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THE KINGSHIP OF YAHWEH
AS A MOTIF FOR THE UNIVERSAL SALVATION
IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

THE KINGSHIP OF YAHWEH IN THE OLD TESTAMENT; Oh; Th.D., 1961

Submitted to the Faculty of the
Department of Theology
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Theology

Presented to the

Faculty of the

1961

by

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Author

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THE KINGSHIP OF YAHWEH
AS A MOTIF FOR THE UNIVERSAL SAVIOR
IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

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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May 1961

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In Korea, Chinese characters are still taught along with the Korean phonetic alphabet.

CHAPTER I

PROLEGOMENA

While the Old Testament is the revelation of Yahweh it also is a literary production of ancient Israel. It is written in the Semitic languages and has Israelite social and ideological backgrounds. When a Far Easterner reads it, he feels somewhat at home in its world of thought, though he cannot experience such a feeling of affinity in the Greco-Roman literature. No actual ethnic or linguistic affinities, however, exist between Israel and the Far East. It is true some scholars have tried to establish a linguistic similarity between them, but their findings must be considered as mere coincidences.

There are, however, some social and conceptual similarities between them. We will now illustrate some of these, comparing mainly Korea and Israel. When a Korean boy commences to learn Chinese characters,¹ his first lesson consists of the two words: "heaven" and "earth." Then he learns also the phrase "between heaven and earth" (Chun-ji-ji-gan) to convey the meaning "in the universe," although there are words for "universe" (Wū-chu) and "world" (Sei-gei) in the Far Eastern languages. In the Old Testament the

¹In Korea, Chinese characters are still taught along with the Korean phonetic alphabet.

phrase "heaven and earth" also appears in the very beginning (Gen. 1:1) and by its subsequent frequent usage is a very familiar expression, while the term "world" ($\int \underset{\cdot}{\text{ג}} \underset{\cdot}{\text{ע}} \underset{\cdot}{\text{ל}}$) occurs much less.

As a boy grows up in Korea, he learns that there is an intricate family system, based on a clan consciousness and the ties of blood. Therefore he will find that the genealogy of his clan has been well kept. Like the genealogy of the Old Testament, the Korean does not list the names of women, though a few exceptions are found in the former. In a Korean family tree the son-in-law's surname often takes the place of the daughter's name. The family system necessitates precise terms for the various relationships. There are words for father-in-law: "husband's father" (אב) and "wife's father" ($\int \underset{\cdot}{\text{ע}} \underset{\cdot}{\text{אב}}$); mother-in-law: "husband's mother" ($\int \underset{\cdot}{\text{ע}} \underset{\cdot}{\text{אמ}}$) and "wife's mother" ($\int \underset{\cdot}{\text{ע}} \underset{\cdot}{\text{אמ}}$, a hapax legomenon in Deut. 27:23). There are also special designations for daughter-in-law (that is, son's wife, $\int \underset{\cdot}{\text{ע}} \underset{\cdot}{\text{אמ}}$) and son-in-law (that is, daughter's husband, $\int \underset{\cdot}{\text{ע}} \underset{\cdot}{\text{אב}}$). In addition he has many more terms for various relatives. There are, for example, many descriptive terms for uncles: the father's elder brother, his younger brother and his cousins on the one hand, and for the mother's brothers and her cousins on the other hand.

The senior male member, usually the father and husband, holds the ruling position in the family. After his death,

the eldest son, not his widow, takes his place. If one does not have a son he has to adopt a son from kinsmen in order to preserve the family name and provide for the widow.

Similarly the adoption of a son-in-law as heir is not unknown in Israel, as can be seen in the case of Laban and Jacob (Gen. 29-31). This custom is also practiced in Japan, where the son-in-law adopts his father-in-law's surname.

When the father dies the inheritance, generally land, is divided among the sons. The "first-born son" (בְּרִיאָה) receives a larger portion. Although it may not always amount to double the size of the others he may be responsible for his widowed mother along with other duties. In this fraternal organization the eldest son functions not only as a chief of the brothers, but it is also incumbent upon him to take care of the affairs of the whole family.

When parents or relatives pass away in Korea, there is a prescribed period of mourning. This practice is also found in the Old Testament, although in Korea a son of the upper classes used to mourn for two full years over his parent's death.

The good custom of respecting one's elders is found in both cultures. In Korea seniority was abused and the idea of a general superiority and inferiority developed. Sons are in an absolutely subordinate position to the father, the wife to the husband, the younger brother to the older brother, the younger friend to the older friend, and the subject to the ruler.

If one goes to the capital city, it is said "he goes up to the capital." This expression is always used, even when one comes from a hill country or from the mountains and the capital is in the plain. The king and the royal palace are said to be "up" as a mark of high esteem.

A lunar and a solar calendar are used as in the Old Testament. Agricultural festivals according to the lunar calendar are likewise celebrated.

Similar manners of politeness and mutual assistance also are found in both cultures perhaps as an outgrowth of the family system.

In addition, some ideological and psychological similarities could be pointed out.

In the study of the Old Testament, therefore, a Far Easterner has the advantage of finding some social and cultural backgrounds, with which he is familiar.

The writer was brought up near the southern center of Confucianism in Korea. Since he had a Confucian father, he was taught the Chinese characters and the classical literature from his kindergarten days. Although he could not comprehend its full meaning, he had to recite whatever he had learned the previous day before his father-teacher. He was forced to learn his lessons from the Chinese classics, not because he was interested in them but because he was afraid of a whipping the next day. When he entered the elementary school he faced both literatures: Korean and Japanese. Since Korea was under Japanese occupation at the time, he spoke Japanese

in school and public offices and Korean at home and in private life. Before he became a Christian, he worshipped nature gods such as the sun, the moon, the mountains, the village tree and well, as well as his ancestors. Since Confucianism is an ethical system, it is tolerant of other religions. Hence he visited Buddhist temples and had an opportunity to learn also about Buddhism. Furthermore, he was forced to visit the Japanese Shinto shrine and bow down to it. This was required of a student as a daily assignment even during summer vacation, the Shinto ritual being observed in the school as well as at the shrine. There is also in Korea a native religion which is called Chondokyo, or the Sect of the Heavenly Way. This started in 1859 as a "Messianic cult," and is syncretistic in doctrine. Certain basic elements are Shamanistic; the "five relations" and the disregard of immortality are from Confucianism; the requirement of a heart cleansing, from Buddhism; a monotheistic concept, from the ancient native Deism and some later Christian influences.

A man brought up in such a multiple religious environment would naturally compare the various religions and develop a critical attitude to them. But in Christianity the writer found the only way of salvation.

In the course of his Old Testament studies, the writer's attention was caught by the recent discussion of the "myth and ritual pattern," and the "kingship ideology." He was

well acquainted with the fact that the Chinese emperor was called the "Son of Heaven" (天子) in Chinese classical literature. The theory of divine kingship reminded him of the time when he was required to memorize the names of 124 Japanese emperors,² and was taught that the emperor is "Manifest Deity" (Aki-tsu Kami) and "Incarnate Deity" (Ara-hito Kami), etc. in a Japanese history class.

The aim of this dissertation is, however, to establish the peculiar function of the Kingship of Yahweh as found in His Universal Saviorship.

In order to understand the Kingship of Yahweh, we shall first examine kingship in the Near East, particularly in Egypt and Mesopotamia. This study is made possible by the discovery, deciphering, and publication of Near Eastern texts. As the reader will notice, the cited data in the Second Chapter are mainly from Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament, edited by James B. Pritchard.³

Significant differences between the Egyptian kings and those of Mesopotamia will be noted.

Then we shall take up the study of kingship in Israel: its origin, function, and peculiar character. We shall note that the Israelite kingship is different from the other two.

²The present emperor is reckoned as 124th.

³J. B. Pritchard, editor, Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament (Second edition; Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1955).

In Chapter IV the Eigenart of the Kingship of Yahweh will be elaborated. Throughout the chapter the uniqueness of Yahweh's Kingship is observed in comparison with this concept in other Near Eastern religions.

Chapter V will consist of the examination of the Sukkoth Festival in Israel, the meaning of קִיּוּם הַיּוֹם and an investigation of the myth and ritual pattern in the Near East in connection with the "Enthronement Festival." Then we shall determine whether the cultic exercises in Jerusalem have any connection with the pattern.

In Chapter VI we shall study Yahweh's activity as Savior, His Lordship over the universe, and His role as Savior of the world. The relevant Old Testament passages will be carefully examined. Finally, man's response to the Savior Yahweh will be explained.

In the discussion throughout the thesis we shall let the Old Testament itself speak about the subject and regard its verdict as final. The passages employed in the thesis will generally be the writer's own literal translation of the Masoretic text, although other versions and commentaries will be constantly checked. The versification will follow the Masoretic text unless otherwise indicated.

CHAPTER II

KINGSHIP IN THE NEIGHBORING NATIONS OF ISRAEL

Kingship in Egypt

From the earliest historical times the king of Egypt ruled the land as a god. In many texts the king is simply called "god" (netjer), or "the good god" (netjer nefer). A text, dated in the fourteenth year of Ramses II (about 1287 B.C.), describes how the deified Pharaoh Neb-pehti-Re (Ah-mose I) halted as he was carried by priests in a procession to give answers to questions submitted to him. Presumably Ah-mose I, who reigned from 1570 to 1545 B.C., had a mortuary chapel at Abydos, where he was worshipped as a god and from which he might emerge in a procession. This text reads:

Year 14, 2nd month of the first season, day 25, under the majesty of the King of Upper and Lower Egypt: Usermaat-Re Setep-en- (Re; the) Son (of Re: Ra)mses (Meri-Amon), given life. The day of the appeal which the Priest Pa-ser and the Priest Tjay made, to lay a (charge before the good god) Neb-pehti-Re. The Priest Pa-ser appealed: "As for this field, it belongs to Pai, the son of Sedje-menef, and (to) the children of Hayu." And the god remained still. (Then he) appealed to the god with the words: "It belongs to the Priest Pa-ser, son of Mose." (Then) the god nodded very much, in the presence of the priests of (the good god) Neb-pehti-Re: the Prophet Pairy, the Priest of the Front Yanzab, the Priest (of the Front) Tja-nofer, the Priest of Rear Nakht, and the Priest of the Rear Thut-mose.¹

¹J. B. Pritchard, editor, Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament (Second edition; Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1955), p. 448. This will be cited as ANET.

Professor J. A. Wilson thinks that the text describes the ceremonial bark of the god Neb-pehti-Re (Ah-mose I) carried on the shoulders of four pairs of priests and attended by the Prophet Pa-iry. Facing this bark in an attitude of worship or appeal is the Priest of Osiris, Pa-ser.²

The king of Egypt had various ways of expressing his divinity. When Ramses II (about 1301-1234 B.C.) addressed his deceased father he said, "Thou restest in the Nether-world as Osiris, while I shine as Re for the people, being upon the Great Throne of Atum, as Horus son of Isis."³ Pharaoh Ramses II here represents himself as three Egyptian gods. Re, the natural designation of the sun-god,⁴ was the chief god of the Egyptians.⁵ As the presiding god over the "Ennead" (the corporation of gods, originally nine), he was also called "All-Lord."⁶ Ramses II claimed to sit on the

²Ibid.

³J. H. Breasted, Ancient Records of Egypt (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1906), III, par. 272, p. 113.

⁴H. Frankfort, Kingship and the Gods (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1948), p. 386. This will be cited as Kingship. The stela of Sehetep-ib-Re is worth mentioning here. Sehetep-ib-Re was chief Treasurer under Pharaoh Ni-maat-Re (Amen-em-het III, about 1840-1790 B.C.) of the Twelfth Dynasty. The inscription clearly identifies Amen-em-het III with Re: "Worship King Ni-maat-Re, living forever within your bodies. . . . He is Re by whose beams one sees, He is one who illumines the Two Lands more than the sun disc." ANET, p. 431. Cf. "The Amarna Letters," ANET, pp. 483ff.

⁵ANET, p. 202.

⁶Ibid., p. 14.

throne also as Atum, the sun-god who as the creator was also the first king of the universe.⁷ By the title "Horus," the Pharaoh apparently emphasized his divine credentials to rule in place of the god, indicating that kingship had been awarded to him by the divine tribunal.⁸

It may be true that the description of the king of Egypt as Horus was originally a title and a symbolic expression, used in religious drama or as a simile of praise, but the Egyptian did not distinguish between symbolism and participation. If he said that the king was Horus, he did not mean that the king was merely playing or acting the part of Horus, but really was Horus and that the god was effectively embodied in the physical frame of the king.⁹ A stela which describes the Asiatic Campaign of Thut-mose III (about 1490-1436 B.C.) plainly states the Pharaoh was Horus:

Live the Horus: Mighty Bull, Appearing in Thebes; . . . the King of Upper and Lower Egypt, the Lord of the Two Lands, Lord of Making Offering: Men-kheper-Re; the Son of Re, of his Body: Thut-mose Heqa-Maat, beloved of Montu, Lord of Thebes, Residing in Hermonthis, living forever.¹⁰

⁷Kingship, p. 386; ANET, p. 3.

⁸J. A. Wilson, "Egypt," in H. and H. A. Frankfort, et al., The Intellectual Adventure of Ancient Man (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1946), p. 75. This will be cited as IAAM.

⁹Ibid., pp. 64-65. Cf. Kingship, p. 45.

¹⁰ANET, p. 234. Similar expressions are used elsewhere for Thut-mose III, ANET, p. 235; for Ramses II, ANET, p. 29; and for Mer-ne-ptah, ANET, p. 376.

In computing the regnal year of the Pharaoh, the name of Horus is often substituted for that of the king. Thus the eighteenth year of Pharaoh Djoser of the Third Dynasty (about twenty-eighth century B.C.) was recorded as follows: "Year 18 of the Horus: Netjer-er-khet; the king of Upper and Lower Egypt: Netjer-erkhet; the Two Goddesses: Netjer-er-khet; the Horus of Gold: Djoser. . . ." ¹¹ The third year of Kamose, who reigned just before the Eighteenth Dynasty (before 1570 B.C.) is similarly given as "Year 3 of Horus." ¹²

The divinity of the king of Egypt was demonstrated not only by his names and titles, but he was also addressed directly as a god. In "The Story of Si-Nuhe," (The Servant of the Palace) the hero says to the Pharaoh Sen-Usert I (about 1971-1928 B.C.):

In very good peace! This flight which this servant made in his ignorance is known by thy ka, of good god, Lord of the Two Lands, whom Re loves and whom Montu, Lord of Thebes, forever! . . . ¹³

A regular title for the Pharaoh, during and after the period of the Old Kingdom, was the "Son of Re." It is repeatedly stated that the king issued from the body of the

¹¹Ibid., p. 31.

¹²Ibid., p. 232.

¹³ANET, p. 21. This same Sen Usert was called a god by his deceased father: "Thou that hast appeared as a god, hearken to what I have to say to thee, that thou mayest be king of the land and ruler of the regions, that thou mayest achieve an overabundance of good." ANET, p. 418. Pharaoh Izezi of the Fifth Dynasty (about 2450 B.C.) is described in the text of "The Instruction of the Vizier Ptah-hotep," as a god: "Then the majesty of this god said." ANET, p. 412. Cf. ANET, pp. 18, 19.

sun-god Re and therefore was his physical son. Although it was recognized that he had a human mother, Re was the progenitor. In the Westcar Papyrus the origin of the Fifth Dynasty is recorded as the result of a theogamy between Re and a humble woman.

She is the wife of an (ordinary) priest of Re, Lord of Sakhebu, who is pregnant with three children of Re, Lord of Sakhebu, and he (Re) has said of them that they shall exercise this beneficent office (of king) in this land.¹⁴

Since the Pharaoh was the "Son of Re," the sun-god, Amen-em-het I is described as being taken back at death into the body of his creator and father, Re. This conception of the death of the Pharaoh is reflected in "The Story of Si-Nuhe":

Year 30, Third month of the First Season, Day 7. The god ascended to his horizon; the King of Upper and Lower Egypt Sehetep-ib-Re was taken up to heaven and united with the sun disc. The body of the god merged with him who made him.¹⁵

Professor J. A. Wilson thinks that the title "Son of Re" emphasizes the claim of the Pharaoh's physical birth as a god.¹⁶

Among the Pharaoh's various titles and epithets, such as "the King of Upper and Lower Egypt," "Lord of Life of the Two Lands," "the Great God," etc.,¹⁷ there are many so called

¹⁴Westcar, 9:9-11, cited in IAAM, p. 72.

¹⁵ANET, p. 18.

¹⁶IAAM, p. 75.

¹⁷Further treatment on the titulary of Pharaoh, see Kingship, p. 46.

"Horus titles." These names of the kings designate them as earthly representatives of the god Horus and are not, therefore, their personal names.¹⁸ We find a Pharaoh addressed as "life, prosperity, health." This epithet is also exactly that of the god Horus as for example in the text of "The Contest of Horus and the Seth for the Rule":

Then Horus, the son of Isis, was brought, and the White Crown was set upon his head, and he was put in the place of his father Osiris. And it was said to him: "You are the good king of Egypt; you are the good Lord--life, prosperity, health!--of Every Land up to eternity and forever!"¹⁹

Although the meaning of some titles and epithets of the Pharaohs is not yet fully understood, it is very clear from the examples adduced that the Pharaohs were recognized as gods and represented as divine.

The divinity of the king of Egypt becomes apparent also from the stress put on the immortality of the Pharaoh. A good example is found in the two mortuary texts which are carved inside the pyramids of Unis of the Fifth Dynasty and Pepi II of the Sixth Dynasty (twenty-fifth and twenty-fourth centuries B.C.). The text B reads in part as follows:

O Atum, the one here is that son of thine, Osiris, whom thou hast caused to survive and to live on. He lives-- (so also) this King Unis lives. He does not die--(so also) this King Unis does not die. He does not perish--

¹⁸J. Finegan, Light from the Ancient Past (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1946), p. 73.

¹⁹ANET, p. 17.

(so also) this King Unis does not perish. He is not judged--(But) he judges--(so also) this King Unis judges 20

Here the dead king is clearly identified with Osiris, the father of Horus, and the immortality of both Osiris and the King Unis is emphasized. Obviously the dead king immediately becomes Osiris. On the basis of such evidence we can only agree with G. A. Wainwright, when he states: "Nothing is more certain than that the Pharaoh was divine."²¹ The king of Egypt was regarded as a god in the full sense of the term.

The divine nature of the Pharaoh stamped the kingship with a character of durability and power.

The king of Egypt was thought to receive his position from the god Amon. This claim is made repeatedly in the annals of Egypt. The inscriptions of "The Divine Nomination of Thutmose III" e.g., carved on the walls of the temple of Amon at Karnak, states:

. . . (The god Amon)--he is my father, and I am his son. He commanded to me that I should be upon his throne, while I was (still) a nestling. He begot me from the (very) middle of (his) heart (and chose me for the kingship . . . There is no lie 22

In the same inscription he repeats:

Re himself established me, and I was endowed with (his) crowns (which) were upon his head, his uraeus-serpent was fixed upon (my brow) . . . I (was equipped) with

²⁰ANET, p. 32.

²¹G. A. Wainwright, The Sky-Religion in Egypt (Cambridge: The University Press, 1938), p. 14. Cf. p. 86.

²²ANET, p. 446.

all his states of glory . . . I was (perfected) with the dignities of a god . . . (He established) my crowns, and drew up for me my titulary himself.²³

The derivation of the kingship was more than a divine appointment of the Pharaoh at the beginning of his reign. The kingship of Tut-ankh-Amon was claimed to be as old as Re himself in a festival song, sung by the soldiers: "King (Tut-ankh-Amon) is conveying Him who begot him! Decreed for him was kingship from the beginning of the lifetime of Re in heaven."²⁴ The kingship in Egypt was, therefore, considered to be coeval with the universe and unshakeable in stability.

In keeping with this view, the ancient Egyptian thought that at the accession of any Pharaoh the agent for the restoration of the normal divine order was placed on the throne. The text of "Joy at the Accession of Mer-ne-Ptah" of the Nineteenth Dynasty (about 1234-1222 B.C.) hails Mer-ne-Ptah as the divine restorer of the order of the universe. It says:

. . . Be glad of heart, the entire land! The goodly times are come! A lord--life, prosperity, health!--is given in all lands, and normality has come down (again) into its place: the King of Upper and Lower Egypt, the lord of millions of years, great of kingship like Horus: Ba-en-Re. Merri-Amon--life, prosperity, health!--he who crushes Egypt with festivity, the Son of Re, (Most) serviceable of any king: Mer-ne-Ptah Hotep-hir-Maat--life, prosperity, health!

All ye righteous, come that ye may see! Right has banished wrong. Evildoers have fallen (upon) their faces. All the rapacious are ignored.

²³Ibid., The divine nomination of Thut-mose IV is described in "A Divine Oracle through a Dream." Ibid., p. 449.

²⁴Ibid., p. 470.

The water stands and is not dried up; the Nile lifts high. Days are long, nights have hours, and the moon comes normally. The gods are satisfied and content of heart. (One) lives in laughter and wonder. Mayest thou know it.²⁵

By his accession Mer-ne-Ptah, the god-king, brought normality to the whole universe. The essential order of the universe, ma'at (truth, order, right) overcame evildoers and the wrong things. The new king also brought prosperity: the Nile provides plentiful water for the soil; times and seasons are normal. Even the gods are satisfied and joy dominates the land.

Some terms of the preceding hymn, such as "the King of Upper and Lower Egypt," "Horus," "The Son of Re," etc., and similar concepts are found in "The Theology of Memphis," a document from about 700 B.C. But linguistic, philological and geopolitical evidence is conclusive in support of its derivation from an original text more than 2000 years older.²⁶ This document reflects an Egyptian idea of creation. Apparently when the King Menes of the First Dynasty established Memphis as his capital, it was necessary to justify the sudden emergence of this town to central importance, since it had no national status before. A traditional religious capital of Egypt, Heliopolis, was the home of the sun-god Re and of the creator-god Re-Atum. It was situated only twenty-

²⁵ Ibid., p. 378.

²⁶ Ibid., p. 4.

five miles from Memphis. "The Theology of Memphis" is in part a theological argument for the primacy of the god Ptah and thus for his home, Memphis. The text, unfortunately now in a damaged state, suggests a division into six parts.²⁷

Section II deals with the end of the conflict between the gods Horus and Seth which precedes the establishment of order both in the universe and in the state. The following lines describe the decision of the council of the nine great gods in which Geb, the earth-god, acts as the executive officer:

The Ennead gathered themselves to him, and he judged Horus and Seth. He prevented them from quarreling (further), and he made Seth the King of Upper Egypt in the land of Upper Egypt, at the place where he was (born), Su. Then Geb made Horus the King of Lower Egypt in the land of Lower Egypt, at the place where his father was drowned, Pezshet-Tawi. Thus Horus stood in (one) place, and Seth stood in (another) place, and they were reconciled about the Two lands. . . .²⁸

But Geb regretted this decision and gave all of his dominion, the earth, to Horus:

(But then it became) ill in the heart of Geb that the portion of Horus was (only) equal to the portion of Seth. So Geb gave his (entire) inheritance to Horus, that is, the son of his son, his first born. . . . (Thus) Horus stood over the (entire) land. Thus this land was united, proclaimed with the great name: "Ta-tenen, South-of-His-Wall, the Lord of Eternity." . . . So it was that Horus appeared as King of Upper and Lower Egypt, who united the Two Lands in Wall Nome,²⁹ in the place in which the Two Lands are united.³⁰

²⁷Kingship, p. 24.

²⁸ANET, p. 4.

²⁹Nome means the province, and the province of Memphis was called "White Wall." Ibid., p. 5.

³⁰Ibid., pp. 4-5.

Upper Egypt and Lower Egypt are two distinct lands in their physical and cultural aspects. Upper Egypt has ties with the desert and Africa; Lower Egypt faces out to the Mediterranean Sea and to Asia. Egyptians have always been conscious of the difference of the "Two Lands," and the reconciliation of the two competing areas is a recurrent theme in mythology and the dogma of rule. As they were one in their dependence upon the Nile, a similar unity of their duality was sought by incorporating authority and responsibility for both regions in a single figure, the god-king, the ruler of the dual monarchy.³¹ Since the dualistic forms of the titles of the Egyptian king such as "Lord of the Two Lands" did not result from historical incidents,³² they were not meant to emphasize the divided origin of Egypt but the universality of the king's power.

The divine character of the king also prevented problems of accession from arising. In Egypt every living king was Horus, and every dead king Osiris. This fact made Horus the legitimate heir of Osiris, whose claim to his father's throne, that is the kingship, had been vindicated in a divine court of law.³³

³¹JAEM, p. 73.

³²Kingship, pp. 19-20.

³³H. W. Fairman, "The Kingship Ritual of Egypt," in Myth, Ritual, and Kingship edited by S. H. Hooke (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1958), pp. 75-76.

The foregoing facts all helped to give an extraordinary stability to the kingship of Egypt. The king was a unique person among the Egyptians, and his rule was unchallenged. Revolutions and conspiracies were relatively infrequent. Thus stability was one of the most peculiar characteristics of the kingship in Egypt.

Since the king of Egypt was the divine ruler he was truly the sole source of authority. By dogma the king of Egypt was the state;³⁴ there was no separation of powers, such as legislative, executive, or judicial. The king alone maintained order on the national level and in the universal sphere. Because all authority was vested in the king at the time of creation,³⁵ his power was essentially different from that of his subjects. His royal majesty put him in a different category from that of his people.

This did not mean, however, the king was supposed to act arbitrarily. The ideals of good rule in Egypt were personified in the king; he was to be the ideal leader and ruler of the people. It seems that the king was reminded of justice every day, since he is portrayed as daily presenting as an offering the little symbolical hieroglyph of the goddess ma'at, "truth" or "justice."³⁶ The Egyptian believed that

³⁴ANET, p. 212.

³⁵Kingship, p. 53.

³⁶IAAM, p. 84.

justice accompanied a good ruler to the throne. The ideal rule was thought of as a god-given authority and as godlike in its magnanimity. It must be gracious but also terror-inspiring, just as a father deals with his son with affection and disciplinary actions, and as the sun and the Nile are gracious but also terrible in their effective power. In a time of disorder the king exercised his miraculous power; he was "Mighty Bull,"³⁷ which symbolized a leader and the victor in war. He restored justice to its place, driving out the unrighteous. In recognition of all of this, he was called "an everlasting fortress."³⁸

The king was also called "the goodly herdsman," and "shepherd" appointed by the sun-god.³⁹ The "herdsman" and "shepherd" are the "feeders"; and a first responsibility of the ruler was to see to it that the people were fed. The king, according to Egyptian doctrine, was the god who gave the country normal times and season, who brought the abundant waters, who gave the fertile crops, and who provided the safety of Egypt and the health and well-being of its inhabitants. One of the essential functions of the king was magically to insure the fertility of the land. It seems that the kingship and the prosperity of Egypt were closely related

³⁷ANET, p. 376 and passim.

³⁸Amen-hotep III, Ibid., p. 375.

³⁹IAAM, p. 79.

ritually and that there must have been some ceremonies in which the king conferred benefits on the land.⁴⁰ Thus, for example, the king went in procession to pour libations and burn incense to Min in his temple.⁴¹

In ancient Egypt, therefore, everything in the religious and the secular life was linked with the king, and every religious ceremony and ritual was in a sense a royal ritual.

In theory the king of Egypt was the sole ruler, but in actual practice he had to delegate authority to others. Thus the office of the vizier and a job-holding bureaucracy were developed. The king was likewise the sole priest for all the gods; but it was impossible for him to function every day in all the temples of the land. In historical times the king, the high-priest par excellence, was usually replaced by a priestly deputy.⁴² In the papyrus containing the daily ritual of the Amon temple at Thebes, the officiating priest states twice: "I am the priest. It is the king who has sent me to behold god."⁴³

⁴⁰H. W. Fairman, op. cit., p. 85.

⁴¹Cf. Kingship, pp. 188-90.

⁴²A. M. Blackman, "Myth and Ritual in Ancient Egypt," Myth and Ritual, edited by S. H. Hooke (London: Oxford University Press, 1933), p. 17.

⁴³Kingship, p. 55. This quotation is taken from the following writing which is not accessible to the writer: A. Moret, Le rituel du culte divin journalier en Egypte (Paris, 1902), pp. 42-43, 55.

Kingship in Mesopotamia

The kingship of the Pharaohs is as peculiar to Egypt as its pyramids. This becomes evident as we proceed to examine the kingship in Mesopotamia.

It has been suggested that the earliest political institution in Mesopotamia was what is described as a "Primitive Democracy."⁴⁴ The government was formed by the assembly of the free men of the community. Actual power was in the hands of a body of elders who dealt with the day-to-day needs of the community, but in times of emergency they chose a single individual to take control for a limited period.⁴⁵

The origin of "Primitive Democracy" seems to be accounted for by geographical reasons. Mesopotamia is in no sense a geographical entity; isolated units of the land encouraged separatist and centrifugal tendencies. The small settlements of early times appeared lost in the boundless plain; each community was surrounded by drained or irrigated fields and separated from the next community by a wilderness of marsh or a desert.⁴⁶

⁴⁴T. Jacobsen, "Primitive Democracy in Ancient Mesopotamia," Journal of Near Eastern Studies, II (July, 1943), 159-72.

⁴⁵Ibid., p. 172.

⁴⁶Kingship, p. 217.

This city-state form of political organization in Mesopotamia represents an intensified self-consciousness and self-assertion. Unwilling to recognize outside authority, the city-state maintained local autonomy under the city god. Consequently, the Mesopotamian community put itself into the hands of a local dictator. Thus, in many respects, the early Mesopotamian cities resembled those of Greece and of Rome in early Republican times.

The Sumerian term for the dictator was lugal which means "great man" and is regularly translated "king." But it is also used in a non-political sense, frequently meaning simply "owner," the man with legal right to a possession, such as the master of a slave or the owner of a field.⁴⁷ The office of kingship was a bala, a word meaning "return" or "reversion" to origin. In other words the royal office was regarded as having a limited tenure; at the end of the emergency, authority was supposed to revert to the assembly. However, in practice, the emergency was found never to end, as is true today. Furthermore, the need of the hour often demanded a quick solution and the assembly would often be handicapped in taking quick action because the elders usually sought a practical unanimity. Under such conditions the

⁴⁷S. Smith, "The Practice of Kingship in Early Semitic Kingdoms," in Myth, Ritual and Kingship, edited by S. H. Hooke (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1958), p. 25.

kingship seems to have become permanent in certain cities.⁴⁸

Of course, not every leader of the community was called lugal. The ruler of Erech, e.g., was called en, "lord."⁴⁹ Another title for the ruler was ensi. Thus Gudea, a remarkable Sumerian ruler, was called "ensi of Lagash."⁵⁰ As ensi of Lagash, Gudea was the governor of the city, but also the human overseer of the community under the sovereign deity Ningirsu. This fact is clear from the following text: "When he (Gudea) was building the temple of Ningirsu, Ningirsu, his beloved king."⁵¹ The story of Gudea's temple building is repeated in another text: "For his king Ningirsu, the powerful hero of Enlil, Gudea, the ensi of Lagash, had quarried and imported (this) sir. gal -stone (marble) . . . and dedicated it to him for (the preservation of) his life."⁵²

Since the city god was usually the greatest landowner in the community, it has been estimated that around the middle of the third millennium B.C., most of the lands of a

⁴⁸H. Frankfort, The Birth of Civilization in the Near East (New York: Doubleday & Co., 1956), pp. 78-79.

⁴⁹Ibid., p. 78.

⁵⁰ANET, pp. 268-69. Ensi was formerly read pa te si; the new reading has been proposed by A. Falkenstein, and has been generally accepted. ANET, p. 267. Professor Sidney Smith reads insi instead of ensi, S. Smith, op. cit., p. 25.

⁵¹ANET, pp. 268-69.

⁵²Ibid., p. 269. Cf. ". . . for the ensi who wanted to build a house for his king. . . ." Ibid., p. 268.

Mesopotamian city-state were temple lands. The Mesopotamian city-state was, therefore, an estate owned and run by the city god who himself gave all important orders. Hence the real sovereign of the city was not the human ensi, but the god, himself. The former was regarded as the highest human servant of the god, steward of his estate, and manager of his city-state which therefore was in reality considered a community.⁵³

In earlier times, the lugal and ensi were two different offices. The former was a temporary, the latter, a permanent official.⁵⁴ But in Early Dynastic times this distinction had already been obliterated, although the title lugal generally denoted a more extensive dominion than that of ensi.⁵⁵

The Akkadian equivalent of lugal is šarru. The ruler of Kish was always called "King (šarru) of Kish." The title possessed such great prestige in Mesopotamia that even Sargon of Agade, who dominated the whole of Mesopotamia used the title: "Sargon, king of Agade, overseer of Ishtar, king of Kish. . . ." ⁵⁶ The Akkadian form of ensi is ishaku. The political connotation of this title varied in various places. In the Third Dynasty of Ur it designated simply a civil servant;

⁵³IAAM, pp. 186-91.

⁵⁴Kingship, p. 223.

⁵⁵Ibid., p. 226.

⁵⁶ANET, p. 267.

on the other hand, the kings of Assur used "Governor (ensi) of Assur" in their titulary. The Mesopotamian kings also used various other titles, such as "King of the Land," "King of Sumer and Akkad," "King of Assyria," "King of Universe," "King of the Four Quarters," "Appointed of Enlil," and "King of Kings."⁵⁷

In comparing the traditional Mesopotamian titulary to that of Egypt, one is struck by the lack of every trace of deification in the former. The royal titles of Mesopotamia indeed stress the power of the king, but they do not contain the idea that king's nature differs essentially from that of other men. The kingship was produced by the pressure of circumstance in a community which originally had not acknowledged authority vested in a single individual.⁵⁸

While the individual king was not considered to be of divine origin, the Mesopotamians nevertheless asserted in their myths that in the earliest times, when there was no human king, the kingship, as such, had descended from heaven. "The Sumerian King List," declares that both before and after the flood kingship was lowered from heaven: "When kingship was lowered from heaven, kingship was (first) in Eridu. . . . After the Flood had swept over (the earth) (and) when kingship

⁵⁷Further study on the titulary of Mesopotamian kings, see Kingship, pp. 226-230.

⁵⁸Ibid., p. 215.

was lowered (again) from heaven, kingship was (first) in Kish."⁵⁹

The same assertion is found in the Old Babylonian text "Etana": "(Then) kingship descended from heaven."⁶⁰ There is no doubt that this remarkable phrase is intended to show the majesty of the kingship. Still, it should be noted that it is the office of the king that was of superhuman origin and not the office-holder. When a human king was established in Mesopotamia, it was only natural that he should assume the "divine right of kings."

Another means of expressing the "divine right of kings" was by the claim that the king was appointed by gods.

Shalmaneser III (858 to 824 B.C.) describes himself in his campaign texts as follows: "At that time (Ashur, the great lord . . . gave me scepter, staff). . . necessary (to rule) the people. . . ."⁶¹

The famous king Hammurabi (1728 to 1686 B.C.) states he was commissioned as king by Marduk: "When Marduk commissioned me to guide the people aright, to direct the land. . . ."⁶²

⁵⁹ANET, p. 265; cf. "The Deluge" text of Sumeria. ANET, p. 43.

⁶⁰Ibid., p. 114.

⁶¹Ibid., p. 277. Similarly Esarhaddon defends his kingship in his text of "The Fight for the Throne." Ibid., p. 289.

⁶²Ibid., p. 165.

The king of Assyria, Ashurbanipal (668-633 B.C.) describes his kingship as commanded by Shamash in a vision.⁶³ Sargon of Agade says that his kingship was the result of the favor of the goddess Ishtar.⁶⁴ The moon-god, Nanna,⁶⁵ is praised as the "king maker" in the text of the "Hymn to the Moon-God," which reads: "Namer of kingships, giver of the scepter. . . ."⁶⁶

Royalty in Mesopotamia was, therefore, something not of human origin but added to society by the gods. The god-chosen and -given king was a potent official. In stressing his authority and power, he declared himself to be "the legitimate king" (šarru dannu).⁶⁷ This claim is made by such kings as Tiglath-pileser I, Adad-Nirari III, Shalmaneser, Esarhaddon, Ashurbanipal, Nebuchadnezzar, and Cyrus.

The Mesopotamian gods gave indications of their choice of the king in various ways. It could be by omens, dreams, or other means. In historic times, however, the election of the king was very complicated since often the will of gods could not be determined or distinguished from the will of the people.

⁶³Ibid., p. 387.

⁶⁴Ibid., p. 119.

⁶⁵Sumerian name of the moon-god, and his Akkadian counterpart is Sin, ibid., p. 385.

⁶⁶Ibid. Enlil was also the king maker, ibid., p. 481.

⁶⁷The rendering of the words šarru dannu, see ibid., p. 274.

While the Mesopotamian king was merely a mortal, elected by the gods, certain kings, however, have the divine determinative before their names. A few texts also suggest the deification of the king. A hymn which glorifies the goddess, Ishtar⁶⁸ as the evening star actually attributes deity to the king. The consort of the goddess bears an epithet of Tammuz, Ama-ushungal-ana, i.e., "Great Ruler of Heaven," but he is none other than King Idin-Dagan of Isin. The poem proceeds to exalt Ishtar's power and describes her couch and the physical union of Ishtar and the king of Isin. The poem further states:

Around the shoulders of his beloved bride he has laid his arm. Around the shoulders of pure Inanna he has laid his arm. Like daylight she ascends the throne on the great throne dais; the king, like unto the sun sits beside her. . . . The king has reached out for the food and drink, Ama-ushungal-ana has reached out for the food and drink. The palace is in fest (ive mood), the king is glad, the people are passing the day in abundance.⁶⁹

In the preceding hymn an epithet of Tammuz and the king's name are used interchangeably and the king of Isin

⁶⁸Ishtar is the Akkadian equivalent for Inanna; some prefer to call her Eštar. Professor Th. Jacobsen comments on Inanna as follows: "The earlier form of this name is Ninanna (k)'lady of heaven.' 'Nin' means 'lady' but sometimes we find it in male names; e.g., Ninurta, Ningirsu. . . . The Akkadian name is Eštar--after the time of Hammurabi the writing Ištar becomes more frequent than Eštar. Ištar is perhaps one of the most complex of the ancient deities." Th. Jacobsen, Ancient Mesopotamian Religion and Thought (Unpublished, typewritten, Chicago: The University of Chicago, 1948), pp. 47-48.

⁶⁹Kingship, p. 296.

acts the part of the god. In Egypt, however, a god takes the part of a king in the sexual act, e.g., the god Amon. The Gilgamesh Epic also makes this difference clear:

He [Gilgamesh] washed his long hair (and) polished his weapons. . . . When Gilgamesh put on his tiara, Great Ishtar lifted (her) eyes to the beauty of Gilgamesh. "Come, Gilgamesh, be thou my consort. Grant me thy fruit as a gift. Be thou my husband and I will be thy wife!"⁷⁰

Nevertheless, Inanna's proposal of marriage to Gilgamesh was refused because of her previous affairs; so "Ishtar burst into a rage and (ascended) to heaven."⁷¹ It is clear here that the goddess Inanna-Ishtar took the initiative, while the king was the passive partner and remained her obedient servant.

The king was also called the son of the god Enlil. King Lipit-Ishtar, the fifth ruler of the Dynasty of Isin, says of himself: "I, Lipit-Ishtar, the son of Enlil."⁷² Hammurabi also describes himself similarly: "Hammurabi, the shepherd, called by Enlil . . . the descendant of royalty, whom Sin begat . . . the monarch of kings, full brother of Zabab."⁷³

⁷⁰VI, 1, 5-9; Alexander Heidel, The Gilgamesh Epic and Old Testament Parallels (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1946), pp. 49-50.

⁷¹VI, 81; ibid., p. 52.

⁷²ANET, pp. 159, 161.

⁷³Ibid., p. 164, Zababa was a son of Enlil, thus Hammurabi would be another son of Enlil.

The king of Ur, Shu-Sin (about 1981-1972 B.C.) was expressly called divine: "The month of Shegurkud, the year the divine Shu-Sin became king."⁷⁴ And in a Sumerian love song, the same Shu-Sin was addressed as god: "O my lord Shu-Sin . . . O my god . . . O my beloved of Enlil, (my) Shu-Sin, O my king, the god of his land!"⁷⁵ The great ruler Naram-Sin, the grandson of Sargon, of Agade had the title: "The divine Naram-Sin, the mighty, god of Agade, king of the Four Quarters."⁷⁶ But Sargon was never deified.⁷⁷

All of this can be summarized in the following observations: The king in Mesopotamia was deified during one short period, during the last centuries of the third millennium B.C.⁷⁸ It seems that only those kings were deified who had been commanded by a goddess to share her couch. The kings who used the divine determinative before their names belong to the same period as the texts mentioning the marriage of the king and the goddess. But the Assyrian and the Neo-Babylonian kings never renewed such a determinative.⁷⁹

Even those kings who adopted the divine title were not like the Egyptian god-kings. Although the power of the king surpassed that of ordinary men, it did not approach

⁷⁴Ibid., p. 217. So also Ibbi-Sin, the king of Ur (about 1972-1947 B.C.), ibid.

⁷⁵Ibid., p. 496.

⁷⁶J. Finegan, op. cit., p. 39.

⁷⁷S. Smith, op. cit., p. 52.

⁷⁸H. Frankfort, The Problem of Similarity in Ancient Near Eastern Religions (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1951), p. 9.

that of the gods. The king remained on the human level. It has been rightly pointed out that there is no inscrip-
tional evidence that the king was the object of worship. Even the king of Ur was not worshipped in a temple of his
own city. He might be a god in Eshnunna; but at Ur he was
the servant of the city's owner, the moon-god Nanna.⁸⁰

Kingship in Mesopotamia was, however, connected with
a particular type of the priestly office, even from its
earliest time. King Sargon of Agade had the following
title: "Sargon, king of Agade, overseer of Ishtar, king
of Kish, annointed priest of Anu."⁸¹ Gudea, the governor
of Lagash was called "the en priest of Ningirsu."⁸² Since
the state belonged to its god in Mesopotamia, the king was
a unique servant of the god, who directed human affairs at
the same time that the king represented his people before
the god. There is the following interesting statement in
the "Lawsuit of the Old Babylonian": "The month of Kislum,
the 15th day, the year Ammiditana, the king, brought in his
statue (representing him as) offering prayer, scepter in
hand."⁸³ This can mean many things, but one thing is clear

⁷⁹Kingship, p. 224.

⁸⁰Ibid., p. 302.

⁸¹ANET, p. 267.

⁸²Ibid., p. 268.

⁸³Ibid., p. 219.

from the text, i.e., the king is the one who offers prayer to his god.

Mesopotamia, like Egypt, had great cult festivals.⁸⁴ These were affairs of state and frequently the king performed the chief role in the cult drama.⁸⁵ Since the king was the earthly administrator of the god, he interpreted the will of god.⁸⁶ In state affairs the king also stood ahead of the priest at all times and appointed the high priest in order that he might be free from minor services.

The king of Mesopotamia was the judge and established justice in the country. The tablets of "The Middle Assyrian Laws" date from the time of Tiglath-pileser I in the twelfth century B.C., but the laws themselves may go back to the fifteenth century.⁸⁷ Tablet B of these laws states: "If one among brothers who have not divided (the inheritance) uttered treason or ran away, the king (shall deal) with his share as he thinks fit."⁸⁸ In a similar manner other kings throughout Mesopotamian history acted as mediators and judges in disputes of the people. "The Sumerian Inscription

⁸⁴We shall discuss the subject further in Chapter V.

⁸⁵IAAM, p. 198.

⁸⁶Kingship, p. 252.

⁸⁷ANET, p. 180.

⁸⁸Ibid., p. 185.

on the Statue of King Kurigalzu" reflects the clear view of the duty of king as judge: ". . . their king had punished the Anunnaki . . . kings who pronounce the word. . . ." ⁸⁹

Some Mesopotamian kings were not only the guardians of law, but also the lawgivers, e.g., Lipit-Ishtar and Hammurabi.

Thus Hammurabi states:

When Marduk commissioned me to guide the people aright, to direct the land, I establish law and justice in the language of the land, thereby promoting the welfare of the people. ⁹⁰

Here Hammurabi calls himself "the King of justice." When the Mesopotamian empires grew strong at a later stage, the decree of the king immediately became law and could generally not be taken back even by the king himself.

The Mesopotamian king conducted foreign wars and protected the country from invasion. The famous kings were war heroes. Sargon, king of Agade, proudly displayed his victories, as follows: "Sargon, king of Kish, was victorious in 34 campaigns and dismantled (all) the cities, as far as the shore of the sea." ⁹¹ He also mentions as the reason for his victory the fact that the gods Enlil and Dagan helped him. Similarly Sennacherib and Esarhaddon were helped by the gods Ashur and Sin; and Ashurbanipal,

⁸⁹ Ibid., p. 58.

⁹⁰ Ibid., p. 165.

⁹¹ Ibid., p. 268.

by Ninlil and Ishtar. In addition, the Mesopotamian king directed the foreign policy of the nation and thus was responsible for internal order and prosperity, as well as for external security and peace.

Kingship in Canaan

Kingship in Canaan is very much like that of Mesopotamia as far as it can be determined from the known sources. There is little direct knowledge on the kingship in Canaan⁹² except in the Old Testament and the Ugaritic texts. Among the latter, "The Legend of King Keret" sheds new light on the subject, although the background and the interpretation of the text are still a disputed question.⁹³

The kingship in Canaan was closely related to that of Mesopotamia. We shall, therefore, consider only the differences between them. The king in Canaan was the ruler of a city-state, i.e., petty king, and he was often subject to neighboring great empires. His power and prestige were, therefore, not like the Mesopotamian suzerain who had supreme power in the empire. The king in Canaan was the

⁹²Syria and Palestine.

⁹³For a survey of the problem see John Gray, The Krt Text in the Literature of Ras Shamra (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1955), pp. 1-6. Cf. R. de Langhe, "Myth, Ritual, and Kingship in the Ras Shamra Tablets," in Myth, Ritual, and Kingship, edited by S. H. Hooke (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1958), pp. 122-148.

son of El, the senior god of the pantheon of Ugarit.⁹⁴

He was known as the son of El and not of any of the other deities, as was the case in Mesopotamia. The king, however, was the son of the god, El, not in his own right but as the representative of the people.⁹⁵ Furthermore, the king in Canaan did not have long titles and epithets like the Mesopotamian kings. Finally, the virtuous deeds of the king in Canaan, mentioned specifically, include help to the widow, fatherless, and other unfortunates.⁹⁶

⁹⁴KRT A: 39-41; ANET, p. 143 and passim.

⁹⁵John Gray, "Canaanite Kingship in Theory and Practice," Vetus Testamentum, II (1952), 201.

⁹⁶ANET, pp. 151, 153.

CHAPTER III

KINGSHIP IN ISRAEL

The Origin of Kingship

Kingship in Israel was instituted long after the Exodus. The Book of Judges twice records the following statement: "In those days there was no king in Israel, every man did what was right in his own eyes" (Judg. 17:6; 21:25). This statement explains the political situation of pre-monarchical Israel. Israel had conquered Palestine and settled there as a confederation of twelve clans.¹ She had no central government or capital city, except that all tribes gathered to worship Yahweh at shrines such as Shechem and Shiloh. In its external form, this amphictyonic system was not unknown outside of Israel, but the relationship between Yahweh and His people as the basis of this federation was a unique phenomenon among the nations.

The leader of the amphictyony was generally called 𐤇 𐤍 𐤂 𐤂 , an old Canaanite word,² which however is also found later among the Carthaginians. The Punic suffete or sufet³

¹For a detailed explanation see, "Die altisraelitische Amphiktyonie" in Martin Noth, Das System der zwölf Stämme Israels (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer Verlag, 1930), pp. 61-121.

²From the evidence of the Ras Shamra texts the verb means "to rule" as well as "to judge." John Gray, "The Kingship of God in the Prophets and Psalms," Vetus Testamentum, XI (1961), 3.

³This is further adapted in Latin, sufes (the chief magistrate in Carthage).

was used as "magistrate, civic leader." Called by Yahweh to be the leader of his people in times of crisis or danger and to be adjudicator of disputes, the עֲדֹנָיִם was a charismatic leader. As such he was respected and followed, regardless of tribal affiliations.⁴ His authority was, however, neither absolute over all Israelites nor permanent; it was in no case hereditary.

During the time of מִיָּסְרָאֵל , the Israelites were surrounded by highly organized nations. The Edomites, Moabites, and Ammonites all had kings who were much more than tribal emirs. The Philistines had their סָרְנַיִם or סָרְנָיִם "lords," "chiefs," "princes," or "captains" who seem to have been tyrants after the Aegean model. The Canaanites of Phoenicia were organized in a city-state, patterned after a Bronze-Age prototype.⁵

Under such circumstances the Israelites also longed for a better organized government as represented by the kingship. Because of Gideon's victory over the Midianites his prestige and authority grew. The Israelites admired him and wished to make him king and said to Gideon: "Rule over us, you and your son and your grandson, for you have

⁴W. F. Albright, From Stone Age to Christianity (Second edition with a new introduction; Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Co., 1957), p. 284. Hereafter this will be referred to as FSAC.

⁵Ibid., p. 289.

delivered us from the hand of Midian" (Judg. 8:22). This was the first attempt to establish a hereditary monarchy in Israel. But Gideon flatly refused and said: "I will not rule over you, and my son will not rule over you; Yahweh will rule over you" (Judg. 8:23).

This answer of Gideon has been interpreted in various ways since the last century. Since both people and Gideon used the term $\psi \dot{\eta}$, "rule," instead of $\eta \dot{\psi}$, "reign" or "to be king," therefore, according to one view the people are not requesting a King in the strict sense of the term but a ruler or "Imperator."⁶ Others consider the statement "a secondary product," by a later hand.⁷ Gideon's speech is supposed to be an example of "the projection theory." According to this theory any reference to a theocracy must be dated in a later period of Israel's history since the theocracy was really a euphemism for hierocracy and in reality the invention of the priests. This ecclesiastical State sought to validate its all too human authority by the use of a convenient fiction. Consequently Gideon's speech, it is claimed, merely reflects exilic or post-exilic times.⁸

⁶J. P. Lange, A Commentary on the Holy Scriptures: Judges (New York: Scribner, Armstrong & Co., 1873), p. 138.

⁷J. Wellhausen, Prolegomena to the History of Ancient Israel (New York: Meridian Books, 1957), pp. 239-40.

⁸N. W. Porteous, The Kingship of Adonai in Pre-exilic Hebrew Religion (London: Shapiro, Vallentine & Co., 1938), p. 4. Cf. G. F. Moore, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary

There is no reason, however, why Gideon's speech in Judges 8:23 cannot be taken as an historical fact; it is more than a later quest for political power.⁹ The story clearly reflects the actual conditions of a time when in practical politics men compared the merits of the charismatic judge who left no heir behind him with the hereditary monarch. Gideon's speech furthermore does not in the least require to be interpreted as the work of priests and their attempt to establish an ecclesiastical organization in opposition to the existing monarchical form of government.¹⁰ It was simply Gideon's honest recognition of Yahweh's kingship, and therefore a reaction which was naturally prior to the development represented in the kingdoms of Saul and David.

Still others think that Gideon's speech appears to express the opinion that Yahweh's sovereignty is absolutely inconsistent with a human kingship. In reality, however, this conflict did not need to exist and this difficulty was never felt by the mass of the Israelites, nor is it expressed

Philistines, the enemy of the Israelites, were a well trained
 on Judges (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1903), p. 230; H. W. Hertzberg, Die Bücher Josua, Richter, Ruth (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1953), p. 198. The text is also supposed to be "Schein-Abweisung" in Chinese tradition. Martin Buber, Königtum Gottes (Dritte, neu vermehrte Auflage; Heidelberg: Verlag Lambert Schneider, 1956), p. 3.

⁹Martin Buber, op. cit., p. 3.

¹⁰N. W. Porteous, op. cit., p. 4.

by the prophets in the period of the monarchy.¹¹

Although it is not easy to understand the thinking behind the words of the people of Israel and Gideon, they clearly demonstrate the admiration and esteem of Gideon on the part of the Israelites. It is impossible to determine to what extent this movement was merely a spontaneous act of Gideon or to what extent it represented a principle of government which the people wanted to put into effect.

After the death of Gideon, his son by a Shechemite concubine (Judg. 8:31) did set himself up as a king in his mother's town. This was, however, a local kingship after the city-state pattern of the Canaanites. Its authority did not extend over all the Israelites and it did not last long.

In the Philistine crisis Israel's amphictyony came to an end. This system of control should not be considered a weak form of government. But since it was a loose organization, the critical situation demanded a higher degree of centralization. This was necessary particularly since the Philistines, the enemy of the Israelites, were a well trained military people, equipped with superior weapons made of iron.¹²

¹¹W. R. Smith, The Religion of the Semites (New York: Meridian Books, 1956), p. 66

¹²John Bright, A History of Israel (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, c.1959), p. 165.

When the ark was captured and Shiloh fell into the hand of the Philistines, the amphictyony was helpless. In the dark days that followed, Samuel became the leader in Israel. During the years of his ruling Israel escaped from foreign domination. When he was old he made his two sons דָּוִד (1 Sam. 8:1-2). They proved themselves unworthy of their high trust and were hated by the people for their misconduct. Under such circumstances many Israelites wished for stronger leadership. It was in this situation that the Israelites elected Saul to be their first king. Yet there was great reluctance on the part of some to accept the monarchy because it was an institution totally foreign to their tradition.

The election of Saul to the kingship is recorded several times in the First Book of Samuel. 9:1-10:16 and 11:1-15 are regarded as constituting one report, and 8:1-22; 10:17-27, and 12:1-25 as giving another. The first section has been regarded as favorably disposed to the monarchy while the latter is considered bitterly hostile.¹³

These accounts merely express the differing attitudes of some people at that time regarding the introduction of the monarchy. A centralized monarchical government was a secondary addition to the primary will of God who was the true sovereign of Israel. This innovation could be regarded

¹³Ibid., pp. 166-67.

by men as at variance with the will of God. It is, therefore, not necessary to hold that the opposition to the Israelite monarchy is a retro-jection of bad experiences with the later kings and to dismiss the last of these narratives as "a late document reflecting actual experience of the ways of Israelite and Judean kingship but put into the mouth of the first king-maker in order to lend to it authority."¹⁴ Professor Isaac Mendelsohn examines the Book of Samuel in the light of Akkadian documents from Alalakh and particularly from Ugarit, dating from 18th to the 13th Century B.C. He especially compares 1 Samuel 8:4-17 with the Ugarit texts, and gives the following conclusion:

In view of the evidence from the Akkadian texts from Ugarit it seems obvious that the Samuel summary of "the manner of the king" does not constitute "a re-writing of history" by a late opponent of kingship but represents an eloquent appeal to the people by a contemporary of Saul not to impose upon themselves a Canaanite institution alien to their own way of life.¹⁵

From the local color of the text he elsewhere describes,

. . . there is good reason to assume that the Samuel account is an authentic description of the semi-feudal Canaanite society as it existed prior to and during the time of Samuel and that its author could conceivably have been the

¹⁴Isaac Mendelsohn, "Samuel's Denunciation of Kingship in the Light of the Akkadian Documents from Ugarit," Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research, No. 143 (October, 1956), 17.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 22. The History of Israel (London: A. & C. Black, 1957), p. 172.

prophet himself or a spokesman of the anti-monarchical movement of that period.¹⁶

Samuel hesitated to appoint a king over the people on these grounds: first, the reasons advanced in the request for a king were in effect a denial of the sole rulership of Yahweh; second, because the power of the monarchy could easily be abused and would result in abject slavery for the people; and third, Israel wanted to be like the other nations, who were pagans.

Yahweh had been the King of Israel from the birth of the nation, and He ruled her through charismatic leaders. But the institution of the monarchy opened the way for a separation of the civil from the religious leadership. When Yahweh gave the covenant to Israel at Sinai, she was specifically designated as having a religious mission to the nations, that is, to be "a kingdom of priests" (Ex. 19:6). The hesitation of accepting the kingship in Israel also came from the fear of the misuse of royal power, for which there was sufficient evidence among the neighboring nations. In reality, Israel's desire for a king like all the nations meant that the kingship of Yahweh over Israel was being rejected by the people.¹⁷ It is conceivable of course that Samuel at first was also motivated by selfish interests in

¹⁶Ibid., p. 18.

¹⁷Martin Noth, The History of Israel (London: A. & C. Black, 1958), p. 172.

his attempt to keep the amphictyonic tradition alive.¹⁸

Saul was designated as the king¹⁹ by Yahweh through Samuel the prophet, anointed by Samuel, and elected by the assembly of the entire people.²⁰ It is interesting to note that Saul was a member of the tribe of Benjamin. Its territory was both centrally located and immediately threatened. The fact that it was also the weakest of the tribes would keep jealousies to a minimum.²¹ Although Saul did not develop administrative machinery during his reign, he played a very important part in unifying the Israelites. After the death of Saul his son Ish-bosheth was made king by Abner (2 Sam. 2:8ff.). But the kingship of Ish-bosheth did not last long (2 Sam. 4:5ff.).

Saul's reign was a transition period. In the main it was not much more than a continuation of the judgeship.

It was David who placed the Israelite monarchy on a firm foundation. One of the important steps in that direction was the selection of Jerusalem as his new capital. Since up to that time it had remained in the hands of Jebusites, David showed his genius as a statesman by selecting as his

¹⁸John Bright, *op. cit.*, p. 166.

¹⁹We shall discuss the title further, *infra*, p. 47.

²⁰I. A. Soggin, "Zur Entwicklung des alttestamentlichen Königtums," *Theologische Zeitschrift*, XV (1959), 402-03.

²¹*FSAC*, p. 290.

new capital, a city which was militarily important and had belonged neither to Judah nor to northern Israel so that no one would be jealous about it.²² So it could be called the "city of David."

Under the reign of David the nation was fully united and its territory extended to embrace numerous other peoples of the Palestine-Syrian Empire thus united in the person of the king. David's political ability was also manifested in the well organized administration of his government. Yet, in spite of the vast territory under his sway and the expansion of his kingdom into an empire, David knew that his power was not absolute. The men of Israel were not all on his side, and some continued to be separatists. An expansion of the royal powers came in the next generation.

The earlier kings had been chosen by the people; for even in the case of Absalom the notion of popular choice was maintained (2 Sam. 16:18). But Solomon was appointed by his father. He had been born in the purple, toward the end of his father's foreign wars. He knew little or nothing of the hard way in which his father had come to the throne. During his reign more autocratic principles came into practice and the dogma of the "divine right of kings" became

²²Th. H. Robinson, "The History of Israel," The Interpreter's Bible; edited by G. A. Buttrick (New York & Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1951), I, 280.

established. Although the wise king made the nation prosperous and peaceful, the appointment of a successor became a prerogative of the royal family. As the law of Yahweh had warned and as Samuel had feared, the royal rights of Solomon were greatly extended. During his reign foreign influence was also introduced into the country, resulting in both religious and political syncretism.

The Israelite monarchy was the instrument for bringing about the Golden Age of Israel, but it was not all gold. It was at the same time the starting point of the decline of that nation.

The Function of Kingship

Saul was anointed to be the לְמַלְכֻת of Israel. After pouring the oil on the head of the son of Kish, Samuel said to him, "Has not Yahweh anointed you to be לְמַלְכֻת over his inheritance?" (i.e., Israelites, 1 Sam. 10:1). From its usage the word לְמַלְכֻת means "designated leader" or "ruler."²³ Saul, the designated leader of Israel, was also called מֶלֶךְ , (1 Sam. 10:24; 15:1,17) "king" or "the ruling one."²⁴

²³The word לְמַלְכֻת is used 43 times in MT. Almost one half of these instances are found in the Book of Chronicles. LXX translates it in the following ways: $\gamma\gamma\omega\mu\epsilon\nu\omicron\varsigma$, 25 times; $\alpha\rho\chi\omega\nu$ 8 times; $\beta\alpha\beta\iota\lambda\epsilon\upsilon\varsigma$ 5 times, and in five cases still other words are used. לְמַלְכֻת is used for even the foreign leaders, but in the majority of the cases it is for the leader of the Israelites and of the temple services. J. de Fraine gives the etymological meaning of the word and its usage: "Le sens de la racine est 's'élever,' 'être mis en avant,' 'être visible; la forme hiphil peut signifier

As the crisis of the nation demanded it, an important aspect of the king's function was to be a leader in the war, like the מלך . Samuel described the way of king's rule as including the establishment of a standing army consisting of draftees and professional warriors (1 Sam. 8:11,20). It was his duty to defend his people from aggressive action on the part of their neighbors. In fact, the early kings of Israel were themselves famous warrior-leaders, for example, Saul, David. The king was the commander-in-chief of Israel. It is significant that the king is described as the "savior" of his people (1 Sam. 10:27; Hos. 13:10) like the מלך (Judg. 3; 7). Hence the king gave safety and freedom to the people. When he is called a shepherd, we have another expression of his rulership: "You shall pasture my people Israel" (2 Sam. 5:2). Like a Sumerian ensi, he claimed to be only the shepherd who pastures Yahweh's human flock. Yahweh is the actual ruler; the king is only His agent.

'designer.' Le nom-participe peut se traduire par: 'chef occupant une position elevee,' 'chef designe.'" J. de Fraine, L'aspect religieux de la royauté israelite (Roma: Pontificio Instituto Biblico, 1954), p. 98; for a further explanation of the word see, Ibid., pp. 99-100. Thus Saul here is "Designierter Jahwes." A. Alt, Kleine Schriften Zur Geschichte des Volkes Israel (München: C. H. Beck, 1953), II, 23.

²⁴The verb מלך , "to rule" is a denominative of מלך . In the cognate languages מלך seems to indicate various functions connected with being מלך : in the Akkadian and Aramaic, "to advise;" Arabic, "to possess," and Ugaritic, "to rule." C. H. Gordon, Ugaritic Handbook (Roma: Pontificium Institutium Biblicum, 1947), p. 246.

Thus the power of king was a given or committed authority.²⁵ At the same time a king's personal ambitions may have played a part in giving occasion for wars.

Another important function of the king was that of being responsible for the administration of justice within the realm. As we have seen already, the following statement is found repeatedly in the Book of Judges: "In those days there was no king in Israel; every man did what was right in his own eyes" (Judg. 17:6; 21:25). From this statement we can infer that the kingship was to maintain law and order in Israel. In order to do so, the king was the highest court of appeals. A widow could appeal her case to him (2 Kings 8:1-6; 2 Sam. 14:1-20; cf. 1 Kings 3:16-28). The justice, of which he was the guardian, actually belonged to Yahweh. He was its administrator, but at the same time he was governed by it. In theory, he was not to act arbitrarily nor contrary to the law of Yahweh. Thus the standard of justice and righteousness was in the given law of Yahweh and in His message through priests and prophets. In maintaining the order of the land he was to defend the rights of his individual subjects.²⁶ For his sub-

²⁵C. H. Gordon, Introduction to Old Testament Times (Ventnor, N. J.: Ventnor Publishers, 1953), p. 156.

²⁶A. R. Johnson, "Hebrew Concept of Kingship," in Myth, Ritual, and Kingship, edited by S. H. Hooke (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1958), p. 207.

jects, whatever their status in society, were one and all Yahweh's people, and therefore he was both dependent upon and responsible to Yahweh for the right exercise of his power.

The king furthermore was a uniting factor in Israel to overcome political divisions or tribal separation. Under him the unity of the whole nation was achieved and maintained. This was an accomplishment greater than that of the $\text{D}^{\prime}\text{Q}^{\prime}\text{S}^{\prime}\text{U}^{\prime}$, under whom was no such unification.

From the time of David, the king also frequently entered into friendly relations with neighboring nations. In fact King Solomon became "a merchant prince."

Since the king was the ruler of the nation and the judge of the people, he was held in high esteem. His seat or throne was no doubt marked by splendor. His prestige, however, at times was the source of evil consequences for Israel. Samuel was right when he said that the king would confiscate the people's lands and give them to his servants, impose upon them heavy taxes, force them to perform corvée labor (1 Sam. 8:12-17), and become a great landowner. From the time of Saul there actually were "crown lands" in Israel (1 Sam. 8:14; 22:7; 1 Kings 9:11-13; Ezek. 48:21; 1 Chron. 27:25; 2 Chron. 21:3; 26:9-10; 32:27-29). As among ancient Near Eastern nations, the property of the state and that of the king merged and a clear line could not be drawn between them. Both were supervised by state

officials.²⁷ In order to maintain the empire, David adopted state slavery, which existed down to the period of Ezra and Nehemiah.²⁸

Since the king was called to serve both Yahweh and His people, he was not to regard his office as an opportunity for exploitation or personal advantage and profit, but to use it for the benefit of the people. However, history tells us that "power tends to corrupt and absolute power corrupts absolutely."²⁹ This fact was no exception in Israel. The king often exceeded his rights and frequently put himself above the law, acting as if he was the law. In many cases he acted arbitrarily and even perverted the basic laws of society. Insisting on the divine right of the kings, he ignored the rights of the people. Consequently he was hated by the people and became the target of Yahweh's punishment.

The king of Israel was not to function as the leader in the cult. Saul, the first king of Israel, was a layman without priestly duties. This is not, of course, to deny that the monarchy was closely related to the worship of

²⁷Isaac Mendelsohn, Slavery in the Ancient Near East (New York: Oxford University Press, 1949), p. 149.

²⁸For a further study on the slavery in Israel see ibid., pp. 95-98.

²⁹John Emerich Edward Dalberg-Acton Acton, Essays on Freedom and Power (Boston: Beacon Press, 1948), p. 364.

Yahweh and the ritual exercises for Him. David brought the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem, the new capital (2 Sam. 6; 1 Chron. 13; 15; 16). He had the altar to Yahweh erected on the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite and sacrifice offered to Yahweh (2 Sam. 24:18-25; 1 Chron. 21:18-22:1). We are also told that King Solomon offered sacrifices (1 Kings 3:4,15; 1 Kings 8: 2 Chron. 5:2-7:10; 1 Kings 9:25; 2 Chron. 8:12ff.).

These acts are not criticized and therefore constitute a problem of interpretation, which we must examine more closely. When David transferred the Ark to Jerusalem, it was partly from his own devotion to Yahweh (2 Sam. 6:12). At the same time it was David's aim to make Jerusalem the religious as well as the political capital of the nation.³⁰ At this occasion David wore the white ephod. Although the ephod was, strictly speaking, a priestly costume, the child Samuel wore it (1 Sam. 2:18). Thus it seems that the use of the ephod was not restricted to the priest. Furthermore, David wore it not because he was the priest, but because he was the head of the priestly nation of Israel.³¹ When he offered sacrifices here and also at Araunah's place, these may be rare official sacrifices of the king, credited to him

³⁰John Bright, op. cit., p. 179.

³¹C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, Biblical Commentary on the Books of Samuel, translated from the German by James Martin (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, n.d.), p. 336.

as the head of the priestly nation. After his inauguration Solomon also offered a thousand burnt offerings (1 Kings 3:4). It must be clear that Solomon did not offer all of these sacrifices in person but that he appointed priests to perform this service for him. This fact is also proved by the number of sacrifices mentioned in connection with the Temple dedication. Solomon offered as peace offerings to Yahweh 22,000 oxen and 120,000 sheep (1 Kings 8:63). Furthermore, the previous verse states: "And the king and all Israel with him offered sacrifice before Yahweh."

The modern English monarchy may serve as an analogy and shed light on this situation. The king or queen of England is the Supreme Head of the Church of England. He supervises the religious affairs as well as the political sphere of the nation. The king does not, however, himself perform the ceremony which is the duty of his appointed clergies. As the head of a religious state, David established the order of priests, and Solomon built the temple for Yahweh.

That the king was not the leader in the cult is further proved by the fact that some kings were punished for their unauthorized performance of cultic activities. Because King Uzziah wished to usurp sacerdotal function, he became a leper and was forced to retire from the kingship (2 Chron. 26:16-21). King Saul was rebuked partly because he had offered sacrifice, contrary to the instructions to wait for Samuel (1 Sam. 13:8-15).

The king did not interpret the divine will. This task remained in the hands of the priests, who cast lots for an oracle. In this there is further support for the contention that the king did not exercise the priestly function.³²

The Peculiarities of the Kingship

The king of Israel was called "His (Yahweh's) anointed" ($\dot{\text{א}}\text{מֶשֶׁחַ$); or, more precisely, "the Messiah of Yahweh" (מָשִׁיחַ אֱלֹהִים).³³ This name expresses the fact that the king was a person specially designated by Yahweh. Kings were anointed also among nations, but in Israel, particularly in the early period of the monarchy, the king was anointed by Yahweh and at the same time elected by the people. This double appointment is peculiar to Israel's monarchy.

This act of anointing was the external sign of super-human strength and wisdom and the possession of the spirit of Yahweh.³⁴ But it was more than a ceremonial exercise. The anointed king was reckoned as the light or life of his people. When David returned from one of his last Philistine campaigns, his followers swore to him saying: "Thou shalt

³²H. Frankfort, The Kingship and Gods (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1948), p. 342.

³³The word $\dot{\text{א}}\text{מֶשֶׁחַ$ is used for both king and priests, but the phrase מָשִׁיחַ אֱלֹהִים is exclusively used for the king.

³⁴J. L. McKenzie, "Royal Messianism," The Catholic Biblical Quarterly, XIX (January, 1957), 26.

not go out to battle with us again, lest thou quench the lamp of Israel." (2 Sam. 21:17; cf. 1 Kings 11:36; 15:4; 2 Kings 8:19; 2 Chron. 21:7). When later another member of the House of David was driven away, and the dynasty came to an end, the poet lamented and said: "The breath of our nostrils, the Messiah of Yahweh was caught in their pit, of whom we said, 'In his shadow we shall live amid the nations.'" (Lam. 4:20). These two passages unmistakably give us the idea that the anointed king was considered as a special "hope," or "shield" of his people, yea, the bringer of the salvation of Yahweh to the nation.³⁵

The king was also the bearer of the spirit. When he was confronted by a special mission, the spirit of Yahweh inspired him, and enabled him to accomplish the mission (1 Sam. 10:10; 11:6; 16:13-14; 2 Sam. 23:1-16; cf. Is. 11:1-5).

These gifts added to his dignity and prestige. His relation to the source of blessing was quite different from that of the other people. This close relationship between Yahweh and the king is expressed in many ways. Yahweh and the king should be feared (Prov. 24:21). He who curses "God and the king" deserved to die (1 Kings 21:10,13). Accordingly, David spared King Saul's life, because

³⁵A. R. Johnson, Sacral Kingship in Ancient Israel (Cardiff: The University of Wales Press, 1955), pp. 1-6.

one should beware of stretching forth his hand against Yahweh's anointed. The people even compared the king with the angel of Yahweh (2 Sam. 14:17,20). These examples demonstrate that the king was an anointed deputy of Yahweh on earth; Yahweh committed the welfare of His people and of the nation to His special agent or servant, the king.

Some leaders of Israel were of lowly origin and lacked previous status like some of the ד' אֲנֹכִי . Saul was from the smallest and weakest tribe, Benjamin; David was the youngest of the eight children of Jesse. Yet by being anointed he became great.

In this connection it is interesting to see how the people reacted to their anointed leader. The tribesmen had recognized the bond of blood alone, and it was exceedingly difficult to envisage a loyalty surpassing the scope of kinship. But when Saul was made king over the nation all tribes recognized him as the ruler. The relationship between David and Jonathan furnishes another example. Although Jonathan as the oldest son of Saul was the crown prince, Jonathan never doubted for a moment that David was going to succeed to the throne. The reason was in part this: the idea of hereditary kingship was not yet firmly established in Israel. Rather the concept of charismatic designation, not passing from father to son, was still in the minds of the Israelite tribesmen. Therefore, it was no great disturbance for Jonathan when he was warned by his father that David

might take the throne (1 Sam. 20:30ff.).³⁶

But although the king of Israel was especially designated by Yahweh, he was not deified, as was the case in Egypt and even in Mesopotamia. There is only one instance where the king seems to be addressed as "God" (דָּוִדִּים). Psalm 45:7³⁷ reads: "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever" (דָּוִדִּים). This passage is a notorious crux of translation and interpretation.³⁸ Its wording does not demand the conclusion that the king of Israel had a divine throne. At any rate, one cannot establish the divine kingship ideology on this verse alone. Thus it is correct for Professor Martin Noth to say, "In keinem Falle kann der Satz Ps. 45:7a allein die ganze Last der These von einer Göttlichkeit des Königtums in Israel tragen."³⁹ Even if one accepts the view that the epithet "God" is here applied to the king, it cannot be proved that the king was ever worshipped as the king of Egypt and of

³⁶C. H. Gordon, Introduction to Old Testament Times, p. 147.

³⁷LXX 44:7; EVV 45:6.

³⁸For a detailed explanation of the text, see C. R. North, "The Religious Aspects of Hebrew Kingship," Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft, I (1932), 29ff. North translates "Thy throne is like that of God forever ever." Cf. also M. Noth "Gott, König, Volk in Alten Testament," Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche, XLVII (1950), 188-89. Here Noth translates "Dein Thron ist (wie) der (Thron) Gottes, nämlich bestehend für immer und ewig."

³⁹M. Noth, "Gott, König, Volk in Alten Testament," p. 189.

Mesopotamia. The relation between the Hebrew monarchy and the people was as nearly secular as is possible in a society in which religion is a living force. The distance between Yahweh and the king was so great that it was unthinkable for the Israelites to put them in the same category.⁴⁰

Furthermore the Epistle to the Hebrews (1:8-9) find this passage as referring to the Messiah, the Son of God. Hence the Messianic King is meant here and not a human king of Israel.

Another throne text is often disputed on the same basis. According to 1 Kings 10:9 Yahweh set Solomon on the throne of Israel ($\text{לְיִשְׂרָאֵל יָשָׁבַע יְהוָה}$), that is, the throne of David. But the corresponding section of 1 Chron. 29:23 reads: "And Solomon sat on the throne of Yahweh" ($\text{יָשָׁבַע יְהוָה בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל}$). These two sections appear to be in conflict with one another. However, a careful study is in order before one jumps to conclusions. If we follow the Septuagint, there would be no problem. It reads 1 Chron. 29:23 as follows, "And Solomon sat upon the throne of his father David" ($\text{καὶ ἐκάθισεν Σαλωμων ἐπὶ θρόνου Δαυιδ τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτοῦ}$). Another explanation of the problem by the late Professor Henri Frankfort is worth noting: "the Hebrew can only mean 'throne

⁴⁰Artur Weiser, Die Psalmen (5 verbesserte Auflage; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1959), p. 244.

avored by the Lord' or something similar."⁴¹ If this explanation is correct, then both passages are correct and proper. The Book of Kings says the throne of Israel and the Book of Chronicles states the throne favored by Yahweh, namely that of Israel.⁴²

The king of Israel is called Yahweh's son (Ps. 2:7). Yet this sonship is in an adoptive sense only.⁴³ Furthermore, the Israelite belief would not even admit that the king was an image of Yahweh any more than it would admit that Yahweh could be represented by any image at all. Since Yahweh is the only God in Israel, the king, if he were deified, would be Yahweh. Yet there is absolutely no evidence that in Israel the king was regarded as Yahweh. Any kind of identification of the king with Yahweh was repudiated.⁴⁴

Thus after reviewing the evidence we can say with Professor Th. H. Robinson:

Even David, who bears a name that may be

⁴¹ Frankfort, op. cit., p. 341.

⁴² Another, more theological, explanation is given by N. Porteous, op. cit., p. 5.

⁴³ J. Bright, op. cit., p. 205.

⁴⁴ Sigmund Mowinckel, He That Cometh, translated by G. W. Anderson (New York & Nashville: Abingdon Press, c. 1956), p. 87.

interpreted as divine,⁴⁵ illustrates the general principle, and we have to remember that much of the material from which our knowledge of him and his kingship is derived, comes to us from a source practically contemporary with him. Yet there is not the slightest trace of any deification of the king, or of any deviation from the ideal standard in which Israel differed so much from her neighbours.⁴⁶

Some scholars, however, argue that Israel also adopted a pagan theory of kingship and a ritual pattern for expressing it similar to the practice in all Near Eastern nations. In this view the King was regarded as a divine being who performed special ritual exercises at the New Year's feast.⁴⁷ Certainly the neighboring nations had deified the king, but the Israelites were not a part of this pattern. It has been too freely assumed that the Israelite kingship was modeled after neighboring kings. We have some similarities between them. But whatever similarities exist, they do not compel us to conclude that Israelite beliefs depend upon those of its neighbors. The history and social background of Israel was different and played a great part in

⁴⁵The Mari letters now shed new light on the etymology of the name David. It is now thought that dawidum may be the original form of David and means "chieftain" or "Führer." G. E. Mendenhall, "Mari," The Biblical Archaeologist, XI (February, 1948), 17.

⁴⁶Th. H. Robinson, "Hebrew Myth," in Myth and Ritual, edited by S. H. Hooke (London: Oxford University Press, 1933), p. 186.

⁴⁷We shall discuss this subject at greater length in Chapter V.

the establishment and the view of the kingship. The tribal consciousness of the Israelites was too strong to permit an elevation of a member of the people to a species of being which was so much higher than that of his fellow-countrymen.⁴⁸

Hence, while the external form of the kingship was borrowed to some extent, the divine kingship idea was not accepted. In addition, we have seen some peculiar Israelite elements which are in no way derived from foreign sources.⁴⁹

The prerogatives of the king of Israel, who remained human, were strictly limited. Although the kingship was a splendid office, as an institution it came to exist far later than מלך ישראל. The king was not only the administrator of מלך ישראל but he himself was also governed by it. He never competed with מלך ישראל for an equal standing, whereas the decree of the king of the neighboring nations was the law.

Whenever the king did not follow מלך ישראל or violated it he was severely criticized. The king of Israel, therefore, never achieved the absolutism which was encountered among neighboring nations. The prophet, the herald of Yahweh and the watchman of מלך ישראל, was independent of the kingship and was therefore free to enter into open conflict

⁴⁸Th. H. Robinson, "Hebrew Myth," p. 186.

⁴⁹J. McKenzie, *op. cit.*, p. 47.

with the sovereign.⁵⁰ From the beginning of the monarchy, Samuel, Nathan, Elijah, Elisha, and Micaiah and later Hosea, Amos, Isaiah, Micaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and other literary prophets warned, rebuked, criticized and condemned the kings. The predominant accusation of the prophets against the kings was faithlessness to Yahweh, a "seduction" of His chosen people (2 Kings 21:9-11). This accusation came to the kings in conformity with the guiding principles of Yahweh through His prophets.

Some of the kings of Israel accepted humbly the rebuke of the prophets and confessed their sins and repented. We cannot imagine any other king in the ancient Near East behaving as the Israelite kings did. It is a striking tribute to the high ideals of Israel in the ancient world. The underlying principles of the nature of the kingship become apparent: it is a divinely imposed responsibility under the supreme rule of Yahweh, the task of the king being to rule in accord with revealed standards of equity. Even though he was the ruler of Israel, he stood before Yahweh on an equal basis with his subjects and therefore was subject to the judgment of Yahweh, as every other Israelite.

It is for these reasons that the good king in Israel served Yahweh with profound humility and ruled the people justly. He was not to exalt himself above his subjects.

⁵⁰G. E. Wright, The Old Testament Against Its Environment (London: SCM Press, 1950), pp. 67-68.

It is worth noting here that a covenant was made between the king and the people in Israel. When David founded his monarchy, he made a covenant, at Hebron, with the Israelites, which had been prepared by Abner beforehand. The pact was made between him and the elders of the people before Yahweh (2 Sam. 3:12,21; 5:1-3; cf. 1 Kings 12). The people were not ready to submit to an ancient Near Eastern dictatorship. The Israelites always maintained a sense of tribal and individual dignity and privilege, and so the king had to abide within the scope of a bilateral pact if they were to accept him.⁵¹ The Israelites never lost their basic and treasured rights, which they would not surrender even to the king. These rights safeguarded their position as a political democracy.⁵²

Another peculiarity of the kingship was that it became the foundation and type for the coming King.⁵³ The king of Israel was imperfect, even many times a rebellious agent of Yahweh's rule. The kingship of Israel was not the institution which itself accomplished Israel's mission, but it was an indicator for the perfect kingship to come.

⁵¹J. Pedersen, *Israel, III-IV* (London: Oxford University Press, 1940), pp. 76-77.

⁵²William Irwin, "Hebrew" in *The Intellectual Adventure of Ancient Man*, H. Frankfort, et al (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1948), p. 350.

⁵³We shall discuss this subject further in Chapter VI.

CHAPTER IV

THE PECULIAR NATURE OF THE KINGSHIP OF YAHWEH

Yahweh Revealed Himself to Israel in History

To the neighbor of Israel, nature was a living force. When he saw the bright and warm sun in the day, the brilliant moon and stars in the night, the terrible power of a thunder-storm, and the mysterious high mountains, these were a living "Thou" to him.¹ He did not distinguish between reality and the force in or behind it; he simply did not know an inanimate world. In the storm, he met the god Storm; in mountains, the god Mountain. Nature was alive, and its powers were distinguished as personal and individual. It was experienced as life (of man) confronting life (of nature). When he looked at nature it was not "what" but "who," that is, the living "Thou." Thus if he saw the river was low, it did not suggest to him the lack of the rainfall on distant mountains, but the refusal of the river to rise.² If he saw a great thunder-storm, it was not a natural phenomenon, but it was thought of as the result of the anger of the Storm god. So he had to offer a sacrifice for his appeasement. Consequently,

¹H. and H. A. Frankfort, et al, The Intellectual Adventure of Ancient Man (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1946), pp. 5-6. Hereafter to be referred to as IAAM.

²Ibid., p. 15.

whatever was bigger than himself was the object of fear and worship.

The story of the object of worship, namely the gods, was told in the language of myth. It was told instead of using the abstract, systematic language of reason. Written in poetic form, it was, however, not a mere form of entertainment, but was considered a true account or narration.³

Since such a myth was not limited to one particular place and was widespread in the ancient East, a "general pattern" was sought in the entire area. The British school of comparative religion, best represented by S. H. Hooke, has sought to apply this principle of a pattern to the history of all ancient Near Eastern religions.⁴ Its advocates are known as the "Myth and Ritual School" or "Pattern School."⁵ According to this school, the ancient religious stories "all contain some thread which, like the clue which

³G. E. Wright, The Old Testament Against Its Environment (London: SCM Press, 1950), p. 19.

⁴See the three omnibus volumes edited by S. H. Hooke, Myth and Ritual: Essays on the Myth and Ritual of the Hebrews in Relation to the Cultic Pattern of the Ancient East (London: Oxford University Press, 1933), this will be cited as M&R; The Labyrinth: Further Studies in the Relation between Myth and Ritual in the Ancient World (New York: Macmillan, 1935); and Myth, Ritual, and Kingship: Essays on the Theory and Practice of Kingship in the Ancient Near East and in Israel (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1958), hereafter to be referred to as MR&K. Cf. also S. H. Hooke's monograph The Origin of Early Semitic Ritual (London: British Academy, 1938).

⁵Karl-Heinz Bernhardt, Das Problem der Altorientalischen Königsideologie im Alten Testament, Supplement to Vetus Testamentum, VIII (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1961), p. 52.

Ariadne gave to Theseus, leads back to the centre, to the original or primitive significance of the story, to the home of the myth."⁶

This "thread" or "pattern" is developed as follows:

. . . while the early religions of Egypt, Babylon, and Canaan differed widely in many respects, nevertheless, they possessed certain fundamental characteristics in common. They were all essentially ritual religions aiming at securing the well-being of the community by the due performance of ritual actions. Each of these religions had certain rituals of central importance, and in each the central figure was the king, in whose person the fortune of the state was, so to speak, incarnate. In each religion these rituals presented the same broad general pattern.⁷

Professor Samuel H. Hooke goes on to explain the pattern as follows:

This pattern consisted of a dramatic ritual representing the death and resurrection of the king, who was also the god, performed by priests and members of the royal family. It comprised a sacred combat, in which was enacted the victory of the god over his enemies, a triumphal procession in which the neighbouring gods took part, an enthronement, a ceremony by which the destinies of the state for the coming year were determined, and a sacred marriage.⁸

Thus all mythical conceptions are derived from cultic rites and the close connection of Israelite myths and rituals with those of Israel's neighbors are emphasized.

⁶S. H. Hooke, "The Myth and Ritual Pattern of the Ancient East," in M&R, p. 2.

⁷S. H. Hooke, The Labyrinth, p. v.

⁸Ibid.

In the latest symposium, Myth, Ritual, and Kingship, Professor S. H. Hooke defends the charges against the "pattern"⁹ and stresses the common pattern of ritual practices. He states: "The most important of these, and the one for which we have most evidence, was the New Year festival in Babylon, though there is evidence that it was also celebrated in other centres."¹⁰ In his discussion Hooke disagrees with the position taken by Professor H. Frankfort. He states that Frankfort ignored "the list of prohibited practices contained in the Pentateuchal codes and condemned by the Prophets. . . ."¹¹ Hooke's final objection is this:

. . . he [Frankfort] has also ignored Mowinckel's demonstration of the evidence in the Psalms for the existence of a Hebrew New Year festival ritual of the enthronement of Yahweh the relation of which to the Akkadian New Year ritual is too obvious to be overlooked.¹²

⁹Cf. particularly the following works: Henri Frankfort, The Problem of Similarity in Ancient Near Eastern Religions (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1951), Frazer Lecture for 1951; Harris Birkeland, The Evildoers in the Book of Psalms (Oslo: I Kommissjon Hos Jacob Dybwad, 1955); J. de Fraine, L'aspect religieux de la royauté Israelite: L'institution Monarchique dans L'ancien Testament et dans Les Textes Mesopotamiens (Roma: Pontificio Instituto Biblico, 1954).

¹⁰S. H. Hooke, "Myth and Ritual: Past and Present," in MR&K, p. 6.

¹¹Ibid., p. 8.

¹²Ibid.

One of the contributions of the Myth and Ritual School to the Old Testament studies has been a stimulation of new research to determine whether there is enough evidence for the claim of such a pattern. The school tries to maintain the cultural pattern, but it seems pattern does not always work out, as it wants to be. A notable scholar in Ugaritic literature, Professor R. de Langhe, who qualifies as a contributor to Myth, Ritual, and Kingship, frankly states concerning the divine kingship and dying and rising god idea: "Nevertheless, I maintain that after twenty years of Ugaritic studies I do not find these ideas and representations in the Ugaritic texts."¹³

Is this pattern applicable to Israel? Similar to the general approach of Hugo Winckler's "Pan-Babylonian" theory and Friedrich Delitzsch's Babel und Bibel,¹⁴ scholars of the

¹³"Myth, Ritual, and Kingship in the Ras Shamra Tablets" in MR&K, p. 142. It is worth noting here the somewhat modified position of Professor Ivan Engnell. He had been one of the exponents of the more extreme forms of the "ritual pattern," and these views had been reflected in his book Studies in Divine Kingship in the Ancient Near East (Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1943). After a decade of further research, he admits reservations in regard to his original position. Thus (in a recent review) he writes: "The present reviewer is also quite willing to admit that his own survey of the material in his Studies may contain certain exaggerations and generalizations. But this does not in any way hit the essential, which is the living on of the ideology in the tradition." Svensk Exegetisk Arsbok, xviii/xix, 208, which appears in R. de Langhe, op. cit., p. 143.

¹⁴Friedrich Delitzsch, Babel und Bibel (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrich, 1903).

Myth and Ritual School have sought to maintain that Yahweh was a dying and rising God. Professor Th. H. Robinson in "Hebrew Myths,"¹⁵ for example, finds Yahweh's death and resurrection in passages like Hosea 6:3; Judges 11:37-40; 21:19-21 and in Rabbinic sources. An examination of these passages, however, reveals that he is looking for a "pattern" that has little evidence in the texts. The inconsistency of identifying Yahweh with the dying and rising god is also pointed out by Professor Sigmund Mowinckel, who says: "It is, however, quite out of the question that Yahweh was ever regarded in Israelite religion as a dying and rising God."¹⁶

One of the contributors to Myth and Ritual, Professor W. O. E. Oesterley, expresses his hesitation on the pattern of the divine kingship and states that the "tangible evidence of the Old Testament" is "not sufficiently strong to justify a definite conclusion regarding this point. . . ." ¹⁷

The sacred marriage, another feature of the pattern, is not found in a single sentence in the whole Old Testament.

¹⁵M&R, pp. 187ff.

¹⁶S. Mowinckel, He That Cometh, translated by G. W. Anderson (New York & Nashville: Abingdon Press, c.1956), p. 85. Cf. ibid., pp. 457-59.

¹⁷"Early Hebrew Festival Rituals" in M&R, p. 126. Oesterley also states, "It is, of course, possible--perhaps probable that such identification existed at one time among the Israelites, but that all direct indication of this have been obliterated, the analogy of the 'pattern' . . . would support identification. . . ." Ibid.

It has often been suggested that the worship in the Jewish colony at Elephantine of the goddess Anath among other deities points to the possibility that the sacred marriage was not unknown in Israel. The relevant text reads:

Cash on hand with Yedoniah the son of Gemariah on the said day of the month of Phamenoth: 31 karash, 8 shekels. Comprising: for Yaho 12 k., 6 sh.; for Ishumbethel 7 k.; for Anathbethel 12 k.¹⁸

The translator of the text, Professor H. L. Ginsberg, gives short comments on the deities: Ishumbethel is the "male divinity" and Anathbethel is "probably a female divinity." Professor W. F. Albright renders Ishumbethel (or Eshembethel) as "Name of the House of God" and Anathbethel (=Anath-Yahu), "Sign of the House of God." These would reflect "pure hypostatizations of deity," probably influenced by contemporary Canaanite-Aramaean theological speculation, in which Bethel frequently appears as the name of a god, from the seventh to the fourth century B.C.¹⁹ The interpretation of these names differs among scholars.²⁰ It is

¹⁸J. B. Pritchard, editor, Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament (Second edition; Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1955), p. 491.

¹⁹W. F. Albright, From Stone Age to Christianity (Second edition with a new introduction; Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Co., 1957), p. 373.

²⁰For a further study on the problem, see G. W. Anderson, "Hebrew Religion," in The Old Testament and Modern Study, edited by H. H. Rowley (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1951), p. 299; G. E. Wright, Biblical Archaeology (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1957), p. 207.

also certain that Jewish soldiers of the garrison of Darius II were obviously not the representatives of Yahwism, and undoubtedly they were a much more sophisticated group and had a syncretistic religion. Even if Anath had been Yaho's spouse, "this would still not be evidence of the ritual of the sacred marriage."²¹

Another contributor of Myth, Ritual, and Kingship, Professor S. G. F. Brandon, has these critical remarks on the pattern:

The clarity with which these liturgical moments are defined and their articulation in the assumed *ἔπος λόγος* demonstrated is certainly impressive, but when a search is made in the relevant expositions of the 'Myth and Ritual' thesis for an account of the actual origin of this 'ritual-pattern' and for evidence of its occurrence as such in the records of the various cultures concerned, the result is curiously vague and unsatisfactory."²²

He goes on to point out the uncertainty of the location of the pattern:

It is, accordingly, found on examination that not only have the exponents of the 'Myth and Ritual' thesis neglected to deal with the practical problems which the idea of a diffusion of an esoteric complex of religious concept and practice inevitably entails, but they themselves do not appear to be clear in their minds on the fundamental point of the location of the original centre from which the 'pattern' was diffused.²³

²¹Harris Birkeland, op. cit., p. 19.

²²"The Myth and Ritual Position Critically Considered," in MR&K, p. 269.

²³Ibid., p. 271.

Another example from Brandon's article should suffice for our purpose. In testing the applicability of the pattern to ancient China he says:

Here indeed the ruler had an essential part in securing the prosperity of the land and this role involved him in the performance of an elaborate ritual, which was regulated by the calendar; he was, moreover the 'Son of Heaven,' who alone could perform those sacrifices which, it was believed, were vital to the well-being of the state. However, despite all this apparent similarity between Chinese kingship and that which existed in the Near East, in Chinese faith and practice there is no trace of those elements which are fundamental to the Near Eastern 'ritual pattern,' namely, the concept of the 'dying-rising god,' the ritual combat, or the sacred marriage.²⁴

These are but a few of the objections made in unequivocal terms against the claim that a common pattern underlies ancient Near Eastern religions.

While similar in externals, the Near Eastern religions often lack essential similarities. This will become apparent as we proceed to examine a pattern common to both Egypt and Mesopotamia, for example, the creation myth and the New Year ritual. In the person of Pharaoh a visible god communicated with the ineffable powers in nature--hence the lack of anxiety, the unqualified joy which distinguished the Egyptian festival from its Mesopotamian counterparts. On the other hand, essential features of the Mesopotamian New

²⁴Ibid., p. 273. For a further criticism on Geo Widengren's "Early Hebrew Myths and Their Interpretation," in MR&K see W. L. Moran Review of MR&K, Biblica, XL (1959), 1026-28.

Year celebration were without parallel in Egypt. There was no atonement, no recital of the creation myth, and no determination of destiny. Thus Professor Henri Frankfort is correct when he says:

Neither in spirit nor in the actual details of the performance did the New Year festivals in the two countries resemble one another--let alone conform to a common pattern. In fact, the pattern-theory could not have been held at all if the relevant facts had been more widely recognized.²⁵

If we further note the part that history played in the religion of Israel in comparison with her neighbors, the gap between them is even greater.

In this respect, Israel had a unique position in the ancient Near East. In the Old Testament we find no evidence of epic and heroic legend, but the record of universal history from the beginning of time. It was Israel, not her large neighbors, who developed ancient historiography. At the time of the Israelite monarchy it antedated that of the Greeks by over 500 years.²⁶ This contribution of Israel to

²⁵The Problem of Similarity in Ancient Near Eastern Religions, p. 17. In this connection it is interesting to see a further comment on the pattern by H. Frankfort: "The point at issue is Frazer's comparative method and the validity of the concepts which he coined and used. They have become so familiar that terms like 'dying god,' 'divine king,' and the like are used nowadays as if they designated well-defined but ubiquitous phenomena--much as we recognize rats and mice all over the world and leave it to zoologists to discuss the finer points of colour and size." Ibid., p. 3

²⁶C. H. Gordon, Introduction to Old Testament Times (Ventnor, N. J.: Ventnor Publishers, 1952), p. 153.

the world is indeed significant.

It is all the more striking when we survey the circumstances out of which it arose. Israel was not isolated from other influences. When she became a nation, Palestine had been the site of an ancient civilization. Her ancestors had adopted the language of Canaan. Hebrew is not the oldest sister in the family of oriental languages, but a relatively young member of the group of Semitic dialects.²⁷ Exposed to various ethnic and linguistic group influences, Israel could be expected to be influenced by its new environment and to absorb much from its culture.

Since the discovery of the Ras Shamra Tablets a similarity between the Canaanites and the Israelites has been sought in various areas.²⁸ Some scholars, mainly from the "Myth and Ritual School" have tried to establish Ugaritic influence particularly on the religion of the Old Testament. These efforts, however, have been not all successful. Israel departed very radically from the mythical thought so characteristic of Ugaritic literature. In Israel the common

²⁷M. Noth, History and the Word of God in the Old Testament (Manchester: The Manchester University Press, 1950), p. 202.

²⁸For an extensive bibliography on Ugaritic literature see J. Gray, The Legacy of Canaan: The Ras Shamra and Their Relevance to the Old Testament, Supplements to Vetus Testamentum, V (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1957), pp. 217-28.

pattern of mythology was broken. Thus the creation narrative may employ some words from the vocabulary of the myth, but there is a complete break with its genius when the separation of Yahweh from His creation is clearly maintained.²⁹ Other fragments of traditional Near Eastern, particularly Canaanitic, mythology survived only to furnish a literary source for poetic imagery. Above all, Israelite thought must be considered as a totality with its own center, and various peripheral manifestations must be placed into relation to that center. It is obvious that mythology is not the center of that totality.³⁰

The Old Testament eloquently approves this thesis. The personification and the worship of nature practiced by the Canaanites are recorded in the Old Testament only to be condemned (cf. 2 Kings 17:13-18; 21:3-6; 23:4-8; Jer. 8:1-3; Ezek. 8:15-16). Nowhere in the Old Testament is the worship of nature sanctioned.³¹ To the Israelite, nature as a whole and in all its parts, declared the glory of Yahweh in wordless praise (Ps. 19:1). Nature spoke eloquently of Yahweh's power, but it was never identified with Him. Israel was the only nation in the ancient world not to join in this common pattern.³²

²⁹J. Barr, "The Meaning of 'Mythology' in Relation to the Old Testament," Vetus Testamentum, IX (1959), 7.

³⁰Ibid.

³¹H. H. Rowley, The Faith of Israel (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, c.1957), p. 25.

³²G. E. Wright, God Who Acts (London: SCM Press, 1952), pp. 38-43.

It must also not be forgotten that the religion of the Old Testament is not the survival of pre-Israelite or Canaanite popular religious ideas and practices. One seeks a common pattern in both Canaan and Israel only by an oversimplification of the historical facts. It may be natural to assume that a newcomer would easily assimilate the alien modes of thoughts, according to the old saying, "In Rome do as the Romans do." However, when Israel entered into her new environment, this proverb was not to apply. Assimilation was regarded as a danger to her existence, and she was admonished to hold out with stubbornness against adopting the thought pattern of her neighbors.³³ Even though the writers of Israel borrowed widely from every literary form, they radically transformed the content of the old concept.

Israel's peculiar emphasis on history can be explained only as a special gift and a committed treasure. To this people alone Yahweh granted the knowledge of His purpose in the world. However small and unimportant she might seem to other nations, this was a people called and chosen to demonstrate that Yahweh was the Lord of history.³⁴ It was to Israel that Yahweh came and revealed Himself at the beginning of her history. She knew that He was guiding her inner life

³³IAAM, p. 367.

³⁴L. Köhler, Hebrew Man, translated by P. R. Ackroyd (New York & Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1957), pp. 125-26.

and external history. She experienced history as the fulfillment of His word, and believed that her position among the nations was determined by Him.³⁵

Yahweh's revelation took the initiative in the history of Israel. It was not Moses who was able to deliver the Israelites (Ex. 4), nor the Israelites themselves (Ex. 14 and passim in the Old Testament) but Yahweh. The story of the deliverance from Egypt does not begin at the point where the Israelites stood before the sea with the pursuing hosts of Pharaoh behind them. It begins with the divine commission to Moses to go into Egypt and bring the people out. This event had even been promised to the Fathers.³⁶ Yahweh demonstrated, therefore, that he was pursuing a purpose in world history as well as in nature. This basic thought explains why the Israelites alone were able to devise a philosophy of history. They knew that Yahweh was directing history toward a goal, the salvation of Israel.

Monotheism is the Presupposition of
the Kingship of Yahweh

Israel's mission was to mediate her belief in monotheism to the entire world. Although some scholars refuse to accept

³⁵G. Östborn, Yahweh's Words and Deeds: A Preliminary Study into the Old Testament Presentation of History ("Uppsala Universitets Arsskrift 1951:7;" Uppsala: Lundequistaska Bokhandeln, 1951), pp. 11-12.

³⁶H. H. Rowley, The Faith of Israel, p. 41.

Israel's early concept of God as monotheistic and the precise nature of her monotheism is still under discussion,³⁷ there are also vigorous advocates of the view that Israel from the beginning had a monotheistic faith. Professor W. F. Albright describes it as follows:

. . . belief in the existence of only one God, who is the Creator of the world and the giver of all life; the belief that God is holy and just, without sexuality or mythology; the belief that God is invisible to man except under special conditions and that no graphic nor plastic representation of Him is permissible; the belief that God is not restricted to any part of His creation, but is equally at home in heaven, in the desert, or in Palestine; the belief that God is so far superior to all created beings, whether heavenly bodies, angelic messengers, demons, or false gods, that He remains absolutely unique; the belief that God has chosen Israel by formal compact to be His favored people, guided exclusively by laws imposed by Him.³⁸

The acceptance of monotheism, of course, does not exclude the mention of false objects of worship and designating them by the term "gods." The first commandment says: "Thou shalt have no other gods before (or besides) me."

³⁷Cf. B. Balscheit, Alter und Aufkommen des Monotheismus in der israelitischen Religion (Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft, lxi), 1938; T. J. Meek, "Monotheism and the Religion of Israel," Journal of Biblical Literature, LXI (1942), 21-43; H. H. Rowley, "The Growth of Monotheism," in The Re-Discovery of the Old Testament (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, c.1946), pp. 108-32; W. F. Albright, op. cit.; H. H. Rowley, "Mose und der Monotheismus," Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft, 69 (1957), pp. 1-21; W. Eichrodt, Theologie des Alten Testaments, I (5. neubearbeitete Auflage; Stuttgart: Ehrenfried Klotz Verlag, 1957), pp. 141-46.

³⁸W. F. Albright, Archaeology and the Religion of Israel (Second edition; Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1946), p. 116.

Jephthah did not deny that the enemy worshipped a national god, but thereby he does not place him on a level with Yahweh (Judges 11:24).³⁹ Elijah mocked Baal, but this does not mean that he granted the existence of Baal as a power to deserve veneration and able to answer prayer (1 Kings 18). Pagan deities and practices, such as magic, worship of demons, and the like are frequently described in the Old Testament only to be condemned. In spite of warnings by the prophets, Israel often denied her monotheistic faith and worshipped other gods. Ezekiel, for example, records the existence of solar worship even in the Temple of Jerusalem and promptly condemns it as an abomination (Ezek. 8).

Some scholars of the Myth and Ritual School, however, endeavor to demonstrate that the Sun-god worship was practiced officially in Jerusalem. They point to the opening words of Solomon's Dedication of the Temple and interpret them as originally a part of an oracle delivered in connection with an eclipse of the Sun. It is conjectured that in its original form, as the Septuagint seems to suggest, this passage probably read:

The Sun did Jahweh set in the heavens
He that goeth into thick darkness hath spoken;

³⁹Jephthah, however, may have lapsed into the henotheistic aberrations of the surrounding nations.

Build me a house, a house meet for me,
That I may dwell there for ever.⁴⁰

The text of the Septuagint in its present form (1 Kings 8:

53a) reads:

Ἡλιον ἐγνώρισεΥ ἐΥ οὐρανῶ Κύριος,
εἶπεΥ τοῦ κατοικεῖν ἐΥ γρόφῳ
Οἰκοδόμησον οἶκόν μου, οἶκον ἐκπρεπήν ἐδοῦτῶ,
τοῦ κατοικεῖν ἐπὶ καλότητος.

This text can be translated as follows:

The Lord (Yahweh) manifested the sun in the heaven:
he said he would dwell in darkness,
build thou my house, a remarkable
house for thyself to dwell in anew.⁴¹

The present Septuagint text does not permit the first
translation. Unless some emendations are made, the text does
not support the theory that the sun was worshipped.⁴²

⁴⁰F. J. Hollis, "The Sun-Cult and the Temple at
Jerusalem," in The Labyrinth, p. 90.

⁴¹In the present form of the text, the subject "the Lord"
(Κύριος), and the sun (Ἡλιον) can be rendered only as object.
Incidentally, the LXX text has an allusion from Joshua 10:12b,
and can be read with a different punctuation: Ἡλιον ἐγνώρισεΥ
ἐΥ οὐρανῶ. Κύριος εἶπεΥ τοῦ κατοικεῖν ἐΥ γρόφῳ. . . .
The MT (8:12,13) does not support the conjecture of the Myth
and Ritual School, since it omits the phrase "the Lord mani-
fested the sun." The RSV, however, includes it in its trans-
lation.

⁴²A similar interpretation is applied to Ps. 130. That
it represents "some dim reflections of popular belief in and
worship of the sun-god" is suggested by W. O. E. Oesterley,
"Hebrew Festival Rituals," in M&R, pp. 115-16. Cf. H. G.
May, "Some Aspects of Solar Worship at Jerusalem," Zeitschrift
für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft, LV, 269ff. Since the
discovery of many ancient Near Eastern texts, many such attempts
have been made to find parallels in the O.T. They are so num-
erous that space does not permit dealing with all of them, nor
is it necessary since they all follow the same approach.

It remains true that Israel worshipped officially only Yahweh and that one who did not worship Yahweh was condemned.⁴³

If this were not true, the prophets had no reason to condemn the adherents of pagan gods. Yet they do so on the basis of the Decalogue and the other Laws. In fact, monotheism is a fundamental element of their message. They proclaim it in such words as the following: "I am God and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me." (Is. 46:9). The sole and unique God is the Creator of the heavens and the earth, and the preserver of the universe.⁴⁴

Yahweh, the creator God, is not a force or impersonal law, but a living person. For the Israelites, the living God means One who always lives and gives life. Because He lives and does not change like man, the form יהוה חי (as Yahweh liveth) was the primary formula in the Israelite oath. In this connection it is interesting to see an entirely different connotation of this phrase for the Canaanites; for them the expression "the living god" means, "the god who has come to life again."⁴⁵

⁴³C. H. Gordon, op. cit., p. 141.

⁴⁴We shall discuss the closely related subject of universality in detail in Chapter VI.

⁴⁵S. Mowinckel, op. cit., p. 85.

Another characteristic of Yahweh is His transcendence above the world of His creation. The prophets of Israel insisted that Yahweh was absolute, holy, and transcending every phenomenon of nature. This remarkable fact explains why Yahweh has no mythology. Since history, rather than nature, was the primary sphere of his revelation, the God of Israel was free from myth.⁴⁶

If we compare the stories of the Egyptian gods with those of the God of the Old Testament, the significant difference will be clear. When Re, the creator god, repented that he had created mankind, which had devised evil against him, he decided to destroy his creatures and sent a goddess to slay them. After she started to destroy mankind, Re regretted his decision and desired to reverse himself. Instead of ordering the goddess to stop the slaughter, he had 7000 jars of red-colored beer made and poured out in her path, so she might believe that it was blood. She waded lustily into it, became drunken, and stopped her slaughtering.⁴⁷ This is a very childish story; but the Egyptians apparently delighted in the humanness of their gods.

Another story tells of a trial in the divine tribunal. During the trial the presiding god Re-Hurakhte was pained at

⁴⁶IAAM, pp. 363-73.

⁴⁷J. B. Pritchard, editor, Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament (Second edition; Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1955), pp. 11-12.

an insult from a lesser god. He lay down on his back and his heart was very, very sore, and the Ennead⁴⁸ was dismissed. In order to cure him of his sulking, the gods sent the goddess of love to him to exhibit her charms to him. Then the great god laughed at her; and so he arose and sat down again on the chair and the proceedings continued.⁴⁹

These stories describe the gods as having human weakness and as being unable to remain on a high and super-human morality. The Israelites would not think of imputing such a low character to their God. Yahweh is far removed from such mythological traits. The Israelites may have employed some figures of speech and descriptive terms current in the ancient Near East, but the concept of their God remains their own unique possession, that is, the revealed will of Yahweh.

Yahweh as the King of the Covenant People

It is true that the Old Testament terminology for Yahweh in large measure is inevitably anthropomorphic. The only way of describing the transcendent God to the limited human mind is by using something by way of comparison which man can understand. This picture-language is frequently derived from man's social relationship.⁵⁰

⁴⁸Supra, p. 9.

⁴⁹IAAM, p. 67.

⁵⁰G. E. Wright, "The Terminology of the Old Testament Religion and Its Significance," Journal of Near Eastern Studies, I (1942), 404.

All language consists of words, and purposes through them to convey ideas or concepts as clearly and unequivocally as possible. Anthropomorphic expressions alone convey meaning to the human understanding regarding Yahweh and his activities. "The Kingship of Yahweh" is such an example. To be sure, to speak of Yahweh's kingship is the best way to express His ruling and governing the universe, but it is actually something far different from any human kingship. Rudolf Otto has emphasized the otherness of God, terming Him the "Wholly Other."⁵¹ This difference must not be forgotten in a discussion of the concept of the Kingship of Yahweh.

The sovereignty of Yahweh is one of the underlying motifs of the faith of Israel. This may not always be evident because of the complexity of historical details and other material found in the Old Testament. Yet this motif can be traced through the whole Old Testament like a golden thread.⁵²

As an expression of the sovereignty of Yahweh, the kingship provides the best description of the relationship between God and man. Since Yahweh is King and Lord, He has all power

⁵¹Cf. Rudolf Otto, "The 'Wholly Other,'" in The Idea of the Holy, translated by J. W. Harvey (New York: Oxford University Press, 1958), pp. 25-30.

⁵²Cf. Th. C. Vriezen, An Outline of Old Testament Theology (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1958), p. 91; S. Mowinckel, op. cit., pp. 169, 144; and for the kingdom of God, J. Bright, The Kingdom of God (New York & Nashville: Abingdon Press, c.1952).

and can demand obedience. Because He is a merciful and gracious God, He saves His people and gives them protection and help.

Although Yahweh is described particularly as King beginning with the monarchical period of Israel, "the idea of His Kingship is at least latent in the story of His deliverance of His people at the Exodus and His leading of them through the wilderness."⁵³

At the Exodus, Yahweh is pictured as the King who exercised three functions: He directs the war, dispenses justice, and exercises government. Since Yahweh was King, He is spoken of as the commander-in-chief of the army of Israel, who fought Israel's battles (Ex. 14:15; 17:16; cf. Num. 23:21; Joshua 6:2; 1 Sam. 8:20; 25:28; 2 Sam. 5:24). The whole Book of Judges is built around the idea that to judge Israel is to fight her battles by Yahweh's guidance and through His spirit (Judges 3:10). The battles of Yahweh are the instruments by which He establishes and maintains right. Therefore, the actions of Yahweh for His people in war are called "the righteous deeds of Yahweh" (הַיְשׁוּבוֹת יְהוָה)⁵⁴

⁵³G. W. Anderson, *op. cit.*, p.300. While an historical survey of the Kingship of Yahweh is given in this chapter, the exegetical treatment will be given in the following chapters.

⁵⁴The word הַיְשׁוּבוֹת can be rendered in various ways; L. Köhler suggests "help to secure rights," Old Testament Theology, translated by A. S. Todd (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, c.1958), p. 33.

(Judg. 5:11; 1 Sam. 12:7; Is. 45:24; Mic. 6:5; Ps. 103:6; Dan. 9:16). He also deals with His people in justice and He punishes the unjust (Ex. 15:16; cf. Gen. 31:50; Judg. 11:27; Is. 45:24). All of this is designed to make Israel His inheritance and to govern her forever (Ex. 15:7; cf. Deut. 33:5).

Israel's covenant with Yahweh at Sinai may be viewed as Israel's acceptance of the overlordship of Yahweh.⁵⁵ His Kingship is also expressed in the "Balaam oracle" (Num. 23:21), in the "Blessing of Moses" (Deut. 33:5), and in the "Song of Deborah" (Judg. 5). As we have already seen in the previous chapter, Gideon thought that Yahweh was the direct and actual ruler of the nation (Judg. 8:23).

At the time of the monarchy we meet the phrase "the throne of Yahweh" (1 Kings 22; Is. 6; Jer. 3:17; 17:12; Ezek. 1:26; Dan. 7:9; 1 Chron. 28:5; 2 Chron. 9:8). This is figurative language of the glorious manifestation of His ruling, and should not be taken as a literal dwelling or sitting of Yahweh.

The prophets after the divided monarchy speak more and more of the Kingship of Yahweh as the hope of Israel. When they saw the Israelite monarchy declining, they directed the

⁵⁵Israel's ideal was not the state governed by a king, but the rule of Yahweh through the practical direction of those who had been endowed with charisma and with the Spirit of Yahweh. Cf. Chapter III.

attention of the people to the future by divorcing the present state of the kingdom of Israel from that of Yahweh. They predicted the doom of the Israelite kingdom, but hoped for the glorious day of Yahweh's full and eternal ruling. The prophet Amos proclaimed "the Day of Yahweh" (Amos 5:18,20) as the great day of salvation for Israel. Thus, the concept of the Kingship of Yahweh and that of eschatology are closely related in the Old Testament, another unique phenomenon in Israel.⁵⁶

In the midst of the surrounding big forces, Isaiah saw the glory of Yahweh King (Is. 6) and proclaimed, "For Yahweh is our judge, Yahweh is our lawgiver, Yahweh is our king; He will save us" (Is. 33:22). He regarded Mount Zion as the very throne room of Yahweh's Kingdom, founded by Him and defended by Him. Isaiah, however, did not identify the existing state as the vehicle of the Kingdom of Yahweh, though he did not attack the monarchy as a sinful institution. He pointed out specifically that Yahweh's rule extends far beyond the present existing state. Yahweh is still the King of Israel, but He is also the King of the whole world. In the latter days He will make manifest His absolute control of the universe. The prophets following Isaiah expanded the idea of the remnant and proclaimed that Yahweh would make

⁵⁶V. Maag, Malkut Jhwh, Supplements to Vetus Testamentum, VII (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1959), p. 131.

a new covenant with the remnant and be their King. It is noteworthy that Yahweh manifested Himself as sitting on His throne to Ezekiel when the Kingdom of Judah was at its end. Even though human Kingship was about to disappear as an institution for His people, He uses the Kingship concept to reveal His glory and dominion to Israel.

The Psalmists praise Yahweh as the King of the covenant people and thank Him for His mighty acts.

After this rather brief sketch of the development of the Kingship of Yahweh, we turn to a short summary of the basic ideas underlying the concept of the Kingship of Yahweh in the Old Testament. Yahweh the King fights the battles of Israel, both to annihilate her foes and to save her; He judges her and the nations according to the laws He has enacted for His realm; and He preserves His chosen Israel and makes a special covenant with her. This covenant is primarily with her, but its benefits extend also to all nations and until endless ages.

The Old Testament presents the time of the Kingship of Yahweh as having two aspects. It is timeless and comprehends both the past and the future (Ex. 15:18; 1 Sam. 12:12; Ps. 145:11ff.; 146:10). On the other hand, it accentuates the element of expectation (Is. 24:23; 33:22; Zeph. 3:15; Obad. 21; Zech. 14:16f.). The Kingship of Yahweh is, therefore, a present reality as well as something to be realized in eschatological

hope.⁵⁷

As we have said before, Yahweh's kingship is the expression of His absolute rule in human language. Since other Near Eastern people also expressed their relationship to their own deities in similar language, we should quite naturally expect to find some analogies. Yet, even though Yahweh too is regarded as King, He is not an arbitrary tyrant nor marked by the ancient oriental unapproachableness. He is the One who hears the voice of the son of the despised maidservant (Gen. 21:17), who listens to the petition of the barren woman (1 Sam. 1-2), and who sees the tears of the human king (Is. 38:5). Then He rewards them all with abundant blessing. King Yahweh's unique character is manifested to Moses: motherly love, gracious deeds, patient understanding, everlasting love, and ever unchanging faithfulness (Ex. 34:6). This has no parallel among ancient oriental kings.

Since the concept and designation of the godhead as king was current in pre-Israel, and even in proto-Semitic times, the question of the neighbors' influence on the belief in the Kingship of Yahweh is not entirely irrelevant. The crystallization of Israel's belief in the Kingship of Yahweh derived its outward form from a foreign pattern. We

⁵⁷G. von Rad, "Melek und malkut im A. T.," Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament, edited by G. Kittel (Stuttgart: Verlag von W. Kohlhammer, 1933), I, 567.

are specifically told that Israel's desire for the formation of a national kingdom grew out of her environment. When the Israelites learned more about human kingship from experience, it was easier to think of Yahweh's Kingship by way of an analogy. The use of the term "king" for Yahweh, therefore, increases after the rise of Israelite monarchy.

The origin of the concept of the Kingship of Yahweh cannot be explained as an antithetic parallelism to the Canaanite conception of the pantheon as ruled by a king-god,⁵⁸ and, therefore, as the direct result of a borrowing from Canaan.⁵⁹ This theory cannot account for the two precious beliefs of Israel: the Sinai covenant and Yahweh's rule as a monotheistic God.

The Sinai covenant was based on Israel's selection by Yahweh; this was not an idea picked up along the way by cultural borrowing.⁶⁰ It was an historical fact and entirely peculiar to the nation Israel.

Furthermore, Near Eastern nations may often call their national god a king, but no nation had a monotheistic king. Since the neighbors were polytheists, their national gods

⁵⁸A. Alt, Kleine Schriften zur Geschichte des Volkes Israel (München: C. H. Beck, 1953), I, 345ff.

⁵⁹J. Gray, "The Kingship of God in the Prophets and Psalms," Vetus Testamentum, XI (1961), 24.

⁶⁰J. Bright, The Kingdom of God (New York & Nashville: Abingdon Press, c.1953), p. 19.

change according to place, time, and ruling dynasty. But Israel did not have a magico-mythical system; her God-King was unchangeable in character.

Yahweh always remained the partner of the one covenant initiated unilaterally by Yahweh. Even though the Israelites changed from generation to generation, He was always the same. The Sinai covenant remained the basic constitution of the nation, guarded, and protected by Him. Although it was supplemented and explained further by other covenants (2 Sam. 7; Jer. 31) to meet new situations, its basic principles were unchanged. Thus it was made clear, for example, that the scope of Yahweh's Kingship is not restricted to the covenant people of Israel, but extends to all men the world over throughout all time.

In common with the other two great feasts, it involved an annual pilgrimage. Every male had to appear before God to make his offering, to worship, and to eat the meal served at the shrine. The seventh month, in which it was observed, marked the close of the agricultural season, when all the products of the year from the grain-field, the olive orchard, and the vineyard were garnered. The celebration began on the fifteenth day of the month and continued for seven days.

The date of the feast seems to vary. According to Leviticus 23, it was celebrated from the fifteenth to the twenty-first day of the seventh month; but according to Nehemiah 8, the seven day celebration began with the first day of the seventh month.

The booths made of the boughs of trees suggested the vintage life; but they were also to be a reminder of the march from Egypt through the wilderness (Lev. 23:43; cf. Hos. 12:9).

Solomon dedicated the new Temple which he had built, at "the feast" in the month Ethanim which is the "seventh month" (1 Kings 8:2).² This feast is called "the Dedication

²Norman H. Snaith suggests that in pre-exilic times Ethanim was the first month. The Jewish New Year Festival: Its Origins and Development (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1947), pp. 48, 102. Cf. E. O. James, Myth and Ritual in the Ancient Near East (New York: Praeger, c.1958), p. 66.

of the Altar" (פֶּסַח אֶת־בְּרִית־יְהוָה , 2 Chron. 7:9). One of the features of this feast was the bringing of the ark of the covenant to its appointed place (2 Chron. 5:4-5). If "the feast" (אֶת־פֶּסַח) in this instance is understood to be Sukkoth festival, then Solomon assured himself of a large gathering of people for the dedication. The harvest over, people could easily have made the pilgrimage for the annual harvest feast. Josephus supports the assumption that the dedication of the Temple took place at this feast.³

This festival in the seventh month has often been discussed in connection with the eighth month festival of Jeroboam, son of Nebat. He built an altar at Bethel and set the fifteenth day of the eighth month for the feast (אֶת־פֶּסַח). Established as a rival to the Jerusalem festival, it likewise was made a pilgrim festival. This change in date may be accounted for in three ways. First, it may have been for political reasons: he tried to prevent the northern people from attending the Jerusalem Temple and thus make the separation from the Davidic monarchy more complete (cf. 1 Kings 12:28,33). Second, since the seasons vary in Palestine and the harvest in the north is later than in the lowlands between the Judean hills and the sea, it is suggested that Jeroboam waited until the next full

³Josephus, Jewish Antiquities, viii, 100.

moon.⁴ Finally, Northern Israel may have had a different calendar.⁵

In the post-exilic period (Zech. 14:16) the feast of Sukkoth was closely associated with the Kingship of Yahweh, thereby giving added significance to it as the principal festival.⁶

In the Mishna, the Sukkoth festival is also called "the festival" ($\lambda \pi \pi$):

He may bring and he makes [sic] the declaration. From the Festival of Weeks until the Festival (of Tabernacles) one may bring and make the declaration. From the Festival (of Tabernacles) until the Festival of Declaration one may bring but does not make the declaration. . . .⁷

Although the Book of Jubilees does not specify the festival by name, it describes the festival as celebrated somewhat differently:

⁴Cf. N. H. Snaith, *op. cit.*, p. 52.

⁵J. Gray, "The Kingship of God in the Prophets and Psalms," *Vetus Testamentum*, XI (1961), 25.

⁶We shall discuss Zech. 14:16 in detail, *infra*. p.140.

⁷Bikkurim 1:6; Philip Blackman, *Mishnayoth* (London: Mishna Press, 1951) I, 470.

מְבִיא וְקוֹרֵא מִעֲצֵרֶת וְעַד הַחֵטָא מְבִיא וְקוֹרֵא
 מִן-הַחֵטָא וְעַד הַחֵטָא מְבִיא וְאֵינוֹ קוֹרֵא; רַבִּי
 יְהוּדָה בֵּן בֶּתְרֵא אָמַר מְבִיא וְקוֹרֵא:

Cf. Bikkurim: 1:10; *ibid.*, I, 472; Maaseroth 3:7; *ibid.*, I, 463.

And on the fifteenth of this [seventh] month he [Jacob] brought to the altar fourteen oxen from amongst the cattle, and twenty-eight rams, and forty-nine sheep, and seven lambs, and twenty-one kids of the goats as a burnt-offering on the altar of sacrifice, well pleasing for a sweet savour before God.⁸

Coming at the beginning of a new agricultural year, much emphasis is placed on "the former rain." Since the soil had been baked hard by the summer sun, rain was absolutely essential to soften it and to make the fields fit for sowing. The mention of rain is, therefore, appropriate at this time of the year, and at the feast the people thanked Yahweh for the harvest of the past year and ask for the blessing of fertility in the coming year. Rain, therefore, was a sign of Yahweh's response to their prayer and His promise for the coming year (Cf. Zech. 14:17-19).

It has been suggested that the time of the Sukkoth festival did not come at the end of the year but marked the new year. This conclusion is based on Exodus 23:16 which says, "And the feast of ingathering at the going out of the year" ($\text{וְהָיָה בְּצֵאת־שָׁנָה} \text{ } \text{וְהָיָה לְךָ} \text{ } \text{לְחַג} \text{ } \text{לְקַיִץ}$, LXX $\text{Καὶ ἔσονται συντελείας ἐπ' ἐξόδου τοῦ ἐν αὐτῷ}$). Some scholars render the word וְהָיָה in this instance with "entering" instead of "going out," that is "beginning" instead of

⁸Jubilees 32:4; R. H. Charles, editor, The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament (Oxford; Clarendon Press, 1913), II, 62.

"ending."⁹ The fact is that the festival looks both ways. It is analogous to a "January" feast. Like the Roman god Janus, it has two faces; one looks back into the year that is past, and the other looks forward into the year that is to come. Furthermore, the root XST in normal usage means "to go out," "to come out" or "to go forth." It is also used in connection with the rising of the sun, and, as a development from that, with the rising of the heavenly bodies in general (Gen. 19:23; Is. 13:10, 40:26; Ps. 19:6; 75:7; Neh. 4:15¹⁰), and in this context does mean "beginning." But beyond this there is no linguistic evidence to support the thesis and the theory that the Hebrew phrase $\text{H}\text{H}\text{W}\text{H}\text{H}\text{X}\text{S}$ means the "beginning" of the year is untenable. It means the "end" of the year.¹¹

A second text quoted in this connection is Exodus 34:22 which reads: "at the circuit of the year" ($\text{H}\text{H}\text{W}\text{H}\text{H}\text{X}\text{S}$), that is, when the year has completed its circuit. $\text{H}\text{H}\text{W}\text{H}\text{H}\text{X}\text{S}$ means "coming around," "circuit" or "turning." It suggests to some the meaning: when the New Year begins, and they assume that this festival is, therefore, the New Year

⁹G. B. Gray, Sacrifice in the Old Testament (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1925), pp. 300ff.; cf. W. O. E. Oesterley, "Early Hebrew festival rituals," Myth and Ritual edited by S. H. Hooke (London: Oxford University Press, 1933), p. 122. This will be cited as M&R.

¹⁰EVV. 4:21.

¹¹N. H. Snaith, op. cit., p. 61.

festival.¹² In this verse, the Septuagint has the reading: "and the ingathering feast at the middle of the year" (Καὶ ἑορτήν συγκλήσεως μεσοῦτος τοῦ ἔτους). This translation may reflect the correct meaning, since the Israelite New Year began in Nisan and Tishri would be the seventh month, that is, the middle of the year.

It becomes necessary at this point to enter upon a discussion of the Israelite calendar. There is Old Testament evidence that the Israelites from ancient times probably counted their days according to the periods of the moon. This conclusion is based in part on the fact that the word for "month" ($\psi \text{ } \dot{\gamma} \text{ } \pi$) actually means "new moon" (the day on which the crescent reappears).¹³ Observation of the new and full moon is clearly indicated in 1 Samuel 20:5,18,24; 2 Kings 4:23; Isaiah 1:13-14; 66:23; Ezekiel 45:17; 46:3,6; Hosea 2:13;¹⁴ Amos 8:5; Psalms 81:4;¹⁵ 104:19; Ezra 3:5-6; Nehemiah 10:34.¹⁶ The beginning of each month was celebrated with a new-moon festival. The Passover rite takes place at full moon, just as does the Sukkoth festival.

¹²W. O. E. Oesterley, op. cit., pp. 122-23

¹³L. Koehler and W. Baumgartner, editors, Lexicon in Vetris Testamenti Libros (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1953), p. 279.

¹⁴EVV. 2:11.

¹⁵EVV. 81:3.

¹⁶EVV. 10:33.

Furthermore, the lunar calendar was widespread among the peoples of the middle East. A calendar that was essentially lunar existed even in Persia, where worship of the sun had so dominant a role. And the center of the solar cult, Egypt, also shows evidence of the existence of a lunar calendar.¹⁷

However, the evidence for the existence of a luni-solar calendar is not lacking. The moon regulates only the months, not the years. In an ordinary year there are twelve lunations covering about 354 days. A solar year, with which the agricultural year more or less coincides, has 365 days. When the lunar calendar is in use, an extra month must be intercalated every two or three years in order to synchronize it with the seasons of nature. The intercalation of the calendar seems to have been practiced in Israel.¹⁸ Genesis 1:14 seems to support a luni-solar nature of the calendar. It reads: "And God said 'Let there be lights in the firmament of the heavens to separate the day from the night, and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and for years.'"

In the Old Testament there is no explicit reference to the "New Year." The phrase $\text{יָדְוָיִם} \text{ שָׁנָה}$ occurs only once,

¹⁷J. B. Segal, "Intercalation and Hebrew Calendar," Vetus Testamentum, VII (1957), 253.

¹⁸J. van Goudoever, Biblical Calendars (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1959), pp. 34-35; J. B. Segal, op. cit., pp. 256ff.

namely in Ezekiel 40:1. It reads: "In the twenty-fifth year of our exile, at the beginning of the year, on the tenth day of the month"

(בְּעֶשְׂרִים וָחֵמֶשׁ שָׁנָה בְּרֵאשִׁית הַשָּׁנָה בְּיָמֵינוּ בְּעֶשְׂרִים וָחֵמֶשׁ יוֹם בְּרֵאשִׁית הַשָּׁנָה).
 The Septuagint reads: καὶ ἐγένετο ἐν τῷ πέμπτῳ καὶ
 εἰκοστῷ ἔτει τῆς ἀρχαίας ἡμῶν ἐν τῷ πρώτῳ μηνὶ δεκάτῃ
 τοῦ μηνός. The Septuagint translates בְּיָמֵינוּ

with the "first" or "opening month" of the year. It appears, therefore, to be a general statement and not a technical term for New Year's Day according to later usage, as some have suggested.¹⁹ It is, however, clear that the Passover month, Nisan, was the opening of the year. Exodus 12:2 reads, "This month shall be for you the beginning (or head, or opening) of the months; it shall be the first month of the year to you"

בְּיָמֵינוּ בְּעֶשְׂרִים וָחֵמֶשׁ יוֹם בְּרֵאשִׁית הַשָּׁנָה
 בְּיָמֵינוּ בְּעֶשְׂרִים וָחֵמֶשׁ יוֹם בְּרֵאשִׁית הַשָּׁנָה

But there is no doubt that in certain periods of Israelite history the calendar year opened around the autumnal equinox. The Gezer calendar, which is dated about 925 B.C., reads:

His two months are (olive) harvest,
 His two months are planting (grain),
 His two months are late planting;

¹⁹G. B. Gray, op. cit., p. 301; N. H. Snaith, op. cit., p. 132.

His month is hoeing up of flax,
 His month is harvest of barley,
 His month is harvest and feasting;
 His two months are vine-tending,
 His month is summer fruit.²⁰

These lines evidently represent a schoolboy's exercise in writing, but they reflect a calendar of the agricultural year and depict something of the life of the Israelite farmer. Although we cannot conclude that it represents the official Israelite calendar, it gives enough indication that at this time and in this locality the first month of the year began with the vintage harvest.²¹

The Mishna interestingly gives four New Years

(׀ ׀ ׀ ׀ ׀ ׀ ׀ ׀). It states:

There are four New Years. On the first of Nisan is the New Year for Kings and for Festivals; on the first of Elul is the New Year for the tithe of animals--R. Eliezer and R. Simon say, On the first of Tishri--on the first of Tishri is the New Year for the years, for Jubilee Years, for planting and for vegetables; and on the first of Shevat is the New Year for Trees, according to the view of the School of Shammai, but the School of Hillel say, On the fifteenth thereof.²²

This survey suffices for our present purpose. From the evidences it is reasonably sure that the Israelite

²⁰J. B. Pritchard, editor, Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament (Second edition; Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1955), p. 320. This will be cited as ANET.

²¹For a further explanation on the Gezer Calendar see G. E. Wright, Biblical Archaeology (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1957), pp. 180-83.

²²Rosh Hashanah 1; P. Blackman, op. cit., II, 381.

calendar year may have begun either with the spring (in Nisan) when nature comes to life again, or with the autumn (In Tishri) at the beginning of the rainy season, which lays the foundation for the growth of another year, the first seed being sown shortly thereafter.²³

Even if it is granted that New Year began in Tishri, it still does not follow that the Sukkoth festival was on the New Year's Day. Professor G. B. Gray and others suggest that the Israelite New Year's Day fell on the tenth of the seventh month or the Day of Atonement.²⁴ Tishri 10 is not a full-moon day, nor is it a new-moon day, as Professor N. H. Snaith acknowledges. According to him the first ten days of Tishri make up the difference between the old lunar calendar and the new solar year. This resembles the eleven days of the zagnuk²⁵ period in the Babylonian Calendar, from which the date of Tishri 10 as the New Year's Day is borrowed. Biblical evidences for this are sought in two texts. The first is Leviticus 25:9. But this verse is actually a part

²³Johs. Pedersen, Israel, III-IV (London, Oxford University Press, 1940), p. 445. Cf. E. R. Thiele, The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1951), p. 15; E. O. James, op. cit., p. 66.

²⁴G. B. Gray, op. cit., pp. 299-305; N. H. Snaith, op. cit., pp. 131-141; J. van Goudoever, op. cit., p. 42.

²⁵The Akkadian rendering of the Sumerian ZAG. MU, which means "the head-of-the year." The Semitic equivalent is resh shatti. N. H. Snaith, op. cit., p. 134.

of the law for the Jubilee year. We quote Leviticus 25:8-9:

And you shall count seven sabbaths of years, seven times seven years, and the time (literally, the day) of the seven sabbaths of years shall be to you forty-nine years. Then you shall send out the loud trumpet on the tenth day of the seventh month; on the day of atonement you shall send out the trumpet throughout all your land.

The other text is Ezekiel 40:1 which we have reviewed already.²⁶

The theory that the Sukkoth festival was the celebration of the New Year, therefore, lacks confirmation from biblical evidences, as Professor N. H. Snaith recognizes:

Indeed, even the removal of the phrase from Ezek. 40:1, does not solve the problem, for Tishri 10 is actually New Year's Day for the Year of Jubilee, and trumpets were blown to mark the fact of it being the new year, even though it was not New Year's Day according to any known calendar.²⁷

It is, however, possible, even probable that the celebration of the New Year may have arisen as the result of the influence from the Seleucid reckoning since around 300 B.C.²⁸

The Meaning of קָלַח קָלַח

As the first step of investigating the meaning of

קָלַח קָלַח we shall examine the usage of the root קָלַח .

²⁶Supra, p.

²⁷N. H. Snaith, op. cit., p. 132.

²⁸Johs. Pedersen, op. cit., p. 446.

According to Professor Otto Eissfeldt²⁹ the noun מְלִכּוּת is used forty-one times for Yahweh,³⁰ and the verb מָלַךְ thirteen times.³¹ The abstract nouns מַלְכוּת (kingdom or royalty),³² מְלִיכּוּת (kingship or royalty),³³ and מַמְלָכָה (kingdom, sovereignty, dominion)³⁴ refer to Yahweh in nine instances.³⁵

Over one-half of these references are from the Psalms. This emphasis on the Kingship of Yahweh makes the study of Psalms very important for our inquiry.

In his Einleitung in die Psalmen Professor Herman Gunkel categorizes a group of Psalms under "Enthronement Psalms." He applies this name to them because he believes that they were composed in celebration of the enthronement of Yahweh

²⁹"Jahwe als König," Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft, 46 (1928), 89-91.

³⁰Num. 23:21; Deut. 33:5; 1 Sam. 12:12; Is. 6:5; 33:22; 41:21; 43:15; 44:6; Jer. 8:19; 10:7,10; 46:18; 48:15; 51:57; Mic. 2:13; Zeph. 3:15; Zech. 14:9,16,17; Mal. 1:14; Ps. 5:3; 10:16; 24:7,8,9,10; 29:10; 44:5; 47:3,7,8; 48:3; 68:25; 74:12; 84:4; 95:3; 98:6; 99:4; 145:1; 149:2; Dan. 4:34.

³¹Ex. 15:18; 1 Sam. 8:7; Is. 24:23; 52:7; Ezek. 20:33; Mic. 4:7; Ps. 47:9; 93:1; 96:10; 97:1; 99:1; 146:10; 1 Chron. 16:31 = Ps. 96:10.

³²Ps. 103:19; 145:11,12,13; Dan. 3:33; 4:31.

³³Obad. 21; Ps. 22:29.

³⁴1 Chron. 29:11.

³⁵Cf. R. D. Wilson, "The Words for 'Kingdom' in the Old Testament," The Princeton Theological Review, XXIII (1925), 133-37.

as the universal King.³⁶ These Psalms characteristically possess the words יְהוָה מֶלֶךְ (Ps. 93:1; 96:10; 97:1; 99:1; cf. 47:9³⁷ יְהוָה מֶלֶךְ). In emphasizing that the phrase (יְהוָה מֶלֶךְ) must be rendered as "Yahweh has become King," he states:

Die Grundlage für das Verständnis dieser Psalmen ist die Beobachtung, dass das Wort, 'er ist König geworden' an bedeutsamer Stelle auch von irdischen Herrschern gebraucht wird. Wenn der neue König ausgerufen wird, so geschieht das mit diesem 'Königsrufe': Absalom, Jehu ist König geworden' II Sam. 15:10; II Reg. 9:13. Dass die Worte auch in den genannten Psalmen so gemeint sind, ergibt sich aus Ps. 96:10: 'Sprechet unter den Völkern: Jahve ist König geworden'; dies entspricht II Sam. 15:10; Absalom sandte geheime Boten in alle Stämme Israel mit dem Auftrage: 'Sobald ihr den Posaunenschall höret, so sprechet: Absalom ist in Hebron König geworden.' Demnach feiern diese Psalmen Jahves Thronbesteigung.³⁸

Professor Sigmund Mowinckel, a pupil of Gunkel, expanded the latter's study. He states emphatically:

Die charakteristische Wendung ist Jahwā malach, das ist nicht: Jahwā ist König, sondern Jahwā ist (Jetzt) König geworden, bedeutet Jehu Malach oder Absalom malach ist der Ruf, mit dem neuerkorenen

³⁶"Lieder von Jahwes Thronbesteigung," Einleitung in die Psalmen; Die Gattungen der religiösen Lyrik Israels, zu Ende geführt von Joachim Begrich (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1933), pp. 94-116. The name is by no means uniformly adopted. H. J. Kraus and others call this group "Jahwe-Königs-Psalmen" Psalmen (Neukirchen Kreis Moers: Verlag der Buchhandlung des Erziehungsvereins, 1960).

³⁷EVV, 47:8; LXX 46:9.

³⁸H. Gunkel-J. Begrich, op. cit., p. 95.

Könige von dem versammelten Volke gehuldigt wird in dem Augenblick als er inthronisiert worden ist.³⁹

A lexicographical examination of the usage of the verb מָלַךְ makes clear that it may have two meanings: "to be king" and "to become king." The translation "to be king" (with לְ , וְ or כִּי) is called for by the context in Genesis 36:31; Joshua 13:10,12,21; Judges 4:2; 9:8; 2 Samuel 16:8; 1 Kings 14:20. It has the meaning "to become king" in connection with a trumpet sound announcing the enthronement of a king or the shout of the people acclaiming the new ruler in 2 Samuel 15:10 ($\text{וַיִּשְׁמְעוּ אֶת-הַקֶּלֶבֶט וַיִּמְלֹךְ}$), 1 Kings 1:11 ($\text{וַיִּשְׁמְעוּ אֶת-הַקֶּלֶבֶט וַיִּמְלֹךְ}$) and 2 Kings 9:13 ($\text{וַיִּשְׁמְעוּ אֶת-הַקֶּלֶבֶט וַיִּמְלֹךְ}$). In these cases the verb precedes the noun. However, such verbal clauses may be translated either "He has become King" or "He is King." In 2 Kings 9:13, for example, we may read either: "Jehu has become King" or "Jehu is King."⁴⁰

³⁹Psalmenstudien, II: Das Thronbesteigungsfest Jahwäs und der Ursprung der Eschatologie (Skrifter utgitt av Det Norske Videnskaps-Akademi i Oslo II, 1921, No. 6; Christiania: Jacob Dybwad, 1922), p. 6. Cf. ibid., Offersang og sangoffer, Salmediktning i Biblelen (Oslo: Aschehoug, 1951), pp. 523-26 (in reply to O. Eissfeldt, "Jahwe als König.")

⁴⁰H. J. Kraus, op. cit., p. 202. There is no agreement in the discussion on the position of the words מָלַךְ וַיִּמְלֹךְ , prior to Kraus' Psalmen appeared both pro and con. Cf. Ludwig Köhler, insists the phrase should be translated "Es ist Jahwäh, der König (geworden) ist" in "Jahwäh Malak," Vetus Testamentum, III (1953), 188. Similarly A. R. Johnson translates "It is Yahweh who is King." Sacral Kingship in Ancient Israel (Cardiff: The University of Wales Press, 1955), p. 57. On the other hand, H. Ridderbos stresses that it should be translated "Jahwäh ist König," in "Jahwäh Malak," Vetus Testamentum, IV (1954), 87-89. Cf. E. Kautzsch, Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar, second English edition by A. E. Cowley (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1946), #142a, p. 455.

On the other hand, when the subject precedes the verb, such a "double-meant verb" like יָשָׁב can only be rendered "to be king." An example is 1 Chronicles 16:31, where יָשָׁב יְהוָה must be rendered "Yahweh is King" or "Yahweh reigns" (cf. EVV.)⁴¹

The Yahweh-King-Psalms exemplify this syntactical observation. יָשָׁב יְהוָה in Psalms 93:1; 96:10; 97:1; 99:1, therefore, has the meaning "Yahweh is King!" or "Yahweh reigns!"⁴²

Furthermore, the verb יָשָׁב frequently signifies the duration of the reign rather than the act of coronation. In such passages as Joshua 13:10,12,21; Judges 4:2 the correct translation must be either "he was king" or "he reigned." The verb יָשָׁב , therefore, denotes the concept of a general present as well as of a perfect, that is, it refers to the past and the present (cf. 1 Kings 15:33).⁴³

The verbal-clause יְהוָה יָשָׁב (Ps. 47:9), accordingly can be translated either "God is King"⁴⁴ or "God has become king."

⁴¹H. J. Kraus, *op. cit.*, p. 202. Cf. 1 Kings 1:18.

⁴²*Ibid.*, pp. 202, 648-49.

⁴³O. Eissfeldt, *op. cit.*, p. 100.

⁴⁴In a sense of duration, cf. Is. 52:7 יְהוָה יָשָׁב which is translated as future in LXX, Βασιλεύσει σου ὁ θεός.

The New Year's Festival in Mesopotamia

In order to understand the discussion regarding the enthronement of Yahweh as a part of the autumnal cultic exercise in Jerusalem, we shall briefly examine the celebration of the New Year's festival in Mesopotamia.

As observed here, this festival is characteristic of ancient Near Eastern practice. It was the center and climax of all religious activities of the year and the most complete expression of Mesopotamian religiosity. Known as zagmuk in Sumerian and akitu⁴⁵ in Akkadian, this festival marked a new beginning in the annual cycle.

It is not easy to establish the whole program and ritual of the akitu festival because it took on a somewhat different form at different places and at different times. An Akkadian text called "Temple Program for the New Year's Festival at Babylon" is dated in the Seleucid period, although the rites which it describes may go back to an earlier time. Here we find the following procedure and

⁴⁵Or akitum, this is a word of Sumerian origin and is found in the third millennium. Sidney Smith, "The Practice of Kingship in Early Semitic Kingdoms," Myth, Ritual and Kingship, edited by S. H. Hooke (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1958), p. 42. This will be cited as MR&K. The etymological meaning of akitu is uncertain, but it is generally known as New Year's festival, H. Frankfort, Kingship and the Gods (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1948), pp. 313-14. The rendering of zagmuk see supra, p. 102.

schedule outlined for the observance of the festival:⁴⁶

Nisan 2: The urigallu-priest⁴⁷ arises in the night, washes himself with river water and then recites a special prayer to the god Bel (or Marduk). Next the eribbiti-priests, followed by the kalu-priests⁴⁸ and the singers, perform their particular rites in the traditional manner before the god Bel and the goddess Beltiya.

Nisan 3: The high priest repeats what he did in the night of Nisan 2, as do also the other priests and the singers. Two images of Bel are made for the ceremony for the sixth day.

Nisan 4: The high priest again washes in the night and recites a prayer to the god Bel and to the goddess Beltiya. The prayer, however, is different on each of the days. On this day he also goes out to the courtyard and blesses the temple Esagil three times. All the priests and the singers perform their rites as they did on the previous days. After a second meal in the late afternoon, the high priest recites the Enuma elish⁴⁹ before the statue of Bel. The recitation

⁴⁶ANET, pp. 331-334.

⁴⁷He is probably the high priest, H. Frankfort, op. cit., p. 319.

⁴⁸They seem to be the singing priests. Ibid., p. 272, cf. p. 262.

⁴⁹Called the Akkadian epic of creation, its first words are Enuma elish which mean "when on high" or "when above." Some scholars hold that "Enuma elish is not primarily a creation story at all." A. Heidel, The Babylonian Genesis: The Story of the Creation (Second edition; Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1951), p. 10.

or chanting of this epic is apparently intended as a magical aid to deliver Marduk from a supposed imprisonment.

We find this purpose expressly stated in an inscription:

"Enuma elish which is recited before Bel, which they chant in the month of Nisan, (it is) because he is held prisoner."⁵⁰

Nisan 5: The high priest washes himself with water from the Tigris and Euphrates. He recites the different prayers to Bel and Beltiya respectively. All the priests and the singers perform their rites in order. After the purification of the whole sanctuary, the high priest stays in the open country from the fifth to the twelfth day of Nisan, while the god Nabu⁵¹ remains in Babylon. Then the high priest and all "the artisans" bring forth "the Golden Heaven" from the treasury of the god Marduk and intone the "loud recital." The high priest prepares a golden tray, places upon it roasted meat, and brings it before the god Nabu as a sacrifice. After the king has purified himself, he appears before the god Bel. Then the high priest takes away the scepter, "the circle," and the sword from the king and gives it to the god Bel. Next, the high priest strikes the king's cheek before the god. The king then makes the following confession:

⁵⁰Keilschrifttexte aus Assur religiösen Inhalts, Nos. 143: 34 and 219:8; ibid., p. 16.

⁵¹He is also called Nabum or Nebo, and is the son ("firstborn") of Marduk. ANET, p. 317.

I did (not) sin, lord of the countries. I was not neglectful (of the requirements) of your godship. (I did not) destroy Babylon; I did not command its overthrow (I did not .). . . the temple Esagil, I did not forget its rites. (I did not) rain blows on the cheek of a subordinate. . . . I did (not) humiliate them. (I watched out) for Babylon; I did not smash its walls.⁴²

Thereupon the high priest replies and comforts him with the following words:

. . . Have no fear. . . . The god Bel (will listen to) your prayer . . . he will magnify your lordship . . . he will exalt your kingship. . . . The god Bel will bless you. . . forever. He will destroy your enemy, fell your adversary.⁵³

Now his scepter, "circle," and sword are restored to the king. The high priest again strikes the king's cheek. If it causes tears to flow, it means that the god Bel is friendly; if no tears appear, the god Bel is angry and will let an enemy rise up and bring about the king's downfall. At sunset the high priest ties together forty reeds. A hole is dug in the courtyard, into which he places the bundle of reeds. He also puts in it honey, cream, first-quality oil. The king set this afire with a burning reed and joins the high priest in reciting the following recitation: "O Divine Bull, brilliant light which lig(hts up the darkness). . . ." ⁵⁴

From this description of the ceremonies a few things are

⁵²Ibid., p. 334.

⁵³Ibid.

⁵⁴Ibid.

clear. The prayers of the rite are penitential and confessional in nature, similar to a "Kyrie Eleison." The celebration reaches its summit on Nisan 5, and takes on the character of "the Day of Atonement." The renewed investiture of the debased king with the insignia of royalty clearly signifies a renewal of the kingship.⁵⁵ It should also be noted that the high priest is the main actor throughout the festival. When he burns the reeds and the food, he is at the same time performing a ritual that is to assure fertility for the coming year.

Although our text does not give us the rites performed from the sixth to the twelfth day, the celebration probably took place from the first day to twelfth of Nisan.⁵⁶ Dr. Alexander Heidel, however, thinks that it "lasted from the first to the eleventh of Nisan."⁵⁷

It is also assumed in the interpretation of the celebration of this New Year's festival, that Marduk actually dies or is captured in the Nether world. The ritual then effects the resurrection of the god, that is, the god is brought forth triumphantly to the world of the living.⁵⁸

⁵⁵H. Frankfort, op. cit., p. 320.

⁵⁶Cf. ANET, pp. 317,333; H. Frankfort, op. cit., pp. 317-18,333.

⁵⁷A. Heidel, op. cit., p. 16.

⁵⁸H. Frankfort, op. cit., pp. 321-25.

This aspect is derived from observing nature. Summers in Mesopotamia are hardly bearable and are considered a protracted scourge. Vegetation withers, the hot dust hurts the eyes and lungs, and men and beasts lose energy and strength. The stagnation of all natural life is symbolically portrayed as the result of god's death. In keeping with this thought, a goddess bewails him and sets out to retrieve him. After the awful summer is past, nature revives and shows its life again. This revived nature and the re-emerging vegetation is dramatically represented by the resurrection of the god.⁵⁹

The procession is also considered a very important part in the festival. It starts from the Royal Gate to the Akitu House (Bit Akitu, the "house of the New Year's feast") which was outside of the city. During the procession the king plays the part of the god and has in his train a number of gods or visiting deities. The priests recite the incantation entitled "Šarru ittasa" (go forth, king) and others. The procession apparently represents Marduk's victory over Tiamat as commemorated in the cult. It is also possible that the Akitu House is the place where the creator's victory over Tiamat is celebrated.⁶⁰

⁵⁹Ibid., pp. 282,290.

⁶⁰ANET, p. 342; H. Frankfort, op. cit., pp. 326-29.

Another part of this festival was the "sacred marriage" as a symbol effecting the renewal of life. A sacred marriage ceremony is attested by a number of texts. The consort of Marduk, Lebettum⁶¹ of Esagila ("the house of lofty head") is also the name of the chief temple of Marduk, located in Babylon and known from old Babylonian times until the Hellenistic period.⁶² Of Marduk it is written that "he hastened to the wedding."⁶³ We have also a description of an occasion when a king acts the part of the divine bridegroom.⁶⁴ In this role he no doubt represents Marduk or Tammuz by proxy. As such he is the embodiment of human society in its entirety. Through him and his deification in the cult, mankind shares in the renewed vital powers which emanate from Tammuz. The sacred marriage therefore signifies the end of the period during which life in nature has been suspended. Now the god and the goddess are united. The male forces are awakened and fertilize the Great Mother from whom all life came forth. Thus blessings for the New Year are assured.⁶⁵

⁶¹ANET, p. 178.

⁶²Ibid., pp. 390,437.

⁶³H. Frankfort, op. cit., p. 330.

⁶⁴Supra, p. 29.

⁶⁵H. Frankfort, op. cit., pp. 296,297,299,331.

The texts which contain information regarding the celebration of the New Year in Mesopotamia are largely dated after the time of Nebuchadnezzar, early in the sixth century B.C. It was the period of Babylon's supremacy, when Marduk was the supreme god of the Babylonian pantheon. Since he was regarded as the creator of the present world order, the festival was celebrated in his honor.⁶⁶

The date of the celebration varied according to the location. In Babylon, the Akitu festival took place in the spring, in the month of Nisan; in Ur and Erech, it occurred in the fall as well as in the spring, in Tishri and in Nisan; in Nineveh, it was observed on the sixteenth of Tebet.⁶⁷

Although the New Year's festival was the principal state affair in Mesopotamia, it was omitted at times. The Akkadian text which describes the period from the accession year of Nabonidus to the Fall of Babylon reads:

Nabonidus, the king, (stayed) in Tema; the crown prince, the officials and the army (were) in Akkad. The king did not come to Babylon for the (ceremony of the) month of Nisanu; the god Nebo did not come to Babylon, the god Bel did not go out (of Esagila in procession), the festival of the New Year was omitted.

⁶⁶N. Snaith, op. cit., p. 212.

⁶⁷Cf. the tablet K 1296. However, the proper date for the festival of Ishtar of Nineveh would be the month of Ululu (elul), the sixth month, because this is her month. Ibid., p. 216; H. Frankfort, op. cit., p. 314.

(But) the offerings in Esagila and Ezida for the gods of (Babylon) and Borsippa were given according to the complete (ritual).⁶⁸

The same situation is recorded in identical words for the seventh, ninth, tenth, and eleventh year of Nabonidus, the text of the eighth year being broken and unrecognizable. There is evidence then that the New Year's festival was not observed for four or five consecutive years. In the seventeenth year, however, it was celebrated again, although a state of war existed.⁶⁹

The record for the ninth year gives us a very interesting insight into the relative importance attached to the festivals. The text reads:

In the month of Nisanu the 5th day, the mother of the king died in Dur-karashu which is on the banks of the Euphrates, above Sippar. The crown prince and his army were in deep mourning for three days, a(n official) 'weeping' was performed. In Addad, a(n official) 'weeping' on behalf of the mother of the king was performed in the month of Simanu.⁷⁰

It is significant that the "weeping" date for the death of the queen-mother is recorded with extraordinary care, while the New Year's festival was missing for a number of years.

It cannot, therefore, be maintained that the festival was an absolutely required annual ceremony. Professor C. H. Gordon has justifiably renounced the view that:

⁶⁸ANET, p. 306; cf. pp. 303,313.

⁶⁹Ibid., p. 306.

⁷⁰Ibid.

Tammuz is said to die and revive annually; a generally accepted idea for which I can find no support in the Mesopotamian mythological texts; annual celebrations prove nothing, for holidays tend to be annual affairs; no one would maintain that Columbus discovers America every year because Columbus day is celebrated every 12th October.⁷¹

The generally assumed pattern of the New Years' festival in the ancient Near East is further disproved by the lack of evidence for a "dying god." The ritual drama of the "dying god" was performed in Mesopotamia, but not in Egypt. Osiris in Egypt⁷² was, in fact, not a "dying god" at all but a "dead" god.⁷³

The Cult Practices in Jerusalem and the Kingship of Yahweh

The Myth and Ritual School and the Scandinavian School suggest that the pattern of the New Year's festival in Mesopotamia was adopted in Israel. According to this viewpoint, the pattern consisted of the following elements which may be found in the Old Testament and particularly in the Psalms:

⁷¹Ugaritic Literature: A Comprehensive Translation of the Poetic and Prose Texts (Rome: Pontificium Institutum Biblicum, 1949), p. 3. The same is true for the Ras Shamra texts. Nowhere do they mention an annual death and revival of Baal. Ibid., p. 4; cf. E. O. James, op. cit., p. 97. Although it is by no means certain, the festival may have been celebrated periodically, perhaps septennially. E. O. James, The Ancient Gods (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, c.1960), p. 146; C. H. Gordon, Orientalia, XXII (1953), 79ff.; cf. C. H. Gordon, Introduction of Old Testament Times (Ventnor, N. J.: Ventnor Publishers, 1952), p. 86.

⁷²Cf. Chapter II.

⁷³H. Frankfort, op. cit., p. 289.

- 1) The dramatic representation of the death and resurrection of the god with whom the king was identified.
- 2) The recitation or symbolic representation of the myth of creation.
- 3) The ritual combat, in which the triumph of the god over his enemies was depicted ("chaoskampf").
- 4) The sacred marriage.
- 5) The triumphal procession, in which the king played the part of the god followed by a train of lesser gods or visiting deities on their way to his sanctuary on Mt. Zion.⁷⁴

The assumption that Yahweh was a dying and rising God is based on an interpretation of some Old Testament passages. Psalm 78:61 reads: "And he (God) gave his power to captivity, his glory to the hand of the foe." This is said to be a mystic description of a situation in which Yahweh is thought of as being dead and as a result His whole people is delivered up into the hands of its enemies. A "state of chaos exists." After the description of the "state of chaos" (verses 62-64), a decided change is portrayed in verses 65 to 66: "Then the Lord awoke as from sleep, like a hero shouting because of wine. He smote His adversaries backward, he put them to everlasting

⁷⁴S. H. Hooke, M&R, p. 8; K. H. Bernhardt, Das Problem der Altorientalischen Königsideologie im Alten Testament, Supplements to Vetus Testamentum, VIII (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1961), pp. 295-96; cf. G. Widengren, "Early Hebrew Myths and Their Interpretations," MR&K, pp. 194-203; A. R. Johnson, "Hebrew Conceptions of Kingship," MR&K, pp. 220-35.

shame." Since the two motifs, sleep and drunkenness are found as symbols of the death of Tammuz in Mesopotamian literature, the Psalm likewise uses this terminology to describe the death of Yahweh.⁷⁵ As further proof for this theory, the reference to "the sleeping Baal of Carmel" is cited (1 Kings 18:19ff.)⁷⁶

Psalm 78 no doubt is to be classified as a "historic Psalm." It relates events from history in order to remind the people of the mighty deeds of Yahweh.⁷⁷ Verses 54 to 64 are a description of the conquest of Palestine and the judgment of Yahweh in the time of the Philistines. Verses 65 to 72 tell of Yahweh's continued action in behalf of His people in the election of Zion and David.⁷⁸ According to Widengren verse 61 is to be interpreted as reflecting pagan religious ideas. There is evidence, however, which invalidates this conclusion and points to the very opposite. The previous verses (56-59) describe Yahweh's rebuke on Israel for the practice of a paganized religion. The terms "sleep" and "drunkenness" in verse 65 may indicate an acquaintance with Mesopotamian literature. There is every reason to believe that we here have an "extremely audacious portrayal" of Yahweh's

⁷⁵Widengren, op. cit., p. 192.

⁷⁶Ibid.

⁷⁷A Weiser, Die Psalmen (5. verbesserte Auflage; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1959), p. 366.

⁷⁸H. J. Kraus, op. cit., p. 541; A Weiser, op. cit., p. 369.

advance to His action in figurative language.⁷⁹

Widengren's second reference is also open to serious objection. For in "2 Kings 18:27, where the thought is certainly of sleep in the literal sense as a form of inactivity."⁸⁰ Although ancient Semitic religions had the primitive idea about the deification of the dead, the religion of Israel expressly denied an identification of Yahweh with the dead. It can be definitely established that Israel rejected or radically transformed all conceptions and rites which presupposed or expressed the death and resurrection of the deity.⁸¹ It is conceivable that the northern kingdom succumbed to pagan influences and accepted such a concept,

⁷⁹A. Weiser, op. cit., p. 369. One should not minimize also the comparative force of the preposition "like" or "as" ().

⁸⁰S. Mowinckel, He That Cometh, translated by G. W. Anderson (New York & Nashville: Abingdon Press, c.1956), p. 458.

⁸¹Cf. F. F. Hvidberg, "For in the Old Testament Yahweh nowhere meets us as a dying and rising Deity. In Israelite cultic usage it was not the resurrection or the renewal of Yahweh which was represented, but Yahweh's saving acts on behalf of Israel which was renewed." Graad og Latter i det Gamle Testamente: en Studie i kananaeisk-israelitisk Religion, (Copenhagen: Gad, 1938), p. 118 in G. W. Anderson, "Hebrew Religion," The Old Testament and Modern Study, edited by H. H. Rowley (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1951), p. 296; Johs. Pedersen, op. cit., pp. 441-42; W. F. Albright, Archaeology and the Religion of Israel, (Third edition; Baltimore: The Johns Hopkin's Press, 1953), p. 167; S. Mowinckel, He That Cometh, pp. 86; 457-59; H. H. Rowley, The Faith of Israel (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, c.1957), pp. 161-62.

though this remains an hypothesis.⁸²

Furthermore, there is no absolute evidence in the description of the penitence in the New Year's festival that it involves the death of the king or god. It

does not mean that he dies. An identification of death and penitence is not found in any text. The king can 'experience' the death of the god, as the mystics speak of experiencing and becoming 'one' with God; but, like the mystics, the king does not 'really' die.⁸³

The cry "Yahweh lives!" therefore, does not require the interpretation that Yahweh has been dead and has risen again.⁸⁴ On the contrary, it expresses His immortality, the God who always lives.⁸⁵

The recitation or symbolic representation of the myth of creation is said to be the second parallel to the Mesopotamian ritual:

The creation story of Genesis is enacted during seven days and this fact has been compared to the seven tablets of the Babylonian Epic of Creation as well as with the seven days of the Israelitic Festival of Booths.⁸⁶

⁸²E. O. James, Myth and Ritual in the Ancient Near East, p. 63.

⁸³A. Bentzen, King and Messiah (London: Lutterworth Press, 1955), p. 26.

⁸⁴Widengren, op. cit., p. 191.

⁸⁵A. Bentzen, op. cit., p. 28; cf. A. R. Johnson, MR&K, p. 233.

⁸⁶Widengren, op. cit., p. 175; cf. S. Mowinckel, He That Cometh, pp. 80-81; S. H. Hooke, The Origin of Early Semitic Ritual (London: British Academy, 1938), pp. 55-56.

No Old Testament reference is given by Widengren as proof. The theory therefore is a mere conjecture in an effort to find parallels with the Babylonian Akitu festival in Israel. Professor W. O. E. Oesterly rightly states that as far as the ritual pattern of Israel is concerned "all traces . . . now disappeared."⁸⁷

The third point of similarity to the pattern is the ritual combat. Since Yahweh is fighting, His enemies are pointed out as being the following: Leviathen (Is. 51:9; Ps. 74:12-15), Rahab (Is. 30:7; Ps. 74:12-15; 87:4), Tannin or Tanninim (Is. 51:9-10; Ezek. 29:3; 32:2; Ps. 74:12-15; Job 7:12), Tehom (Gen. 1:2; Ps. 104:6).⁸⁸ Widengren comments on this phase of the ritual: "This mythical battle in the Old Testament texts is described as ending in Yahweh's victory over his enemies, followed by his creation of the world, Gen. 1 (and many other passages)."⁸⁹

Two objections can be raised to this interpretation. In the above references to the struggle between Yahweh and His enemies, the terms under consideration are obviously mere figures of speech applied to powerful nations hostile to

⁸⁷M&R, p. 138.

⁸⁸For the detailed explanation for the term Rahab see Alexander Heidel, op. cit., p. 141; for Tehom and others see ibid., pp. 83-88, 98-114; cf. H. H. Rowley, The Re-Discovery of the Old Testament (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, c.1946), p. 68.

⁸⁹Widengren, op. cit., p. 173.

Yahweh or His people, although one cannot always be able at this remote point of time to determine with certainty what particular nation is meant.⁹⁰

The following references demonstrate this identification: Leviathan and Rahab is used for Egypt and the Egyptians (Is. 51:9-10; Ps. 74:12-15),⁹¹ Rahab for Egypt (Is. 30:7; Ps. 87:4), Tannin for the king of Egypt (Ezek. 29:3; 32:2) and for Egypt and Egyptians (Is. 51:9-10; Ps. 74:12-15).

Chaos is often referred to as the enemy of Yahweh, but it is not the antithetic counterpart of Yahweh, as in the ancient Oriental mythologies. The representation has lost its mythological character entirely and is no more than a survival of figurative language. The preceding texts still indicate a struggle between Yahweh and chaos, "but these passages are clearly symbolic in meaning."⁹² Amos 9:3 describes Yahweh as commanding the serpent who is therefore completely subjected to Him (cf. Ps. 104:26).

It is further suggested that Death is the enemy of Yahweh, who is defeated by Him.⁹³ There is, however, no

⁹⁰A. Heidel, op. cit., p. 108.

⁹¹These passages unquestionably refer to the occasion of Israel's passing through the Red Sea. Ibid., p. 109.

⁹²Th. C. Vriezen, An Outline of Old Testament Theology (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1958), p. 181.

⁹³H. Ringren, The Messiah in the Old Testament (London: SCM Press, 1956), p. 9.

indication whatsoever that "Death" is conceived as a god in the ritual of the Jerusalem cultus. In fact, the mass attack by "Death" is obviously portrayed as an onslaught by the kings (and ipso facto the nations) of the earth.⁹⁴

In concluding our remarks on this point, it should be noted that no proof can be brought that Israel had an important cult drama on New Year's day in which a divine battle myth, borrowed from Canaan or Babylon, was symbolically enacted with the king taking the role of the victorious God. Certainly none of the Old Testament rituals preserved contain any hint of such a drama.⁹⁵

The fourth aspect of the pattern is the sacred marriage. In his Schweich Lectures of 1935 Professor S. H. Hooke states:

Hence it is permissible for us to suppose that the original significance of the booths of greenery was connected with the ritual of the sacred marriage. . . . The transformation of the ancient form of Hebrew ritual under the influence of Jahwism would naturally tend to obliterate this element from the ritual, but there are traces of its existence among the Hebrews in the mention of a goddess Anat-Jahu in the Elephantine Papyri, implying a consort for Jahweh in the ritual of this outlying Hebrew settlement. It may also be inferred that the very frequent occurrence in the prophetic literature of the representation of the relation between Jahweh and Israel as that of husband and wife bears indirect evidence to

⁹⁴A. R. Johnson, Sacral Kingship in Ancient Israel, p. 81.

⁹⁵G. E. Wright, The Old Testament Against Its Environment (London: SCM Press, 1950), p. 66; J. Bright, A History of Israel (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, c.1959), p. 206.

the existence of the sacred marriage as part of Hebrew ritual at an earlier period.⁹⁶

The question of the booths of greenery needs further exploration. In the prologue of the Code of Hammurabi, we read the following words:

. . . the wise king, obedient to mighty Shamash⁹⁷
the one who relaid the foundations of Sippar; who
decked with green the chapels of Aya; the designer
of the temple of Ebabbar, which is like a heavenly
dwelling."⁹⁸

The text says that Hammurabi decked the chapels (gigunu) of Aya with green. Hooke now explains "gigunu" as follows:

In his discussion of the meaning of gigunu, Mr. Sidney Smith has shown good grounds for supposing that the gigunu was a chamber used for the ritual of the sacred marriage.⁹⁹

Hooke concedes that he has no absolutely positive evidence for the meaning of gigunu as chamber. Furthermore, we are not told what connection the gigunu has with the booths of Israel. Even if we were told what it is, it still would not follow that the booth was the chamber of the sacred marriage in Israel. We have also shown the inadequacy of the claim that the mention of Anath in Elephantine is evidence

⁹⁶The Origin of Early Semitic Ritual, p. 54. Cf. Th. H. Robinson, "Hebrew Myths," M&R, pp. 183-85.

⁹⁷The sun-god and the god of justice, the consort of Aya, worshipped especially in the temple of Ebabbar in Sippar in northern Babylonia, modern Abu Habba. ANET, p.164.

⁹⁸Ibid.

⁹⁹The Origin of Early Semitic Ritual, p. 54.

for the existence of the sacred marriage in Israel.¹⁰⁰ Since Yahweh is not represented as having any sex, the relation between Him and Israel as that of husband and wife is merely a figurative expression. There is therefore no basis for the conclusion that Israel's ritual included a sacred marriage ceremony.

The fifth and last item of the suggested pattern is the triumphal procession. We quote Professor Th. H. Gaster on this point:

The Psalms, it is now admitted, were, in general, more than mere lyric outpourings of individual piety. In many cases they possessed at the same time a distinctly liturgical function, being recited or chanted as the accompaniments of ritual ceremonies and procedures. These, for example, which begin with the words 'The Lord is become king' (i.e. Pss. 93, 97 and 99) are now generally recognized to have been patterned after a traditional style of hymn composed for the annual enthronement of the deity at the New Year Festival; while the long and difficult Psalm 68, with its reference to Yahweh's 'goings' to the Temple (v. 25), is now commonly explained as a 'processional' designed for the same occasion.¹⁰¹

We have shown¹⁰² that Yahweh-King-Psalms are not connected to the New Year festival. It is noteworthy also that there is no indisputable statement concerning the enthronement of Yahweh in any of these Psalms or even in

¹⁰⁰Supra. p. 70.

¹⁰¹Thespis: Ritual, Myth and Drama in the Ancient Near East (New York: Henry Schuman, 1950), p. 73.

¹⁰²Supra. p. 107.

other Old Testament passages.¹⁰³ The fact deserves to be stressed since "Das argumentum e silentio ist hier nicht unwichtig."¹⁰⁴

Furthermore, at present there is no clear evidence that these Psalms were used at the autumnal festival, even in later period. We do know, however, that they do not occur in the Rosh hashshannah liturgy. As a matter of fact, the Yahweh-King-Psalms are, every one of them, Sabbath Psalms in the Jewish liturgies.¹⁰⁵

The Psalms exult that the throne of Yahweh is standing firmly forever (Ps. 93:2; cf. 97:2; 99:4). Therefore, Yahweh does not need to be periodically re-enthroned or renewed in His power¹⁰⁶ as mere gods of ancient Oriental world. Yahweh is recognized as the Living God, who exists and who is also present among His people under all circumstances. The eternal element in Yahweh's Being is presupposed in the Old Testament and so is the eternity of His rule.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰³W. O. E. Oesterley, op. cit., p. 138; cf. G. W. Anderson, op. cit., p. 299.

¹⁰⁴H. J. Kraus, Die Königsherrschaft Gottes im Alten Testament (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1951), p. 21.

¹⁰⁵N. Snaith, op. cit., pp. 200-201; E. O. James, Myth and Ritual in the Ancient Near East, p. 67.

¹⁰⁶H. J. Kraus, Psalmen, p. lxvii.

¹⁰⁷Th. C. Vriezen, op. cit., pp. 182-83.

In conclusion it should be added here that a cultic re-enactment of myth, based upon elements of sympathetic magic, is completely foreign to Israelite worship. It should also not be forgotten that the "assumption that virtually all of the Psalms and much other Old Testament literature were composed as ritual material for use in the cult cannot be proved."¹⁰⁸

One can suppose that some in Israel may have succumbed to the pagan temptation of celebrating a festival for enthronement of Yahweh. But there is no record of it although other forms of idolatry are mentioned. If there were enthronement ceremonies of both the divine and human kings, even in a modified form, there is no doubt that the prophets would have emphatically rejected such a presumption on the part of the human king in the festival.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁸G. E. Wright, The Old Testament Against Its Environment, p. 66. Cf. "As it happens, the traces of this hypothetical myth and ritual pattern were found to be very slight and indeed quite fragmentary so far as ancient Israel was concerned." A. R. Johnson, MR&K, p. 226.

¹⁰⁹G. E. Wright, The Old Testament Against Its Environment, p. 97.

CHAPTER VI

KING YAHWEH AS THE UNIVERSAL SAVIOR

The Kingship of Yahweh appears to be manifested in three concentric circles: in a narrower circle He appears as the warrior king who fights for His people Israel and brings deliverance to them; in the wider circle He is the Lord who creates and sustains the universe; and in the most comprehensive circle He appears as the King of Justice and mercy by punishing those who rebel and by vindicating the righteous.¹ These circles do not represent a chronological development of the idea, but simply signify a logical grouping of the activities of His Kingship.

The Kingship of Yahweh Manifested in His Acts of Salvation

As a warrior king, Yahweh will rule, guide, help and fight for Israel; He will protect her from physical harm and save her from national disaster. In the history of Israel there are clear witnesses to the manifestation of Yahweh as Savior. Exodus 15 describes the triumphant character of His Kingship and calls him the "Man of war" (v. 3). This verse is a part of the song, praising Him for His miraculous deliverance of Israel from the power of Egypt. His Kingship manifests

¹J. L. McKenzie, "God and Nature in the Old Testament," The Catholic Biblical Quarterly, XIV (1952), 132.

itself in His act of saving His people that they might serve His purposes. Numbers 23:21 describes the joy of Israel. Since Yahweh dwells and rules as King in the midst of her she shouts in jubilation. This song also refers to the Exodus and speaks of His victorious guidance.

Deuteronomy 33:5a reads, "And He became King in Jeshurun." In the context the subject is certainly Yahweh. The passage then refers to the assembling of the nation after the Exodus (cf. Ex. 19:17ff.) and the convocation at Sinai to enter into covenant with Yahweh. (Deut. 4:11ff.). Similar to the suzerainty treaties² of the ancient world, Yahweh exercises His Kingship by providing a covenant. Yahweh is the One who took the initiative, who makes Himself known as He is in His grace and compassion to His people.

The Kingship of Yahweh is mentioned also in connection with the formation of the monarchy. Samuel says to Israel: "And when you saw Nahash the king of the Ammonites come against you, you said to me, 'No, but a king shall reign over us,' although Yahweh your God was your King" (1 Sam. 12:12; cf. 1 Sam. 8:7). This passage clearly demonstrates

²For the suzerainty treaties see G. E. Mendenhall, Law and Covenant in Israel and the Ancient Near East (Pittsburgh: Biblical Colloquium, 1955); cf. J. A. Fitzmyer, "The Aramaic Suzerainty Treaty from Sefire in the Museum of Beirut," The Catholic Biblical Quarterly, XX (October, 1958), 444-76.

that a king is regarded as a deliverer in such a national emergency.

In the sixth chapter of Isaiah, the prophet says at the time of his "call": "Woe unto me! . . . for my eyes have seen the King, Yahweh Sebaoth!" (v. 5). This glorious description of Yahweh's Kingship is interpreted by some as reflecting the New Year's festival with its enthronement day.³ When viewed in its context, however, this passage gives no support to the cult theory of the Kingship of Yahweh. Chapter six appears to be the prelude to the story of how in the name of Yahweh Isaiah opposed the earthly sovereign Ahaz and sketched the portrait of the messianic ruler who would be all that Ahaz was not. Isaiah criticized Ahaz on the ground that the human king was not showing proper reliance on the divine king and thereby indicated that his conception of Yahweh's sovereignty was not derived from a cult drama.⁴ Yahweh's royal glory is described as filling the whole earth and not only a corner of the temple. From the above observations it is clear that at this occasion Yahweh is about to proclaim a new work for the salvation of Israel and therefore He shows His royal appearance to Isaiah for his encouragement.

³I. Engnell, The Call of Isaiah: an Exegetical and Comparative Study ("Uppsala Universitets Arsskrift, 1949:4"; Uppsala: Lundequistaska Bokhandeln, 1949).

⁴N. Porteus, The Kingship of Adonai in Pre-exilic Hebrew Religion (London: Shapiro, Vallentine & Co., 1938), pp. 5-6.

Isaiah 24:23 reads: "Then will the moon turn pale with confusion, and the sun ashamed, for Yahweh Sebaoth will reign on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem and before His elders He will manifest His glory." This passage is a part of the so-called "Apocalypse of Isaiah." Yahweh manifests His Kingship by punishing the host of heaven and the kings of the earth. They will be gathered together like prisoners in a dungeon and after many days they will be punished (24:21-22). The defeat of the enemies (the kings of the earth, etc.) is in contrast here to the blessed state of the elders; judgment of the wicked is the other side of the picture of the salvation of His people.

An undisputable passage declaring the Kingship of Yahweh as the Savior is recorded in Isaiah 33:22, "For Yahweh is our judge, Yahweh is our lawgiver (statute-maker or ruler, following LXX ἀρχων), Yahweh is our king, He will save us."

As an introduction to the first "Servant Song," Yahweh challenges the idols of man which cannot predict, or do good, or harm, but are simply nothing (Is. 41:21-24). However, the One who stirred up one from the north, who shall tread down rulers like mortar as the potter tramples clay, who foretold coming things, and who sent heralds of good news to Jerusalem (Is. 41:25-27) is the King of Jacob (Is. 41:21).

Isaiah 43:14-15 read:

Thus says Yahweh, your Redeemer,⁵ the Holy One of Israel:

⁵For the recent discussion on the meaning of $\{X\lambda\}$, cf. A. R. Johnson, "The Primary Meaning of $\{X\lambda\}$," *Supplements to Vetus Testamentum*, I (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1953), pp. 67-77.

'For your sake I will send to Babylon and bring down all the bars, and Chaldeans, whose ringing cry is in the ships. For I am Yahweh your Holy One, the Creator of Israel your King.'

This King Yahweh is doing a new thing: He will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert to give drink to His chosen people (Is. 41:19-20).

Another text in Isaiah which speaks clearly of Yahweh as the Savior is Isaiah 44:6, "Thus says Yahweh, the King of Israel and his Redeemer, Yahweh Sebaoth: 'I am the first and I am the last; and besides me there is no god.'" So also Isaiah 52:7:

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good tidings, who publishes peace, who brings good tidings of good, who publishes salvation, who says to Zion, 'Your God reigns.'

Jeremiah 8:19-20 read:

Behold the voice of the cry of the daughter of my people from the land of distances: 'Is Yahweh not in Zion? Is her King not in her?' 'Why have they provoked me to anger with their graven images, with their foreign vanities?' 'The harvest is past, the summer is over, and we are not saved.'

This section consists of the prophet's word, the people's cry, and Yahweh's answer. As the context indicates, the Kingship of Yahweh is associated with salvation in the mind and thinking of the people.

In Ezekiel 20:33-35 we read:

'As I live,' says the Lord Yahweh, 'surely with a strong hand and an outstretched arm, and with wrath poured out, I will be king over you. And I will bring you out from the peoples and gather you out of the countries where you are scattered, with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, and with wrath poured out; and I will bring you into

the wilderness of the peoples, and there I will enter into judgment with you face to face.'

These verses are a part of the judgment which will result in the purification of Israel scattered among the heathen (vv. 32-38). The words, "with a strong and an outstretched arm," are a standing expression in the Pentateuch for the mighty acts by which Yahweh liberated His people from the power of the Egyptians and led them out of Egypt (cf. Ex. 6:1,6; Deut. 4:34; 5:15; 7:17; etc.). His promise of deliverance is connected in Ezekiel with "wrath poured out," whereas Exodus mentions "great judgments" (Ex. 6:6). Yahweh clearly acts as King in delivering Israel from the midst of the heathen.

Micah 2:12-13 state:

I will surely gather all of you; I will surely gather the remnant of Israel; I will set them together like sheep in a fold, like a flock of Bozrah, like a herd in the midst of their pasture: they will murmur with men. The breaker comes up before them; they break through and pass the gate, going out by it; and their King will pass on before them, and Yahweh at their head.

This section has been much discussed and various interpretations have been offered by commentators. However, the promise of Yahweh in behalf of His people is clear. The time will come when Yahweh will assemble the remnant of Israel and miraculously multiply them, and redeem them as their King and lead them home.

In Micah 4:6-7 we find:

'In that day' says Yahweh, 'I will assemble the lame, and I will gather the outcast and her whom I have afflicted. And I will make the lame the remnant, and the far removed for a strong nation; and Yahweh will reign over them in Mount Zion from now on and forever.'

This is obviously a picture of Yahweh's future Kingdom, in which those who are unfortunate and in misery are not excluded from its salvation.

Zephaniah 3:15 reads, "Yahweh has taken away your judgments, he has cast out your enemies. The King of Israel, Yahweh, is in your midst; you shall fear evil no more." Here King Yahweh takes away judgments and enemies, and gives peace to Israel. He is, therefore, truly the Savior.

The Psalmists praise Yahweh as King, thank Him for what He has done for them, ask deliverance from evil, and adore His glorious name. They employ various poetic and figurative forms to express their beautiful and lofty thoughts. Some of them also describe Yahweh as a King who answers prayer (Ps. 5:2-3, EVV. 5:1-2). He gives joy and protection to those who take refuge in Him (Ps. 5:11-12, EVV. 5:10-11). He judges the evildoer, hears the desire of the meek and does justice for the orphan and the oppressed (Ps. 10:14-18). He sits as King forever, gives strength to His people, and blesses His people with peace (Ps. 29:10-11).

The Psalmist sings, "Thou art my King, O God: Command deliverances for Jacob" (Ps. 44:5, EVV. 44:4). Yahweh is a great King over all the earth and subdues nations under the feet of His people and chooses their inheritance for them (Ps. 47:3-9, EVV. 47:2-8). Yahweh, the great King of Zion, is known as a stronghold, a tower of strength and a sure defense for His people (Ps. 48:3-5, EVV. 48:2-4). His King-

ship is thought of as carrying with it the responsibility of acting as the heavenly Judge and exercising His power in defense of His people from His royal throne (vv. 11-12, EVV. 10-11). In other words, His righteousness and justice prevail over the forces of darkness and evil. He is, therefore, praised and honored by His people. The King is the God of salvation who provides escape from death and crushes the head of his foes (Ps. 68:21-25, EVV. 68:20-24).

Again the Psalmist says, "God my King is from of old, working salvation in the midst of the earth" (Ps. 74:12). Yahweh is the Rock of His people's salvation and a great King above all gods (Ps. 95:1-3). Yahweh's Kingship must be declared and His salvation proclaimed from day to day (Ps. 96:2-10). Since Yahweh has done a wonderful thing in making known His salvation so that all the ends of the earth saw the salvation of God, praise and song ought to be given the King Yahweh (Ps. 98:1-6). King Yahweh is the holy God, who gives answers to His people and forgives them but also takes vengeance for their wrongdoings (Ps. 99).

As God and King the Psalmist praises Yahweh for what He has done for him: He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love; He fulfills the desire of all who fear Him by hearing their cry and saving them (Ps. 145). Yahweh is the King who executes justice for the oppressed, gives food to the hungry, sets the prisoners free, opens the eyes of the blind, lifts up those who are bowed down

in distress and humiliation, loves the righteous, watches over the strangers, supports the orphan and the widow, and bends the way of the wicked (Ps. 146). Yahweh is also the Preserver and the King of Zion, who adorns the humble with salvation (Ps. 149).

1 Chronicles 16:28-36 is another passage which describes Yahweh as King and the God of salvation who delivers His people from the nations.

In all the above texts Yahweh, the King of His people is at the same time the Savior and Deliverer of His people from distress, misery, oppression, evil, and the power of the enemy.

Yahweh the King of the Universe

While Yahweh is primarily the God of Israel and Israel is the great bridge-head in His campaign against the forces of evil,⁶ His reign is worldwide and assumes cosmic proportions.

Yahweh is the King of the universe by virtue of the fact that he has created it and sustains it. As we have seen, Yahweh is the King of Israel because He has chosen her as His people. Yahweh therefore was no national hero or patron, bound to His worshippers by ties of blood and cult. Having cosmic power over the entire universe, He had chosen Israel

⁶A. R. Johnson, Sacral Kingship in Ancient Israel (Cardiff: The University of Wales Press, 1955), p. 132. This will be cited as Sacral Kingship.

and made a covenant with her according to His own good will and pleasure. He did not need Israel but she owed her peculiar position solely to His goodness and mercy.

The concept of Yahweh as the King of the universe is old. In the Song of Deborah, Yahweh is described as marching forth from Seir and the field of Edom to help His people against Sisera. The prophetess recognized him as the Lord in Edom as well as in Sinai, even though Edom did not acknowledge him but worshipped its own national god Qaus, lord of the bow.⁷

The universal character of Yahweh's Kingship is stressed at the time of David and Solomon. David and Solomon controlled virtually all of Palestine and Syria; all the deities of the conquered peoples were unable to save them from the power of Yahweh. In the Temple in Jerusalem He was worshipped as the sole ruler of the entire universe, sharing His power and functions with no pagan deities.⁸

In his Temple Dedicatory prayer Solomon says, "Yahweh, God of Israel, there is no God like Thee, in heavens above or on earth beneath. . . ." (1 Kings 8:23). Since Yahweh's incomparable existence is here described as without limits, we have at the same time an indication of His cosmic Kingship.

Jeremiah testified to Yahweh's universal kingship in these words: "Who would not fear thee, O King of the nations? For this is thy due; for among all the wise ones of the nations

⁷W. F. Albright, Archaeology and the Religion of Israel (Second edition; Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1946), p. 117.

⁸Ibid., pp. 154-55.

and in all their kingdoms there is none like thee." (Jer. 10:7). The prophet also says, "But Yahweh is the God of truth; He is the living God and the King of eternity. At His wrath the earth trembles, and the nations cannot endure His indignation" (Jer. 10:10). Jeremiah 46:18 and 19 read:

'As I live,' says the King, whose name is Yahweh Sebaoth, 'like Tabor among mountains and like Carmel by the sea, shall one come. Prepare yourselves vessels for exile, O inhabitants of Egypt! For Noph (Memphis) shall become a waste, a ruin, without inhabitant.'

Yahweh King advises the Egyptians, as well as His own people to escape from the coming judgment.

Concerning Moab we read: "Desolated is Moab and her cities and the choicest of his young men have gone down to slaughter, says the King, whose name is Yahweh Sebaoth" (Jer. 48:15). Here Yahweh is called the King, contesting the belief of the Moabites that their god Chemosh was the king of his people (cf. Jer. 48:7). Yahweh, the Ruler of the whole world is the true King of the Moabites too, regardless of their worship of Chemosh. In Jeremiah 51:57 we read:

'I will make drunk her princes and her wise men, her governors, her commanders, and her mighty men; they shall sleep a perpetual sleep and not wake,' says the King, whose name is Yahweh Sebaoth.

Yahweh's sovereign power is clearly expressed here. He will even punish the god-king of Babylon, namely, Bel,⁹ for He says: "I will punish Bel in Babylon. . . ." (Jer. 51:44; cf. 50:2).

⁹Cf. Chapter II.

Important passages concerning the universal Kingship of Yahweh are recorded in the Book of Zechariah. Zechariah 14:9 reads, "And Yahweh will be King over all the earth; on that day Yahweh will be one and His name, one." The prophet is referring to a coming event when Yahweh will be mentioned and revered. It seems that here both the unity and uniqueness of God are stressed. Yahweh is one Being and not divided by time, space, and circumstances. And this is true because Yahweh is the unique God, that is, He alone is the true God.¹⁰ Verses 16-19 of the same chapter read:

And it shall come to pass that every remnant of all nations that have come against Jerusalem, shall go up year after year to worship the King, Yahweh Sebaoth, and to celebrate the feast of booths. And it shall come to pass that if anyone of the families of the earth does not go up to Jerusalem to worship the King, Yahweh Sebaoth, there will be no rain upon them. And if the family of Egypt does not go up, and come not, then also not upon them; there will be the plague with which Yahweh will plague all nations which do not go up to celebrate the feast of booths. This shall be the sin of Egypt, and the sin of all nations, which do not go up to celebrate the feast of booths.

The remnant of those who marched against Jerusalem will turn to the worship of Yahweh. The entrance of the remnant into the Kingdom of Yahweh is depicted under the figure of the festival journeys to the sanctuary of Yahweh, which had to be repeated every year. Here the feast of booths is particularly mentioned not because it occurred in autumn and autumn was the best time of the year for travelling, or because it

¹⁰Th. C. Vriezen, An Outline of Old Testament Theology (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1958), pp. 175-77.

was regarded by the Israelites as the great feast of rejoicing,¹¹ or because it was the celebration of the royal festival in which the great drama of the end time was performed,¹² but it is specifically mentioned because the celebration of the feast of the booths becomes symbolical of the incorporation of the remnant in the Kingdom of God.

According to Leviticus 23:33-44 it was a feast of thanksgiving for the gracious protection afforded by Yahweh to His people in their wanderings through the desert and for their entry into the promised land with its abundance of glorious blessings.¹³ This feast will not only be for Israel but also for the remnant of all nations to signify that they have come to worship Yahweh as their God and King just as the Israelites did. But, if anyone refuses to present himself at the feast of boths in Jerusalem he, like the Israelites, will receive as punishment the withholding of rain, preventing a normal harvest in the following year. Egypt receives special treatment, since that country is,

¹¹E. W. Hengstenberg, Christology of the Old Testament, and a Commentary on the Messianic Predictions, translated from the German by J. Martin (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1858), IV, pp. 145-46.

¹²S. Mowinckel, He That Cometh, translated by G. W. Anderson (New York & Nashville: Abingdon Press, c.1956), p. 339.

¹³C. F. Keil, The Twelve Minor Prophets, in Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament, translated from the German by J. Martin (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1954), p. 412; Hengstenberg, op. cit., p. 146.

and always has been, watered, not by rain, but by the river Nile (cf. Deut. 11:10).¹⁴ Its punishment, therefore, comes in the form of plagues, perhaps like those mentioned in Zechariah 14:12,15.

Malachi 1:14 reads,

And cursed be the cheat, in whose flock is a male,
and vows it, and sacrifices to the Lord what is
blemished; for I am a great King, says Yahweh Sebaoth,
and my name is feared among the nations.

The expression "a great King" indicates Yahweh's majesty which is to be feared among the nations.

The Psalms give a more vivid picture of the universal Kingship of Yahweh. Psalm 24 praises Him as the Possessor of the world (v. 1) and its Creator (v. 2). He is, therefore, the Lord of the world. Psalm 29:10 describes Yahweh as sitting over the flood and as King forever. He is the Lord of the universe who even controls the flood. The power of the King extends to natural forces, even the personified chaotic power of evil. Psalm 47 celebrates Yahweh as the universal King and the highest God of all peoples. Hence he receives universal homage and glorification as the sovereign Lord of the world.

Psalm 93 presents Yahweh as the King and Lord of the whole world. The sovereign creator and Lord of the world is unchangeable and eternal. The continued existence of the

¹⁴C. F. Keil, op. cit., p. 413.

earth is a testimony to it.¹⁵ Psalm 95 magnifies Yahweh as the King of the world (vv. 3-5). Another Yahweh-King-Psalm (96) also asserts the fact that the comprehensive and universal Kingship of Yahweh has been made known to the people of the world.¹⁶ Psalm 97 describes Yahweh as coming and manifesting Himself before all as the King of the world. Psalm 98 says that Yahweh appears as the King of all creation before the eyes of all peoples. Psalm 99 begins with the shout of homage: Yahweh is King in the world. Psalm 103:19-22 praises Yahweh as the universal King who sets His throne in heaven.

Thus the Old Testament throughout describes the Kingship of Yahweh as unique and unchallenged in the world.

Yahweh, the Universal Savior-King

Yahweh, the universal King, directs history in order to bring about the salvation of His people. He does not tolerate evil or let it defeat his saving purposes. His deliverance of Israel through the Exodus was accompanied by His execution of judgment and punishment of the wicked as a manifestation of His justice and for the protection of the righteous. Yahweh punishes "the kings of the earth" (Is. 24: 21-22) in behalf of His people. Because He is a God of

¹⁵H. J. Kraus, Psalmen (Neukirchen: Verlag der Buchhandlung der Erziehungsvereins, 1960), pp. 650-51.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 669.

recompense (Jer. 51:56), He brings retribution upon Babylon. He judges the idol worshippers (Ezek. 20:33), and punishes those who do not observe the feast of booths among all nations with drought and plague (Zech. 14:17-19).

Yahweh, the Redeemer, the Holy One, the Creator and the King of Israel is also the Savior of the world (Is. 43:14ff.). The universal King appeared to Isaiah (Is. 6:1-5) and commissioned him to be the messenger of good tidings and as such He could raise the gentile Cyrus as His earthly agent for executing His purpose (Is. 45:1-2). His saving acts are designed for the benefit of all men. He employed Israel as the tool to achieve His plan and purpose of bringing men everywhere into one holy and righteous community. This ultimate goal is called a "new thing" and is mentioned several times in the Book of Isaiah (42:9; 43:19; 48:6).¹⁷ It is described in terms of a highway leading through a desert blossoming and flowing with water (cf. Is. 35; 40:3-5; 41:18f.; 42:16; 48:21; 49:9-11; 55:12-13).

Some nations outside of Israel are specifically mentioned as included in King Yahweh's reign. He cares for the Egyptians and is concerned with their salvation (Jer. 46:18-19). Obadiah 21 reads, "Saviors shall go up to Mount Zion to rule

¹⁷Cf. C. R. North, "The 'Former Things' and the 'New Things' in Deutero-Isaiah," Studies in Old Testament Prophecy, edited by H. H. Rowley (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1950), pp. 111-26.

Mount Esau, and the kingdom shall be Yahweh's." When Saviors ($\text{D}^{\prime}\text{y}\psi^{\prime}\text{h}$, not $\text{D}^{\prime}\text{y}\psi^{\prime}\text{h}$] with LXX and Syriac) are ruling Mount Esau, the dominion of the people of Yahweh even over the heathen world has been achieved. Then Yahweh will show Himself to the world as the King of the universe and will be acknowledged by the nations of the earth.

Micah proclaims Yahweh's glorious reign over all the peoples of the world. The prophet describes the nations of the world eventually coming to worship Yahweh at the mountain of the house of Yahweh with Israel and sharing the joy of salvation with them (Mic. 4:1-8; cf. Is. 2:2ff.).

Psalm 9:5 (EVV. 4) reads, "For Thou hast maintained my right and my cause, Thou hast sat on the throne, a righteous Judge." This psalm praises the righteous Judge and His defeat of hostile peoples. Taking His position upon the judgment seat, He executes justice by vindicating the cause of His people. This Judge sits enthroned forever (v. 8) and punishes evil ones (v. 18). But He gives salvation to His people (v. 15) and satisfies the needy (v. 19).

Psalm 24 refers to the universal saviorship of Yahweh. He is the One who has been proved to be "mighty in battle" (v. 8); He is a victorious warrior who triumphs over every evil.¹⁸ He is, therefore, called the King of Glory (vv. 7,10).

¹⁸ A. R. Johnson, Sacral Kingship, p. 65.

The Yahweh-King-Psalms, as we have seen, point to Yahweh as the Creator and Maintainer of the cosmos. But they also speak of Him as the Savior of the nations. According to Psalm 47:9-10 God sits on the throne and the rulers of the nations, that is, the representatives of the peoples, gather together to pay homage to Him. In this great scene, the nations share the salvation of Yahweh with Israel; they have become the people of the God of Abraham (v. 10). Incidentally, the title of "king" is given here to Yahweh alone and not to any earthly ruler.¹⁹

Psalm 89 indicates that the Kingdom of Yahweh is based on righteousness and justice as its foundation (v. 15, EVV, 14). With these He governs the nations of the world. Psalm 93:1a reads, "Yahweh is King; He is clothed with majesty; Yahweh is clothed, He is girded with strength." His royal robes consist of His victories. He judges the world with righteousness and truth (Ps. 96:10-13). As King, He vindicates His people, overthrows the evil forces, makes His righteous purposes prevail, and brings to His people uprightness and goodness, peace and happiness, enabling them to sing a new song.²⁰

¹⁹A. Weiser, Die Psalmen (5. verfasserte Auflage; Gottingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1959), p. 255.

²⁰G. F. Moore, Judaism in the First Centuries of the Christian Era (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1927), I, 432.

As King of righteousness and justice (Ps. 97:20) he preserves His saints from the hands of the wicked (Ps. 97:10). He manifests His salvation to the ends of the earth (Ps. 98:4), judging the world with justice and equity (Ps. 98:9). Because King Yahweh is powerful, He delivers His people from their enemies (Ps. 99:4); He is holy and righteous, thus, He can judge the world (Ps. 99:3-4).

We have surveyed individual texts which apply the word יְהוָה or יְהוָה to Yahweh. The whole Old Testament can be, however, said to be the Book of Salvation because it records Yahweh's exercise of His Kingship: punishing the wicked and vindicating and saving the righteous. The Old Testament is a part of the manifestation and the execution of His whole plan to save men. His final goal is the establishment of a universal community in which men will be in perfect harmony with the will of Yahweh.²¹ The restoration of His glorious Kingdom is pictured in terms of the establishment of cosmic order, the realization of His rulership looks forward to the coming of His Son Jesus Christ to redeem men from the power of sin, death and the devil and to His return in glory to consummate His eternal kingdom in a new heaven and a new earth.

The saving acts of Yahweh therefore are not only world-wide, but also timeless in extent. There are passages that are so comprehensive in scope as to include His Kingship in

²¹A. R. Johnson, Sacral Kingship, p. 132.

the past and future as well. (Ex. 15:18; 1 Sam. 12:12; Ps. 145:11ff.; 146:10). Others accentuate particularly the element of expectation in the future (Is. 24:23; 33:22; Obad. 21; Mic. 4:7; Zeph. 3:15; Zech. 14:9; 16-17; Ps. 10:16; 29:10).²²

This blessed rule of Yahweh is thus of unlimited scope of space and time and is not restricted to a limited number of people. The Psalmist, therefore, shouts "O sing to Yahweh a new song; sing to Yahweh, all the earth" (Ps. 96:1).

The Kingship of Yahweh and the Response of Man

Man indicates his response to King Yahweh in the act of worship. Yahweh exercises His royal power over His people by saving them, forgiving their sins and establishing His rule in their hearts. Man responds by worshipping his powerful and gracious King. His grateful devotion to and humble adoration of his Savior King may express itself in the inward thoughts and the unspoken meditation of his heart. The Psalmist says that Yahweh pays attention to his groaning (Ps. 5:2), and another describes his soul and heart as desiring Yahweh King (Ps. 84:3-4, EVV, 84:2-3). This personal communion between Yahweh and man without external forms is recognized and stressed particularly by the prophets.

²²G. von Rad, "Melek und Malkut im A.T." (s.v. βασιλεύς), Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament, edited by G. Kittel (Stuttgart: Verlag von W. Kohlhammer, 1933), I, p. 567.

Micah, for example, rejects the mechanical performance of the external forms of religion and insists that those are true subjects of the King who express their loyalty to Him by doing justice, loving kindness, and walking humbly with their God (Mic. 6:8).²³

The King also gives His people an opportunity to express His sway over their hearts in external forms of the cult. By its complex ceremonies and acts of worship, if performed from the heart, communion between Yahweh and man is created and renewed. Yahweh's saving activity in history is recalled and celebrated without ceasing so that the psalmist can say: "Every day²⁴ I will bless Thee, and praise Thy name for ever and ever" (Ps. 145:2).

The response to Yahweh's Kingship, however, is not limited to any particular time or space. Israelite cultic exercises are prescribed for various seasons as a convenient means to teach the historical basis of their religion and to remind them of their constant need of the gracious forgiveness of their King, and oriented by cultic and eschatological overtone.

If this response of man to honor King Yahweh is to be associated particularly with one of the great annual festivals,

²³Th. C. Vriezen, op. cit., p. 282.

²⁴These words ($\text{בְּכָל־יְמֵי־חַיָּיִךְ}$) can be rendered "All day long," cf. A. Weiser, op. cit., p. 570.

then no doubt the Sukkoth festival suggests itself because the worship at this occasion was largely given over to thanksgiving. As we have seen in Chapter V of this thesis, the celebration of this feast as the feast par excellence consisted of harvest thanksgiving festivities, commemorating Yahweh's saving activities in the wilderness, and being reminded of the covenant with Yahweh.

While it can not be proved that it was a New Year's or enthronement festival, as we have seen in the previous chapter, the act of response may have included the celebration of the covenant renewal (Bundeserneuerungsfest)²⁵ at least septennially. Some suggestions to substantiate such a rite may be found in the Old Testament. There is a prescription that the law be read at the Sukkoth festival at the end of every seven years (Deut. 31:10ff. cf. Neh. 8). We also have the record of the renewal of the covenant on certain occasions such as at the time of Joshua (Josh. 24).

Recently Professor Hans-Joachim Kraus has suggested that an annual feast of the "Choice of Jerusalem" (Erwählung Jerusalems)²⁶ or the "Royal feast of Zion" (Das königliche

²⁵Ibid., pp. 22-35; H. J. Kraus, "Das Fest der Bundeserneuerung," Gottesdienst in Israel: Studien zur Geschichte des Laubhüttenfestes (München: Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1954), pp. 49-66.

²⁶Psalmen, pp. lxivff., 879-83. Cf. Walther Eichrodt, Theologie des Alten Testaments (5. neubearbeitete Auflage; Stuttgart: Ehrenfried Klotz Verlag, 1957), I, 71-75.

Zionfest) was celebrated.²⁷ Yahweh was regarded as dwelling in the city of Jerusalem and therefore Zion is the city of the deus praesens. This festival is not the ceremony of Yahweh's enthronement, but a cultic enactment, based on the "cult-legend" of 2 Samuel 6 and demonstrating "Choice of Jerusalem" as the verbum visibile of the cult-community (cf. Ps. 132:13ff). Kraus stresses the significance of the choice of Zion and the central position of the Davidic dynasty and bases his thesis mainly on his interpretation of certain Psalms, of 2 Samuel 6 and 7, and of 1 Kings 8. These factors lead him to believe that the "Royal feast of Zion" is to be associated with the first day of the Sukkoth festival in its pre-exilic form.²⁸

While the possibility that such a festival took place during the reigns of David and Solomon may be granted, further evidence needs to be cited from the rest of the Old Testament, before its actual celebration can be considered proven.

²⁷ Psalmen, p. 882; Die Königsherrschaft Gottes im Alten Testament: Untersuchungen zu den Liedern von Jahwes Thronbesteigung (Tübingen: Verlag J. C. B. Mohr, 1951), pp. 27ff.; Gottesdienst in Israel, pp. 68ff.

²⁸ Die Königsherrschaft Gottes im Alten Testament, p. 47.

CHAPTER VII

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

A similarity is often found in the external forms, in the cultus and in the descriptive terms of various religions. But it is dangerous to make facile generalizations. Similar terms frequently do not mean exactly the same thing and therefore need a careful investigation before general conclusions can be drawn. We have seen, for example, that the "Myth and Ritual pattern" does not fit all ancient Near Eastern religions. By a careful investigation of the primary sources, we found out that the supposed pattern lacks exact uniformity in the Near East. There are points of diversity in practice and the connotations of terms, although superficially they appear to be similar in Mesopotamia and Egypt. In summarizing these differences, a quotation from Frankfort will serve our purpose:

The Mesopotamian mother goddess has no counterpart in Egypt where life is believed to proceed from the male principle, even if it is seen as chthonic [sic]. There is no "mother earth." In Egypt the king was divine in essence and the conception of a "substitute king," or of deposition or humiliation is unknown and unthinkable. In Mesopotamia the king was a mortal who led humanity in its servitude. . . .¹

¹H. Frankfort, "The Absence of a Pattern in the Religions of the Ancient Near East," Proceedings of the 7th Congress for the History of Religions, Amsterdam, 4th-9th September 1950, edited by C. J. Bleeker, G. W. J. Drewes and K. A. H. Hidding (Amsterdam: North-Holland Publishing Co., 1951), p. 100

We have also demonstrated that the revelation of Yahweh made Israel basically different from the surrounding nations, even though she was small and weak. Here the king ruled the nation as Yahweh's designated agent. While he was to exercise his royal functions with profound humility under the לְיְהוָה , he nevertheless represented Yahweh's rule over Israel and was a type of His promised coming as King.

Because Israel's faith did not grow from a natural religion but was based on Yahweh's revelation, the concept of His kingship also differed significantly from that of divine kingship of her neighbors. Sufficient evidence for the peculiar character of the kingship of Yahweh is at hand in the Old Testament. It is described as unique in its transcendence over all creatures. There is no need of a myth to explain its origin. The King of Israel is furthermore the merciful and gracious God who has entered into a covenant of grace with His people. Since He is not an arbitrary tyrant or an impersonal force, man can freely approach Him and trust His saving power.

We have demonstrated the differences between the observance of the Sukkoth festival and the cultic exercises in Jerusalem in connection with an alleged celebration of the New Year and an "Enthronement Festival." The lack of a myth and ritual pattern in Israel is so apparent as to disprove any "procrustean generalization."

In the final chapter we have attempted to make a study of the way in which the Old Testament tells of the Kingship

of Yahweh in terms of a universal Savior. Yahweh is the Protector of Israel. Yet He rules not only as her King; He is the Creator and Maintainer of the whole universe. As the King of justice He delivers His people from evil. The Savior of the universe is praiseworthy and He is to be worshipped. Thus, man's thanksgiving for His deliverance is his response and cultic exercises. His activity as Savior is in many cases in the sphere of the physical and the temporal. But the emphasis on the spiritual and the eschatological purpose of His rule is never lacking and receives accentuation in a significant way. He is concerned ultimately with the spiritual salvation of His people. The full manifestation and realization of His Kingship is promised in an eschatological prospect.

The present dissertation has raised a number of problems and suggested some possible solutions. Nevertheless, some aspects of our topic have not been treated at all or as fully as they deserve. Further research could profitably be directed to such problems as the relationship between the Kingship of Yahweh and the Servant of Yahweh, the Kingship of Yahweh and the Davidic covenant, and eventual fulfillment of the Kingship of Yahweh.

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