattered across the deserts where creatures of prey will enjoy a rich repast.

The triumphant exclamation "Baal shall reign" or "Now Baal is king" is not accidental at this juncture. It falls into logical sequence and expresses the necessary result of the preceding action. For the kingship of Baal is totally dependent upon the victorious outcome of this conflict.

Baal's kingship, unlike its human counterpart, is not

¹⁹Baal III* A 27.

²⁰Note the Arabic parallels cited by Gray, op. cit., p. 25. Cf. J. Obermann, "How Baal Destroyed a Rival," Journal of the American Oriental Society, LXVII (1947), 195-201.

hereditary, it is not designated by a vote of the pantheon, not some natural right from eternity, not by virtue of El's choice of a favorite but something won by combat. And that combat, as the preceding discussion has shown, involves a rise from humiliation and servitude to glory, a herculean task to perform against a formidable foe, a victory by the might of his own hand and the total extermination of the enemy. These are the essential features of the battle episode in the sequence involving the establishment of kingship.

The Exaltation of Baal as the Cosmic Overlord

The precise nature of the text Baal V i-vi which follows the Baal-Yam conflict cycle in the sequence of G. R. Driver,²¹ is rather difficult to define, as the wide variety of scholarly attempts would confirm. In the first place it seems preferable to take Baal V i 1 to V iii 46 as a separate unit in the sequence and to delineate its character on its own terms.

Moreover, there is no textual indication that Baal appears redivivus, as Gray assumes, for "reintegration into the living society of the active fertility powers,"²² while his suggested reference to a hieros gamos is rather dubious

²¹G. R. Driver, op. cit., pp. 82-91.

²²Gray, op. cit., p. 32.

although possible.²³ Further, whether the blood bath of Anat is part of a rite of imitative magic to stimulate the flow of the life essence cannot be determined with any measure of finality.²⁴ It seems clear, however, that the text is concerned with the exaltation of Baal the Victor and the affirmation of his right as cosmic overlord by the expression of his creative power. That this aspect of the Baal myth may have been associated with the new season of life and fertility is plausible. On the other hand the significant point at this juncture is to see this episode as a logical sequence of the Baal-Yam cycle. For after the submission of chaos follows the release of life and the creative activity of the god of the cosmos.

The opening lines of the text are an exhortation to exalt Baal at a banquet in his honor. The lines read:²⁵

'bd 'al'iyā b'l	Serve Baal the Victor,
s'id zbl b'l 'arṣ	Exalt ²⁶ the Prince, Lord of the Earth!
qm yē'r w'ašlḥmnh	Arise, let preparation be made, that I may dine him.

Baal is now designated as the Prince, the Victorious Lord

²³Ibid., pp. 36f.

²⁴Ibid.

²⁵Baal V i 2-5.

²⁶The root s'd is parallel with kbd in Aqhat II v 29 which suggests the translation "exalt."

over the earth. Such a title implies a sovereign overlordship.²⁷ Baal has, by virtue of his victories, become the mighty one. Thus Baal introduces his victory speech with the words: "The message of Baal the Victor, the speech of the most valiant of heroes."²⁸ Aliyan Baal is the victor par excellence. Comparable affirmations are also found in the subsequent context. Twice for example, the following exclamation occurs:²⁹

mlkn 'al'iyn b'l Baal the Victor is our King!

ʔpʔn w'in d 'lnh Our Judge, and there is none superior to him.

It is apparent then that Baal is exalted as the incomparable one, and significant that now he bears the titles that once were borne by Yam his vanquished foe. Thus Baal is exalted as the Judge (ʔpʔ) supreme and the Prince (zbl) over all.

The banquet in Baal's honor soon becomes a massacre of heroes and as such a sympathetic expression of Baal's nature as the mightiest hero of all. The slaughter ritual is performed by Anat, who is officially Baal's sister and consort,

²⁷There are no chthonic associations connected with this title here as Kapelrud, op. cit., pp. 60f., seems to imply.

²⁸Baal V iii 20f. For the text and treatment of this section see infra, p. 99.

²⁹Baal V v 32f.; II iv 43f. Kapelrud, op. cit., pp. 63f. observes that "the final sentence must be a hint intended to hit El, who was supposed to be the supreme head of the pantheon," and to whom this exclamation was directed. Cf. Schmidt, op. cit., pp. 27f.

but in a certain sense the bloodthirsty alter ego of Baal, the source of life and fertility. In the resultant flood of gore Anat revels triumphantly:³⁰

yml'u lbh bšmht Her heart is full with joy,
 kbd 'nt tšyt The liver of Anat with victory!³¹
 kbrkm tğll bdm For she plunges her knees in the blood
 of warriors³²
 ħlqm bmm' mhrm Her loins in the gore³³ of heroes.

In this way the victory of Baal and his nature as the great warrior are exaggerated, while Anat represents the terrifying aspect of Baal's role as warrior, the hypostasis of his victorious presence.³⁴ Accordingly the same catalogue of mighty acts is applicable to Anat as well as to Baal. And such an array of deeds is clearly designed to overwhelm any would be challenger. These points are illustrated by the words of

³⁰Baal V ii 25-29.

³¹Gray, op. cit., p. 35 translates the line "For in the hand of Anat is victory." However, the parallelism between lb and kbd can hardly be ignored. The suggestion that tšyt is related to Hebrew tšiyā "success" is probable.

³²For the meaning of dmr compare the Arabic parallel damir "brave"; see Gordon, op. cit., p. 257.

³³The translation of mm' is based on the various parallels employed elsewhere.

³⁴Compare the portrait of Anat in Kapelrud, op. cit., pp. 66-75, and W. F. Albright, Archeology and the Religion of Israel (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1923), pp. 74-77; Gray, op. cit., pp. 127f.

Anat herself;³⁵

mn 'ib yp' lb'l	What enemy would rise up against Baal? ³⁶
grt lrkb 'rpt	What foe against the Rider of Clouds?
l mhšt mdd 'il ym	Have I not slain Yam, beloved of El?
l klt nhr 'il rbm	Have I not annihilated the great god River?
l 'ištbn tnn 'isbmnh	Have I not muzzled Tannin, yes muzzled him?
mhšt bēn 'qltn	I smote the crooked serpent!
šlyt d šb't r'šm	The mighty one with seven heads! ³⁷

The catalogue continues in like manner and the opening lines are repeated at the end of the speech, for in the light of

³⁵Baal V iii 52-58. Note the parallel passage in Baal I* i 1-4 which is treated by W. Albright, "Are the Ephod and Teraphim mentioned in the Ugaritic Literature?" Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research, LXXXIII (1941), 39ff. Cf. "Anath and the Dragon," Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research, LXXXIV (1941), 14ff.; Gray, op. cit., pp. 27ff.; H. L. Ginsberg, "Did Anath fight the Dragon?" Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research, LXXXIV (1941), pp. 12ff. For the entire Anat cycle, see J. Aistleitner, "Die Anat-Texte aus Ras Shamra," Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft, LXVII (1939), 193-211.

³⁶The use of the root yp' in Ugaritic as meaning "rise up," "challenge," "be presumptuous," is significant for an appreciation of certain Old Testament texts such as Ezek. 28:17; Deut. 33:2; Pss. 50:2; 80:2; 94:1. See further T. Gaster, "Ezekiel XXVIII:17," Expository Times, LXII (1950), 124 and F. L. Moriarty, "A note on yp'," Catholic Biblical Quarterly, XIV (1952), 62.

³⁷For Old Testament references to Tannin, Leviathan and the dragon motif see "The Relevance of the Battle for Kingship Motif," infra, p. 110.

such mighty acts "What enemy would dare to rise up against Baal?" Furthermore, one gets the impression from this and similar passages that the battle motif and the dragon motif are not confined to the conquest of Yam, and that Yam and Leviathan are not identical figures. Warfare is therefore a natural part of the existence of Baal and his consort Anat.

Whether a hieros gamos takes place at this point is hard to determine from the text itself, and the question remains whether just such a union is necessary before Baal can function as a creator and life-giver. In any case, to whatever the various overtures of devotion on Baal's part may have reference, it is the three prominent parts of Baal's victory speech which are the arresting features of this text. The first of these is the motif of subsequent peace and well-being on the earth over which Baal is lord. Thus the speech begins:³⁸

thm 'al'iy b'l	The Message of Baal the Victor,
hwt 'al'iy qrdm	The speech of the most valiant of heroes: ³⁹

³⁸Baal V iii 28-32.

³⁹Albright, Archaeology and the Religion of Israel, p. 195, translates the second and third lines, "I prevail over the heroes who meet me in the land of battle." For qrdm see Accadian quradu "hero." The difficulty with Albright's translation is that the preceding hwt becomes isolated without a grammatical dependent. Cf. Gray, op. cit., p. 122.

qryy b'arš mlhmt	"Meet me in the turbulent earth," ⁴⁰
št b'prm ddym	"Diffuse love across the land," ⁴¹
sk šlm lkbd 'arš	"Pour out peace in the midst of earth
'arb dd lkbd šdm	"That I may increase love amidst the fields." ⁴²

This translation is quite in harmony with the context. After Baal has conquered the power of chaos and Anat has given complete vent to her bloodthirsty disposition, Baal invites Anat to come to the land which had been disrupted by this warfare and there exercise her function as mistress of love

⁴⁰The present translation takes this line in the most common sense of the terms. Qryy "meet me" agrees perfectly with line 34 below, "May your feet run to me." The translation of mlhmt as "unions" is rather forced and unnecessary; see Gray, op. cit., p. 37. The obvious reading "land of warfare" as a reference to what has just preceded is quite suitable.

⁴¹ddym suggests Hebrew dōdm "love."

⁴²Gordon, op. cit., p. 242 reads 'arbdd as one word, G. R. Driver, op. cit., p. 37 translates "honey from a pot," and Gray, op. cit., p. 37 has "increase love." The transition to the first person "I will increase love," is supported by a similar transition in the subsequent lines of Baal V iii 35-40. A. Goetze, "Peace on Earth," Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research, XCIII (1944), 17-20 offers another plausible translation as follows:

Message of Al'iyn Baal
Word of Al'iy Qrdm:
Remove war from the earth!
Do away with passion!
Pour out peace over the earth,
Loving consideration over the fields.

Compare also the translation of Kapelrud, op. cit., pp. 19f. where he relates this text to certain cultic rituals involving libations poured into the ground.

and fertility that peace or well-being may now abound on the earth.

After an exhortation for Anat to hasten to his side for this purpose, Baal announces that he is about to exercise his creative activity as lord over heaven and earth. Such creative activity as an expression of victorious overlordship in no way negates the fact that the relatively inactive El is the creator god in the strict sense of the term.⁴³ Baal does not create heaven and earth here, either ex nihilo or from chaos (Yam), but rather introduces something new into the world to demonstrate his life-giving creative power as lord of the cosmos. The pertinent lines of the text read:⁴⁴

'abn brq dl td' šmn	I will create lightning which the heavens do not know,
rgm ltd' nšm	Thunder ⁴⁵ that mankind does not know,
wltbn hmlt: 'arš	Nor the multitudes of the earth understand.

Such creative acts are obviously related to his character as the storm god as well, yet their presence at this point, prior

⁴³M. Pope, El in the Ugaritic Texts (Leiden: Brill, 1955), pp. 49f. Note the distinction of Schmidt, op. cit., p. 50, "Während El der Schöpfer ist, begegnet in Baal der Erhalter der Schöpfung."

⁴⁴Baal V iii 41-43.

⁴⁵Rgm is here translated on the basis of the Accadian rigmu "speech, roaring, noise," (cf. Ps. 68:28), G. Driver, op. cit., p. 155, although the normal meaning in Ugaritic is "word." Hence Gray, op. cit., p. 38 reads, "A matter that men do not know." The Hebrew regem "stone" may suggest "hailstone" as another possibility.

to the erection of the temple from which Baal storms forth, is to be noted.

This speech of Baal concludes with an invitation to behold this new phenomenon which he has created. The rendezvous is to take place in the mountains of Şapon, the specially chosen abode of Baal. Accordingly the activity of Baal culminates in retirement to a particular sanctuary designated "the mountain of my inheritance." The relevant passage is now given:⁴⁶

'atm w'ank 'ibğyh	Come now and I will show it to you
btk ğry 'il şpn	I, God of Şapon, in the midst of my mountain,
bqdş bğr nğlty	In the sanctuary, in the mountain of my inheritance,
bn'm bgb' tl'iyt	In the pleasant place, in the hill of victory.

The final expression, "hill of victory," suggests a further connection with the combat motif, this holy mountain being that which he has won thereby, the trophy of the victorious king.

The kingship sequence is terminated at this point, even though certain of its aspects are repeated in the text which follows. For in a sense this whole kingship sequence is but a prelude to the longer cycle of Baal as the storm god in which the building of a temple is involved, inasmuch as Baal

⁴⁶Baal V iii 43-46. The present translation follows Gray, op. cit., p. 38, in the main.

cannot express his nature as storm without just such a temple-palace. This cycle will be considered in the next chapter.

In recapitulation the following pattern becomes apparent. The theme is that of Baal the warrior. He begins in ignominy and slavery, overcomes a mighty and powerful adversary with his own hand, completely annihilates his foe and consequently gains the kingship. He is thereupon exalted as the incomparable warrior and lord of earth and exposed as a terrifying power. As king, Baal dispenses well-being on earth, exercises his creative activity and retires to his mountain of victory. However, before Baal can exercise his kingship in the storm a temple must be built.

The Kingship of Jahwe in
"The Song of the Sea"

The kingship sequence of the Baal texts has its biblical counterpart in the "Song of the Sea" (Exod. 15:1-18).⁴⁷ The present analysis of that song will delineate this sequence in detail, make the necessary comparisons and indicate what tentative conclusions might be drawn.

⁴⁷For the treatment of the archaic features of this song see F. Cross and D. N. Freedman, "The Song of Miriam," Journal of Near Eastern Studies, XIV (1955), 237ff. Other recent treatments of the song include those of H. Schmidt, "Das Meerlied," Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft, XL (1931), 59-66; M. Rozelaar, "The Song of the Sea," Vetus Testamentum, II (1952), 221-228; J. D. Watts, "The Song of the Sea," Vetus Testamentum, VII (1957), 371-380; cf. T. Gaster, "Notes on the Song of the Sea," The Expository Times, XLVIII (1936-37), 45ff.

The theme of the song is the exaltation of the name and character of Jahwe as the victorious warrior. Hence its overture to worship reads:

I will sing to Jahwe
 For He is highly exalted!
 Both horse and chariot,⁴⁸
 He hurled into the sea!
 Jahwe is a man of war!⁴⁹
 Jahwe is His Name! (Exod. 15:1,3)

The emphasis is clear; Jahwe is the mighty warrior, his foe the powers of Egypt, His battleground the turbulent sea (Yam). His character is demonstrated when He espouses the cause of the humiliated and downtrodden slaves of Egypt and rises to overthrow the mightiest historical power of that day, the army of the King of Egypt. Pharaoh is indeed a formidable foe and the victory a glorious triumph, as the subsequent lines affirm:

The chariots and army of Pharaoh
 He cast into the sea!⁵⁰

⁴⁸The vocalization rekeb "chariot" is plausible and supported by the present stage of archeological and historical investigation into the date of the introduction of cavalry, Cross and Freedmann, op. cit., p. 243.

⁴⁹The Samaritan Pentateuch would suggest a reading of jahwe gibbōr at this point. The meaning would not be altered in any way. For Jahwe as a "man of war" in similar passages see Exod. 17:16; Num. 14:42-45; 21:14; 10:35; Deut. 33:29; Josh. 7:9; Judg. 5:23; Ps. 24:8, et passim.

⁵⁰The meaning of yry in Ugaritic as "go forth" or "go down" (as in Baal IV ii 11, 29f.; I* i 6) would suggest the translation, "They went down into the sea." The use of yrd in v. 5 supports this translation. Cf. G. R. Driver, "Hebrew Notes," Vetus Testamentum, I (1951), 249f.

His crack troops
Sank in the reed-sea!
The deeps covered them,
They went down to the depths
as a stone! (Exod. 15:4-5)

The historical nature of Jahwe's adversary in no way implies his innocuous character. On the contrary the presumption and power of this god-king of Egypt is vividly reflected in the staccato lines:

The enemy said:
I'll pursue! I'll overtake!
I'll divide the spoil!⁵¹
My greed will be sated!⁵¹
I'll bare my sword!⁵¹
My hand will conquer!⁵¹ (Exod. 15:9)

The victory belongs to Jahwe alone. None can withstand the power of His right hand. This metaphor is emphasized in the following way:

Thy right hand, O Jahwe,
Is mighty in power!⁵²
Thy right hand, O Jahwe,
Shatters the enemy! (Exod. 15:6)

Nor is this triumph a momentary or temporary act. The furious onslaught of the divine presence spells the end of the opposition, while the waters and the winds are willing agents for the total annihilation of the enemy. Thus the sea (Yam) and the storm (Baal) are but pawns of the Victor as the

⁵¹Cross and Freedman, op. cit., p. 246 suggest that these two forms (originally tnl'm and tršm) preserve the archaic enclitic men. Hence the translation given here.

⁵²The meaning of "mighty" or "strong" is suggested by the Ugaritic 'dr. For the various translations of 'dr see Gray, op. cit., p. 78.

royal authority of Jahwe is established in the current events of history:

In Thy great majesty
 Thou didst crush Thy foes!⁵³
 Thou didst send forth Thy fury,
 Thou didst blow with Thy wind,
 The sea covered them!
 They sank as lead
 In the mighty waters. (Exod. 15:7,10)

The natural division of the song at verse ten corresponds in thought sequence to the division between the two sections of the Baal kingship texts described above. The first half is concerned with one aspect of the sea conflict, the battle motif. Israel and her fate are bypassed. For the moment Jahwe and Pharaoh are the only actors.⁵⁴

The second section opens with an explosive exaltation of Jahwe as the Incomparable One. This evaluation is based upon the mighty acts of victory He has performed. Thus He is King in the heavens and Lord of the earth. The latter is also His battleground, His "land of warfare,"⁵⁵ and must respond to His powerful hand. The opening verses read:

Who is like Thee among the gods, O Jahwe?
 Who is like Thee, mighty among the holy ones?⁵⁶

⁵³Note the use of ga'ānu and the participle qānu in Aqhat II vi 43 and Baal IV ii 25 respectively.

⁵⁴See Watts, op. cit., p. 373.

⁵⁵See Chapter IV, footnote 40.

⁵⁶The rendering "holy ones" is supported by the Septuagint, see parallelism with 'ēlīm, and the frequent reference

Awesome in laudable deeds,
 Performer of great feats!
 Thou didst extend Thy right hand,
 The earth swallowed them.⁵⁷ (Exod. 15:11f.)

A further consequence of the victorious combat is the revelation of the terrifying reality of the divine presence. All prospective foes are paralyzed by the 'āmā of Jahwe⁵⁸ and the nature of Jahwe as a true "man of war" thereby acknowledged. None can gainsay the petrifying terror of His militant character. Accordingly, after relating how the princes of Philistia, Moab, Edom and Canaan reacted to this overwhelming presence of Jahwe, the climax reads:

Terror and dread overcame them,
 In the greatness of Thy arm
 They were struck dumb as a stone.
 Till Thy people pass over, O Jahwe,
 Till the people Thou hast created
 pass over. (Exod. 15:16)

Here the vicarious nature of this victory becomes evident! Jahwe is fighting for His people, they are His redeemed (v. 13)

to holy ones in the Ugaritic texts. See, for example, Baal III* B 18f., "the gods sat down to food, the holy ones to a meal." For 'ēlīm in the Old Testament see Pss. 29:1; 89:7; Deut. 32:8. The "holy ones" are suggested in Deut. 32:2; Ps. 89:6-8; Zech. 14:5, et passim. See further F. Cross and D. Freedman, "The Blessing of Moses," Journal of Biblical Literature, LXVII (1948), 201.

⁵⁷Cross and Freedman, "The Song of Miriam," op. cit., p. 247, have suggested that 'ereš is here personified and represents the underworld. If so, a polemic against Baal who must descend into the underworld ('rš) of Mot, may be implied. Cross and Freedman refer to Isa. 29:4; Gen. 2:6; Isa. 14:9; Jonah 2:7 and other passages to illustrate their point.

⁵⁸See Chapter III, footnote 67.

and more especially his creation.⁵⁹ Hence the creative activity of Jahwe as King is illustrated by the moulding of a new people. Israel is indeed "What God has wrought" (Num. 23:23).

The description of the final action of Jahwe, in which He retires to His holy mountain, reflects an imagery quite similar to that of its counterpart in the Baal texts. This glorious finale is anticipated earlier in the strophe:

Thou didst faithfully lead them,
The people whom Thou didst redeem
Thou didst guide them by Thy might,
To Thy holy encampment. (Exod. 15:13)

The precise location of the holy encampment (newē godšekā) is vigorously disputed. Canaan and Zion are the alternatives proposed. The term encampment is in itself a neutral concept applicable to Canaan, Zion and Jahwe Himself and especially suitable to describe the abode of the God who has revealed Himself to a nomadic people.⁶⁰ The subsequent portrait of this location is even more colorful:

Thou wilt bring them and plant them,
In the mountain of thy heritage.
Thou hast made, O Jahwe,
The place of Thy rule,
The sanctuary, O Jahwe,
Thy hands established. (Exod. 15:17)

⁵⁹For the meaning of gnh as "create" or "beget" see Chapter III, footnote 28.

⁶⁰For the use of the term in reference to Jahwe see Jer. 50:7; in reference to Zion, Isa. 33:20; in reference to Canaan or Israel, Jer. 10:25; Isa. 32:18; Ps. 79:7; Jer. 31:23. For the use of the term in the Mari documents, see Cross and Freedman, "The Song of Miriam," op. cit., p. 244.

In Baal V iii 44-46 discussed above, the abode of Baal is described both as a sanctuary (gdš) and as the "mountain of my heritage" (šr nhlty), a description which precedes the building of the temple for Baal! Thus the "mountain of heritage" refers to the chosen divine abode and not to a temple locality. Elsewhere the throne (ks'u šbt) of Mot is identical with his domain ('rš nhlš).⁶¹ Likewise, the abode of Jahwe where Israel is "planted" is not necessarily confined to Mount Zion but in the first instance is applicable to Canaan as Jahwe's personal inheritance.⁶² Canaan is His throne! However, just as in the Baal sequence a palace or temple constructed as a symbol of the royal abode is naturally associated with the reign of the god, so too the sanctuary made or established by Jahwe would readily be connected with the central sanctuary of the covenant king wherever that shrine happened to be.

In view of this sequence depicting Jahwe as the Warrior without peer, who espouses the cause of the enslaved, rises to conquer Pharaoh His mighty adversary with His own right hand, completely annihilates His foe, receives fitting

⁶¹Baal I* ii 15f.; II viii 13f.

⁶²One cannot ignore that Sinai was also considered a holy mountain (Exod. 19:4; 24:13; Judg. 5:5; Deut. 33:1; I Kings 19:8). Watts, *op. cit.*, p. 378 maintains that Jerusalem alone can be meant here. For the opposite view, see Cross and Freedman, "The Song of Miriam," *op. cit.*, pp. 240, 250. For Canaan (Israel) as Jahwe's inheritance see Jer. 2:7; 12:8f.; 16:18; 50:11.

exaltation as the supreme God, reveals to all His terrible presence and reaches the holy mountain from which He rules, the final verse is apropos indeed. For just as Baal receives an eternal kingship thereby (Baal III* A 10), Jahwe too "will reign for ever and ever" (Exod. 15:18).

The Relevance of the Battle for Kingship Motif

What conclusions can be drawn from the preceding comparison and what contributions can be made for a deeper appreciation of biblical thought? In the first place the thought sequence in the respective battles for divine kingship is remarkably similar. This fact cannot be ignored. In several cases the same terminology is also employed. In others the biblical concepts are elucidated by their Canaanite equivalents. Nevertheless, none of this demonstrates any direct literary dependency. Yet it does suggest that the concept of divine kingship had associated with it a cycle of ideas also current within Canaanite circles, and that the biblical writer in describing the exodus event either consciously or unconsciously employed this sequence in order to emphasize the Kingship of Jahwe. Whether this presents a conscious and direct polemic against Baal is not clear despite the numerous striking antitheses. In any case the archaic character of the Kingship motif as an integral part of the covenant faith of Israel can

no longer be dismissed.⁶³ This statement is also confirmed by recent investigations into the precise nature of the covenant as a mutual agreement patterned after the archaic suzerainty treaties between King and vassals.⁶⁴ In the covenant Jahwe is acknowledged as King (Deut. 33:5):

Jahwe became King in Jeshurun,
When the heads of the people were gathered,
The tribes of Israel together. (Deut. 33:5)

and as the warrior in Israel's midst Jahwe's Royal power becomes manifest for:

Jahwe his God is with him,
The shout of a King in his midst,
A God who brings him from Egypt. (Num. 23:21f.)

In other words, these and similar references confirm the major significance of the Kingship of Jahwe in the Israelite covenant and in early Hebrew poetry.⁶⁵

However, when one makes a detailed analysis of the nature of the exploits of Baal and the magnalia of Jahwe one becomes

⁶³The outline of this sequence is more than a "gesture toward Canaanite concepts" as Watts, op. cit., p. 380 describes the efforts of Cross and Freedman in "Song of Miriam," op. cit.

⁶⁴Compare the treatment in Chapter I.

⁶⁵See also Num. 10:35; Judg. 8:23; I Sam. 4:4; 8:7; 12:12; Pss. 24:9; 68:25. In recent times the same conclusion has been reached by Cross and Freedman, op. cit., p. 250 and E. Jacob, Ras Shamra et l'ancien Testament (Neuchatel: Delachaux & Niestlé, 1960), p. 38. Compare also the discussion of Schmidt, op. cit., pp. 64-69, who insists that the entry into Canaan is the terminus a quo for this concept.

aware of a pronounced tension between the two.⁶⁶ For while each god appears as a mighty and triumphant warrior who exhibits both destructive and creative powers beyond compare, the feats are presented from different frames of reference. Baal's activity is an epic among gods, a cosmological and mythical encounter. Jahwe's revelation of his kingship involves a definable locality in time and space, an historical opponent and a local world power. Sea, (Yam) wind, (Baal) and kindred natural forces are obedient servants and not personified chaotic foes. This is a battle witnessed in history and not in cosmic drama. Here the powerful and overpowering hand of Jahwe is a revelation of a personal God and not the theophany of Baal in a distant lightning flash.

Moreover, apart from Baal's inevitable involvement in the well-being of the earth by the dispensation of fertility, there is no indication of his concern for a specific people, such as those at Ugarit, no sovereign choice of one people over another. Baal is independent of those people who induce his activity. In fact it is nature and not people which is his concern. His "experiment in love" is in the kissing of earth with peace and well-being, his communion is with Anat, his holiness in the numinous isolation of his mountain in the North. Any indication of an election motif is totally absent. Divine wrath and jealousy have no connection with any

⁶⁶See the analysis of "The Character of Jahwe," in Chapter III.

designated people. The elimination of rivals and the bloody exploits of his alter ego are but the expression of Baal's character in cosmic affairs without any direct relevance to a sensitive pathos over against a particular nation.⁶⁷

Nevertheless, the relevance of this comparison is not simply antithetical. For the Israelite who had come into contact with Canaanite culture, and in particular with Canaanite mythology, would have been aware, from the outset, that divine kingship was popularly considered something that had to be won, not simply inherited, inherent or given.⁶⁸ Hence it is quite plausible that in such a milieu the proclamation of the victorious acts of warfare on the part of Jahwe would be an emphatic way of affirming the divine kingship of Jahwe. Such an affirmation would automatically sound certain polemical overtones. Moreover it is precisely these royal acts of triumph which provide the impetus for Israel's response to Jahwe as the suzerain overlord in the covenant, for Israel had witnessed the battle of its King. Thus, wherever Jahwe intervenes to defeat the enemy of Israel He is reasserting His Kingship, which also means that the battle motif is an inevitable part of the concept of divine kingship so prevalent in

⁶⁷Compare the discussion of "The Sovereign Choice of Israel," and "The Jealousy Relationship" in Chapter III.

⁶⁸Supra, p. 93.

the subsequent worship of Israel.⁶⁹ And such battles are first and foremost the conflicts of history like that first glorious precedent of Jahwe versus Pharaoh.

If the presence of certain Canaanite divine kingship imagery in this poem be granted, then the wording of Exod. 15:11 and similar passages is more readily understood. In the first place the assertion, "Who is like Thee among the gods, O Jahwe?" is dependent upon the subsequent proclamation of His performance of victorious acts. Such an assertion, however, says nothing explicitly concerning the essential existence of other gods as such, but simply employs the common Canaanite image of divine kingship as an "established superiority over all gods" in relation to Jahwe Himself.⁷⁰ In other words, this is but a culturally relevant way of saying Jahwe, not Baal, is King.⁷¹ And as the context shows Jahwe is King in Israel; Israel is His creation and Canaan His heritage. For by designating Jahwe as its own King Israel is affirming the direct unmediated divine rule of Jahwe in its own midst

⁶⁹See J. Gray, "The Kingship of God in the Prophets and the Psalms," Vetus Testamentum, XI (1961), 1-14. Note especially Pss. 47, 95, 99 which associate Jahwe's Kingship solely with Exodus themes.

⁷⁰For a discussion of the role of "Jahwe als König der Götter," see Schmidt, op. cit., pp. 69-76. The subject will be discussed in greater detail in a later chapter.

⁷¹Ibid., p. 72.

and not merely in some heavenly council of gods.⁷² Once again the strong personal element apparent in the covenant passages is reaffirmed.

Again, if this battle motif is relevant in a general way, then those later biblical passages which speak of combatants explicitly mentioned in the Ugaritic texts cannot be ignored either. Tannin, for example, is used as a metaphor to describe Pharaoh who is given the "scattering treatment" applied to Yam (Exod. 29:3-5) and made a torrent of blood that would delight the heart of Anat (Exod. 29:1-8). Accordingly, not only is the "battle for kingship" imagery applied to the exodus event, but Pharaoh the foe par excellence is described in terms of the mythological dragons enumerated among the mighty acts in Baal's rise to kingship. Yet the enemy of Jahwe is still Pharaoh! This fact becomes even more clear in Isa. 51:9-11 where the same victorious arm of Jahwe, who once divided the sea, hewed Rahab and pierced Tannin for the redeemed to pass over, is now called into action to bring the redeemed once more to its mountain of rest!⁷³ In the context Tannin and Rahab logically refer to Pharaoh the

⁷²Ibid., p. 75f.

⁷³The similarity in terminology between this passage and Exod. 15 is immediately apparent.

mightiest of Jahwe's historical foes.⁷⁴ In Ps. 74:12-14 the psalmist, after defining his current predicament amid vicious foes, recalls the revelation of Jahwe's divine kingship in His past conquests:

Yet God is my King from of old,
Performing salvation in the midst of earth,
Thou didst divine the sea (Yam) with Thy might,
Thou didst break the heads of Tannin upon the
waters,
Thou didst crush the heads of Leviathan,
Thou didst give him as food for a people among
desert creatures.

In the light of the preceding, this divine act of salvation on earth is apparently the exodus event, the division of the sea is the parting of the waters at the Reed Sea, while Tannin and Leviathan are once again the mighty Pharaoh, and Egypt for which he stands. If this line of thinking is correct, then, to this point there is no reference to an independent mythological battle between Jahwe and a dragon,⁷⁵ but simply the application of the Canaanite "battle for

⁷⁴In Ps. 87:4 and Isa. 30:7 Rahab is clearly identified with Egypt which would support the identification of the same in Ps. 89:11. Just as in Exod. 15:11 Jahwe is here exalted as the incomparable One because of His control of the sea and conquest of Rahab and all His foes. Cf. also Job 9:13; 26:12. The whole discussion has been anticipated by A. Heidel, The Babylonian Genesis (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1951), pp. 102-114. There is no indication that Tehom was one of the chaotic enemies destroyed by Baal.

⁷⁵Gray, "The Kingship of God in the Prophets and Psalms," op. cit., p. 5, goes beyond the evidence when he assumes the existence of an independent biblical tradition concerning a primeval battle between Jahwe and the monsters which is only later associated with the exodus incident. Cf. Schmidt, op. cit., pp. 39-42.

kingship" imagery to the revelation of Jahwe's kingship in the glorious exodus battle. And moreover, as W. Schmidt has so forcefully demonstrated, the conflict between Baal and the dragons, whether Yam, Leviathan, Tannin or Ba'an, is in no way connected with the creation of the cosmos as such.⁷⁶ In other words a dragon myth is not necessarily a creation myth. The Babylonian myth of Marduk and Tiamat is the exception rather than the rule. It is incorrect then, as many have done,⁷⁷ to designate biblical dragon imagery as the relic of an ancient creation myth, for in the passages noted above the conflicts involved all take place after creation, the dragon imagery being applied to the battles of time and history.

Can the same statement be made concerning the biblical references to Jahwe's conflict with the sea (Yam)? It is quite clear that in "The Song of the Sea" (Exod. 15) the sea itself is in no way personified!⁷⁸ And again, as noted above, there

⁷⁶Schmidt, op. cit., pp. 39-42.

⁷⁷These designations revert back to the work of H. Gunkel, Schöpfung und Chaos in Endzeit und Urzeit (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1895), in particular. E. Jacob, Theology of the Old Testament (New York: Harper Bros., 1958), p. 138 is but one illustration of this prevalent usage. However, compare the same writer's distinction between "un mythe cosmique" and "un mythe cosmogonique" in his later publication; Jacob, Ras Shamra et l'ancien Testament, p. 95.

⁷⁸Cross and Freedman, "The Song of Miriam," op. cit., p. 239.

is no indication that the Baal-Yam encounter involves a creation or cosmogony in the strict sense of the term. It is the battle for cosmic control of the created world.

Now while it is true that the vast majority of biblical allusions to yam speak of the sea as such, there are certain passages which suggest that yam and mayim (rabbim) represent something more.⁷⁹ The sea is first of all a divine creation, "The sea is His and He made it" (Ps. 95:5); it is the very foundation of the Lord's earth (Ps. 24:1f.). The sea and the waters are in fact a regular feature of the creation portrait in the Old Testament, but without any explicit description of a battle which took place before creation. In His creative acts the waters simply flee at His coming (Ps. 104:5-9). Nevertheless, such waters do appear to become presumptuous and menacing at times (Ps. 46:2f.) and the worshiper often describes his plight in relation to the sea's rebellious activity.⁸⁰ But no battle takes place; Jahwe always has these powers under control. Above all the tumult of the roaring sea Jahwe reigns as King (Ps. 93:1-4). In a general way then the sea does represent the chaotic and catastrophic phenomena observable in nature, yet there is no evidence of Jahwe having fought the sea for supremacy on earth. Accordingly the description of

⁷⁹See H. G. May, "Some Cosmic Connotations of Mayim Rabbim, 'Many Waters'," Journal of Biblical Literature, LXXIV (1955), 9-21, for a somewhat extreme position on the subject.

⁸⁰Pss. 42:8; 69:2f., 16f.; 124:4f.; 144:7; 68:22f.; 89:26.

Jahwe as the King who establishes His throne upon the flood or reigns over the sea is a culturally relevant way of saying that Jahwe, not Baal, is King over all cosmic forces. Nor is it surprising then that, despite the completely impersonal character of yam in Exod. 15:1-18, other exodus passages which characterize Egypt as Rahab, Leviathan or Tannin, should complete the picture and speak of the sea in a way which suggests the Yam-Baal imagery⁸¹ thereby emphasize the cosmic kingship of Jahwe. Thus Jahwe reigns supreme as Lord of both historical and chaotic powers, the victor over all. Does this also mean that Jahwe is Lord of the Storm in the same sense that Baal is? This question is the burden of the next chapter.

⁸¹Isa. 43:15-17; Pss. 74:12-15; 89:9f.; Job 25:12. There is much of the Baal-Yam imagery suggested in Hab. 3. See especially, W. Albright, The Psalm of Habakkuk in Studies in Old Testament Prophecies, edited by H. H. Rowley (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1950), pp. 1-18. This passage will be discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER V

THE THEOPHANY OF BAAL AND THE THEOPHANY OF JAHWE

If the current comparison of religious imagery from kindred cultures is a somewhat precarious adventure, then the subsequent effort to establish the uniqueness and distinctive character of pertinent religious concepts of the Old Testament in every nuance of meaning can be fraught with similar dangers. For the presence of a concept within the covers of the Old Testament in no way demands that this concept is unique in every detail. The concept of the theophany of Jahwe in early Hebrew poetry is a particular case in point. Accordingly this chapter is devoted to a consideration of the spectacular self-manifestation of Baal and comparable theophanies of Jahwe which illustrate the problem involved. In such a study the question of remarkable similarity and peculiar perspective becomes relevant for an appreciation of the vital religious polemic of Israel in its struggle for religious self-preservation within the mesh of Canaanite society.

The concept of divine self-disclosure in the Ugaritic texts is quite broad. In the Daniel epic, for example, the blacksmiths of heaven deliver the marvelous bow they have fashioned, in person, to the hero Daniel as an honorific gift

for his son Aqhat.¹ In the ensuing narrative there is an extended dialogue between Aqhat, the king's son, and Anat the goddess of love and war, who has coveted the bow in question.² No clear indication is given that such appearances were abnormal in any way, but rather that they were natural features of Canaanite epic. In the Keret legend, on the other hand, it is El himself, the father of mankind, who suddenly appears to the mourning and destitute Keret with specific directions for obtaining a suitable bride.³ The subsequent announcement of the birth of Keret's son suggests a similar apparition at this time.⁴ In any case, such passages indicate that the idea of personal theophanies to heroic individuals is not alien to Canaanite epic thought. The theophany of Baal as the storm deity par excellence, the self-revelation of his essential character in the cataclysmic forces of wind and water from the heavens, however, has no direct relationship with the above. It is quite impersonal; Baal is but the personification of the tempest. The account of this theophany is basic for the subsequent comparison of the respective roles of

¹Aqhat II v.

²Aqhat II vi.

³Keret I i-iii.

⁴Keret III ii.

Jahwe and Baal in the storm.⁵

The Character of Baal as
the Storm God

The Baal of the Ugaritic pantheon is none other than the ancient semitic storm god Hadad. He is so named in the texts themselves and as such he appears as the victorious king in the Canaanite council of gods. For unlike many other deities of the Canaanite pantheon, Hadad is not merely one of the glorious foes who had fallen before the mighty mace of Baal. Hadad is the Baal of Canaan!⁶

The dramatic portrait of Baal on a stele found at Ugarit offers a vivid character sketch.⁷ Here Baal stands erect as a vigorous young warrior god, brandishing a club in one hand and holding a lightning flash which culminates in a huge spear head in the other. Beneath the feet of Baal, it seems, are turbulent waves which represent the sea or the flood over which Baal is victorious.

As the storm god Baal bears the distinctive title "the

⁵The cycle of texts under discussion in this chapter includes primarily Baal V iii 46 - vi 25 and Baal II. C. Gordon, Ugaritic Manual (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1955), pp. 138f., 139-144 numbers them Anat III 29 - VI and text 51.

⁶Compare A. Kapelrud, Baal in the Ras Shamra Texts (Copenhagen: G. E. C. Gad, 1952), pp. 50-52; W. Albright, Archeology and the Religion of Israel (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1953), p. 75.

⁷C. Schaeffer, The Cuneiform Texts of Ras Shamra-Ugarit (London: Oxford University Press, 1936), plate XXXII, figure 2.

rider of the clouds" (rkb 'rpt).⁸ This colorful expression underscores the Canaanite belief that the presence of Baal was evident from the advent of nimbus clouds in the heavens. These are, as it were, the "chariots" of Baal (cf. Ps. 104:3). Thunder and lightning are his weapons, and the mountains of the North the fortress from which he charges forth. As mentioned earlier, thunder and lightning are Baal's own creation, the personal expression of his victorious overlordship, his supremacy and his individuality as the storm god become king. This text was previously translated:⁹

I will create lightning which the heavens do not know,
Thunder that mankind does not know,
Nor the multitudes¹⁰ of the earth understand.

Baal's theophany in the storm is, furthermore, a revelation of his powerful control over all the waters of heaven with which he renders fertile his earthly domain. In fact the living presence of Baal is attested, in the mind of the Canaanite, by precipitation of any form of moisture. Thus Baal's very existence is bound up with the forces of the storm, the repeated revelation of which, in some such heavenly spectacle, is the sine qua non of his being alive. Accordingly,

⁸Aqhat I 43f.; Baal I ii 7; II iii 10, 17; V ii 40.

⁹Baal V iii 41-43, supra p. 101.

¹⁰The term hmlt could readily be translated "rain storm" or "flood" which meanings would be quite appropriate in Jer. 11:16 and Ezek. 1:24. The secondary meaning of Arabic hamala "rain steadily" or "flow abundantly" would tend to support this suggestion.

when at a later period Baal must descend into the underworld, he is obliged to take his clouds ('rpt), wind (rh) and rain (mtr), the absence of which, in the eyes of the worshipers in Canaan, was an indication of his being dead.¹¹

It is characteristic of Baal as the storm god, that the divine self-disclosure of his being in the phenomena of natural forces is not effected in isolation from other deities. For not only is Baal intent upon demonstrating his kingship in the weather to the anxious council of the heavens, but he is frequently associated with a retinue of holy ones who are, apparently, lesser manifestations of his presence. Cyrus Gordon translates the given names as "Pdriya girl of light," "Tly girl of rain," and "Aršiya girl of Y'bdr."¹² Some such lackeys of Baal are also included in Yam's demands to the heavenly council.¹³ In his northern abode this heavenly monarch enjoys the company of his daughters and invites his wife Anat, the first lady of fertility, to share his

¹¹Baal I* v 7f.

¹²C. Gordon, Ugaritic Literature (Rome: The Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1949), p. 32. G. R. Driver, Canaanite Myths and Legends (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1956), p. 97, translates "Pdriya daughter of mist," "Taliya daughter of showers," and "Aršiya daughter of the wide world." Cf. Baal I* v 10; II i 14, iv 55; V i 23, iii 21. The name Taliya means something like "Dewy" and Aršiya is apparently associated with the earth which Baal must fertilize.

¹³Baal III B 33.

quarters.¹⁴ This company of Baal it seems is necessary for his dispensation of life in the elements of nature.

Moreover, although Baal, as the storm god is king among the gods, and although strong lesser deities are always at his side, Baal does not possess an independent and unrestricted power of the theophany in the storm. Indeed, Baal's victory over Yam for the kingship is laughable if he cannot exercise his powers of kingship in the weather or function as the victorious one by a vigorous self-expression in the realms of his domain. And laughable it is until a further prerequisite is fulfilled. For, strange to say, the rider of the storm clouds across the vast reaches of the heavens requires the confines of a particular heavenly structure within which to operate effectively as a king in the forces of the storm.

The Theophany of Baal from his Temple

The absence of a fitting house for king Baal evokes the ire of Anat, his bride, who threatens to let her bloodthirsty fury loose upon the aged El residing far off in the two rivers.¹⁵ Her bloody invectives are apparently without effect, however,

¹⁴Baal V i 21-25, iii 26-46. Whether the fertility gods and goddesses invited to Baal's banquet at the completion of the palace in Baal II vi 45-54 are also part of his retinue is not at all apparent from the text.

¹⁵Baal V ivb 7 - v 4.

for trickery is thereupon employed with much greater success. Aširat (Asherah), El's wife, is bribed with an appropriate gift of royal furniture constructed by the heavenly blacksmiths and induced to obtain El's permission for the erection of Baal's house.¹⁶ To be without such a palace meant ignominy and humiliation in the eyes of his fellow gods, as he himself recounts:¹⁷

y'n 'ali'yn b'l	Baal, the Victor, answered,
yt'dd rkb 'rpt	The rider of the clouds repeated
hm ydd wyqlšn	Behold, they draw back ¹⁸ and insult me ¹⁹
yqm wywptn btk	They rise up and spit on me,
btk p(b)r bn 'ilm	In the midst of the assembly of the sons of El.

It is clear therefore that Baal's authority is limited and that El must grant permission before the house of Baal can be built and his theophany take place. Once the "Lady of the Sea,"

¹⁶Baal II i 1 - ii 29. For a detailed discussion of the furniture mentioned here see W. Albright, "The Furniture of El in Canaanite Mythology," Bulletin of American Schools of Oriental Research, XCI (1943), 39-44. The structure involved seems to be some form of throne (kḫt) with a canopy and litter borne by two poles overladen with gold.

¹⁷Baal II iii 9-13. The force of this passage is brought out by T. Gaster, "A King without a Castle," Bulletin of American Schools of Oriental Research, CI (1946), 21-24.

¹⁸Cf. Hebrew ndd "retreat." Here the sense is apparently to stand at a distance from the insulted person. The other gods, all of whom possess houses, are the mockers.

¹⁹The meaning of Ugaritic qlš is the same as that of Hebrew qls, even though there is no direct etymological connection.

Aširat, has softened the heart of her aged consort El and gained the desired approval for the project she indicates the full significance of the forthcoming building:²⁰

wš 'ap 'dn mšrh b'l y'dn	Now, moreover, Baal will give an abundance of his rain,
'dn šrt bglš	An abundance of moisture and snow,
w(y)tn qlh b'rpt	He will utter his voice in the clouds,
šrh l'arš brqm	His flashing to the earth with lightning!

These lines make it clear that the self-disclosure of Baal is associated with excessive rain (or snow), thunder, clouds, fire and lightning, and that this theophany is intimately connected with a specific house which is variously designated bt (house), hkl (palace or temple) or bhbm (mansion). The location of this house is apparently in the distant mountains of the North for it is thither that Anat hastens with the news of El's approval, and where the work of construction begins with suitable timber from Lebanon and Sirion (cf. Ps. 29:6).²¹ The enormous size and beauty of the temple

²⁰Baal II v 6-9. J. Gray, The Legacy of Canaan (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1957), pp. 40f., claims that this passage provides the clue to the Sitz im Leben of the texts as part of the Canaanite New Year Festival. The present writer's translation of this passage is largely dependent upon the parallels suggested by J. Gray. The allusion to light or fire here is also to be noted.

²¹Baal II v 20-57. For a fuller discussion of Baal as the builder of the temple see Kapelrud, op. cit., pp. 110-117.

suggest that this is not some earthly temple which is under construction but a palace which may be a portion of the heavens themselves, presumably somewhere on the Northern horizon, from which Baal proceeds in meteorological splendor.

Two points need to be emphasized: Baal's theophany as the storm god is apparent from the spectacular weather phenomena in the heavens above and the temple of Baal is that specific location of the heavens from which this royal self-expression emanates. Thus, to that extent, the terms "temple" and "heavens" can be considered parallel. In brief, a heavenly residential palace, a location for the exercise of kingship in cosmic proportions, and not merely some earthly shrine, appears to be the nature of this hkl.²²

On the surface there is no apparent reason for Baal's objection to a window which the heavenly architects have proposed for this temple of Baal. A number of scholars, such as U. Cassuto,²³ relate this to the incipient conflict between Baal and Mot and connect it with a suggested allusion in Jer. 9:20 which reads:

For death (Mot) has come up into our windows,
It has entered our palaces,
Cutting off the children from the streets,
And the young men from the squares.

²²Consider also U. Cassuto, "The Palace of Baal," Journal of Biblical Literature, LXI (1942), pp. 51-56.

²³Ibid.

Other writers, such as John Gray,²⁴ see this as a literary device which serves to emphasize a particular feature of the accompanying ritual. An even more plausible explanation, however, is that Baal, as lord of the seasons, is obliged to wait until the appropriate time before he permits the seasonal rains to fall. At that time the window in question could be inserted and the spectacle of his advent be seen.

The window in question is that instrument upon which Baal's appearance in the storm is dependent and the heavenly exit for the elements which must accompany the storm god. In fact, the opening of the window means the opening of the clouds through which the rain can fall. Precisely the same imagery is reflected in Gen. 7:11 according to which "the windows ('rbt) of heaven were opened (pth)" for the rain to descend and the flood commence. The relevant Ugaritic passage reads:²⁵

yph ₁ hln bbhtm	He will open a window in the mansion,
'urbt bqr ₁ hklm	A shutter ²⁶ in the midst of the palace,
wy(p)th ₁ bdqt 'rpt	He will make an opening in the clouds.

T. Gaster may well be right in considering this incident a

²⁴Gray, op. cit., p. 42.

²⁵Baal II vii 17-19. Gray, op. cit., p. 43, on the basis of an Arabic root (wdq) translates the last line, "And let the clouds be opened with rain."

²⁶Note that the noun for window ('urbt) and the verb "to open" (pth) are identical with the corresponding terms in Gen. 7:11.

reflection of an actual rain-making ceremony at the Baal temple of Ugarit in which the windows of the temple roof or the skylight were flung open as a sympathetic gesture to induce rain.²⁷ In response Baal would open the flood gates of his heavenly temple, and make the necessary opening in the clouds for the precipitation of rain. In any case the window of heaven or the heavenly temple is a further prerequisite for Baal's complete self-revelation as the god of the storm who brings lifegiving rain.

The building of this temple or palace is celebrated with a joyous banquet to which all the seventy sons of Aširat are invited.²⁸ The window is then constructed in the palace and Baal thunders forth his stentorian voice in open challenge to all his foes. In that moment the theophany of Baal is seen. Unfortunately, some of the details of his meteorological activity are obscure because of the poor state of the text at this point. Nevertheless, it is clear that Baal thunders triumphantly, "he utters his holy voice" (qlh qdš ytn), his awful presence causes considerable agitation in the high places of the earth (bmt 'arš), his foes flee to the deep recesses of the forest, and he waves his spear (literally

²⁷T. Gaster, Thespis (New York: Henry Schuman, 1950), p. 181. Comparative anthropology can yield parallels to this practice as far afield as the Australian Aborigines. One such example is found in J. Frazer, The Golden Bough (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1958), pp. 74f.

²⁸Baal II vi 36-61.

"cedar") victoriously in his right hand as lightning bolts rend the skies.²⁹ It is apparent that the theophany of Baal is designed to terrify his opposition and to express his complete kingship and lordship over all at this point. Here the storm god is king de facto, he has finally given full expression to his individuality as the victorious storm god. Accordingly, Baal's theophany is a demonstration of his divine supremacy and a disclosure of his essential nature. The full force of his efficacious kingship is brought out in the subsequent text:³⁰

bkm yēb b'l lbhth	Henceforth Baal sits (enthroned) over his mansion!
'u mlk 'u bl mlk	Shall king or commoner
'arṣ drkt yštkn	Make the earth a dominion for himself?

Baal is enthroned as king and by virtue of his theophany must now be acknowledged as such.

The Temple Cultus of Baal as Storm God

One conspicuous feature of the preceding Baal cycle is not merely that Baal is a "king without a castle," that is, a

²⁹Baal II vii 30-41. See especially the translation of G. R. Driver, op. cit., p. 101 at this point.

³⁰Baal II vii 42-44. G. R. Driver, op. cit., translates the first line "Baal forthwith returns to his mansion." However, the root yēb is frequently used in Ugaritic and Hebrew to designate sitting on a throne. Note especially Ps. 29:10 "Jahwe sits enthroned over the flood."

god without a temple, but that he is the only one of the Canaanite pantheon in this predicament, a fact which occasions taunts and derision from the remainder of the gods. Marduk, on the other hand, is the first to be housed according to Babylonian mythology.³¹ Accordingly, the suggestion that behind this myth can be seen the historical process of Baal's introduction into the Canaanite pantheon, and that Baal is thus portrayed as the founder of a new cult, is indeed plausible. One thing at least is clear, Baal is not only portrayed as a young god³² but appears as a new god with newly acquired kingship in the Canaanite pantheon, whereas El, the titular head, is an aged figure.

Further, it is logical to assume that, just as the various portrayals of El, Baal, Anat and other Canaanite deities on stone or some other medium correspond to their character in the various known myths concerning them, so the temple of Baal discovered at Ugarit was considered a replica of its heavenly archetype. Hence the suggestion of

³¹On this point note also Kapelrud, *op. cit.*, p. 110.

³²This is also apparent from the stele of Baal found at Ugarit; see Chapter V, footnote 7. Despite the fact that Baal is a young god, and presumably a recent deity in the Canaanite pantheon, the present writer can find no clear evidence that the theophany of Baal reflects a historical event which has been mythologized. The relation between the myth and nature is so intimate that the latter seems to provide its original genesis.

C. Schaeffer³³ that the staircase in one of the towers of the Baal temple is designed to give access to a skylight or window of some kind which was part of the original construction is also plausible. This being the case, the Baal temple at Ugarit corresponded in this detail at least, to its heavenly counterpart.

As noted above, some rainmaking ceremony of a sympathetic nature corresponding to the opening of the windows in the heavenly temple of the Baal myth was probably performed in the Baal temple at Ugarit, a ceremony designed to induce the appearance of Baal in the heavenly storms. If so, then in the mind of the Canaanite worshiper, the self-revelation of Baal was neither an independent act nor a sovereign intervention, all of which exposes a character trait comparable to the inefficacy of Baal prior to El's gracious permission to build a royal temple. In any case, the temple of Baal is a sine qua non for his efficacy, even though the specific rites in the earthly ceremonies which were thought to effect Baal's revelation are relatively obscure. In the last analysis the Canaanite could not consider a Baal theophany a sovereign act free from cultic involvement.

At this point it ought to be mentioned that the precise nature of the sacrificial system and cultic rituals at Ugarit

³³Schaeffer, op. cit., p. 68.

is far from clear.³⁴ While there are numerous references to the slaughter of animals and birds, and the general term for sacrifice (dbḥ) is quite frequent, any effort to classify these sacrifices and equate them with etymological Hebrew parallels is almost impossible. The heavenly banquets of the pantheon are likewise irrelevant. Isolated rites performed by Keret and Aqhat do not provide a consistent or complete picture of the cultus in the Baal temple itself. In general, however, it would appear that sacrifices and similar ritual activities were meant to influence the god or gods in one way or another, either by plying them with food or honoring them with gifts.³⁵ This function seems quite clear in Keret I iii-iv where Keret reacts to the appearance of El in a dream by ascending the tower of his palace to implore the aid of El and effect the assistance of Baal in his forthcoming venture in search of a suitable wife:³⁶

w'ly lṣr mgdl	Then he went up to the top of the tower,
rkb ṯkmm ḥmt	He mounted the shoulder of the wall,
nš'a ydh šmmh	He raised his hands to the sky,

³⁴Note especially the sober appraisal of A. de Guglielmo, "Sacrifice in the Ugaritic Texts," Catholic Biblical Quarterly, XVII (1955), 196-216. On the basis of the actual sacrificial terminology, Gray, op. cit., p. 146 concludes "From such sporadic evidence, it is very precarious to assume a sacrificial system such as is found in the 'Mosaic' law."

³⁵Op. cit., p. 96.

³⁶Keret I iv 2-3.

dbḥ l'ēr 'abh 'il He sacrificed to bull El, his father,
 šrd b'l bdbḥh He made Baal descend with his sacrifice,
 bn dgn bmqdh The son of Dagan with his food.

One cannot press the term šrd into meaning that Keret actually induced a theophany.³⁷ However, the thought that he invoked and effected his aid seems clear from the context. Likewise, when Keret arrived at the shrine of Aširat, his vow of ample gifts of silver and gold gained him the support of that deity also.³⁸ Thus it appears that the rites employed in the Ugarit cultus were primarily executed for the inducement of a divine activity of some kind. That certain of these rites were sympathetic in nature cannot be denied, but that the entire myth of Baal's theophany in the storm was reenacted in a ritual drama at the annual New Year festival is nowhere specified, nor can the details of such a drama be clearly discerned from the pattern of the myth itself.³⁹ This does not rule out the fact that many features of the

³⁷Gray, op. cit., p. 99 translates "serve" and relates the term to the Hebrew root šrd.

³⁸Keret I iv 34-43.

³⁹It must be emphasized that the reconstruction of Gray, op. cit., pp. 147-152, is based upon the analogy of the seasonal cult patterns and the subject matter of the myth itself, not upon details of a ritual which are specified. It is quite possible that certain ritual instructions do accompany the text of Shachar and Shalim. See the interpretation of T. Gaster, "A Canaanite Ritual Drama," Journal of the American Oriental Society, LXVI (1946), 49-76. There is no obvious connection between this text and the Baal myth, however.

Baal myth correspond to similar ancient Near Eastern myths with attendant rituals. It is not possible to enter into the controversy concerning the myth-ritual problem in ancient mythology at this time.⁴⁰ Suffice it to say that any attempt to find the origins of Hebrew cultic practices or the ritual for a corresponding Hebrew myth-ritual pattern in the Baal myth has very little explicit textual evidence for its support.⁴¹

The Theophanies of Jahwe in the Early Israelite Poetry

To what extent is the mythological portrait of Baal's storm theophany the same as comparable descriptions of Jahwe's advent in nature? Is there any indication that biblical writers employed this Canaanite imagery for a specific purpose? In what way is Jahwe's theophanic self-revelation unique? These are the basic questions underlying the ensuing discussion.

The splendor of Baal emanates from the mountains of the North, the advent of Jahwe from the peaks to the South. In

⁴⁰For the most consistent and complete presentation of the theory concerning the myth-ritual pattern in the ancient world and in primitive thought forms see Gaster, Thespis, op. cit. For the necessary precautions concerning this theory see R. de Langhe, Myth, Ritual and Kingship in the Ras Shamra Tablets in Myth, Ritual and Kingship (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1958), pp. 132-134.

⁴¹Compare the remarks of de Langhe, op. cit., pp. 137-141.

fact association with mountains is a feature common to any number of ancient Near Eastern deities⁴² and hence not especially significant at this point. It is noteworthy, however, that comparable storm metaphors and imagery are employed to describe certain theophanies of Jahwe even though the character of Jahwe is nowhere defined as that of a phenomenological storm deity. This point is illustrated by the colorful imagery of Judg. 5:4-5:

O Jahwe, when you went forth from Seir,
 When you strode forth from the land of Edom,
 The earth trembled,⁴³
 Yea, the heavens dripped,⁴⁴
 Yea, the clouds dripped water,
 The mountains flowed,⁴⁵
 Before Jahwe, the One of Sinai,⁴⁶
 Before Jahwe, the God of Israel.

⁴²Cf. supra, pp. 59f.

⁴³Earth-rending disturbances are a frequent characteristic of storm theophanies. Note Baal II vii 30-35. See Ps. 77:19; Hab. 3:6, et passim.

⁴⁴Note that šmm (heaven) seems to be synonymous with "clouds" or "rain" in several Ugaritic passages, e.g., Baal II viii 23; III ii 25; IV i 5; V v 18. Hence the lack of an object presents no difficulty.

⁴⁵The translation "flow" suits the context admirably and follows the present vocalization of the Massoretic Text. The Septuagint rendering assumes a root zll "to shake," which is also suitable but less likely. Cf. Mic. 1:4 for example, and the parallel passage in Ps. 68:10.

⁴⁶The present writer agrees with the position of W. Albright in rendering the text "the One of Sinai" both here and in Ps. 68:9. The grammatical usage is illustrated by the title of El in the Ugaritic texts, to wit, ʾil d p'id, "Bull El, the One of Heart." See W. Albright, "The Song of Deborah in the Light of Archeology," Bulletin of the American

This spectacle of Jahwe's awful coming is apparently a description of Jahwe's intervention in that overwhelming storm which flooded the Kishon and drowned the Canaanite army at Tanaach (Judg. 5:19-22).⁴⁷ If this be the case, then the emphasis again lies upon the specific purpose of this divine revelation and the sovereign interference of Jahwe through the resplendent phenomena of the storm. For the storm is not effected by Israel nor is its coming necessarily related to any seasonal need for rain. This theophany is spontaneous, an independent act of self-disclosure to meet the particular historical crisis in Israel's life. It is a theophany against specific foes; indeed, "So perish all thine enemies, O Jahwe" exclaims the poet (Judg. 5:31). Hence the storm and the rainfall are the medium and not the essence of this divine revelation. Jahwe is present but not personified in the storm. The purpose of Jahwe's theophany is to reveal His nature as

Schools of Oriental Research, LXII (1936), 30. The compounding of divine names to describe a single entity is common in Ugaritic. Gordon, op. cit., p. 51 gives a list and indicates the relevance for the name Jahwe Elohim in the Old Testament.

⁴⁷This interpretation is espoused by men such as G. Moore, Judges in The International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1895), pp. 139-142. While it is true, as A. Weiser maintains, that many cultic expressions are also present in this poem, the context argues against making this theophany simply a theophanic portrait of Jahwe's advent in the cultus as may be the case elsewhere. See A. Weiser, "Das Deborahlied," Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft, LXXI (1959), 67-97, especially p. 74. Nevertheless it is the cultus where such theophanies are celebrated so that a reflection of the cultic setting is understandable.

a god whose sovereign activity of salvation and election in Israel is readily discernible and ever present, while the character of Baal's appearance is a seasonal and rather impersonal precipitation of moisture for one and all.

It is natural to ask why Jahwe should employ a storm to indicate His presence, or at least why the description of His advent is given in terms of an overwhelming storm spectacle. One answer may be found in the terminology employed by the response of the psalmist in Ps. 68:5 which reads:

Sing unto God,
Sing praise to His name!
Exalt the "Rider of the Clouds"
Jahwe is His name!
Exult before His presence.

Although there are numerous general references to Jahwe's agitation of the elements of the weather and overpowering presence in the phenomena of the storm and the tempest, the application of this particular epithet, "Rider of the Clouds" to Jahwe the God of Israel, can hardly be accidental, for this is the precise title applied to Baal in Canaanite mythology, a title which is used to express the distinctive character of Baal in a culture contemporaneous with that of Israel.⁴⁸ This evidence suggests that the relevant passages may reflect a conscious religious polemic against Baal both in the

⁴⁸This Ugaritic parallel is frequently mentioned. Cf. Gordon, *op. cit.*, p. 200; W. F. Albright, "A Catalogue of Early Hebrew Lyric Poems," Hebrew Union College Annual, XXIII (1950-51), 18, *et alii*. Its full polemical implication, however, needs to be given greater emphasis.

borrowing of Baal's distinctive title as the storm god "who rides the clouds" and in the application of similar storm imagery to the advent of Jahwe from the heavens. The points of similarity in the storm theophany are obvious. Thus Jahwe appears from the mountains accompanied by a profusion of clouds and rain as well as considerable disruptive activity on earth in order to rout those Canaanites (Judg. 5:19) whose god is none other than Baal himself. In fact Jahwe not only deals with Israel's foe but exposes the impotence of the gods of Israel's enemy, for in the conflict of these armies there is simultaneous conflict of religious ideals. To emphasize this fact it would seem that Jahwe is given certain peculiar titles of Baal and exalted as master over the particular dominion to which Baal lays claim by using the various forces of the storm for His own purposes.

Hence, even the cultic remembrance of Jahwe's self-disclosure in the leading of Israel through the wilderness is described in terms of a storm theophany. One significant portrait is given in Ps. 68:8-10:

O God, when Thou didst go forth before Thy people,
 When Thou didst march through the wilderness,
 The earth trembled,
 Yea the heavens dropped,
 Before God, the One of Sinai
 Before God, the God of Israel
 Rain in abundance Thou didst shower abroad, O God,
 As for Thy languishing heritage, Thou didst revitalize it.⁴⁹

⁴⁹Compare the plausible rendering of Albright, "A Catalogue of Early Hebrew Lyric Poems," p. 37. Note the terms 'am, nahalā, and the Polel of knn which were associated with the election in Deut. 32.

Once again it is clear that the storm theophany is not an end in itself, for here too the election or redemption motivation is paramount.⁵⁰ Jahwe reveals Himself for His 'am, He appears for the sake of His naḥalā (cf. Deut. 32:9), He acts to save His elect. The storm imagery, on the other hand, stresses that Jahwe and not Baal is the God of all theophany. For as the wording of Deut. 33:26 makes clear, there is no god who can compare with Jahwe in splendor; it is He, not Baal who is the "Rider of the Clouds" and the "Rider of the Heavens."⁵¹ The polemical implications cannot be avoided in these lines:

There is none like God, O Jeshurun,
Who rides the heavens mightily,
Who rides the clouds gloriously.⁵²

Similar polemical overtones are evident in later passages such as Hab. 3:3-15 where Jahwe arrives from the mountains of Paran attended by pestilence and plague just as Baal appears accompanied by Rešep the god of pestilence. Jahwe here appears with His lightning spear in hand and His chariot of clouds to execute His wrath upon river (Nahar) and sea (Yam), just as

⁵⁰ Compare I Sam. 7:10f.; Josh. 10:10f.; Ps. 77:17-21; Hab. 3:13; II Sam. 22:7-20; Ps. 89:6-11; compare also the storm elements in the theophany at Sinai in Exod. 19:16-19.

⁵¹ For the concept of Jahwe riding the clouds, heaven or heavenly forces, see also Ps. 68:34; II Sam. 22:11f.; Isa. 19:1; Hab. 3:8; Ps. 104:3.

⁵² For this rendition of the text, see F. Cross and D. Freedman, "The Blessing of Moses," Journal of Biblical Literature, LXVII (1948), 209.

Baal, who also brandishes a lightning spear, rode the clouds to victory against Judge Nahar and Prince Yam.⁵³

This allusion to pestilence (rešep) accompanying the presence of Jahwe in a storm theophany as one of the subservient agents of his activity and subsidiary manifestations of his presence leads to a second major feature of the storm revelations of Jahwe. For Rešep is a minor deity attendant upon Baal in Canaanite mythology.⁵⁴ Does this fact shed new light upon the appearance of heavenly beings attendant upon Jahwe in certain of the poetic descriptions of His theophanies for Israel? Although II Sam. 22:11 simply speaks of a cherub which was a medium of speedy transportation across the heavens, in Deut. 33:2 the annunciation of Jahwe's coming is depicted as follows:

Jahwe came from Sinai,
He dawned upon them from Seir,
He shone from Mount Paran,
With Him were myriads of holy ones,⁵⁵
At His right hand fire came upon them.⁵⁶

⁵³For a detailed discussion of the Canaanitisms in Hab. 3, see W. Albright, "The Psalm of Habakkuk," Studies in Old Testament Prophecy (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1950), pp. 1-18.

⁵⁴Ibid., p. 14. Cf. Gray, op. cit., p. 96. Compare the association of Rešep with Baal in the Phoenician inscription of Azitawadd from Karatepe. See R. Marcus and I. J. Gelb, "The Phoenician Stele Inscription from Cilicia," Journal of Near Eastern Studies, VIII (1949), 115-120.

⁵⁵On this rendering see the vocalization based on the Targum and archaic orthographic usage given by Cross and Freedman, "The Blessing of Moses," op. cit., p. 198.

⁵⁶The 'ēšdāt lāmō in this line is somewhat enigmatical. Hence Cross and Freedman suggest a plausible textual

Holy ones are clearly associated with Jahwe's appearance in this theophany. Elsewhere in the Old Testament the "holy ones" are synonymous with the "sons of gods" (Ps. 89:6-8; Exod. 16:11 according to the Septuagint) as well as in the Ugaritic texts. There can be little doubt that they are heavenly beings of some kind. Accordingly, it seems logical to argue, that in stressing the role of Jahwe as the God of revelation in the theophany all heavenly powers are seen applauding His advent and are all portrayed as willing servants of His supreme will. The theophanic supremacy of Jahwe is the point at issue. It is Jahwe as King and not Baal to whom all heavenly forces and beings pay homage. Baal and his lackeys are thereby humiliated. In other words the allusions to heavenly beings in such passages are polemically relevant and in no way speak to the question of Israelite monotheism. In fact all such holy ones are but subsidiary personnel in the heavenly assembly, all are worshipers of Jahwe not Baal, for Jahwe is the sovereign lord who does not need the permission of El for His temple theophany but who comes from His holy ones to conquer the sea (Yam) and destroy Rahab, as the polemic of Psalm 89:6-11 expresses it:

Let the heavens praise Thy wonders, O Jahwe,
 Yea Thy faithfulness in the assembly of the holy ones!
 For who in the clouds is like Jahwe?
 Who is like Jahwe among the sons of the gods?

correction to read 'āšerū 'ēlīm ". . . the mighty ones proceeded," ibid., p. 199.

He is EL feared in the council of the holy ones,
 Great and terrible above all who are around Him!
 O Jahwe, God of hosts
 Who is as Mighty as thou art, O Jahwe,
 With Thy faithfulness around about Thee?
 Thou dost rule the sea with power,
 Thou dost still its waves with ruthlessness,
 Thou didst crush Rahab like a carcass
 Thou didst scatter Thine enemies with Thy mighty arm.⁵⁷

Indeed, in the language of Israelite polemics, Jahwe has usurped all the honor of the heavenly powers as well as all the theophanic prerogatives that Baal once exercised, and has controlled with sovereign ease every power that once threatened Baal's kingship. For Jahwe is EL and hence unrestricted in His self-revelation. Thus the sovereignty of Jahwe is the primary religious thrust in these passages, while the poetic imagery reflects the polemical atmosphere in Israel's conflict with the Canaanite religious culture of that day.⁵⁸

Jahwe's Theophany from His Temple

The integral relationship between the theophany of Baal

⁵⁷The underlined terms indicate first of all the relevant parallelism which shows that these beings are heavenly entities present with Jahwe "in the clouds" and second, that Jahwe's victorious coming is described in a manner similar to Baal's conquest of Sea (Yam), by crushing with a mace and scattering abroad, cf. *supra* p. 93. For the role that these verses play in the total context of the Psalm see J. Ward, "The Literary Form and Liturgical Background of Psalm LXXXIX," *Vetus Testamentum*, XI (1961), 321-339.

⁵⁸For a discussion of these heavenly beings in the wider context, see G. E. Wright, *The Old Testament Against Its Environment* (London: S. C. M. Press, 1950), pp. 30-41.

and his temple is obvious, even though the Canaanite worshiper may not have made a clear distinction between the appearance of Baal from his heavenly temple, as in the Baal myth, and his advent from its earthly counterpart where an attendant sympathetic ritual was, no doubt, performed in the presence of some visible replica of his personality. A similar dual perspective seems to be reflected in a number of Old Testament passages where the meaning is elucidated by the presupposition of a heavenly temple as the origin of Jahwe's advent in the storm.

Baal's spectacular self-revelation in the forces of the storm was dependent upon two factors, namely, the erection of a suitable temple (hkl) within which to express his essential kingship and a window in the temple as the point of exit from which to appear in regnal splendor. The heavenly temple was both a fitting locality for divine self-disclosure as king of cosmic forces and a suitable point of departure for a theophanic advent.⁵⁹ A similar perspective may be present in certain Old Testament passages.

Psalm 11:4, for example, offers an explicit parallelism between "in the temple" and "in the heavens." The text reads:

Jahwe is in His holy temple (hēkāl),
 Jahwe's throne is in heaven.
 His eyes behold,
 His eyelids test the sons of man.

⁵⁹For a treatment of this subject in connection with Exod. 15:17, see F. Cross and D. Freedman, "The Song of Miriam," Journal of Near Eastern Studies, XIV (1955), 249f.

Accordingly, an allusion to a heavenly temple which is at the same time the palace of the king, seems probable. Similarly in Mic. 1:2-4 some such temple is the point of departure for Jahwe's descent in the storm in connection with His advent in judgement:

Hear, you peoples all of you;
 Harken, O earth, and all that is in it;
 And let Jahwe be a witness against you,
 Jahwe from His holy temple (hēkāl),
 For behold Jahwe is coming forth from His
place (māqōm),
 He will descend and tread on high places of
 the earth,
 The mountains will melt before Him,
 And the valleys will be cleft.

Further, in the archaic song of David in II Sam. 22:7-16, the saving intervention of Jahwe on behalf of the entangled worshiper is not only portrayed in the imagery of a brilliant electrical storm, but this divine appearance actually emanates from the temple (hēkāl v. 7). Thus just as Baal had done in the well known Baal myth, "Jahwe thundered forth from heaven, Elyon uttered His voice" (II Sam. 22:14).⁶⁰

The reference to a temple in Psalm 29 is also pertinent.⁶¹ Here the worshipers are heavenly beings whose response to

⁶⁰Other possible references to the temple where a heavenly temple could well have been understood include Hab. 2:20; Ps. 18:7 (which is parallel to II Sam. 22:7); Ps. 68:34-36; Jonah 2:7; Isa. 6:1; Pss. 104:3; 150:1.

⁶¹F. Cross, "Notes on a Canaanite Psalm in the Old Testament," Bulletin of American Schools of Oriental Research, CXVI (1949), 19-21 summarizes some of the Canaanite features of the poetic form of the psalm.

Jahwe's overwhelming self-manifestation in the storm is made from a temple which is logically the heavenly abode of Jahwe. ". . . in the temple (hēkāl) all of them cry 'Glory'" is the psalmist's description of this exultant response. So, too, in Ps. 68:34-36 Jahwe, as the "Rider of the Clouds" resides in a heavenly sanctuary (miqdāš) amid the clouds. However, even in these cases the Israelite worshiper is, no doubt, located in the earthly sanctuary where the glorious manifestation of Jahwe is also seen in faith, so that the fluctuation of perspective between the heavenly and the earthly presence of Jahwe is understandable. Accordingly, it is not surprising that the earthly shrine of Jahwe was thought to have a heavenly model or archetype as in Exod. 25:40 (cf. Heb. 9:23f.). Thus, just as in the Baal texts divine kingship and the temple, which is a royal palace, are inseparable, and the presence of this house is essential for divine self-disclosure from the heavens, so too Jahwe deigns to have His heavenly kingship depicted in similar culturally relevant terms, His personal revelation expressed in comparable storm terminology, and His kingship linked with a temple as His palace, a temple having both heavenly and earthly dimensions.⁶²

⁶²Compare the discussion of W. Schmidt, Königtum Gottes in Ugarit und Israel (Berlin: A. Töpelmann, 1961), pp. 56-58. J. Gray, "The Kingship of God in the Prophets and Psalms," Vetus Testamentum, XI (1961), 1-29, does not treat this aspect of divine kingship.

However, the fundamental difference between the supremacy of Baal in the storm theophany and the sovereignty of Jahwe in His self-revelation, is that for Baal the storm itself and the subsequent downpour are the essence of this theophany which brings "peace (šlm) on earth," that is fertility and welfare in the world of nature. In the case of Jahwe, on the other hand, the storm phenomena are quite secondary; they merely emphasize the divine presence of the king in a way which is readily discernible to His Israelite audience. The ultimate purpose of Jahwe's theophany is personal self-revelation to individuals, to persons, to a people. The theophany is but the medium of His mighty acts of interference in history, a forceful way of inculcating the truth of His sovereign choice of a people or a person by virtue of His royal presence. The theophany of Jahwe is more than "peace on earth"; it is also "goodwill to men," and in these passages specific men of His divine choosing.

Thus a cry for help sends the entire storm machinery of Jahwe into action to rescue one drowning psalmist (II Sam. 22:7-20); the vast spectacle of the glorious vision of Jahwe's enthronement and heavenly attendants was but the setting for the call and divine selection of Isaiah (Isa. 6:1-8); the fantastic manifestation of cataclysmic phenomena was subsidiary to the election and leading of Israel His people (Ps. 77:17-20); and even though Elijah had defeated the Baal enthusiasts with a simple invocation of Jahwe's aid in fire

and storm, he still had to learn that spectacular theophanies in thunder, fire, wind and earthquake are quite secondary to the divine purpose of person to person revelation in the "still small voice" (I Kings 19). Personal election and not theophanic splendor is the ultimate goal. The same perspective is apparent throughout the early poetic materials,⁶³ Psalm 29 being an excellent illustration.

Psalm 29: Jahwe's Expression of
Divine Kingship in a Storm Theophany

Psalm 29⁶⁴ provides a suitable text for a recapitulation of the major points of comparison between the respective storm theophanies of Jahwe and Baal. Thus the initial exordium to acknowledge the character (šem) of Jahwe as King is addressed to those heavenly beings who are associated with Jahwe in this vivid manifestation of His royal supremacy. For it is not Baal but Jahwe who is exalted in the heavenly assembly as the God of revelation.⁶⁵ The opening lines read (Ps. 29:1-2):

⁶³Those alluded to above include Ps. 29; Ps. 68:8-11; Deut. 33:2-5, 26f.; Judg. 5:4f., 21f.; Exod. 15:7-11; II Sam. 22:7-20.

⁶⁴See the treatments by T. Gaster, "Psalm 29," Jewish Quarterly Review, XXXVII (1946-47), 55-65, and Cross, "Notes on a Canaanite Psalm in the Old Testament," op. cit., pp. 19-21, Gaster, Thespis, op. cit., pp. 74-77; A. Johnson, Sacral Kingship in Ancient Israel (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1955), pp. 54-57; Schmidt, op. cit., pp. 46-49.

⁶⁵Schmidt, op. cit., p. 47 stresses the fact that El is considered the head of the heavenly assembly in Ugaritic mythology, and that here, "Jahwe das Königtum Els und Baals in sich vereignigte."

Ascribe to Jahwe,
 O heavenly beings,
 Ascribe to Jahwe,
 Glory and strength,
 Ascribe to Jahwe,
 The honor of His Name,
 Worship Jahwe
 In the revelation of His
 holiness.⁶⁶

This theophany of holiness is seen in the forces of the storm, in the forceful and exciting voice which issues from the heavenly abode, in large scale flooding and tempestuous winds, in widespread upheavals and disturbances throughout the land and in the splendor of the lightning flash across the heavens. The same terminology is found elsewhere in the Old Testament and in the Baal text discussed above. Thus it is not the voice of Baal, but the voice of Jahwe, whose thunderous cries of self-expression in nature evoke universal response: (Ps. 29:3f.):⁶⁷

The voice of Jahwe upon the waters,
 The God of glory thunders,
 Jahwe upon many waters,
 The voice of Jahwe with power,
 The voice of Jahwe with splendor.

It is the cataclysmic intervention of Jahwe, and not of Baal, which makes "Lebanon skip like a calf and Sirion like a young buffalo" (Ps. 29:6). Hence it appears that in the use of

⁶⁶The presence of hdrt in Keret I iii 51 in the sense of "vision," "theophany" or "divine appearance" argues in favor of the present translation. Cf. Cross, "Notes on a Canaanite Psalm in the Old Testament," op. cit., p. 21.

⁶⁷The voice of Baal in the sense of thunder is found in Baal II v 8; II vii 29, 31.

precisely this storm imagery the Israelite worshiper acknowledges and confesses that it is Jahwe, and not Baal, who is the God of theophany and revelation.⁶⁸

The supremacy of Jahwe over all forces and beings is subsequently acclaimed in the heavenly temple, for at the sound of this resplendent voice "All in His temple cry glory" (Ps. 29:29). Thus it is not Baal but Jahwe who is the sovereign Lord of the heavenly palace by virtue of His glorious theophany from its windows (as in Gen. 7:11). Jahwe's advent is not dependent upon El's approval, for Jahwe is the El of kābōd (Ps. 29:3). Consequently it is not Baal but Jahwe who enthroned as King above the flood (Ps. 29:10).

The unique feature of this theophany, however, is its personal dimensions. For the exhortation to magnify the name of Jahwe as well as the vivid portrayal of Jahwe's supreme kingship in the phenomena of nature, are but a prelude to the worshiper's plea that the God of revelation would exercise this sovereign power on behalf of His 'am and that He would impart šālōm to His elect. Thus the final lines read (Ps. 29:10f.):

Jahwe sits enthroned above the flood,
 Jahwe sits enthroned as king forever!
 May Jahwe give strength to His people,
 May Jahwe bless His people with peace.

⁶⁸The parallelism between Lebanon and Sirion, both locations of Baal's domain from which he obtained cedar for his temple, is apparent in Baal II vi 18f.

In brief, the portrayal of Jahwe's advent in the storm in no way suggests that Jahwe is a storm god. On the contrary, it underscores that fact that Jahwe, not Baal, is King over all the forces of weather and cosmos, and that in such a theophany Israel can witness the presence of that God who reveals Himself primarily to make a personal choice of people rather than to bless nature. In other words, these theophany passages, especially in this archaic Hebrew poetry, probably express a forceful polemic against Baal as the storm god, and emphasize the distinctive sovereign intervention of Jahwe for a particular people as the ultimate purpose of these spectacular appearances. In the conflict between the faith of Israel and the Canaanite religious culture the storm image was apparently employed to emphasize the truth that Jahwe's involvement in history and life was not obscure or hidden and rarely suaviter in modo, but was frequently spectacular or disruptive and always fortiter in re beyond anything that the limited kingship of Baal permitted. It served to magnify the magnalia of Jahwe and highlight the sovereignty of His choice of Israel in its polemic against Baal worship.

CHAPTER VI

BAAL AS THE GOD OF FERTILITY AND YAHWE AS THE GOD OF LIFE

The Rechabites and Nazirites¹ were part of a broader movement which focused its attention primarily upon the ancient nomadic heritage of Israel. "Back to the desert" might well express the party cry of this segment of the community. The unrest of these particular groups, however, was but symptomatic of that tension between Israelite and Canaanite culture which survived for many generations after the initial conflict of the respective semi-nomadic and agricultural ideologies. The compatibility of the religion of Israel with an agricultural way of life was more than an academic question. It is the purpose of this present chapter to accentuate the main features of Baal's role as a god of agriculture and fertility, and to gain a deeper appreciation of the Spannung between the early faith of Israel and this aspect of the religion of the Canaanites.

The Descent of Baal in the
Underworld of Mot

Encouraged by his glorious self-vindication in the

¹cf. Jer. 35; Num. 6, et passim. Compare W. Eichrodt, Theology of the Old Testament (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1961), I, 303-306, 316f., and R. de Vaux, Ancient Israel, Its Life and Institutions (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1961), pp. 3-15.

preceding storm theophany, Baal sends an embassy to Mot the one God who had always claimed his victim in the end. With supreme confidence he dispatches his two lackeys to inform Mot of his triumph.² Unfortunately, the details of that message are lost. However, certain features of the character and locale of Mot are clearly distinguishable. John Gray considers the role of Mot quite negative serving merely to provide a suitable antagonist for the Baal drama.³ While it may be true that Mot is no great favorite of Canaanite worshippers, he is characterized as a son of El, a beloved of El (ydd 'il) and a hero (šzr) whose dreadfulness is overwhelming. His throne, his house, his domain and "the land of his heritage" are located in the underworld.⁴ Baal's emissary must journey through the huge mountains on the distant horizon where the waters of the underworld reach the surface. Over the realms of the netherworld, it seems, Mot is a king in his own right. In brief, Mot is the god of the underworld. That Baal should

²This is found in the last section of the Baal II tablet (Baal II vii 45-viii 47). The cycle of texts which treat of Baal's descent into the underworld and subsequent revival includes in logical sequence, Baal I*; I; III; IV and perhaps Hadad according to the numbering of G. R. Driver, Canaanite Myths and Legends (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1956), pp. 102-121 and 70-73. C. Gordon, Ugaritic Manual (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1955), pp. 146-152 and 137-139, numbers these texts 67, 62, 49, 76 and 75.

³John Gray, The Legacy of Canaan (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1957), p. 137.

⁴Baal II viii 1-19.

claim dominion over this territory was presumptuous indeed.

Mot does not confine his activities to the underworld, however, for any aridity on earth was evidence of his presence at large. Even Šapaš (the sun god) may at times humor Mot by concentrating his scorching rays on earth. The relevant passage in Baal II viii 21-24 may be rendered:

nrt 'ilm špš	Even Šapaš, luminary of the gods,
šhrrt la' šmm	He burns fiercely (resulting in) no rain, ⁵

byd add 'ilm mt By the authority of Mot, darling of El. Furthermore, certain passages depict Mot with dragon-like characteristics. Thus the jaws of death can reach, if Mot wishes to extend himself, from the earth below to the heavens above.⁶ To die means to be swallowed by Mot himself and literally to enter the bowels of the earth that his appetite might be satisfied.

One thing is clear. Mot is a prominent Canaanite deity whose role is an integral part of the fertility myth which follows. For Mot was a reality of nature which each Canaanite had encountered in the fertility drama long before he descended into the underworld himself. In a sense Mot is a fertility

⁵Both Gordon, *op. cit.*, p. 316 and G. R. Driver, *op. cit.*, p. 150, appeal to the Arabic šahrā'u "burning desert" to support the translation given. The present reading is apparently an intensified form of the stem šhr.

⁶CF. Baal I* ii 1ff.

god whose presence is needed for ripening the grain and who himself is strewn abroad (and perhaps sown) at the appropriate season.⁷ Thus Mot too, along with Baal and Anat, is probably to be included among the major deities involved in this aspect of ancient Canaanite worship.

In the opening lines of tablet I* Mot arrogantly summons Baal to the underworld. The translation of G. R. Driver at this point suggests a sympathetic relationship between Mot, nature and the vanquished enemies of Baal, while that of J. Gray, C. Gordon and others, stresses the inevitable victory of Mot despite the former conquests of Baal.⁸ The following translation incorporates the latter feature and reflects Mot's joy over the deficiency of life-giving moisture and consequent anemia of Baal.

ktmḥḥ ltn bḥn brḥ Though thou didst smite Leviathan the
writhing serpent,

⁷Note also the conclusions of A. Kapelrud, Baal in the Ras Shamra Texts (Copenhagen: G. E. C. Gad, 1952), pp. 126f., and V. and I. Rosensohn Jacobs, "The Myth of Mot and 'Ali'iyān Ba'al," Harvard Theological Review, XXXVIII (1945), 77-109.

⁸For the treatments of this passage see G. R. Driver, op. cit., pp. 102f.; Gray, op. cit., pp. 27, 47; C. Gordon, Ugaritic Literature (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1949), pp. 38f.; W. Albright, "Are the Ephod and Teraphim mentioned in Ugaritic Literature?" Bulletin of American Schools of Oriental Research, LXXXII (1941), 39-43; and "Anat and the Dragon," Bulletin of American Schools of Oriental Research, LXXXIV (1941), 14-17; H. L. Ginsberg, "Did Anat fight the Dragon?" Bulletin of American Schools of Oriental Research, LXXXIV (1941), 12-14.

tkly bēn 'qltn	And didst annihilate the crooked serpent, ⁹
šlyt̄ dšb't r'ašm	The mighty one ¹⁰ with seven heads,
tšk̄h ttrp šmm	The heavens will dry up and languish. ¹¹
krs 'ipdk	Like the dew of thy robe. ¹²
'ank 'isp'i	I will consume thee,
'uṭm ḡrqm 'antm	Thy red blood will be dried up and lifeless. ¹³
lyrt bnpš bn 'ilm mt	But now thou must descend the throat of Mot, son of El.

Once the messengers of Baal have relayed the demands of Mot, their hero cannot retaliate. He capitulates without any

⁹The close verbal parallels between these first two lines and Isa. 27:1 have long been recognized. Cf. Isa. 51:9; Ps. 74:12-15; Enoch 60:7ff., Job 26:13.

¹⁰The Hebrew root šlt̄ provides an admirable parallel. Gray, *op. cit.*, p. 27, translates "the Foul-Fanged" on the basis of an Arabic root.

¹¹The next lines are very difficult to translate with any certainty. For the use of Hebrew šk̄h meaning "dry up" see Pss. 102:5; 137:5; cf. Albright, "Anat and the Dragon," *op. cit.*, p. 15. rpy is cognate with Hebrew rph "to droop."

¹²Each scholar seems to translate this line differently. The present translation takes the form krs as a preposition plus a noun from the root rss "to moisten." Cf. Ezek. 46:14; Cant. 5:2. The translation of G. R. Driver, *op. cit.*, p. 103, is dependent upon an emendation to krks rendering the text "as the belt of thy robe." For the heavens wearing out like a garment see Isa. 51:6; Ps. 102:26f.

¹³'tm corresponds to Hebrew 'tm "to stop up." The suggestion of Albright that ḡrq (or šrq) is cognate with Accadian šarqu "red blood" and Hebrew šrq is plausible (cf. Zech. 1:8), but not conclusive.

kind of struggle.¹⁴ Why this sudden reversal of character? Baal had once been renowned as the champion of the gods, the incomparable warrior. The explanation, it seems, lies in the rotation of the seasons. Baal cannot escape the relentless wheel of time. With the advent of summer his lifegiving strength is spent. The same controlling factor offers a plausible explanation for that crux in the previous cycle where Baal was obliged to wait a certain period of time before he could open a window in the heavenly temple through which the seasonal rain would descend. The day of the former rains could not be anticipated. Accordingly, it needs to be underscored that the efficacy of Baal as a god of fertility is dependent upon the seasonal cycle of nature itself. Baal is not nature personified but merely one aspect of nature. This reversal of Baal's character is apparent in the text of Baal I* ii 6-12:

yr'a'un 'al'iyn b'l	Baal the Victor was afraid of him,
ṣt'mn rkb 'rpt	The Rider of the Clouds feared him, ¹⁵
.....
hwt 'al'iy qrdm	The answer of the most valiant of heroes,
bhṣ lbn 'ilm mt	"Hail, Mot, son of El,
'bdk 'an wd'luk	I am your slave, your perpetual slave."

¹⁴Note the conclusions of Kapelrud, op. cit., pp. 117-120.

¹⁵There is some uncertainty as to the precise meaning of ṣt'. Compare the parallelism of Isa. 41:23.

Baal's submission and subsequent descent into the abode of the dead also means the surrender of his total personality as the storm god and the god of life-giving water. His entire retinue of lesser moisture gods as well as his "tools of trade," such as clouds, wind, rain and bucket must accompany him into the rocky graveyard of the netherworld.¹⁶ Thus the death of Baal coincides with the disappearance of precipitation and moisture from the earth. Presumably this is a mythopoetic description of observable natural phenomena. Once Baal has expended himself by the diffusion of his life blood, namely the rain and moisture of the heavens, he permeates the ground as water and thereby descends into the underworld of the earth. With the progress of summer the vitality of Baal gradually diminishes while the forces of aridity increase in order to ripen the grain which Baal has grown. Hence just as self-disclosure was a fundamental part of Baal's nature as the god of the storm, so here self-expenditure and dying are an essential feature of his nature as a god of fertility.

Baal's function as the god of life and fecundity, however, is not confined to the realm of vegetation. The animal world is also involved. Accordingly, Baal is seen mating with a heifer prior to his descent into Sheol. In the mating season he plants the seed of life to ensure progeny for the

¹⁶Baal I* v 5-15.

Forthcoming spring. The relevant passage in Baal I* v 18-22 reads:

ysm' 'al'iyn b'l	Baal the Victor hears,
y'uhb 'glt bdb	He loves a heifer in the pasture, ¹⁷
prt bšd šhlant	A cow in the field of šhlant, ¹⁸
škb 'mnh šb' lsb'm	He lies with her seven, and seventy times,
∟ /ly tmm ltmym	Yea / eight and eighty times,
w/ṭh/rn wtldn mē	And she conceives and bears a male. ¹⁹

That some kind of fertility rites accompanied this portion of the myth is quite possible. Ritual bestiality, however, is not implied, nor can the passage be used to explain the biblical condemnation of bestiality in general.

Tablet IV which G. R. Driver places at the end of the Baal myth appears to be an elaboration of the mating theme.²⁰ The tablet in question relates how Anat is found pregnant and gives birth to a bull which proves to be Baal's son. Baal has apparently returned from the underworld at this time. The

¹⁷The sexual connotations of 'hb are common also in the Old Testament. For the noun db meaning pasture see Mic. 2:12; Isa. 5:17.

¹⁸The meaning of šhlant is still uncertain. Perhaps the meaning "dying pastures" is possible. Cf. The Arabic sāhlu mamātin cited by G. R. Driver, op. cit., p. 107.

¹⁹Compare the Egyptian mesu "son." The name of Moses (mšh) is frequently associated with this noun.

²⁰G. R. Driver, op. cit., pp. 114-119.

tablet (Baal IV iii 35-37) concludes with the words:

w'ibr lb'l [yl]d	Surely a bull is born unto Baal
wr'um lrkb 'rpt	And a buffalo to the Rider of the Clouds.
yšmb 'al'iyn b'l	Baal the Victor rejoiced.

Accordingly, Baal's character as the god of life and fertility is dictated not only by man's need for moisture but also by his need for life-giving sperm. Hence Baal takes on the characteristics of the bull, an animal which is basic for Canaanite agricultural prosperity. Here Baal is just as much the deity of sexual life as Anat or Astarte, contrary to what archeology seems to suggest. In any case Baal is a god whose sexual activities engender life.

Mortuary Rites for Baal

The death of Baal is portrayed both as a necessity and as a catastrophe. A sympathetic relationship exists between the death of Baal, his followers and all life. Even El, the head of the pantheon is appalled at the death of his son when he learns that the inevitable has happened. The passage in question (Baal I* vi 8-10) reads:

lb'l npl l'arš	Verily Baal has fallen to the earth,
mt 'al'iyn b'l	Baal the Victor is dead,
blq zbl b'l 'arš	Perished is the Prince, Lord of earth.

The details of El's mourning ritual now follow. The way in which the Canaanite worshipers emulated these rites of the gods is not explicit. Nevertheless, the example of their

heavenly overlords no doubt dictated their own actions to a large extent. In the subsequent lines (Baal I* vi 11-16) the role of El, the Father of the gods, involves self-degradation from his throne and self-imposed humiliation.

'apuk lṭpn 'il d p'id	Thereupon Luṭpan, the compassionate god,
yrd lks'i yṭb lhdn	Descends from the throne, sits on a footstool,
wl.hdn yṭb l'arṣ	Even /descends/ from the footstool, sits on the ground.
yṣq 'mr 'un lr'išh	In grief he scatters straw upon his head, ²¹
'pr plṭt lqdqdh	In writhing, dust upon his pate. ²²

This agonizing self-torture also includes the rending of garments, vigorous vocal lamentation and, in particular, self-mutilation (Baal I* vi 19-20).

lḥn wdqn yṭlṭ	Cheeks and chin he lacerates, ²³
qn ḏr'h yḥrṭ	His upper arm he ploughs ²⁴
kgn 'ap lb	His chest like a garden,
k'mq yṭlṭ bmt	His back like a valley he lacerates.

²¹yṣq literally means "pour out." 'mr is apparently related to Hebrew 'omer "sheaf" or 'amfr "fallen grain."

²²Compare Mic. 1:10 "In Beth-le-aphrah roll yourselves in dust."

²³ṭlṭ is parallel to ḥrṭ "plough." The root seems to imply a threefold scoring of the flesh. Inasmuch as agricultural imagery is employed here it is plausible that some sort of plough or hoe with three prongs is the instrument used.

²⁴G. R. Driver, *op. cit.*, p. 144 relates qn to Hebrew qāneh in Job 31:22 where it is parallel to šekem "shoulder."

The appellation dp'id "the compassionate one," is appropriate for El at this point. This divine pathos of El, this emotional self-expenditure of the father of mankind, is exaggerated by the preceding mortuary rites. Moreover, the empathetic activities of El reflect the psychological experience of worshipers caught up in a seasonal complex of existence. The spirit of the fertility cult worship, it would seem, is in harmony with the seasonal activities of the gods. Ritual suffering, however, is not vicarious but sympathetic. Frenzied and agonizing lamentation routines form an integral part of the fertility cultus. In fact such rituals reveal the peculiar seasonal nature of divine compassion or feeling in Canaanite mythology. Indeed, the pathos of El is quite free from any moral overtones!

At the end of this tablet Anat is found searching the countryside for the corpse of Baal. Another tablet (Baal I) relates how Anat performed the same mortuary rites as El and engaged the assistance of Šapaš to transport the body of Baal to the mountains of Šapon, the traditional abode of Baal. There she wept bitterly for him and honored his burial with a mortuary holocaust of oxen, sheep, deer, goats and asses. Although the latter may not be sacrifices to the actual person of Baal they are nevertheless offerings in honor of the dead god and apparently a legitimate part of lamentation rites in the fertility cultus.

The nature of the subsequent interregnum is difficult to

determine (Baal III i 1-39). The new king chosen to replace Baal is 'ĕtr (Athtar) an astral deity.²⁵ His candidacy is supported by Aĕirat, the queen mother. Whether this interim activity of Aĕtar reflects some former historical era when an astral cult of semi-nomadic tribes was making serious inroads into the religious life of Canaan cannot be demonstrated conclusively.²⁶ In any case the significance of this god in the fertility cultus of Canaan seems quite secondary here.

The Harvesting of Mot and the
Revivification of Baal

"Mot is the god of the corn. He undergoes the fate which overtakes the crops and to which the grain-god is therefore universally subjected." This is the conclusion of Vivian and Isaac Jacobs concerning that portion of tablet three which follows.²⁷ Quite plausibly Mot, or Death, is also a positive force which expresses itself in heat, drying, ripening and the like. But the question still remains whether the subsequent winnowing, grinding and scattering of Mot necessarily

²⁵See J. Gray, "The Desert God 'Aĕtar in the Literature and Religion of Canaan," Journal of Near Eastern Studies, VIII (1949), 72-83.

²⁶Gray, Legacy of Canaan, op. cit., p. 54. T. Gaster, Thespis (New York: Henry Schuman, 1950), p. 198 suggests that 'Aĕtar was relegated to the role of an irrigation deity whose aid was invoked during the dry seasons when Baal was considered dead.

²⁷V. and I. Jacobs, op. cit., p. 79; cf. Kapelrud, op. cit., p. 126.

implies that he is a grain god in the strict sense, or whether harvesting is but one part of a broader personality. In any case Vivian and Isaac Jacobs have overlooked one major problem, namely, that Baal's title is bn dgn, "son of Dagon," or "son of the grain god." In point of fact then Mot, were he considered the god of grain (that is Dagon), would also be the father of Baal, a relationship which is not expressed elsewhere.

The text in question deals with Anat's relentless intercession to Mot for the release of her brother and husband. As the months drag on the summer heat becomes more intense. Finally, at the time of harvest, Anat's hour has come. With vengeful enthusiasm she reaps Mot who now becomes the bread of life, just as Baal had been the water of life (Baal III ii 30-36):

t'ehd bn 'ilm mt	She seizes Mot, son of El,
bhrb t̄bq'nn	With a blade she slashes him,
bqtr t̄drynn	With a flail she winnows him,
b'išt t̄šrpm	With fire she parches him,
br̄m t̄ṭnn	With millstones she grinds him,
bšd tdr'nn	In the field she strews him.

The dramatic activity of the goddess Anat in her harvest treatment of Mot immediately suggests that a similar ritual activity was performed in the temple cultus itself. The precise nature of this ritual is uncertain. More than likely, however, it involved the offering of first fruits from the

harvest or the ritual presentation of the last sheaves prior to public consumption of the sacred new crop. In any case harvest rituals and ceremonies of some kind seem to play an important part in the resurrection sequence of the Baal myth.

After the ritual harvesting of Mot, El has a dream which anticipates the revivification of Baal and the restoration of fertility on earth. Once again he ascends the throne, expresses exuberant joy and implores the aid of Šapaš to locate Baal so that the parched furrows of the field may be kissed anew with life-giving rain. The relevant text reads (Baal III iii 10-21):

bḥlm lṭpn 'il dp'id	In a dream of Lutpan, the compassionate god,
bḡrt bny bnwt	In a vision of the creator of created things,
šmm šmn tmṭrn	The heavens rained oil,
nḥlm tlk nbtm	The valleys ran with honey. ²⁸
šmḥ lṭpn 'il dp'id	Lutpan, the compassionate god, rejoiced,
p'nh lhdm yṭpd	He placed his feet on the footstool,
wyprq lṣb wyṣḥq	He opened wide his gullet and laughed, ²⁹
yš'u gh wyṣḥ	He raised his voice and shouted: ³⁰

²⁸Cf. Amos 9:13; Joel 4:18 (Heb.); Ezek. 32:14; Job 20:17.

²⁹lṣb is apparently related to Arabic liṣbu "narrow passage, strait." Cf. G. R. Driver, op. cit., p. 159.

³⁰Cf. Hebrew ṣḥ in Isa. 42:11.

'ašbn 'ank w'anbn	"Now I will sit /enthroned/ and rest, ³¹
wtnb b'irty npš	And my soul shall rest in my breast, ³²
khy 'al'iyn b'l	For Baal the Victor is alive,
k'iš zbl b'l 'arš	For the Prince, Lord of earth, exists." ³³

The revival of Baal coincides with the renewal of nature. This renewal is here expressed in terms of the ideal. Honey and oil, the richest commodities of life, are seen flooding the heavens and the earth. The moment of new life dawns with the overwhelming expectancy of perfect šālōm; for spring is the glorious eschaton of the fertility cultus. The cycle of nature is dependent upon the mood and vitality of the gods and vice versa. The jealousy of the gods is but the passion for survival; the sympathy of nature but a progress report of their endeavors.

The conclusion of the Baal tablet has evoked considerable comment. For after the return of Baal to earth and his summary dismissal of the renegade deities who had usurped his throne, a bitter rivalry exists between Baal and Mot. Mot

³¹The context suggests divine enjoyment and the removal of divine anxiety as the major element in the "rest" of the god. The question may well be asked whether or not the "rest" of God after creation signifies enjoyment of his labors rather than mere cessation from the creative activity.

³²Cf. Accadian irtu.

³³In line 8 of the same tablet the translation can be rendered "I know that Baal the Victor liveth." Any connection with Job 19:25, however, is ruled out by the context of the latter.

complains that because of Baal he has been disgraced and humiliated through the constant routine of reaping, winnowing, grinding and sowing (Baal III v 1-21). This is presumably a reference to the annual harvest cycle. At the end of seven years Mot, who is also aggravated by Baal's assassination of his half-brothers, challenges Baal to a duel (Baal III vi 10-35). The precise outcome of this heavenly encounter is not clear. The so-called Hadad text offers a similar theme in which a drought persists for seven years as a result of Baal's act of fratricide. But one thing is clear. The descent of Baal into the underworld in the preceding cycle is not the result of a battle against Mot. In that cycle Baal's capitulation was quite docile and apparently a necessary consequence of the seasonal rotation. The final Baal-Mot conflict, then, would appear to be an abnormal rather than a seasonal activity. Presumably it refers to an extended period of drought, or to the observance of a sabbatical year.³⁴ Any further conclusions are impossible because of the fragmentary nature of the texts involved. Likewise there is no indication as to the

³⁴For a discussion of this question see Gray, Legacy of Canaan, *op. cit.*, p. 63, and Kapelrud, *op. cit.*, pp. 128f. Gordon, Ugaritic Literature, *op. cit.*, pp. 3-5 espouses the position that the seven year cycle is the only cycle involved and that Baal is a fertility god but not a seasonal god. See also H. J. Kraus, Gottesdienst in Israel (München: Kaiser Verlag, 1954), pp. 129-132. For a discussion of the Hadad text see J. Gray, "The Hunting of Baal: Fratricide and Atonement in the Mythology of Ras Shamra," Journal of Near Eastern Studies, X (1951), 146-155.

nature of the ritual which may have accompanied this particular myth.

It is the conviction of the present writer that the portrait of Baal thus presented is explicable only on the basis that Baal was both a fertility god and a seasonal god, although his role is not necessarily limited to the latter. Moreover, many of the descriptive activities of the gods are cultic in character and suggest a comparable cultic activity or an accompanying ritual which may or may not be a re-enactment of the dramatic incidents of the myth. It is noteworthy, however, that the cycle of Baal's death and revival covers the entire agricultural year. The time of the ritual celebration of the same is therefore debatable. The text itself offers no explicit guidelines in the matter. The common inference that all of these events were dramatized at a New Year Festival is a somewhat gratuitous assumption based upon the imperfect analogy of isolated Ancient Near Eastern parallels.

Finally, it can be said that the fertility cultus of Canaan apparent from these passages incorporates the roles of Baal, Anat and Mot. The disposition of El and of nature is dependent upon the fate of these deities. And the sympathetic ritual response of the worshipers may well form an integral part of the fertility cultus in which fecundity and the existential need of nature are given top priority by all concerned.

Drought and the Sympathy of
Nature in the Old Testament

The Israelites may have been semi-nomads and their religious heritage may have been colored by certain desert ideologies, but from their earliest literature to the most imaginative apocalyptic, every realm of nature is considered kerygmatic. For just as the "heavens declare the glory of God," so the locusts proclaim His wrath. In fact there is an integral relationship between the natural order and the moral order. Thus, disruption of the moral order may mean cosmic disorder. And the moral jealousy of Jahwe may express itself by reversing or restoring this cycle of nature. For the sympathy of nature often coincides with the moral and religious activities of the people of God.³⁵

In Deut. 32:22-24, for example, the jealous ire of Jahwe, kindled by the idolatrous practices of Israel, is portrayed as a consuming fire that burns off all vegetation, effects famine, leaves pestilence in its wake and reaches to the very depths of the cosmos. Elsewhere the same cosmic fire disrupts all natural order to dry up even the fathomless waters of the deep and consume the personal land of Israel (Amos 7:4). Neither the realm of Mot (Sheol and Tehom) nor the haunts of

³⁵Cf. J. L. McKenzie, "God and Nature in the Old Testament," Catholic Biblical Quarterly, XIV (1952), 134-136 who speaks of the "Sacramental" character of nature; Th. Vriezen, An Outline of Old Testament Theology (Wageningen: Veenman and Zönen, 1949), pp. 183-193.

anger.³⁸ At the high point of Baal worship under King Ahab the presence of the seven year drought was especially significant. Drought and famine are a curse of covenant disobedience.³⁹ The windows of heaven will only be opened when the Israelites are penitent and faithful.⁴⁰ The sympathy of nature, the mourning of the land and the languishing of its inhabitants are natural consequences when man has broken all moral bounds.⁴¹

The normal cycle of life and nature is completely within the control of Jahwe's sovereign might.⁴² Jahwe is neither emotionally nor vitally affected by seasonal variations. Any abnormality within this pattern, however, is a witness to His moral and religious jealousy. There is no accommodation to Canaanite imagery here as though Jahwe were engaged in a battle with Mot or mourning like the aged El in the Canaanite pantheon.

That periods of drought and sterility were often considered direct polemics against the so-called fertility gods of Canaan

³⁸Jer. 14:1-10; II Sam. 21:1; 42:13; I Kings 17:1; 18:17f.

³⁹Deut. 11:14-17; 28:15-24; I Kings 8:35-40.

⁴⁰Deut. 28:1-12; Lev. 26:3-5; I Kings 8:35f.

⁴¹Hos. 4:3; Jer. 4:23-26; 12:4; Isa. 24:4-6; 33:9 and frequently in apocalyptic literature.

⁴²Gen. 8:22; Jer. 5:24.

is quite understandable. What is implicit in the terminology of Deut. 32:21-24 becomes explicit in Hos. 2:11-15 where the reversal of the seasons is designed to bring the harlot Israel to her senses and to humiliate the Baal cultus. Likewise in Amos 4:6-8 famine and drought seem to be directed against a similar Baal worship of that period. The emphasis is continually upon Jahwe as the Lord over nature, the dispenser of fertility, who is not Himself a part of its relentless cycle. Accordingly, the role of the Israelite was not adjustment to the forces of nature, but to that will of the jealous God who had chosen him.

From the biblical perspective Jahwe is never portrayed as a nature god, or as the nature, even for the sake of polemic. His moral will and personal character remain unaffected by nature's variations. While it is true that storm imagery is employed to describe His disruptive advent the same cannot be said of nature in general. Nature, life and vegetation are considered kerygmatic but not theophanic, "sacramental" but not personified. The drought motif, in particular, accentuates this position.

Agricultural Rituals in Israelite Society

It seems apparent from the preceding discussion that the Baal myth depicts a fertility religion in the strict sense of the term. In this myth the self-expenditure and sexual expression of the divine personality are prominent features.

Likewise, mortuary rites and ritual harvesting are an integral part of the cultus of the gods themselves. That certain aspects of this myth are reflected in the Canaanite cultus described at various points in the biblical record seems quite obvious. Cult prostitution is frequently condemned by the prophets and the high places of Baal exposed for what they are.⁴³ There are mortuary rites for Baal as well as weeping for Tammuz.⁴⁴ The marriage imagery of Hosea upholds the love of Jahwe as a holy love, elective and jealous, unaffected by the erotic impulses of the Baal myth. Throughout the Old Testament there is a violent reaction against the cruder aspects of the Baal cultus.⁴⁵ The jealousy of Jahwe could not tolerate this kind of crass syncretism. The derision of Elijah on Mount Carmel illustrates the faithful Israelite's attitude toward the mortuary rites for Baal (I Kings 18:27f.):⁴⁶

⁴³Hos. 4:12-14; Amos 2:7f.; Num. 25:1-9; Deut. 23:18f.; I Kings 14:24; 15:12; 22:46; II Kings 23:7; et passim.

⁴⁴Note especially Hos. 7:14; I Kings 18:27f.; Deut. 26:14; Ezek. 8:14; Zech. 12:11, et passim. The suggestion that the lamentation over the daughter of Jephthah is the historization of a fertility ritual creates more problems than it solves (Judg. 11:34-40). Cf. Gray, Legacy of Canaan, op. cit., pp. 53, 149.

⁴⁵See W. Albright, Archeology and the Religion of Israel (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1953), p. 94; McKenzie, op. cit., pp. 124-130. See also the comparison of Jahwe and Baal in Hosea by G. Ostborn, Yahweh and Baal (Lund: C. W. K. Gleerup, 1956).

⁴⁶For a complete treatment of the Baal polemic of Elijah, see H. N. Rowley, "Elijah on Mount Carmel," Bulletin of the John Rylands Library, XLIII (1961), 190-219. Compare the bodily mutilation of El at the death of Baal in Baal I* vi 11-23.

And at noon Elijah mocked them saying: "Cry aloud, for he is a god; perhaps he is musing, or has gone aside, or is on a journey, or perhaps he is asleep and must be awakened." And they cried aloud, and cut themselves after their custom, with swords and lances until the blood gushed out upon them.

Jahwe could not be associated with the religious implications of these rituals for He transcended not only nature but also sex and death.⁴⁷ Nor was the verdict of Baal Peor ever modified!⁴⁸

While very few scholars suggest that Israel adopted the crass features of the fertility cultus, there are many who tacitly assume that the agricultural festivals are derived in toto from the Canaanite fertility cultus.⁴⁹ It must be said, at the outset, that such a position cannot be substantiated from the Baal myths outlined above. How well the Israelites may have been acquainted with agricultural rituals prior to their entry into Canaan cannot be ascertained. But that the agricultural feasts were not celebrated prior to Israel's entry into Canaan seems clear from Lev. 23:10. In any case, those contexts which treat the offering of agricultural first fruits reveal a sharp conflict between Israelite and Canaanite

⁴⁷ Cf. G. E. Wright, The Old Testament Against its Environment (London: SCM Press, 1950), pp. 22-24.

⁴⁸ Supra, Chapter II, "The Incident at Baal Peor."

⁴⁹ For example J. Morgenstern, "The Origin of the Massoth and the Massoth Festival," The American Journal of Theology, XXI (1917), 275. De Vaux, op. cit., p. 491 et passim is more guarded in his statements.

religious culture.⁵⁰

The ritual harvesting of Mot reflects the period of reaping, winnowing, grinding into flour and sowing (Baal III ii 30-36). It would correspond in time, then, to the biblical Feasts of Unleavened Bread and of Weeks. No offering of first fruits is specified in the Baal text although some such attendant ritual seems likely. John Gray has stressed the connection between this ritual activity of Anat parching and grinding Mot with the cereal offering of first fruits in Lev. 2:14.⁵¹ The passage reads: "If you offer a cereal offering of first fruits to the Lord, you shall offer for the cereal offering of your first fruits crushed new grain from fresh (or green) ears, parched with fire." This would point to the fact that there were at least certain similarities between Israelite and Canaanite agricultural ritual. Nor can the possibility of some borrowing be ruled out. But anything beyond this is mere conjecture.

In the so-called "Ritual Decalogue" of Exod. 34:10-28 the polemic against the Canaanite fertility cultus is quite forceful. The background for these cultic legislations is the breach of covenant brought about by the golden calf festivities which also had certain Baal worship overtones.⁵²

⁵⁰Exod. 34; Deut. 26.

⁵¹Gray, Legacy of Canaan, op. cit., pp. 57, 149.

⁵²Supra, Chapter I, "The Covenant Renewal at Sinai."

Accordingly the persistent jealousy of Jahwe demands that all Israelite festivals be free from any distasteful Canaanite pollutions. Thus the first fruits of the ground must be brought to the altar three times a year just as all first born animals must be offered to God or redeemed from Him. The emphasis lies on offering the first of the new produce as a gift to which Jahwe is entitled.⁵³ And this emphasis is found even in connection with the offering of animals which, no doubt, was part of Israel's nomadic heritage. Thus Exod. 34:26 concludes, "The first of the first fruits of your ground you shall bring to the altar of the Lord your God," and adds a sharp Canaanite polemic, "You shall not boil a kid in its mother's milk."⁵⁴ The implication seems to be that while the offering of first fruits may be found in Canaanite circles also, none of the distinctively Canaanite practices should be tolerated. It is not the burden of the present chapter to discuss the whole gamut of legislations relating to the three major agricultural festivals.⁵⁵ Certain characteristics of

⁵³See further de Vaux, op. cit., pp. 490f.

⁵⁴The basis for assuming a polemic in these words is found in the text of Shachar and Shalim I 13f. which G. R. Driver, op. cit., p. 121, renders, "Over the fire seven times the sacrificers cook a kid in milk."

⁵⁵The major code legislations concerning these are found in Exod. 23:14-17; 34:18-24; Lev. 23:1-43; Num. 28:16-29:39; Deut. 16:1-17. For treatments of the festivals see de Vaux, op. cit., pp. 484-506; E. Auerbach, "Die Feste im Alten Israel," Vetus Testamentum, VIII (1958), 1-18. It is not the purpose of

these festivals, however, need to be underscored at this point.

In the various legislations concerning these agricultural rites there is no hint of any sympathetic acts either dramatic or superstitious. The rituals involved are always a response and not a re-enactment of some feature of the natural cycle, or an agitation of the divine powers through some fertility "means of grace." The emphasis lies on giving and joyful appreciation, not upon empathy with nature. No man may appear empty handed before Jahwe on such days (Exod. 23:15; Deut. 16:16). This absence of personal kinship with nature is emphasized by the fact that historical incidents are also connected with the celebration of the festival. Thus the Feast of Unleavened Bread also commemorates certain incidents in the exodus history (Exod. 12:33-39) while the Passover was an integral part of that historical course of events. In general the freewill offering of agricultural produce is immediately a reminder that once ". . . you were a slave in Egypt" (Deut. 16:12). Even the Feast of Booths is associated with the temporary habitations of the Israelites in the wilderness wanderings (Lev. 23:42f.). Accordingly the concern for fecundity recedes into the background in the portrait of the festivals

the present study to investigate the numerous problems seen in the various accounts of the festivals, but merely to point out where the above Canaanite materials contribute to an appreciation of the same.

found in the legislative codes.⁵⁶

The liturgy for the offering of first fruits (Deut. 26:1-15) brings this theological perspective into sharper focus and reveals a strong anti-Canaanite polemic. The archaic character of the creed in Deut. 26:5-9 has been stressed by von Rad.⁵⁷ The following features in the remainder of the liturgy also suggest an early period when the danger of adopting harmful Canaanite practices and ideas into the ritual of Israel was a living issue.

In the first place the credo (Deut. 26:5-9) accentuates the historical perspective of the ritual! The offering of first fruits is primarily an expression of thankfulness for Jahwe's magnalia in history not in nature. These offerings are a token of the total divine gift of Canaan, and not a plea for fertility either in themselves or by virtue of the rite of offering. "And behold, now I bring the first of the fruit of the ground, which Thou, O Lord, has given me" is the immediate

⁵⁶Recent portrayals of the Feast of Booths as a New Year festival involving the enthronement of Jahwe are not immediately relevant at this point. The codes themselves offer no information about this aspect of the Feast of Booths. Moreover, the reconstruction of this New Year festival extends beyond the area of agricultural fertility rites now under discussion. Nor is there any clear evidence in the early literature that a New Year festival of the kind reconstructed from the Baal myth was actually celebrated. See especially, N. Snaith, The Jewish New Year Festival (London: S.P.C.K., 1947).

⁵⁷G. von Rad, "Das Formgeschichtliche Problem des Hexateuch," Gesammelte Studien zum Alten Testament (München: Kaiser Verlag, 1958), pp. 11-16.

response of the worshiper to the credo (Deut. 26:10). The final offering of the tithe of first fruits is accompanied by a confession which embodies a forceful polemic against the Canaanite fertility cultus. The portion to be offered is here designated the "sacred portion" (haqqōdeš). In numerous ancient agricultural societies the offering of this portion meant the desacralization of the remainder of the harvest.⁵⁸ Here the worshiper testifies that the present portion has not been contaminated by any Canaanite processes of desacralization! The key passage is translated "I have not eaten of the tithe while I was mourning, or removed any of it while I was unclean, or offered any of it to the dead . . ." (Deut. 26:14). This reference to eating part of the tithe in mourning only makes sense if this is an allusion to a ritual mourning for the death of some god, presumably Baal. There is no indication that the Israelite would have consumed his holy tithe anywhere other than at the appointed sanctuary. Eating the tithe at home or at the time of a family death is nowhere suggested by the biblical evidence.⁵⁹ Accordingly, some forceful impulse or apparent necessity must have moved the Israelite to break this normal practice. The temptation to assure himself of agricultural prosperity through participation in the

⁵⁸cf. Gray, Legacy of Canaan, op. cit., p. 57.

⁵⁹cf. Deut. 12:17f.; 14:23.

Canaanite fertility cultus seems the most logical explanation. If so then any Israelite association with the mortuary rites of the Baal cultus would cause uncleanness and explain the references to removing the tithe while unclean.⁶⁰ The third feature of this passage makes the Canaanite polemic even more pointed. Inasmuch as there is no evidence that Israelites sacrificed to the spirits of their own dead, or if they did why a tithe would be used, the offering of the sacred portion of the harvest must refer to something else. The Canaanite myth given above offers two possible explanations. Either there is an allusion to offerings made to Baal upon his death, in which case the text might be rendered, "I have not offered any of it to the dead one (i.e. Baal)"; or there is a reference to the ritual harvesting connected with Mot, in which case the text can be translated "I have not offered any of it to Mot."⁶¹ In view of the fact that the sacrifices offered to Baal were animals and not grain, the latter rendering may be preferable. Hence, the testimony of the confessing Israelite is not simply that he has abstained from eating any of the tithe, but that he has made no accommodation to Canaanite fertility practice by using his holy portion for

⁶⁰It is plausible that the root b'r actually refers to the burning or parching of the grain as in Canaanite practice and Lev. 2:14. However, the broader meaning of b'r as "remove" in other parts of Deuteronomy may argue against this suggestion.

⁶¹See Baal I i 10-29; III ii 30-37. The Hebrew consonantal text could just as readily be vocalized mōt as mēt.

the desacralization of the harvest in mortuary rites for Mot or Baal.

Having testified that he has not attempted to induce fertility by pagan Canaanite practice, the worshiper pleads that Jahwe would look down from His heavenly temple and continue to bless both people and nature. The keeping of the covenant by virtue of his abstinence from any Canaanite aberrations is the only thing that the Israelite can bring before God in his plea for rain and fertility. Jahwe is not moved by cultic practice but by His covenant promise (Deut. 26:15). His jealousy is that ever-present factor which will not tolerate compromise even in the area of cultic practice (Exod. 34:14). Israel is an 'am qādōš, and this character must be expressed even in Israel's ritual activities (Deut. 26:19).

Jahwe as the Lord of Life

When Baal is revived with the new year of life, the world of nature responds with joy. This response, which is in itself a self-expression of Baal's personality, is portrayed in the preternatural terms of heavens raining oil and valleys running with honey.⁶² And although this superlative imagery is frequently employed in the Old Testament⁶³ it is nowhere a symbol of Jahwe redivivus, but of the material and physical dimension

⁶²Baal III iii 10-21.

⁶³See Chapter VI, footnote 27.

of Jahwe's blessing of Israel. Thus even the promised land is a "land flowing with milk and honey" (Deut. 26:9) while on the eschatological day of bliss the hills will flow with wine (Amos 9:13).

While it is true that an antimythical pathos is found in most of the Old Testament portraits of Jahwe's relation to His creation, the poetic imagery of certain passages in the early literature can be more fully appreciated in the light of the Canaanite concept of nature, life and vegetation. In the first place it is noteworthy that the earth ('ereš) is the only secondary agent of creation in Gen. 1:1-2:4.⁶⁴ The primary agent is the divine word. At the divine injunction, earth responds with the production of vegetation and life. Here the sovereign will of Jahwe stands in direct antithesis to the advent of vegetation through the rebirth of Baal from the bowels of "mother earth." 'Ereš is but a responsive agent of the Lord of life, not a divine personification. Elsewhere in the Old Testament, powers or forces which are personified or deified in Canaanite fertility myths are relegated to their proper role in nature. The forces mentioned in Gen. 49:25-26 are a case in point. This passage may be translated:

⁶⁴Note the discussion of G. von Rad, Genesis (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1961), p. 53. He concludes, "One is reminded unmistakably of the term natura; the term, however, is bounded by the term creatura."

expression "the blessings of šādayim wārāḥam" may also have its origin in Canaanite imagery. In the Ugaritic texts Anat and Aširat are explicitly called the wet nurses of the gods and actually perform this function for the "miracle" child born to Keret.⁷¹ The breasts (šd) of the goddess are the source of life and blessing. Moreover, rh̄m appears as a quasi-proper name either for Anat or Aširat in the expression šd 'ilm šd 'ašrt wrh̄m, "the divine breasts, the breasts of Aširat and Raḥam."⁷² The reading of the Septuagint for the following line then may well reflect an archaic expression which spoke of God as the father and mother of all life. Further, the mountains in Canaanite mythology were the home of the gods, and were consequently the source of all blessing. They were the locale of Baal's palace and the secret places for his creation of lightning and storm.

The parallel passage in Deut. 33:13-16 offers additional terms and expressions which are significant in Canaanite mythology.⁷³ The significant lines read:

With the choicest of heaven, from the dew
And from the deep crouching beneath;
With the choice produce of the sun,

⁷¹Keret III ii 25-28; Shachar and Shalim i 24; ii 25, 27.

⁷²Shachar and Shalim i 13, 24, 28.

⁷³For Deut. 33 in general see F. Cross and D. N. Freedman, "The Blessing of Moses," Journal of Biblical Literature, LXXVII (1948), 191-210.

With the rich yield of the moon,⁷⁴
 With the finest of the ancient mountains,
 With the best of the eternal hills,
 With the choicest of earth and its fulness,
 And the favor of Him who dwells on Sinai.⁷⁵

Tal "dew" appears in Ugaritic as one of the retinue of Baal. Thus in Canaanite imagery the line could be understood as "With the choicest of heaven from Taliya." Moreover, both šmš "sun" and yrh "moon" appear as gods in Canaanite mythology, while even 'ereš is included in the train of Baal as the goddess 'arsy.⁷⁶ This catalogue of terms which refer to deities or the abode of deities in Canaanite thought can hardly be ignored in a discussion of the origin of the imagery here employed.⁷⁷ The distinctive meaning of this symbolism, however, must be determined from the context of the passages cited. For neither a mythological origin for a term, nor a contemporary mythological usage of a term necessarily demands

⁷⁴The parallelism with šmš "sun" suggests that yrhm be vocalized as "moon" plus enclitic mem.

⁷⁵The archaic orthography of snh would appear as sn. The vocalization sinē "Sinai" is therefore plausible. Cf. Samaritan Pentateuch and Judg. 5:5.

⁷⁶šmš appears in Ugaritic as špš in Baal III ii 24; III iii 24 *et passim*. The text Nikkal and the Kathirat relates the marriage of Yarih to Nikkal. 'Aršy appears in the retinue of Baal in Baal II i 16; II iv 56.

⁷⁷Vawter, *op. cit.*, p. 13, cites an ancient incantation from upper Syria which corresponds in form to the blessing of Gen. 49:25f. Here, just as in the ancient treaties, the heavens, the earth, and various personified powers of nature are considered powers capable of blessing or cursing.

that the biblical usage corresponds to either. For even in these early poetic sections, the relationship between Jahwe and nature is normative for their understanding.

The primary sphere of Jahwe's self-disclosure is that of history. Thus even in the present context the God who blesses nature is the God of Israel's history, "the Mighty One of Jacob" (Gen. 49:24), "the Rock of Israel" (Gen. 49:24); the "Father" who elects (Gen. 49:25), "the One who dwelt on Sinai" (Deut. 33:16). And this One is Jahwe Himself, who came from Sinai (Deut. 33:2) to become king in the midst of Jeshurun (Deut. 33:5). For as the opening lines of Deut. 33:13 state, it is Jahwe who dispenses blessing upon His land. All those blessings which follow are but gifts from His hand. There is no indication that the sources of these blessings sound any mythological overtones any longer. All of these natural resources, from the sun above to the waters of the deep below, from the spectacular storm that rolls out of the distant mountains to the fertility of field and womb, are at the sovereign disposal of Jahwe. From the earliest literature in Israel the portrait is that of Jahwe as a dispenser of fertility and not a god of fertility,⁷⁸ the God who lives to give life and not a

⁷⁸See also Gen. 27:28; Deut. 7:12-15; Pss. 65:10-14; 85:13 and frequently in later literature. The advent of Jahwe and the revival of Baal are hardly comparable incidents as T. Worden seems to imply in his allusions to Pss. 75:10-16; 96:11-13; 104:30; 147:8. T. Worden, "The Literary Influence of the Ugaritic Fertility Myth on the Old Testament," Vetus Testamentum, III (1953), 295f. Cf. McKenzie, op. cit., p. 126.

god who is but part of the cycle of life and death. While it might be admitted that much of the above imagery reflects a Canaanite milieu, there is no longer any indication that the perspective of the fertility cultus is retained. For the Israelite acquainted with Canaanite thought patterns an anti-mythical polemic would probably be aroused. Any accommodation to Canaanite religious beliefs, however, is excluded. Jahwe has no consort, no conjugal needs, no growing pains, no fear of Not. Jahwe never dies!

In this connection then the epithet 'el hay is specially appropriate. While there is no good reason to assume that the concept of Jahwe as the "living God" originated as a reaction against the cult of the dying and rising god, its association with jealousy of Jahwe is totally relevant at this point. Jahwe is a living God because He addresses man as "thou"! He is not a personified life force. Accordingly His personal jealousy is seen as directed against any other so-called source of life or any cultic act which presupposes a source of life other than His transcendent person. The reality of Jahwe as the "living One" is not static, moreover, as though it were merely an assertion of His existence. On the contrary He demonstrates His "liveliness" by His incessant and jealous activity in punitive defeat or glorious redemption, in drought or in vegetation, in the reversal or restoration of the seasonal cycle, in the moral pathos of curse and blessing, in the annihilation of other gods and the vindication of His own Name!

Perhaps the most forceful expression of this conclusion is to be found in Deut. 32:39f. which reads:

Behold now, I am I
And there is no other God than I;
I kill and restore to life,
After I have smitten I heal,
And none can rescue from my hand,
For I lift up my hand to heaven,
And I swear, "As I live forever."

In short, while there are numerous terms in the early literature which may have had mythological connotations in the fertility cultus of Canaan, the jealousy of Jahwe excluded any designation of Himself as the fertility god, or any practice which might suggest this title. Communion with Jahwe could not be established through nature, and His "person-ness" eliminated the possibility of His self-expenditure in nature or complete revelation through nature.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSIONS

The preceding analysis has concentrated primarily upon the literature of the pre-monarchic period. The first significant document which claims to come from the early monarchic period is the covenant renewal sermon of I Sam. 12:1-25. It is noteworthy that each of the major assertions of the foregoing presentation are correlated in this text. Accordingly, the subsequent recapitulation will include a re-statement of these affirmations, a summary of their respective applications to I Sam. 12:1-25 and finally a statement of the necessary conclusions which the writer believes are to be drawn from this study.

The biblical traditions concerning the conflict of religious cultures are important for an understanding of the occasion, setting, emphases and nature of the earliest covenant or covenant renewal formulations of the Old Testament.

I Sam. 12:1-25 is also a covenant renewal formulation. Its covenant Gattung is quite explicit;¹ Samuel plays the role of the covenant mediator just as Moses and Joshua had done before him. The witness motif is found in verses one to six,

¹In addition to the skeleton outline of the covenant Gattung which follows, see the treatment of J. Mulenburg, "The Form and Structure of the Covenantal Formulations," Vetus Testamentum, IX (1959), 36-365.

the catalog of šidqōt follows and the paranesis for the covenant crisis is introduced by the emphatic we'attā hinnē (v. 13). The conditions for the covenantal order of the kingdom are introduced by 'im and underscored by the subsequent 'im plus infinitive construct (vss. 14, 25). The repentance of the whole assembly serves to accentuate the total allegiance of "all Israel" (vss. 1, 18-25). The religious conflict which precedes this chapter and gives rise to this sermon is related to the Israelite request for a king. "They have not rejected you, but they have rejected me from being king over them" (I Sam. 8:7) was Jahwe's initial response to Samuel. The full implications of this statement only become apparent when it is recognized that Israel was requesting a king like the kings of Canaan.² The adoption of Canaanite kingship in toto would have meant an irreconcilable conflict of religious ideologies. It is this conflict which the present covenant formulation of Samuel resolves in a relevant way.

The fundamental beliefs of this covenant faith are prominent throughout Israel's archaic poetic literature. This literary corpus reflects contact with the religious culture of Canaan in particular. The same essentials of covenant faith

²For an appreciation of the nature of Canaanite kingship, see the Ugaritic texts of Keret and Aqhat. See further treatments by I. Mendelsohn, "Samuel's Denunciation of Kingship in the Light of the Akkadian Documents from Ugarit," Bulletin of American Schools of Oriental Research, CXLIII (1956), 17-22; J. Gray, "Canaanite Kingship in Theory and Practice," Vetus Testamentum, II (1952), 193-220.

are apparent in I Sam. 12:1-25. Thus the magnalia of Jahwe, from the exodus activity of the warrior King par excellence to the mighty exploits of deliverance from every king and ruler in Canaan, are again paraded before the disgruntled Israelites. Jahwe's sovereign intervention in Israel is re-affirmed, not only by the assurance that this people is His personal 'am (v. 22), but by insisting that He alone had established the king over Israel (v. 22) and by His bold disruption of the cycle of nature in order to demonstrate His unquestionable authority over Israel (vss. 17f.). Likewise, the jealousy of Jahwe recurs throughout this passage. Even the king must "hearken to His voice" in all things (v. 14) for Jahwe the creator God will not tolerate the worship of tōhū (vss. 20f.), whether it be in the cosmos, in an idol or in a human king.

Jahwe's demonstration of His kingship in history and in nature is a significant feature of the early faith of Israel. The relevant kingship passages seem to express a polemic against the kingship of Baal. In I Sam. 12:1-25 the Israelite request for a king was tantamount to breach of covenant, for "Jahwe your God was your king" (v. 12). Accordingly the polemic at this point is directed against Canaanite kingship with all its mythological and cultic implications. But the polemic is also against the kingship of Baal. The sermon is delivered at the time of wheat harvest when the temptation to participate in the agricultural rites of the Canaanite cultus

would be very strong. At this moment Jahwe disturbs the seasonal cycle of nature by sending a destructive rain storm into the harvest field. Baal might be languishing in the underworld during this dry season but Jahwe is very much alive. In that hour Jahwe and not Baal is acknowledged as king over the cosmos.

Certain features of Canaanite religious culture appear to have been incorporated into Israelite religious literature and life, while others seem to have been deliberately rejected.

The adoption and modification of Canaanite kingship in First Samuel illustrate this point admirably. For the Israelite king did not, at this time, establish his own covenant of feudal overlordship with the people, but was obligated to rule according to the former covenant structures

(I Sam. 12:4f.). And as the context discloses, it was Jahwe who designated or chose the king as a nāgīd rather than as a melek, the latter term being quite naturally associated with hereditary Canaanite kingship.³ The king, moreover, could claim no immunity in case of any breach of covenant with Jahwe (v. 25).

In brief, I Sam. 12:1-25 supports the contention that the major assertions of this study concerning the early faith of Israel are mutually related. In particular, this event which marks the end of the pre-monarchic period, demonstrates

³Judg. 8:22f.; I Sam. 8:5; 9:16; 10:1; 13:14 et passim.

the relevance of this conflict of religious cultures for an understanding of the distinctive formulations of Israel's faith in Jahwe. In addition to this re-statement of the principle theses under discussion a more complete delineation of the various conclusions and implications of this research is desirable.

(a) The biblical record attests to a pre-monarchic contact between the faith of Israel and alien religious cultures. This is confirmed by the conflict traditions concerning Sinai, Beth Peor and Shechem among others. The existence of this clash of cultures and, in particular, the Israelite dammamus pronounced upon many of the religious beliefs and practices of alien cultures, as well as the tacit laudamus to be heard in the Israelite adoption of less offensive religious modes of expression presupposes the presence of a mutually intelligible circle of religious concepts. And this but serves to emphasize that the life, language and literature of Israel were conditioned by its cultural environment. In the religious milieu of the ancient Near East Israel was indeed qādōš (set apart) but not nikrāt (cut off).

(b) The pangs of controversy and conflict have played a significant part in the birth of numerous religious documents. And, as the previous study has shown, the earliest covenant formulations of Scripture are no exception. The specific conflict in these passages, however, is not between factions of Israel, but between Israel and contemporary

religious movements of kindred pagan cultures. A knowledge of these religious tensions leads to a deeper understanding of the zeitgemäss character of the covenant pericopes, as well as the religious antitheses which they inevitably pose.

(c) In the consequent delineation of Israel's covenant faith three fundamentals were emphasized. Briefly, each Israelite who had witnessed the abnormal intervention of Jahwe in the exodus event and had confronted Him in the covenant moment was thereby moved to acknowledge the magnalia of Jahwe, the jealousy of His overlordship and His sovereign choice of Israel as the sine qua non of his own faith and the basis for his covenant communion with Jahwe. The pertinent features of these religious postulates were outlined in connection with the covenant pericope of Exod. 19:3-8 and further illustrated by certain features of the golden calf story, the incident at Beth Peor and the Diet at Shechem.

(d) In chapter three it was demonstrated how the same essentials of the covenant could be traced through the early poetic literature of Scripture. Moreover, it became apparent that the poetic imagery and archaic terminology employed in this literary corpus accentuated the distinctive character of these articles of faith. In addition it was found that the Canaanite religious culture was relevant in a general way, for a deeper understanding of a number of the concepts of this faith.

(e) Accordingly, it was the burden of the subsequent

chapters to indicate the specific value and relevance of comparing similar terminology, imagery and practices found in both Israelite and Canaanite religious culture. In so doing it became apparent, first of all, that the fundamentals of the covenant faith are brought into sharper focus. Thus in chapter four the magnalia of Jahwe's saving activity are seen from the broader perspective of Jahwe's kingship, in chapter five the sovereignty of Jahwe is emphasized through His theophanic self-revelation to Israel, while in chapter six the avid jealousy of Jahwe is magnified by His activity in nature and His attitude toward agricultural rites.

(f) Moreover, certain religious concepts and imagery in early Israelite poetry which are similar to Canaanite religious culture have been consciously incorporated into these biblical writings. On the other hand, the attitude taken toward other Canaanite beliefs and practices reveals that these were vigorously excluded. It is clear, furthermore, that the Ugaritic texts provide a relevant source of information concerning the Canaanite religious culture.

(g) In this connection the first significant feature presented was the sequence of religious activities and concepts which are employed to portray the kingship of Baal. A similar pattern of thought was shown to underlie the account of Exod. 15:1-18. However, the existence of such a pattern in this passage, or elsewhere, does not necessarily imply the adoption of all the religious ideas reflected in the Canaanite

original nor the attendant ritual which may have accompanied the recital of this text. For despite the similarity of thought sequence the religious presuppositions must be first ascertained. In this case the presuppositions of the respective texts concerning the nature of kingship are radically different. The one is historical and the other mythological. For the early Israelite the principium cognoscendi, that is the normative source of knowledge for his faith, is Jahwe's activity in history, for the Canaanite it is the complex of the cosmos.

(h) The pattern in question, however, does indicate that the kingship of Jahwe is here portrayed in a way which is culturally relevant for the Israelite of that day. Further, it accentuates the archaic character of the kingship of Jahwe concept. This concept, in fact, is presupposed by the covenant itself. In brief, the presence of a pattern of religious thought does not necessarily imply that the biblical usage of the same corresponds in every detail, whether theological or cultic, with its mythological counterpart. The tertium comparationis must first be established. In this case it is the kingship of Jahwe and the kingship of Baal.

(i) Further, it was shown that comparable religious imagery is common to both Canaanite and biblical literature. Many of these concepts and images, however, can be regarded as a part of the cultural milieu of the Israelite world and do not necessarily presuppose a conscious exchange of ideas.

Accordingly, such imagery may be relevant for an understanding of the Weltanschauung of the pre-monarchic period, but it does not automatically presuppose an identical meaning in all its usages. The religious perspective of the respective cultures must always remain a conditioning factor in any interpretation of the same. The previous analysis of Jahwe's advent in the tempest and of Baal's theophany in the storm, as well as of their respective retinues of heavenly beings, was concerned with this question. The concept of the sympathy of nature and the image of Jahwe as a warrior God fall into the same category.

(j) On the other hand, considerable evidence was adduced to suggest that certain imagery and terminology may have been consciously and deliberately adopted by biblical authors in order to express a direct polemic against certain gods or beliefs of the Canaanite religion. This evidence was seen especially in connection with the various antitheses between Jahwe and Baal as the storm god, the portrait of Jahwe in Psalm 29 offering a striking illustration of this point.

(k) While it is apparent that many of the preceding biblical concepts and images can be more fully appreciated by comparison with their Canaanite counterpart, it is also true that identical terms and idioms appear in the respective literatures. The meaning of this terminology, however, may or may not be identical in both cultures. Thus, just as biblical usage and contextual relevance rather than etymology

is finally determinative for the textual meaning of a biblical term, so too the analogia fidei found in the essentials of the covenant is normative for the complete understanding of the religious or theological meaning of a word in its cultural environment. In other words, a term in Canaanite literature may appear linguistically synonymous with a biblical expression, but bear a totally different or at least significantly modified theological import from its scriptural counterpart. This was demonstrated by the treatment of such terms as yan, hēkāl, Leviathan, or Mot and by this discussion of the terminology of fertility worship.

(1) Furthermore, it became clear that the biblical record concerning a number of religious practices suggests a direct polemic against certain features of the Canaanite cultus. It was also seen that none of the Ugaritic materials gave any explicit information concerning the origin of Israelite cultic practices. In a few instances, however, pertinent objections to known usages of the Canaanite cultus seem either explicit or implicit. The preceding discussion of the agricultural rites and temple cultus of Baal suggested this as a possible conclusion.

In brief, it has been shown that a conflict of religious cultures is reflected in the biblical record and that the Ugaritic texts are relevant for an appreciation of the conflict between Israelite and Canaanite religious culture in particular. Moreover, it has been demonstrated that these

texts are relevant for a deeper understanding of the essentials of Israel's covenant faith, and that valuable insights into the meaning of contemporary biblical materials can be gained by a comparison with similar religious patterns, imagery, concepts, terminology and practices of the religious culture of Canaan. Hence, a consideration of the conflict of Israelite faith with the religious cultures of its pagan neighbors is no mere triviality of scholarship. Perhaps the words of Robert Browning are apt at this point:

It is by no breath,
Turn of eye, wave of hand,
That salvation joins issue with
death.

Saul XVIII:18f.

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