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THIS DO IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME

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
Master of Sacred Theology

by

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June 1959

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CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM AND RAISON D'ETRE OF THIS STUDY

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As an example of the interest currently turned toward a solution of the problems of the Lord's Supper we must call attention to the Abendmahlsgespräche held in Germany since World War II. Some of the more important results are the books, Julius Schniewind and Ernst Souverlat's Abendmahlsgespräche (Göttingen: Alfred Töpelmann Verlag, 1952) and Victor Schmidt's Grundlagen des Abendmahlsgesprächs (Essen: Johannes Brockmeyer Verlag, 1954). A number of other important books and articles have been written as a direct result of this intense interest in the problems involved in the eucharistic doctrine. A most important collection is the German Discussions between representatives of the Lutheran, Reformed and Union theologians in the recently (November 1 and 2, 1957) approved Abendmahlstagung, reported by Paul M. Metzger, "The Eucharistic Discourse on the Lord's Supper," in Quadrant Theological Monthly, 1958 (February), 32-44, pp. 32-44.

CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM AND RAISON D'ÊTRE OF THIS STUDY

One of the chief concerns of the Church and the churches in our day is a concern for the divided state of the "one holy Catholic and Apostolic Church." This concern for the unity of Christ's Body always carries with it the obverse problem of the palpable and empirical disunity which exists among the branches and denominations of Christendom.

In this attempt by Christians of various backgrounds to realize the intended unity of the Church there is probably no single fulcrum which bears more collected weight than the doctrine of the Eucharist or Lord's Supper or Holy Communion.¹ In this context we must point out that there is a very heartening intention in virtually all quarters of contemporary Christendom to be and remain faithful to the intention of

¹As an example of the interest currently turned toward a solution of the problems of the Lord's Supper we must call attention to the Abendmahlsgespräche held in Germany since World War II. Some of the more important results are two books, Julius Schniewind and Ernst Sommerlath's Abendmahlsgespräch (Berlin: Alfred Töpelmann Verlag, 1952) and Peter Brunner's Grundlegung des Abendmahlsgesprächs (Kassel: Johannes Stauda Verlag, 1954). A number of other important books and articles have been written as a direct result of this intense interest in the problems involved in the Eucharistic doctrine. A most important milestone in the German discussions between representatives of the Lutheran, Reformed and Union theologians is the recently (November 1 and 2, 1957) approved Arnoldshain Theses, reported by Paul M. Bretscher, "The Arnoldshain Theses on the Lord's Supper," in Concordia Theological Monthly, XXX,2 (February, 1959), pp. 83-91.

Christ and the implications of His institution of His Supper for the Church. Thus almost all the variegated churches and sects of Christendom follow our Lord's command: $\piοΙΕΙΤΕ$. This points up an underlying unity of intention which augurs well for a realization of the aims of uniting the Body of Christ.

Although, and quite possibly, because the churches are extremely fixed in their estimate of the importance of this "doing," it is also true that the doctrine of the Lord's Supper is one of the most divisive doctrines. The very importance of this Supper, which all the churches underscore by the very fact that they are "doing," makes doctrinal formulations regarding this Supper extremely outspoken and relatively inflexible. The living experience of the Lord's Supper in the various churches gives rise to an almost violent tenacity in regard to these formulations; this tenacity, in turn, leads to a nervewracking tension between the churches in Christendom and bears with it the constant threat of hardening the edges of the various wounds in the Body of Christ even more.

Thus the "doing" in accordance with Christ's command presents the Church with a paradox: the fact that this "doing" goes on underlines a certain basic unity; on the other hand, questions and answers as to precisely what is being "done" and what should be "done" to remain faithful to the command and intention of our Lord have driven wedges of disunity between men and churches which profess a common loyalty to

the Lord of the Church.

While the pious wish that the whole present Church might transplant itself back to the days of early Christianity seems, on the face of it, to be nothing more than a romantic escape mechanism, there is a clue here for the direction which must be taken in order to close this breach, a breach tremendously wider and more universal than the schisms which threatened the Corinthian congregation to whom Paul wrote the original *τοῦτο ποιεῖτε*. No thinking theologian would seriously entertain the dream of moving back into the first decades of the first century A.D. -- possibly by using some sort of Rube Goldberg-Flash Gordon "time and space machine." And yet the problem is essentially a problem of space and time, a problem of history.

The Church must always take history very seriously, for the Incarnation of our Lord took place in the time and space of definite history. The Church of today must always take history seriously, for the existence of the Church today is also under the rubric of time and place. Thus the history of the doctrine of the Lord's Supper in a Church intent on "doing this" cannot be cavalierly disregarded or written off with one bold stroke of oversimplification. The existence of blocs within contemporary Christendom and the existence of churches and denominations today bears powerful witness to the importance of history. And yet the very basis for the "doing this" in the Church and churches of today points backward in history to a time and space before the history of any church or

denomination began. The historical task of a Church bent on closing the breaches in the walls of God's Zion therefore takes on a two-fold aspect. It must be a history which bears in mind both poles of the tension of unity and disunity. The Church of today and the theologians of today must keep their eyes fixed on the historical basis of the unity of "doing" which we find recorded in the Scriptures. But Church and theologian must also keep a fixed eye on the history of the Church as she "did this."

If we may set up a formulation of another basic tension which faces today's Church and churches, it can be put into the question: Is my church actually "doing this" in the sense of our Lord's intention in His institution? The very apparent contrast between the verbosity of current and historic formulations on the one hand and the utterly naive simplicity and directness of the command should serve as a clue for an attempted solution of the tension. In order to be faithful to the Lord's institution the Church and the churches must check all formulations of Eucharistic doctrine against the primary historical data of the institutions itself. Any and all explanations and extensions of the original "do this" arose in a specific historical context, as the Church and the churches "proclaimed the Lord's death" to a definite time and place. But extensions and explanations, while indeed absolutely essential to the apostolic proclamation (in the widest sense) of the Church, are still just that: "extensions and explanations." They are voces ecclesiae, and very much vivae voces;

nonetheless, all formulations receive their vitality and meaning from the viva vox Christi: "do this."

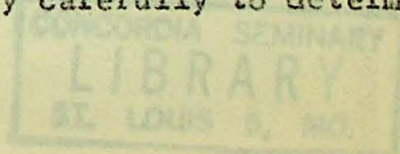
This paper aims to indicate the importance of the background against which our Lord instituted the Sacrament of His Body and His Blood for a proper understanding of the meaning and intention of the words "This do in remembrance of Me." A formulation or approach to a doctrine of the Lord's Supper which proposes to be Biblical cannot be content merely to re-iterate the Verba Testamenti in a conflated form and then propose to have exhausted the meaning of "this do." Nor can a formulation which all but ignores the total Sitz im Leben of the Scriptural records fail to realize and deal with the danger of substituting foreign and even unnecessary categories for the Scriptural categories of the institution and command, "This do in remembrance of Me."

An approach which sees only a "simple meaning" in the Verba Testamenti is neither doing justice to the theology of the Sacrament nor is this approach eminently Scriptural. The hermeneutical principle that the Scriptures interpret the Scriptures dare not be watered down to allow such a one-dimensional process of oversimplification and identification. Similarly the Scriptures themselves, not subsequent approaches or formulations, must be the interpreter of the Scriptures. In applying this principle to our study we must keep a number of crucial considerations in mind. We dare not see the $\tau\omicron\upsilon\tau\omicron$ $\pi\omicron\lambda\epsilon\hat{\iota}\tau\epsilon$ completely in terms of complete novelty and

disregard the continuity and similarity between the "old" and the "new." Although the Christian religion means the termination of the efficacy of the Jewish faith, we must bear in mind that the Christians viewed themselves as the "new Israel," to be sure, but also simultaneously as the "new" or "perfected" "Israel."

This means that our first basic approach to the accounts of the institution of the Lord's Supper must attempt to rediscover the approach which Jesus and His disciples brought to the Last Supper. Only from this Ausgangspunkt, which is no longer an unconscious datum for us in our day, can and must we begin. The sketching of the setting into which the original institution was set is of the most fundamental import for an understanding of the meaning of the words "this do."

This primary task is not merely a matter of attempting to fix the exact date of the Crucifixion and Last Supper, nor does it involve the discovery of the Upper Room. While it is true that the date of the institution has considerable bearing on the meaning of "this do," it is even more important to inquire into the question of the *τίς ἡ πόλις καρπός* of the institution. The meaning of words, and this does not exclude the words of the Sacred Scriptures, is conditioned by the prior experience of the initial hearers and these words are addressed to their world of thought in the first instance. To apply this to our problem: the question of the meaning of "this do" must begin by trying very carefully to determine

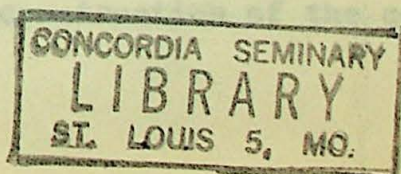


what was happening and what was in the mind of our Lord and of His disciples at the original Last Supper, to the degree possible with available sources.

Therefore we propose to stress the Gedankenwelt of our Lord and His disciples. This involves a statement of the Jewish approach to history's categories of time and space. It involves an attempt to see what Christ and His disciples would understand by "reality." This would, in short, involve attempting, as completely as possible, to become "contemporaneous with Christ." Thus we are attempting a reconstruction.

This attempt proposes to take seriously the duty to let the Scriptures speak for themselves, and proposes to try to avoid making the Sacred Scriptures some sort of theological Charley McCarthy, which must, by definition, parrot the word of men, and not remain, "as it is in truth, the Word of God."

This means that formulations and extensions are only of secondary concern, and it means further that formulations must always be measured against and instructed by the Biblical meaning in its fullest sense. The Biblical records get meaning from an event in history; thus the fullest meaning lies in the saving activities of God to which the Scriptures bear witness. When the Biblical sense of the words "this do" is arrived at, then, and only then, do we have something to formulate and to extend in our proclamation to this day and age. Only then can we propose to proclaim the Biblical message correctly.



In order to carry out this purpose in this thesis it is necessary to investigate the question of what it meant for a Hebrew to "remember" something or someone in an extremely theological sense. This forces at least an outline consideration of the Hebrew man's approach to theology, which sees theology and history in the closest possible relationship. A theological, rather than a metaphysical, approach to "reality" lies at the center of the Jewish conception of theology and cultus, and this predominantly Oriental outlook was taken over by the Christian Church, which viewed itself as the "new" Israel in the sense of "true Israel."

Thus this thesis attempts to consider, first of all, the relationship of the Jewish Passover celebration to the Christian Eucharist, treating both similarities and differences. The very active memorialization of the Exodus in the Passover is fundamentally definitive for an understanding of the words, "This do in remembrance of Me." The centrality of this conception of the Lord's Supper, so completely colored by the Exodus-Passover, to the whole New Testament approach to the Church can then be amplified.

Only after this has been done can historical and current "doctrines" be evaluated for both strengths and weaknesses. In this critique of the contemporary status we can find the strengths and weaknesses of our own Lutheran doctrine of the Eucharist.

In attempting this sort of reconstruction of the concrete

historical setting of the original institution our chief stress lies on the approach of the disciples and our Lord, their "mental set." This is essential to gaining an understanding of the words "This do in remembrance of Me." Oddly enough, in trying to look at the institution through the eyes of that historic Passover Haburah, we find it very difficult to organize our research in extremely neat, compartmentalized outline. But this is not really odd -- this very difficulty points up the basic thesis of this paper, i.e., that the Jewish mind simply did not operate in the same way that the scientific mind of the modern, Aristotelian mind operates. The Jewish mind did not take great pains to analyze, to set up rational and intellectual antitheses. It did not think in forms of straight lines and careful compartments. Rather, it thought cyclically, it thought synthetically. A preoccupation with antitheses and distinctions did not afflict the Jewish mind as it does our Aristotelian approach to reality.

In the spirit of this mode of thought, which was always more concerned with different methods of describing, rather than defining (e.g., man is described as "body and soul," "body, soul and spirit," "heart, soul, mind and understanding" -- man is never "defined" in a scientific manner in the Scriptures), it is our aim to organize this thesis around the central core that the Lord's Supper must be understood from the Passover setting and the Passover associations in the mind of our Lord, whose great desire to celebrate this

particular Passover *κατ' ἑξοχὴν* with His disciples culminated in the institution of His Supper. Around this central core we intend to study the Jewish approach to history and theology (which the Jew did not separate into "departments," as modern seminaries do); we must see the importance of the "covenant," always intimately connected with the primary theological and historical datum of the Exodus; we must do justice to the Jewish penchant for "remembering" in a much more vital and dynamic sense than modern man "remembers"; we must reconstruct the Jewish approach to the "reality" present in cultic activities. All this striving would be fruitless unless we can prove that the New Testament Church reached her self-awareness under the same rubrics -- a fact which is already indicated in the term *καὶνὴ διαθήκη*.

In addition to this reconstruction of the original meaning of "This do in remembrance of Me," we must evaluate the historic Lutheran approach to the question of the Lord's Supper, a question which the Lutheran Reformation, in the main, gave the correct answer by operating, like the Jew, theologically rather than metaphysically. But we must also point out weaknesses of position and emphasis in the Lutheran doctrine, and also underscore the strengths of positions which we tend to ignore or overrule in a misguided unnecessary polemic.

Finally we intend to draw a few necessary implications for current "doctrine and practice" which would seem to bring our church in our day a bit closer to the Biblical approach.

We can also indicate some extremely interesting lines for further study and investigation of questions asked by our current labors.

In order to find the fullest meaning of the routine phrase, "This do in remembrance of Me," which occurs twice (I Cor. 11, 24b, 25b) in his account of the institution, we must attempt to find out the setting in which the bread and wine were first distributed. This question is extremely thorny, since it involves the difficulty of a conflicting chronology between the Synoptics and the Gospel of John. The former are quite firm in asserting that the Last Supper was eaten on the day of the Passover (Mt. 26, 19f.; Mk. 14, 12ff.; Lk. 22, 7ff.), while John 13, 26 seems to be completely contradictory in dating the Crucifixion on the Passover Day itself.

This problem has given rise to virtually endless discussion and argument.¹ One of the proposed solutions of this contradiction is the so-called Kiddush Theory, which prefers the Johannine chronology to the Synoptic, and thus sees the Last Supper as the "sanctification of the Sabbath."² Thus our Lord and His disciples would have been following the Jewish

¹ Joachim Jeremias, The Eucharistic Words of Jesus, translated from the second German edition by Arnold Ehrhardt (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1953), pp. 177-183 lists scores of proponents for the view that the Last Supper was a Passover and similar scores of opponents of this view, as well as a list of scholars who are either sceptical or undecided.

² A. A. B. Higgins, The Lord's Supper in the New Testament (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1952), p. 14.

CHAPTER II

THE PASSOVER AND THE LORD'S SUPPER

In order to find the fullest meaning of the Pauline phrase, "This do in remembrance of Me," which occurs twice (I Cor. 11,24b.25b) in his account of the institution, we must attempt to find out the setting in which the bread and wine were first distributed. This question is extremely thorny, since it involves the difficulty of a conflicting chronology between the Synoptics and the Gospel of John. The former are quite firm in asserting that the Last Supper was eaten on the day of the Passover (Mt. 26,19f.; Mk. 14,12ff.; Lk. 22,7ff.), while John 18,28 seems to be completely contradictory in dating the Crucifixion on the Passover Day itself.

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custom of gathering on a Friday evening in a religious company, the Haburah, to join in a common religious meal. Thus the Last Supper is seen merely as the culmination and crown of all the common meals which Jesus ate with his disciples. Higgins³ points out that this theory, held by G. H. Box, F. Spitta and others, fails since it supposes that the kiddush, which normally fell on Friday, was moved back to Thursday evening, an untenable position. Another rather serious objection to the kiddush theory is presented by the fact that the Synoptics and John (Mt. 26,20; Mk. 14,17; Jn. 13,30; also I Cor. 11,23) agree that the Last Supper was held at night -- something which would preclude the kiddush theory, since the kiddush took place immediately before the Sabbath began, i.e., before sunset.⁴

A somewhat similar kiddush theory connects the last meal of Jesus with the "blessing" of the Passover, rather than the "blessing" of the Sabbath. This theory has been advanced by W. O. E. Oesterly, G. H. C. Macgregor, F. Gavin and others. According to this view, the blessing of the Sabbath and the blessing of the Passover are connected into one ritual meal, which is held on Friday evening. Higgins'⁵ objection, that the Lord's Supper was held on a Thursday, is based on the dating of the Resurrection on Sunday; he argues that the Last

³Ibid.

⁴Cf. Jeremias, op. cit., pp. 17f.

⁵Higgins, op. cit., pp. 14f.

Supper was held on a Thursday, not on a Friday. In addition, the opening of the Passover by "blessing" the day did not antedate the Passover by one day; rather, the Passover was "blessed" or "sanctified" at the outset of the Passover celebration itself.

Both of these kiddush theories are basically untenable in themselves.⁶ In addition, they are vitiated by the fact that they attempt to solve the difficulty of conflicting chronologies in favor of the Gospel of John. Jeremias indicates that the difficulties are somewhat eased by the fact that John 13,1 does not necessary give an indication of time during which the succeeding action took place, but very probably the phrase *πρὸ δὲ τῆς ἑορτῆς τοῦ πάσχα* is to be construed as an adverbial modifier of the participle *εἰδῶς*. He also painstakingly points out that there are traces of the Synoptic chronology in John, as well as outright indications that the meal described there is indeed a Passover meal (e.g., it was held at night, the participants reclined at table, etc.).⁷

Another argument against the necessity (and hence also the validity) of the various kiddush theories is the generally accepted fact that the shift of the date of the crucifixion in the Fourth Gospel is indicated and caused by theological interests on the part of the writer. Thus the whole chronology of

⁶For a much more complete discussion of the various kiddush theories and more objections see Jeremias, op. cit., pp. 21-25.

⁷Jeremias, Die Passahfeier, loc. cit.

John poses many other weighty problems of chronology (e.g., the cleansing of the temple). The theologically oriented shift in chronology in John, rather than working against the dating of the Last Supper as a Passover, may, at least theoretically, work in quite the opposite direction. The theologizing of John in his arrangement of his materials could very well have been late (the traditional date for its composition has always been late). It is not at all inconceivable that John's apparent attempt to draw theological inferences from the fact that Jesus died at the precise hour of the slaughter of the Passover lambs (Jn. 19,14) was occasioned by the realization of the intimate connection between His death and the "new Exodus"; thus the Synoptic chronology, taken to its logical conclusion, sees in Jesus the very Paschal Lamb (this is Paul's theological conclusion in I Cor. 5,6-8).

Another view which attempts to discredit the connection between the Last Supper is the position of Lietzmann, Cirlot, Rudolph Otto, Gregory Dix and others that Jesus and His disciples had formed a religious association, a Haburah, which centered its activities around common meals, and thus concludes that the Last Supper was merely a religious meal. This view has nothing in it at all to particularly commend it. Certainly the fact that Jesus does, in the Gospels, partake of table fellowship regularly with His disciples is, by no stretch of the imagination, an argument against His eating

His last meal with them as a Passover meal. The idea of a Haburah, as Higgins mentions,⁸ includes the idea of "special ritual meals." Certainly the Passover is such a "special ritual meal." Nothing could be more logical than that Jesus should celebrate the Passover with His disciples, who had shared His bread before. In addition, the Haburah theory flies in the face of all the very patent evidence in the Synoptics and in John that the Last Supper was a Passover meal, a "special ritual meal," enjoyed by Jesus in the company (the very word Haburah is connected with the Passover in particular) of His normal tablemates.

Opponents of the view that the Last Supper was a Passover work with the following arguments:⁹

1. Scholars following the lead of J. Wellhausen have objected that the proper term for the bread of the Passover is ἀζυμα, whereas Mark (14,22) uses the term ἄπρος. However Jeremias, following the lead of G. Beer, makes a conclusive study of usage and linguistics to prove that Wellhausen set up a false antithesis; ἄπρος certainly can refer to the unleavened bread used in the Passover meal.
2. The lack of reference to the elements of the Paschal rite (e.g., the lamb, the bitter herbs) in Mark (14, 22-25) has been adduced as an argument against the Passover connection of the Last Supper. Jeremias stresses the fact that the Markan account has its chief reference to the Lord's Supper, not the Passover. Hence the omission of the reference to the lamb and herbs is natural, since it was not these elements of the Passover menu which Jesus chose to lift from the Passover context. Lk. 22,15 does, however, refer to

⁸Higgins, op. cit., p. 14.

⁹Ibid., pp. 49-53.

the lamb, and Mk. 14,20 and its parallels infer the presence of the bitter herbs.

3. The use of a common cup has been used to attempt to prove the Last Supper inconsistent with current Jewish usage. Jeremias, however, proves the opposite to be true; individual cups would have been chronologically inconsistent.
4. Mk. 14,1 and Mt. 26,1-5 seem to be contradictory. In Mk. 14,2 the Sanhedrin does not want to arrest Jesus $\epsilon\nu\ \tau\eta\ \epsilon\omicron\rho\tau\eta$. Jeremias sees two basic difficulties in using this as an argument against the Passover connection: the plan of the Sanhedrin is nowhere said to have succeeded, and the term $\epsilon\omicron\rho\tau\eta$ could very well mean "the festal crowd." This would certainly be in harmony with other occasions on which the Jewish leaders feared the opposition and violence of the people who tended to be sympathetic toward Jesus. Thus Jesus' arrest was to be a secret and stealthy move, rather than a public arrest.
5. A number of casuistic objections (e.g., the carrying of arms, the session of the Sanhedrin on a high feast, the purchase of linen for a shroud on the feast, et al.) can be explained one by one, as Jeremias has shown.¹⁰

With these arguments against the possibility of a Passover celebration as the Last Supper confuted, Jeremias goes on to list at least ten weighty arguments (if not equally valid individually, their total combined impact is certainly convincing) in favor of the position that the Last Supper was indeed a Passover. He makes these observations:¹¹

1. The Last Supper was held in Jerusalem according to both the Synoptic and Johannine witness.
2. The meal was held at night, thus fulfilling the requirements for a Passover celebration.

¹⁰Jeremias, op. cit., pp. 50-53.

¹¹Ibid., pp. 14-37.

3. Jesus ate this meal with the twelve only; elsewhere He takes His meals with His hearers, either individuals (Zacchaeus) or a large group.
4. Jesus and His disciples reclined during the meal, an almost certain indication that it was a Passover meal, since at normal meals the Jews did not recline -- at the Passover they had to recline as a token of their freedom, wrought in the Exodus.
5. The explicit reference to the "breaking of bread" "while they were eating" indicates a Passover meal; the regular Jewish meal included "breaking of bread," but only in the Passover dinner were there preceding courses.
6. The use of wine, usually reserved for festal meals, indicates the Paschal character of the Last Supper; particularly the apparent use of red wine seems to indicate a Passover.
7. The surmise that Judas left the gathering "to give alms" would be understandable only if the Last Supper were a Passover, for almsgiving was not generally a nighttime deed. On the evening of the Passover, however, the poor were the object of conscious charity.
8. The singing of a hymn at the end of the meal can refer only to the Passover *ὕμνος* (Pss. 114-118 according to the Shammaites, 115-118 according to the Hillelites).
9. The fact that Jesus did not return to Bethany, but rather spent the night in the Mount of Olives would seem to be an observance of the Passover regulation that no celebrant should leave the city district, which at this time included Gethsemane.
10. The interpretation of the elements of bread and wine in the Lord's Supper is obviously a new Passover Haggadah.

These arguments of Jeremias, taken cumulatively, support the Synoptic record of the Last Supper as a Passover. However, even if this chronology is not absolutely and finally conclusive, the New Testament records, including even the problematical Gospel of John, certainly agree unanimously in their

interpretation of the death of Christ and the Last Supper in a Passover framework. Thus George Buchanan Gray¹² says that although two traditions of chronology were apparently current in the early Church, the importance of the Passover setting does not suffer in the least. Bultmann¹³ similarly underscores the unity in diversity by stating that the Synoptic tradition expresses the fact that the Passover lamb has been replaced by Christ by seeing the institution of the Lord's Supper on the eve of the Passover, while John expresses the same idea by placing the crucifixion at the time of the slaughter of the Passover lamb.

This diversity of tradition, if we care to call it that, becomes much less problematical when we realize that Judaism itself had no one single fixed tradition for the exact date and time of the Passover celebration. Thus the two regnant rabbinic schools, those of Shammai and Hillel, were divided on the question whether the Passover overruled the Sabbath.¹⁴ About 30 B.C. Hillel posed the possibility that the Passover could be slaughtered on the 14th of Nisan if that date was a Sabbath. Before this time it had been illegal to do the work

¹²George Buchanan Gray, Sacrifice in the Old Testament; Its Theory and Practice (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1925), pp. 392f.

¹³Rudolph Bultmann, "Prophecy and Fulfilment," in Essays Philosophical and Theological (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1955), p. 195.

¹⁴Solomon Schlechter, Studies in Judaism, Third Series (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1945), p. 199.

of slaughtering on the Sabbath. Thus the slaughtering could conceivably be done on Thursday by one group and on Friday by another.¹⁵ Another possible divergency of views existed between the Pharisees and the Sadducees on the interpretation of Leviticus 23,15f, "from the morrow of the sabbath."¹⁶ Jeremias, however, disagrees with the thesis that this difference would have affected the problem involved, since the Sadducees would not wait twenty-four hours to eat the previously slaughtered lamb because of the prohibition of Ex. 12,10, which forbade leaving anything overnight.¹⁷

Recently Mme. Annie Jaubert, working with the new Qumran materials, has proposed the revolutionary thesis that the Last Supper, a Passover meal, was held on Tuesday night; the crucifixion fell on Friday. On the basis of two separate calendars, one lunar and the other solar, she maintains the possibility that Jesus celebrated the Passover on the date set by the ancient sacerdotal calendar, while the majority of the people, following the "modern" reckoning, killed the Passover on Friday.¹⁸

¹⁵ Joachim Jeremias, Die Passahfeier der Samaritaner und ihre Bedeutung für das Verständnis der Alttestamentlichen Passahüberlieferung (Giessen: Verlag von Alfred Töpelmann, 1932), pp. 79ff.

¹⁶H. St. John Thackeray, The Septuagint and Jewish Worship (London: Oxford University Press, 1923), p. 44; also Jeremias, Eucharistic Words, p. 7.

¹⁷Jeremias, loc. cit.

¹⁸Annie Jaubert, "The Date of the Last Supper," in Theology Digest, V,2 (Spring, 1957), pp. 67-72. The findings originally appeared in "La date de la dernière cène," in Revue de l'Histoire des Religions, 146 (1954), pp. 140-172.

This could help to solve the difficulty between the Synoptics and John, since the Synoptic "chronology" would not disprove or disagree with a Tuesday dating of the Last Supper. The "chronological" references, after all, are quite indefinite in all the Gospels. It is very important, however, to note that even this radical rearrangement supports the Paschal character of Jesus' last meal.

At any rate, however, the association of the Lord's Supper with the Passover does not rest essentially on any fine chronological exactitude, but rather on the very patent theological connection, made by the whole of the New Testament witness.

Thus the Synoptics are most explicit; the first three Gospels make the Last Supper a Passover meal. John remembers the connection and makes the crucifixion coincide with the slaughter of the lambs, thus pointing out the very patent fact that the New Exodus and the New Age of the New Israel completely abrogated the Old. This is strongly reinforced by John's constantly reoccurring antithesis between Jesus and the Jews, his very deliberate attempts (e.g., Jn. 8,31ff.'s obvious slapping the face of the renegade and apostate Jews' insistence on Abrahamic derivation) to show the Christian community as the true Israel of God. John's reference to the failure of the soldiers to break the legs of Jesus is very probably a veiled reference to Ex. 19,46, which states that the bones of the Passover lamb must be kept intact. Although

there have been objections to this connection,¹⁹ it does not seem that these objections are at all valid. Thus Daube connects this reference not only with Ex. 19,46, but also with Ps. 34,21 and also Ezek. 37,1ff's vision of the revival of the dead bones into a living nation under the effects of Jahweh's life-giving breath. This last connection is particularly important in favor of a Passover-lamb overtone, since the Ezekiel pericope is the prophetic lesson for the Sabbath of the Passover week.²⁰ W. D. Davies²¹ states that J. Macpherson's insight that ". . . the only really relevant formal parallel to John 13 to 17" is the Passover Haggadah. Paul, in I Cor. 5,6-8; I Cor. 10,1ff.; I Cor. 15,20; II Cor. 3,1-11 is very apparently impressed by the reinterpretation of the Jewish Passover in the light of the life and death of Christ. Similarly Romans chapter 6 is cast in terms which see Christian Baptism as a new Exodus.²²

The New Testament's emphasis on the Passover can best be explained when we realize the impression that the connection

¹⁹Otto Schmitz, Die Opferanschauung des späteren Judentums und die Opferanschauung des Neuen Testaments (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1910), pp. 238f. argues that the reference to intact bones refers to Ps. 33 (34),21, which states that the Lord will preserve His people so that their bones will not be broken.

²⁰David Daube, The New Testament and Rabbinic Judaism (London: The Athlone Press, 1956), p. 309.

²¹W. D. Davies, Paul and Rabbinic Judaism (London: SPCK, 1948), p. 110.

²²Ibid., pp. 104-107.

between Passover time and the Last Supper and death of Jesus made on the disciples. The great number of explicit references to the Passover (31, of which 22 occur in the Passion narratives) underscores the connection between the Passover and the death of Christ.²³ Daube even goes so far as to pose the possibility that portions of the Gospels represent attempts by Jesus' disciples either to insert the story of the life and death of Christ into the old Passover Haggadah or to parallel the Passover's Exodus story with the proclamation of Jesus.²⁴ Thus the messianic "I am" arose out of the self-revelation of God as savior in the story of the first Exodus from Egypt under Moses, and was applied to Christ. Both Daube²⁵ and Gray²⁶ emphasize the very apparent Haggadah-character of the words of institution. The latter stresses the use of the terms ἀνάμνησις and καταγγέλετε in Paul's account; particularly the stress on ἀνάμνησις. the death of Christ corresponds to the basic idea of the Haggadah, which recited the great act of God's redemption in the Exodus. Daube lays especial stress on the tripartite form of the Passover ritual which finds amazing parallels in the words of institution and their framework. Thus there are

²³Thackeray, op. cit., p. 383.

²⁴Daube, op. cit., p. 413.

²⁵Ibid., p. 187.

²⁶Gray, op. cit., p. 395.

the three elements of the meal, the question of the meaning of the ceremonies, and the explanation of the meaning by a recital of God's mighty deeds.

Certainly no one can avoid the obvious parallels between the Passover and the Lord's Supper. The use of bread and wine is chiefly an external parallel. But the theological parallels are most striking. The solemn commemoration of the past, in which the listener hears a recital of God's words and acts in the past is certainly extended in the recital of God's act in Christ. Thus the Lord's Supper is celebrated "in remembrance" of Christ. As early as the time of Justin Martyr milk and honey, reminiscent of the promise of the land of Canaan, are used in connection with the Christian Eucharist.²⁷ Justin is very explicit:

. . . the Christian Eucharist, offered, as the Jewish, to God, is now Christ centered; in fact, the redemption wrought for Israel by Yahweh [sic] in the Red Sea has passed to the redemption wrought by Christ for us; specifically, therefore, the memorial of his [sic] passion, or of his blood; but also of his incarnation; and as Justin implies in giving a reason for Sunday as a day of the Eucharist, of his resurrection.²⁸

The extent to which this connection went in the early Church is underlined by the interesting conclusions of B. Lohse, who studied the Passover celebrated by a second century

²⁷Paul F. Palmer, editor, Sacraments and Worship, Volume One of Sources of Christian Theology (Westminster, Md.: The Newman Press, 1955), pp. 8f.

²⁸F. C. M. Hicks, The Fulness of Sacrifice, an Essay in Reconciliation (London: Macmillan and Co., 1930), p. 278.

Christian group in Asia Minor. This group, called the Quartadecimans, celebrated a Passover annually with fasting and prayers, awaiting the final deliverance according to the promise of Christ that He would not keep the Passover again until the consummation of the Kingdom. In this historically reconstructed observance Lohse sees nothing else than the early Eucharist of the primitive Church.²⁹ Thus the intimate connection between the Jewish Passover and the Lord's Supper is again vehemently underlined; the connections dare not safely be underestimated.

Some of the similarities have already been pointed out. But a catalog of similarities at this point would serve to strengthen the thesis that the Lord's Supper must absolutely be seen against the backdrop of the Passover, since the Passover did indeed form the Sitz im Leben of the original Last Supper and the institution.

The Passover commemorates the Exodus, God's greatest single mighty act of the past; this act is, for the Jew, the act which constitutes the Jewish nation as a nation. The Passover remembers the Exodus as an act of God's choice in grace, quite independent of any merit or worthiness on the part of the people. The reoccurring Passover, however, sees in the Exodus the pattern for God's activities with His people. Ever new historic deliverance is the theme of the Passover. The

²⁹B. Lohse, Das Passahfest der Quartadecimaner (Gütersloh: C. Bertelsmann Verlag, 1953), p. 139.

past deliverance wrought by God is seen as a present deliverance in the Passover itself, and the acts of God in the past point forward to the last final eschatological act of God saving His people in the future.

Similarly, the Lord's Supper's "remembrance" looks backward to a concrete historical act of God's intervention in the past. It is "in remembrance of" Christ. The Lord's Supper is instituted by Christ for His new "people of God" as He eats His final meal with the twelve disciples, whose number at once echoes the formal arrangement of ancient Israel in twelve tribes. These twelve pillars of the New Israel have been reminded that they have not chosen Jesus, but that He has chosen them for His purposes. In the Lord's Supper the redemption in Christ remembers not only the death of Christ, but His entire saving activity throughout His life. This past historical fact and act of deliverance is also the basis for the hope of a future divine intervention for the total deliverance of the people of God.

The presence of the Kingdom of God in the person of Jesus was seen by the Church as the event in God's plan which fulfilled the previous history and purpose of the Old Testament people of God. The kairos of God has struck, and in Christ God was at work, with "outstretched hand and bare arm," to make those who were not His people in "His people." The Lord's Supper, "in remembrance of" Jesus is also called "the new covenant" in His blood. Thus the importance of the entire

Old Testament history for the uncovering of the fullest meaning of the phrase "This do in remembrance of Me" cannot be overlooked. We must attempt to see how the historical and theological memory of the Jewish man worked. We must see the organization of history and theology for the Jewish man as something which always implied "remembrance" of the past in a most active sense. We must also uncover the Hebrew approach to the meaning and effectiveness of historical recollection in a cultic and festal setting. Thus our further investigation of the exact load which the phrase "This do in remembrance of Me" carries must move next to a study of the covenant history of the Old Testament which was thoroughly embodied in the Jewish Passover celebration and its ritual.

CHAPTER III

THE IMPORTANCE OF HISTORY AND THE APPROACH TO HISTORY AMONG THE JEWISH PEOPLE

The historical "remembering" which characterizes the Passover celebration is completely typical of the Jewish pre-occupation with God's dealings with men in history, and particularly, His dealings with His people. This historical consciousness can, without any stretch of the facts or imagination, be termed absolutely essential and positively central to the Jewish personal self-consciousness as well as Israel's national self-consciousness. This overwhelming centrality of history as the record of God's dealings with men and nations is definitive for Jewish theology. "For the Jew there is no distinction between "history" and "theology." These two areas completely interpenetrate each other; history and theology cannot be arbitrarily ripped apart without doing fatal damage to the Jewish outlook on life and the world.

This approach, it must be cautioned, is very different from the methodology of modern occidental man, who tends, by his very presuppositions, to take an analytical and atomistic view of reality. Therefore we must necessarily sketch Israel's history and Israel's view of history on the basis of some typical concept. In view of the fact that the Verba Testamenti speak of a "new covenant," and since the "covenant" idea has

been widely used as an organizing factor for Old Testament theologies,¹ we propose to outline a sample of Jewish historico-theological matter around the concept of the covenant relationship between Jahweh² and His people. This study is related to the question posed by "This do in remembrance of Me" not only by the verbal occurrence of ἡ καινὴ διαθήκη in the Verba, but also by the patent and inescapable fact that the Exodus is absolutely central to the concept of God's covenant with Israel. Johannes Pedersen is certainly correct when he says that "no event in the life of the people came to characterize Israel's relation to Yahweh [sic] as the emigration from Egypt."³

Any attempt to consider the theology of the Old Testament which underrates the importance of the Exodus fails to arrive

¹Particularly the work of Walther Eichrodt, Theologie des Alten Testaments (Fifth edition; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, and Stuttgart: Ehrenfried Klotz Verlag, 1957), is organized around the centrality of the covenant concept. Ludwig Koehler, in his Theologie des Alten Testaments (Third edition, 1953), O. Procksch, in his Theologie des Alten Testaments (1950) and P. van Imschoot, Theologie de l'Ancien Testament (1954) follow Eichrodt's lead.

²This author will consistently use the following spellings of Hebrew and Aramaic words:

Jahweh, Hallel, Haburah, Haggadah.
The last three, as "foreign words," will be consistently italicized. The proper name, Jahweh, will not be italicized. In quotations from other writers, however, their transliterations will be used with the additional note "[sic]."

³Johannes Pedersen, Israel: Its Life and Culture (London: Oxford University Press, 1953), III-IV, 657.

at the center of the Jewish faith. The first generation of literary critics ran this risk when they cast aspersions on the very historicity of the Exodus itself. This approach, which suffered from too neat a system of development, based largely on the assumptions and methods of the evolutionary doctrines in the biological sciences, tended to virtually disregard the Exodus. Although we owe a debt of gratitude to the historico-critical method for drawing attention to the historical side of Biblical scholarship, we can see today that the position of Wellhausen⁴ that the Exodus story was developed in the eighth century tends to be, in the final analysis, less than historical. The labors of Walther Eichrodt,⁵ and, more recently, of men like Martin Noth,⁶ Albrecht Alt,⁷ and Gerhard von Rad⁸ have shed light on the early history of

⁴Julius Wellhausen, Prolegomena to the History of Ancient Israel, translated by A. Menzies and J. S. Black (New York: The Meridian Library, 1957).

⁵Eichrodt, op. cit.

⁶Especially his Das System der zwölf Stämme Israels (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer Verlag, 1930).

⁷Gerhardt von Rad, "Kritische Vorarbeiten zu einer Theologie des Alten Testaments," in Theologie und Liturgie (Kassel: Johannes Stauda Verlag, 1952); also his Die Josephsgeschichte (Wuppertal-Wischlinghausen: Montanus und Ehrensvein, 1954); his Der heilige Krieg im Alten Israel (Zürich: Zwingli Verlag, 1951); his Das Erste Buch Mose, Volumes I-III of Das Alte Testament Deutsch, edited by Volkmar Hertrich and Artur Weiser (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1949-1952); his Studies in Deuteronomy, translated by David Stalker (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1953); and his Theologie des Alten Testaments (München: Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1957).

⁸Albrecht Alt, Kleine Schriften zur Geschichte des Volkes Israel (München: C. H. Beck'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1953).

Israel. These men all concur in stressing the importance of the Exodus and the Sinai covenant for Israel's life and faith. Wright⁹ goes so far as to say that the developmental hypothesis of the literary critics is prejudiced by its failure to take seriously enough the story and fact of God's revelation and covenant on Sinai.

Recent Old Testament scholarship has made the great contribution of restoring a sense of the importance of the Exodus as not merely a theological datum, but also as a historical fact. Thus W. F. Albright summarizes that the findings of recent archeology tend to confirm the historical character of the Biblical records of the Exodus.¹⁰ This fact of the historical character of God's mighty deed in the Exodus confirms Israel's approach to theology, which saw theology as a witness to God's acts in history. Thus Wright cannot be doubted today when he sketches this close relationship of history and theology:

The power of Yahweh [sic], the God of Israel, was known because he [sic] had chosen this people for himself, because he had humbled Pharaoh and delivered Israel from slavery, had formed a dispirited people into a nation and given them a law and an "inheritance" of land. Israel had been in bondage but now was freed. No abstract words were needed to describe God's being; it was sufficient to identify him with the simple historical statement: he was the God who had brought Israel out of

⁹G. Ernest Wright, The Old Testament Against Its Environment (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1950), p. 15.

¹⁰William Foxwell Albright, From the Stone Age to Christianity (Second edition; New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1957), pp. 13-15 and 236-272.

the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage (Exodus 20). Such was the God whom Israel knew. Wherever people were, or in whatever circumstance, they encountered and acknowledged the power of the God who had delivered them. Looking back to the days of their fathers, they recognized his gracious providence in revealing himself to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, even though under different names or epithets. In Egypt he saw their affliction and visited them. At Mt. Sinai, Mt. Horeb and again in battle with Sisera, he was recognized in the phenomena of the storm.¹¹

The Exodus, as God's great act for His people, cannot be separated from the entrance into the land of Canaan and, in a sense, all subsequent Jewish history. However, the Exodus and Sinai are the real high point of Jewish history and theology. From the experience of Sinai the Jewish people learned to see God's prior activity with the Patriarchs as part of the total plan and intention of Jahweh. Similarly the entrance into the land was seen as a continuation of God's mighty activity in the Exodus.

The period after the Exodus has been the object of considerable study. The system of the twelve tribes of Israel, seen against its setting, is not a simple matter. Nevertheless, the investigations of Martin Noth,¹² in particular, have shed great light on the considerable period commonly referred to as the "period of the judges," i.e., between the Exodus and the establishment of the monarchy.

¹¹Wright, op. cit., pp. 20f.

¹²Martin Noth, Das System der zwölf Stämme Israels (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer Verlag, 1930). This work will subsequently be referred to as Das System.

Noth, in studying Joshua 24, emphasizes the gradual process of consolidation of various nomad tribes into a nation which was known as the "Hebrews."¹³ According to his studies the Biblical account of the Exodus of the twelve tribes must be understood in the light of the development of amphyctionic alliances in Palestine after the Exodus. This would seem to contradict the account of Exodus 20ff. However, rather than being a contradiction, this helps to clarify the apparent contradiction between the record of the Book of Exodus and the record of the Book of Joshua. Joshua 24 describes an occurrence during the period between the Exodus of a small group of Hebrews from Egypt and the consolidation, in Palestine, of the Jewish nation of twelve tribes. The ceremony at Shechem, described in Joshua 24, is a ceremony in which nomad tribes resident in Palestine accept the covenant stipulations of the Sinaitic covenant, which they had not experienced themselves.¹⁴ This means, of course, that the centrality and importance of the Exodus and Sinaitic covenant is vindicated, not vitiated; the historical experience was normative for the formation of the Jewish nation as such.

¹³Claus Schedl, Urgeschichte und Alter Orient, Volume I of Geschichte des Alten Testaments (Innsbruck-Wien-München: Tyrolia Verlag, 1956), pp. 332-342 studies the term "Hebrew" in the earliest records.

¹⁴Noth, Das System, pp. 122-132; Martin Noth, Das Buch Josua, Volume VII of Handbuch zum Alten Testament, edited by Otto Eissfeldt (Tübingen: Verlag von J. C. B. Mohr, 1938), p. 109; Gerhard von Rad, Die Theologie der geschichtlichen Überlieferungen Israels, Volume I of Theologie des Alten Testaments (München: Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1957), p. 20.

Not that there haven't been attempts to see a major contradiction in traditions between Joshua 24 and Exodus 20-24. There have been serious questions raised.¹⁵ Most of these questions were raised on the bases of literary criticism, which was always quick to see more divergencies than similarities. The traditio-historical approach, typified by men like Noth and von Rad, sees a very ancient and common source for both Joshua 24 and Exodus 20-24.¹⁶ The source of this common tradition can hardly be anything else than the experience of God's deliverance in the Exodus, which is the central fact of Jewish history and theology. The very existence of these two accounts, and particularly the fact that Joshua 24 is a carefully placed "summary" of the whole book, stresses the importance of the event recorded both in Exodus and in Joshua. The similarity in form between the two accounts (both have the sequence of paranesis, laws, binding of the covenant, blessing and cursing) also underlines the common source of both records.¹⁷ This research concludes that the tradition of the Exodus, rather than being a late invention, goes back to the earliest sources.¹⁸

The essential character of the Exodus for the Hebrew,

¹⁵Noth, Das System, pp. 68f.

¹⁶Noth, Das Buch Josua, p. xii.

¹⁷Gerhard von Rad, Studies in Deuteronomy, p. 14.

¹⁸H. H. Rowley, The Faith of Israel: Aspects of Old Testament Thought (London: SCM Press, Ltd., 1956), p. 68.

then, is never a static formulation; on the contrary, the importance of the Exodus experience is definitive for the Jewish national self-awareness. When the twelve tribes consolidate, they "remember" the covenant of Sinai. This remembrance is a dynamic, constitutive remembrance; the Palestinian tribes become a nation under the rubric of God's saving activity. The experiences of the houses of Joseph and Benjamin become binding and normative for the totality of the nation.¹⁹ Nor does this reapplication of the Exodus-event and its importance fail to appear in subsequent generations. The Psalms recall the Exodus; the prophets, speaking to quite a different sort of nation, exhort on the basis of the Exodus; the Babylonian captivity is cast in the form of the slavery in Egypt and the return is a new Exodus.

This theological and historical "memory" of the Exodus in Jewish theology is normative for the Jewish concept of God. God for the Jew was the saving God of the Exodus. This God was the one who had entered into a "covenant" with His people. The covenant concept, as centered in the events of Egypt and Sinai and the "promised land," is similarly normative and central for Jewish theology, and also for the Jewish national awareness.

The "covenant" idea in the Old Testament can well be used to unify the history of Israel in the Old Testament. God made

¹⁹Noth, Das System, pp. 90, 113.

a covenant with Noah (Gen. 9,9ff. and Gen. 6,6).²⁰ God made a covenant with Abraham (Gen. 12,1-3; 13,14-17; 15,1ff.; 17,1ff.) and the other patriarchs. But these covenants are seen by the Jews only in connection with the Exodus and the Sinaitic covenant, by which Israel became a nation by entering into a covenant with God. Similarly, after the acceptance of the Sinaitic covenant by the twelve tribes of the amphyctionic period, the monarchical period is seen as an extension of the Sinaitic covenant.

In the pre-Sinaitic history of Israel the nation which had been created in the Exodus saw the prologue of its own history. The God Who revealed Himself in action in the Exodus is the "God of the fathers."²¹ As a saving God, He carries on the "holy war" by which the promised land is captured.²² The God Who revealed Himself to Moses and Israel is the God of the covenant. He is "the Lord your God" for the people of Israel.²³ God's choice of Israel and His saving activity are

²⁰Edwin C. Sohn, "The Covenant Concept in Old Testament Theology" (unpublished Bachelor of Divinity thesis, Concordia Seminary, Saint Louis, 1946), pp. 25-30.

²¹Walther Eichrodt, Theologie des Alten Testaments (Fifth edition; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1957), p. 147, summarizes the continuity of God's saving activity.

²²For a brilliant study of the phenomenon of the "holy war" during the period of the judges, see Gerhard von Rad, Der heilige Krieg im Alten Israel (Zürich: Zwingli Verlag, 1951).

²³Friedrich Baumgärtel, Verheissung: zur Frage des evangelischen Verständnisses des Alten Testaments (Gutersloh: C. Bertelsmann Verlag, 1952), stresses the importance of the first commandment.

God's gracious act. It is at once a saving act and a creative act, for through the covenant relationship to God Israel becomes, horizontally, a nation.

This relationship between Jahweh and His people through the covenant stands in the closest possible connection with God's $\tau\omicron\pi$, His covenant love. He has bound Himself to a people in a covenant (I Kings 8,23; Is. 55,3; Ps. 89,50) of His own free will (Hosea 9,10: "I found Israel like grapes in the wilderness"; Hosea 11,1: "When Israel was a child, then I . . . called my son out of Egypt"; Hosea 12,13: "the Lord brought Israel out of Egypt"; Amos 2,10: "Also I brought you up out of the land of Egypt"; Amos 3,1: "Israel, . . . the whole family which I have brought up from the land of Egypt"; Amos 9,7: "Have not I brought up Israel out of the land of Egypt?"; Micah 6,4: "For I brought thee up out of the land of Egypt"). Here we have the basic emphasis on God's choice connected with the covenant idea, and related centrally to the Exodus. We cannot really treat any of these ideas in isolation.

Deuteronomy 14,2, the classic passage on this subject combines all three ideas of choice in grace, covenant, and nation: "For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God, and the Lord hath chosen thee to be a peculiar people unto Himself." God's sovereignty is never challenged; He chooses Israel, not because of its greatness or power (Deuteronomy 7,7), nor because of its righteousness (Deuteronomy 9,5f.).

He has entered into a unilateral covenant relationship, in which the initiative lies with Him.²⁴ This action of God makes Israel a nation which is "holy."

Here again we must face the centrality of the Exodus. Kurt Galling²⁵ studies both the "election"-tradition centered around Sinai and the tradition of the patriarchal God, and concludes that the historical event of the Exodus and Sinai is crucial. He emphasizes the fact that Israel's conception of herself as a nation rests squarely on history; God speaks His Word of revelation to Israel through history, and Israel hears His Word in history.²⁶ This does not mean to ignore the fact, pointed out by Noth²⁷ that the extension of the Sinaitic covenant to the "whole nation" during the later amphyctionic period makes references to the "whole nation" leaving Egypt in Exodus 19ff. somewhat anachronistic. The continuity of God's activity and the continued existence of the nation for a far longer time than any parallel amphyctionic groups, says Schedl,²⁸ is either a riddle or can be explained as God's own activity and

²⁴Gottfried Quell, "Eklegomai," in Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament, edited by Rudolph Kittel (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer Verlag, 1942), IV, 165ff.

²⁵Kurt Galling, Die Erwählungstraditionen Israels (Giessen: Verlag von Alfred Töpelmann, 1928), pp. 26-63.

²⁶Ibid., pp. 92f.

²⁷Das System, passim, especially pp. 16f.

²⁸Claus Schedl, Das Bundesvolk Gottes, Volume I of Geschichte des Alten Testaments (München: Tyrolia-Verlag, 1956), p. 1949.

intervention in history. The Jew would see no logical difficulty here: the nation's existence is due to God's covenant choice in a history which He controls for His people.

In considering the complex of God's grace, His election of Israel and the covenant, it must be noted that the political conception of Israel as a nation emphasizes the communal aspect of Hebrew thought. Eichrodt says that God's choice places the people as such in the foreground, and the individual's religious importance is only secondary and derivative.²⁹ This is immediately apparent when we realize that the covenant concept is not only seen in a vertical dimension, i.e., as God's outreach to man, but also horizontally, determining the relationship between men in the community and, to a slighter degree, man's relationship to other nations. This can be seen in the fact that the stipulations of the covenant do not only determine God's relation to man and man's to God, but also, as in the Ten Commandments, man's relationship to his fellow.³⁰

The idea of God's choice puts the Israelite nation into a peculiar relationship with Jahweh; this does not mean that the Jews thought of themselves as related to Jahweh by natural

²⁹Walther Eichrodt, Ist die Alt-israelitische National-religion Offenbarungsreligion? (Gütersloh: C. Bertelsmann Verlag, 1925), p. 21.

³⁰Gottfried Quell, "Diatheke," in Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament, edited by Gerhard Kittel (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer Verlag, 1935), II, 112-120, outlines briefly and succinctly the legal aspects of the covenant, especially the concept of "Bundesrecht."

kinship, but through the covenant; the covenant is not only between God and the individual, but between God and the nation. Thus God is not the God of the individual, but the God of a confederation. This is readily apparent in the Sinai account, with its stress on the participation of the whole nation. It is also of interest to note that the Joshua 24 account of the covenant at Shechem imposes the duties of the covenant and its reciprocal blessings on the whole "nation," the amphyctionic alliance of the twelve tribes.

This means that the "historical" problem of an antithesis between the record in Exodus 19ff. and Joshua 24 asks the wrong question. The national consciousness of the Jewish man is not "historical" in the modern sense of the word. Jewish theology, firmly rooted in and determined by history, sees no contradiction. Von Rad is very correct when he says that the Deuteronomic Heilsgeschichte sees history as "a process of history which is formed by the word [sic] of Yahweh [sic] continually intervening in judgment and salvation and directed toward fulfilment."³¹ Thus we come to the point at which we must repeat Wright's judgment of the extreme critics: they don't take Sinai seriously enough as definitive for all subsequent Israelite history.³² The whole period from Egypt through the amphyction (if we dare stop even there) is seen

³¹Gerhard von Rad, Studies in Deuteronomy, pp. 83, 91.

³²Wright, op. cit., p. 15.

as one continuous activity of God in history; theologically viewed, this whole process is part of the Sinaitic covenant. Sinai makes Israel a nation in a real sense and in a proleptic sense, "proleptic" since the God who acted with a mighty arm at the Red Sea is the same God who fights for His people in the "holy war" and gives them the land as an inheritance. Sinai makes Israel a people -- it makes Israel the people of God, the nation of His sovereign choice.

Israel, the people of God, view God and history in the light of Sinai. Sinai sets the nation apart for God's "possession." The idea of separation from other nations and separation for God's purposes is expressed in the idea of "holiness." The "holy" nation, Israel, is always a worshipping nation, a cultic people. In our day the importance of the cultus for ancient Israel has been emphasized particularly by the Scandinavian Biblical scholar. We are indebted to the fine treatment of Sigmund Mowinckel of the importance of the dimension of the cult in the entire scheme of Israel's history and especially the formation of an organized religious literature.³³

This properly high regard for the importance of the cultus has a direct bearing on our study of the covenant concept. Eichrodt, who stresses the centrality of the covenant concept to any approach to Jewish history is very outspoken on the

³³Sigmund Mowinckel, Religion und Kultus, translated by Albrecht Schauer (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1953).

effects and influences the cult. He corrects the previous extremes of the historico-critical school of literary critics, who made a great point of the "struggle between prophet and priest."³⁴ This extreme view, prompted by an overdose of Hegelianism, cannot be made to harmonize with the Biblical records, which stress the interrelation between the cultus and prophecy.³⁵ Von Rad even goes so far as to say that the political implications of the covenant grew out of prior cultic relationships, particularly during the amphictyonic period;³⁶ Noth sees cultic tradition antedating theological (in the narrower sense) tradition, and concludes that the earliest parts of the Pentateuch (the story of the Exodus and Sinai) developed in a cultic setting.³⁷ This would certainly not disagree with the cultic details and overtones of both Exodus 19ff. and Joshua 24.

Our sketch of the Jewish view of history and theology has seen the interrelations between history and theology centered around the fundamental revelation of God in the Exodus and Sinai covenant. The national consciousness and political

³⁴Eichrodt, Ist die Alt-israelitische Religion Offenbarungsreligion?, pp. 32f.

³⁵Cf. Von Rad, "Kritische Vorarbeiten zu einer Theologie des Alten Testaments," p. 17, who mentions the thesis that certain theological formulations were probably developed to defend the "holiness" of certain cultic centers.

³⁶Ibid., p. 14.

³⁷Ibid., p. 17.

organization of the Jewish nation were viewed in the light of God's choice of a people for His possession. This separated and "holy" people realized its existence and purposes in the area of the cultus, in which God made His will known to His worshipping people. This leads us next to a review of the Jewish cultus in general and a particular consideration of religious festivals. These festivals always had an *ἀνάμνησις* character as they made theological history relevant to both the present and the future. Jewish history, theology and worship all fall into the category of "remembrance" in a much more vital and dynamic sense than we are sometimes willing to grant and ready to realize.

CHAPTER IV

THE "REMEMBRANCE" OF HISTORY IN THE JEWISH CULTUS

It goes almost without saying that the investigation of the meaning of the words, "This do in remembrance of Me," must lead us to an investigation of the "memorial" character of Jewish cultic life. The nation which bears God's choice, the covenant people of God, was a cultic nation. This is already apparent in both the Exodus 19ff. account of the Sinai covenant and the record of Joshua 24. In both cases references are made to a cultic setting. In Exodus 20,24ff. God tells Moses that the cultus is the medium of His revelation and blessing, in Exodus 24,4ff. Moses sacrifices and sprinkles the people with the "blood of the covenant." In Joshua 24 the cultic context is less explicit; however the "stone of witness" or memorial stone is set up in the sanctuary of the Lord -- an apparent, though cryptic allusion to a more elaborate ceremony than our records give in detail.

The importance of the cultus for an understanding of Israel's history and theology has been generally underrated in previous generations of scholarship. The former vogue of setting prophet against priest, however, is now completely

passe, thanks to the efforts of Albrecht Alt,¹ Hermann Gunkel,² and Martin Noth.³ The new direction indicated by these men has caused a major reversal of approach to the whole Old Testament. Currently the Scandinavian Old Testament studies are almost preoccupied with the influence and effects of the cultus and its vital importance.⁴ The cultic background of the Pentateuch has been emphasized, an emphasis which serves as a healthy corrective to the excesses and extremes of literary criticism.⁵ The cultic associations of the prophetic Scriptures has also been stressed recently.⁶

In the light of the reference to the "blood of the covenant" in the Verba, and since the covenant idea has been shown to be a central and organizing factor for Jewish theology, we should treat, in passing, at least, a very

¹Albrecht Alt, Kleine Schriften zur Geschichte des Volkes Israel (München: C. H. Beck'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1953).

²Hermann Gunkel, Einleitung in die Psalmen (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1933).

³Martin Noth, Das System der zwölf Stämme Israels (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer Verlag, 1930); his Überlieferungsgeschichtliche Studien (Halle: M. Niemeyer Verlag, 1943).

⁴Especially the following: G. Widengren, I. Engnell and S. Mowinckel.

⁵Supra, p. 30.

⁶Cf. H. H. Rowley, The Faith of Israel (London: SCM Press, 1956), pp. 138f., for a fine summary and excellent bibliographical notes. For a study of the eighth century prophets and cultus cf. Carl Graesser, "The Eighth Century Prophets' Opinion of Cultus," (unpublished Bachelor of Divinity thesis, Concordia Seminary, Saint Louis, 1953).

interesting phenomenon: the festival of the "renewal of the covenant."⁷ A theory of a reoccurring celebration of the covenant renewal was first proposed by Albrecht Alt, Sigmund Mowinckel and Gerhard von Rad in connection with their study of Joshua 24.⁸ The importance of this assembly for the consolidation of the nation of twelve tribes has been mentioned before. It is interesting, however, that the practice of renewing the covenant of Sinai was very probably a recurring celebration.⁹

The Old Testament refers to several major "covenant renewals"; the ceremony at Shechem (Joshua 24) during the amphyctionic period, the Deuteronomic account during the monarchy, and the prophetic vision of Isaiah 52,11.¹⁰ Von Rad calls attention to a record of a renewal of the covenant in II Kings 23,1ff.¹¹ and in Nehemiah 7,72-79.¹²

⁷Hans Joachim Krauss, Gottesdienst in Israel: Studien zur Geschichte des Laubhüttenfestes (München: Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1954), pp. 49-66, gives a complete discussion of the "covenant renewal" ceremonies.

⁸Ludwig Kohler, Old Testament Theology, translated from the third edition by A. S. Todd (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1957), pp. 49ff.

⁹Martin Noth, Das System (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer Verlag, 1930), p. 73.

¹⁰Gerhard von Rad, "Kritische Vorarbeiten zu einer Theologie des Alten Testaments," in Theologie und Liturgie (Kassel: Johannes Stauda Verlag, 1952), pp. 33f.

¹¹Gerhard von Rad, Die Theologie der geschichtlichen Überlieferung Israels, Volume I of Theologie des Alten Testaments (München: Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1957), p. 84.

¹²Ibid., pp. 96f. and G. Ernest Wright, The Old Testament Against Its Environment (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1950), pp. 55f.

Wright mentions Jehoidah's covenant in II Chronicles 23, 16-21 and connects it with Josiah's find of "the book of the covenant" in 621.¹³

This tends to confirm Eichrodt's position that the covenant, based on a historic fact and act, was never thought of as merely a random bit of history. On the contrary, the history of the great deliverance and the formation of the Jewish nation was an ever-present reality which remained contemporary through the renewal of the covenant in succeeding generations. Rowley summarizes the theological centrality of this "remembrance" thus:

Any generation which declined to make its own covenant by the renewal of its own loyalty to God would repudiate its election and declare that it no longer wanted the bond between Israel and God to continue. Yet it is everywhere made clear that any generation which so repudiated the covenant would only disgrace itself. Nowhere is it supposed that each generation should decide de novo whether it wanted the bond to continue. Rather it was thought that on every generation rested the moral obligation to renew the covenant in its own life, since each generation inherited a blessing which imposed its claim upon it.¹⁴

The Jewish approach to history as God's continual dealings with His chosen covenant people would demand this sort of renewal, since Jewish theology is historically oriented. The Jewish approach to cultic life, similarly, was based on the historic deliverance in the Exodus, which made Israel a nation. In the widest sense the Exodus cannot be limited to

¹³Wright, op. cit., p. 56.

¹⁴Rowley, op. cit., pp. 69f.

the experience at Sinai, but includes the entrance into the land and the consolidation of the nation in the amphyctionic period. Under the Jewish rubrics of the continuity of history this is not at all difficult to understand.

The historical character of Jewish cultus, the "remembering" that characterized Jewish festivals, is nowhere more apparent than in the Passover celebration. The Passover festival is frequently commanded in the Old Testament,¹⁵ and various notable Passovers coincide with weighty moments of Jewish history.¹⁶ Thus the Passover celebration was a "remembrance" of the historical event par excellence of the Exodus, and was thus a "historical" festival; the close connection of the Passover and the important subsequent events in Jewish history is apparent in the records of the memorable celebrations during the various "stages" (the Exodus from Egypt, the plain of Sinai, the Jordan Valley; in the monarchy under Hezekiah the reformer and under Josiah the reformer; in the post-exilic period under Ezra at the important juncture of the restoration).

¹⁵Ex. 12,21-27; Dt. 16,1-8; Ezek. 45,21-24; Ex. 12,1-13; Ex. 12,43-50; Lev. 23,5; Num. 9,1-14; Num. 28,16; Ex. 34,25. The various accounts of the institution bear witness to the basic importance of this festival in various periods of Jewish history.

¹⁶Num. 33,3 records the Passover of the Exodus; Num. 9,5 records the celebration on the plain of Sinai; Joshua 5,10-12 records the Jordan Valley Passover; II Chron. 30 details the Passover under Hezekiah; II Kings 23,21-23 and II Chron. 35, 1-19 record Josiah's Passover (note the connection with Josiah's finding the "book of the covenant" and the "covenant renewal"); Ezra 6,19-22 records the post-exilic Passover.

The importance of the Passover indicates that we must at least sketch the history of the feast. There is no doubting the connection between Passover and Exodus, since all the commands of observance and all the narratives of historic Passovers makes this association abundantly clear. There has been much study, however, of the development of the festival. Recent studies have emphasized the underlying similarity of cultic patterns in the ancient Near East.¹⁷ The fact that the Passover itself and the feast of unleavened bread were combined into one festival which could be termed "the feast of unleavened bread" or "the Passover," as well as study of parallel cultures, has led to the conclusion that the Passover may originally have been a more general religious feast.¹⁸ Johannes Pedersen posits an antecedent spring festival behind the later Passover,¹⁹

¹⁷S. H. Hooke's studies (especially his Myth and Ritual and The Labyrinth) and his disciples in England and Scandinavia have proposed a great degree of similarity of "cultic pattern" in the Near East. This does not speak of the content of the cultus, but rather the forms. Cf. Rolf Rendtorff, "Der Kultus im Alten Israel," in Jahrbuch für Liturgik und Hymnologie, edited by Konrad Ameln, Christhard Mahrenholz and Karl Ferdinand Müller, 2. Jahrgang (1956) (Kassel: Johannes Stauda Verlag, 1957), pp. 2ff.

¹⁸H. Clay Trumbull, The Threshold Covenant or the Beginning of Religious Rites (New York: Chas Scribner's Sons, 1906), p. 203; similarly H. H. Rowley, op. cit., p. 93; Rowley is careful to stress that the rite was not simply taken over from existing Canaanite religion, but was no doubt celebrated even before the settlement in Palestine.

¹⁹Johannes Pedersen, Israel: Its Life and Culture (London: Oxford University Press, 1953), III-IV, 384.

Claus Schedl similarly agrees to the possibility that a primarily agricultural festival became assimilated to the Passover and reinterpreted in connection with the Passover's celebration of the "memory" of the Exodus.²⁰ This position is also held by Joachim Jeremias²¹ and G. Ernest Wright.²² Gerhard von Rad raises the important caution that any elaborate projection of the Passover into pre-Exodus times must remain hypothetical.²³

The importance of the Passover, whatever its earliest origins, lies in its associations with the Exodus from Egypt.²⁴ As a celebration of God's deliverance, however, it went through successive stages during the history of the

²⁰Claus Schedl, Das Bundesvolk Gottes, Volume II of Geschichte des Alten Testaments (Innsbruck-Wein-München: Tyrolia Verlag, 1956), p. 212.

²¹Joachim Jeremias, "Pascha," in Theologische Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament, edited by Gerhard Kittel (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer Verlag, 1954), V, 897.

²²Wright, op. cit., p. 98. Wright agrees with Jeremias in essence, although he sets up the antithesis between the other festivals and the Passover; for him the agricultural origin of the Passover is less apparent.

²³Gerhard von Rad, Die Theologie der geschichtlichen Überlieferung Israels, Volume I of Theologie des Alten Testaments (München: Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1957), p. 25. Von Rad directs his caution against the extremes of L. Rost's "Wiederwechsel und Altisraelitischer Festkalender," in Zeitschrift des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins, 1943, pp. 205ff.

²⁴Cf. Walther Eichrodt, Theologie des Alten Testaments (Fifth edition; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1957), p. 75; and Schedl, Das Bundesvolk Gottes, p. 129.

Jewish nation. Gray²⁵ outlines three steps in its history:

1. originally the Paschal lamb was killed and eaten in the home,
2. in the period after the reform of Josiah the lamb is sacrificed in the temple and the meal eaten in the temple area,
3. in the first century of our era the lamb is killed in the temple enclosure and the fat parts burned there while the Passover meal is eaten by small companies in the houses of greater Jerusalem.

Along somewhat similar lines Jeremias stresses the shift in the Passover celebration from the home to the temple. The original festival was a family festival; after the centralization of the cultus in Jerusalem it became much more a priestly function. He sees traces of the earlier usage in Ex. 12,7 and traces of the later custom in Ex. 12,22-27.²⁶ These two poles seem to be mediated in the usage of the time of our Lord, when the slaughter occurred in the temple and the Haburah ate the meal in a family-setting in a home.

The Exodus associations of the Passover, however, remain constant despite shifts in form of the celebration. The

²⁵George Buchanan Gray, Sacrifice in the Old Testament: Its Theory and Practice (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1925), p. 371; for more detail of this development cf. Johannes Pedersen, op. cit., III-IV, 384-415; also Joachim Jeremias, "Pascha," p. 897, note 12.

²⁶Joachim Jeremias, Die Passahfest der Samaritaner und ihre Bedeutung für das Verständnis der Alttestamentlichen Überlieferung (Giessen: Verlag von Alfred Töpelmann, 1932), pp. 89ff. In the Samaritan celebration of the twentieth century Jeremias sees a form of decentralization which he feels is a fairly accurate guide to a reconstruction of the pre-Deuteronomic practice (cf. pp. 66-71).

application of this festival of "remembrance" to the various periods and ages within the history of the Jewish nation indicates the value placed on the feast as a real link to the past from whatever "present" the people found themselves in. But the historical centrality of the Exodus did not only inform and influence the Passover; Thackeray makes the interesting observation that the two other major annual festivals, Pentecost and the Feast of Tabernacles (which were certainly reinterpretations of earlier rites under the impact of the Exodus) which were days of obligation for all Jews, are also colored by the sequence of the Exodus, the Sinai covenant and the entrance into the land.²⁷

This process of interpretation of the past in terms of the present can best be seen when we consider the Passover Haggadah, which relates the story in very personal terms. Thus the Haggadah uses the technical verb for freeing slaves in describing the act by which God led the captives out of Egypt.²⁸ The Haggadah does not merely speak of the past, it speaks to the present. Thus it begins, "We were slaves unto Pharaoh in Egypt, but our God brought us out from

²⁷H. St. John Thackeray, The Septuagint and Jewish Worship: A Study in Origins (London: Oxford University Press, 1923), p. 42.

²⁸David Daube, The New Testament and Rabbinic Judaism (London: The Athlone Press, 1956), p. 269; cf. Ex. 12,41; 13,16; 21,7; Lev. 25,54.

there."²⁹ The Haggadah underscores the present relevance of the Passover rite by putting the question, "What mean you by this service?" (Ex. 12,26) into the mouth of the "wicked son," whose use of the wrong personal pronoun in effect eliminates him from the deliverance offered in the rite; he should rather say, "This is done because of that which the Lord did for me when I came forth from Egypt." (Ex. 13,8). The Haggadah is very explicit on the point of personal application and reliving of the Exodus in the Passover ritual:

"In each generation each one of us should regard himself as though he himself had gone forth from Egypt, as it is said (Ex. 13,8): 'And thou shalt show thy son in that day, saying, This is done' Not our ancestors alone did God redeem them, but he did us redeem with them as it is said (Deut. 6,23): 'And he brought us out from thence that he might bring us in to give us the land which he swore to our fathers.' Therefore we are in duty bound to thank, to glorify, to exalt, to honour [sic], to bless, to extol and to give reverence to him who performed for us, as well as for our forefathers, all these wonders. He has brought us forth from bondage to freedom, from sorrow to joy, from mourning to festival, from darkness to light, and from slavery to redemption. Now, therefore, let us sing before him a new song, Hallelujah!"³⁰

Thus the Passover is a vital and dynamic recital of God's past deeds but also, an especially, is the Vergegenwärtigung of the outstretched arm of Jahweh. Just as the covenant

²⁹ Daube, op. cit., p. 279; and W. D. Davies, Paul and Rabbinic Judaism (London: SPCK, 1948), p. 103.

³⁰ Davies, loc. cit.

renewal did not begin de novo, so the Passover's annual and national character and its emphasis on the presence of the youth for education, keeps alive the continuity of God's saving activity. This approach runs head-on into our modern tendency to separate past and present into relatively tight categories. The Jewish conception of time and also that of the New Testament, which is essentially Hebrew, sees less problems in Vergegenwärtigung, which stresses the qualitative aspect of time and the continuous existential relevance of the past for the present.³¹

This time-concept and its implications for the Passover have been summarized thus by Ludwig Kohler:

History presupposes the past, and what is past has lost its reality. In this sense the Hebrew mind hardly knows the past or history. The promises to the patriarchs are regarded by the later generation as valid for them still (though this word "still" is not really appropriate). The Exodus from Egypt is not related at each Passover to no purpose. "It shall be a sign unto thee upon thine hand, and for a memorial between thine eyes, for with a strong hand Yahweh [sic] brought thee out of Egypt." . . . What happened once is not a "once" but a "now." It is "we ourselves" whom he [sic] has brought out (Exodus 13,16). Past and present are one single act of God. The Exodus from Egypt and the return from Babylon are one single action of God delivering his [sic] people. It is hardly comprehensible for us to-day [sic] that the Hebrews still experienced after centuries what had once happened. For the Hebrew mind this release from the past and from history was a living reality which creates life.³²

³¹Martin Noth, "Die Vergegenwärtigung des Alten Testaments in der Verkündigung," in Verkündigung: Aufsätze zur Auslegung des Alten Testaments (Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1955), p. 43.

³²Ludwig Kohler, Hebrew Man, translated by Peter R. Ackroyd (London: SCM Press, Ltd., 1956), p. 219.

In this connection we must remember that the Hebrew idea of history is theologically oriented and, conversely, the Hebrew idea of theology is historically oriented. Thus von Rad stresses the fact that the Old Testament cannot be "systematized" in terms of an abstract world of belief, but only in terms of the record of Jahweh acting in history. In its witness to history Israel did not point to its faith, but it pointed to Jahweh. Thus theology for the Hebrew is not static, but dynamic; it is not a bloodless set of schemes, but the confessional proclamation of God's actions and activity in history.³³ Von Rad concludes that both the original happening, which is virtually lost in the dark past, and also the interpretation of the past event makes up the material of history. Thus von Rad emphasizes the nexus between fides quae and fides qua of Hebrew theology.

Diese Zuversicht hat sich Israel nicht aus den Fingern gezogen, sondern Israel hat sie aus vielfältigen und weiträumigen Erfahrungen aus der Geschichte eingebracht und sie personal verpflichtet in einer Erzählung zur Anschauung gebracht.³⁴

Thus Israel's theology is not theological reflexion and systematization, but praising and celebrating God's mighty acts which are intensely relevant for the present.

In this context we can add that the sacral and cultic union of the covenant is intimately connected with the ongoing

³³Gerhard von Rad, Die Theologie der Geschichtlichen Überlieferung, pp. 117ff.

³⁴Gerhard von Rad, op. cit., pp. 116f.

Vergegenwärtigung of God's salvation. This presentation, interestingly enough, keeps God's initiative and man's activity clearly separated, although they are interrelated. The spoken, declarative word of the priest is seen as Jahweh's word, which reveals Him.³⁵ Our modern contrast between appearance and reality does not phase the Hebrew mind.³⁶ Thus Mowinckel speaks of a "real presence" in the sacramental materials of the Old Testament,³⁷ and Noth stresses the importance of a cultic object like the "ark of the covenant."³⁸ The Old Testament concept of God's presence connected with the ark of the covenant and later the holy of holies is always seen in the context of cultic action.³⁹

The material aspect of Jahweh's presence among His people must be seen in the terms of Hebrew thought, rather than Western thought. Thus the Hebrew does not know our distinction between "matter" and its antithesis, whatever it may be termed; the Hebrew does not distinguish sharply

³⁵Sigmund Mowinckel, Religion und Kultus, translated by Albrecht Schauer (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1953), p. 109.

³⁶H. and H. A. Frankfort, "Myth and Reality," in Before Philosophy: the Intellectual Adventure of Ancient Man (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England: Penguin Books, 1954), p. 20.

³⁷Mowinckel, op. cit., pp. 101f.

³⁸Eichrodt, Theologie, p. 116.

³⁹Noth, Das System, pp. 94ff.; Schedl, Das Bundesvolk Gottes, pp. 138ff.; von Rad, Studies in Deuteronomy, pp. 38ff. and 41-44.

between the "spiritual" and the "physical."⁴⁰ Mowinckel therefore emphasizes that the distinction between "flesh" and "spirit" is not one of a kind at all; "spirit" was quite materialistically conceived of as a material somewhat finer and more full of power than "flesh."⁴¹ Similarly "symbol" and "reality" are not at all at opposite poles; a man, an institution, a God can be completely and fully compressed into a "symbol" as far as the Jewish mind is concerned.⁴² Frankfort summarizes the ancient Near East's approach to "symbols" thus:

Symbols are treated in much the same way i.e., the Jew does not differentiate sharply between reality and appearance . . . he [the ancient Oriental] can no more conceive of them as signifying, yet separate from, the gods [sic] or powers than he can consider a relationship established in his mind--such as resemblance--as connecting, and yet separate from, the objects compared.⁴³

Therefore Wright cannot be gainsaid when he states that Jewish religion "is not centered in the Absolute of metaphysical speculation any more than it is centered in the cycle of nature."⁴⁴ This theological center and basis of Hebrew thought has been well put by H. Wheeler Robinson. He proposes that if thought is considered as three concentric circles, with

⁴⁰Schedl, Das Bundesvolk Gottes, loc. cit.

⁴¹Mowinckel, op. cit., p. 16.

⁴²Ibid., pp. 17f.

⁴³Frankfort and Frankfort, op. cit., p. 21.

⁴⁴Wright, op. cit., p. 41.

consciousness in the center, nature around consciousness, and history the outermost circle, the Greek approach would begin from the outside and work inward, while the Hebrew would begin at the center and work outward. Thus the Jews "within each circle found themselves in contact with God."⁴⁵ This theological centralization of Jewish thought rests squarely on the nation's self-awareness as God's chosen people, as Ludwig Köhler states very succinctly:

Israel, the people of the revealed God, with its worship of this one and only God, ordained once and for all by what was given by God himself [sic] through Moses -- Israel was a world to itself. It is the community of God, in the world, but not of the world, in time but not of time. Israel's only duty, the only reason for its existence, is the right worship of God, as it ought to have been observed from the fathers onward.⁴⁶

The central and basic theological datum of God's choice and His deliverance of His people in the Exodus was vergegenwärtigt in the repetition of the Passover. Thus Alfred Cave combines the past event of the Exodus and the present event of the Passover thus:

The first Passover was the commencement of the special privileges of the chosen nation; every subsequent Passover became a pledge of the continuance of these privileges. The Passover, as it was celebrated from year to year, was a re-enactment [sic], a reiteration, a renewal of that ancient rite which inaugurated the divine adoption of Israel as "a peculiar treasure, the kingdom of priests, and a holy nation," as Jehovah [sic] Himself described the liberated Egyptian slaves. Briefly,

⁴⁵H. Wheeler Robinson, The Religious Ideas of the Old Testament (London: Gerald Duckworthy and Co., Ltd., 1952), p. 219.

⁴⁶Köhler, op. cit., pp. 144f.

Passover was a holy convocation, when the first Passover was recapitulated, and the nation again entered upon the amenities of divine forgiveness and adoption.⁴⁷

Through this annual repetition of the Passover the onetime fact and act in the Exodus is kept alive in an extremely real sense for the nation. The Passover vergegenwärtigt the salvation which Jahweh grants to His covenant people through the medium of the cultic activity.

It is against this background of historic and theological consciousness that the words, "This do in remembrance of Me," of the Lord's Supper stand. In that upper room the question "Why do we do this?" of the Passover Haggadah received a new and fulfilling meaning from our Lord. Against this background we intend to study the words of institution with a special effort bent toward underlining the "remembrance" character of the Lord's Supper.

⁴⁷ Alfred Cave, The Scriptural Doctrine of Sacrifice and Atonement (Second edition; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1890), p. 111.

CHAPTER V

"THIS DO IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME"

The Passover, as we have seen, is the very active cultic "remembrance" of God's great saving action in the past for His people. In the liturgy of the Passover an interpretation and explanation of the meaning of the celebration was required in answer to the question, posed by the son of the family.

"Why is this night different from all [other] nights? For on all [other] [sic] nights we eat leavened and unleavened bread, whereas on this night we eat only leavened [sic]¹ bread; on all other [sic] nights we eat all kinds of herbs, on this night bitter herbs; on all other nights we eat meat roast, stewed or boiled, on this night, roast only. On all other nights we dip once, but on this night we dip twice."²

The explanation of the "elements" and the "action" of the Passover consists of Deuteronomy 26,5ff.:

A Syrian ready to perish was my father, and he went down to Egypt, and sojourned there with a few, and became there a nation, great, mighty and populous: And the Egyptians evil entreated us, and laid upon us hard bondage:

¹Seder Moed, Volume X in The Babylonian Talmud, translated under the editorship of I. Epstein (London: Soncino Press, 1938), p. 594, pulls this colossal blunder, which certainly ranks with the error of the so-called "Adulterous Bible"; obviously the Mishna should read "unleavened," as it is correctly reported by Philip Blackman, Order Moed, Volume II in Mishnayoth (London: Mishna Press, Ltd., 1952), p. 217.

²Epstein, loc. cit.

And when we cried unto the Lord God of our fathers, the Lord heard our voice, and looked on our affliction, and our labour, and our oppression:

And the Lord brought us forth out of Egypt with a mighty hand and with an outstretched arm, and with great terribleness, and with signs, and with wonders: And he brought us into this place, and hath given us this land, even a land that floweth with milk and honey.³

The Mishnah explains the "elements" of the Passover thus: the Passover offering is sacrificed because Jahweh "passed over" the Israelite houses (Ex. 12,27); the unleavened bread is eaten because Jahweh "redeemed" the fathers from Egypt (Ex. 12,39); the bitter herbs are eaten to remember the bitterness of slavery (Ex. 1,14).⁴ The Passover Haggadah, then, explains the "elements" and "action" of the Passover by a recital of historic facts and acts of God's deliverance in the Exodus. This "remembrance" is not merely a bland recollection of something that once happened, but is represented in a very real and personal sense. Thus the Haggadah used pronouns in the first person:

the Egyptians evil entreated us, and laid upon us hard bondage: And when we cried unto the God of our fathers, the Lord heard our voice, and looked on our affliction, and our labour, and our oppression: And the Lord brought us forth out of Egypt And he brought us into this place, and hath given us this land⁵

³Quoted from the King James Version.

⁴Epstein, op. cit., p. 595.

⁵Deut. 26,5ff., passim.

This is Vergegenwärtigung in typical Jewish form. The past is again re-presented in the cultic "remembrance" of the Passover.⁶

Similarly the Passover liturgy includes the saying of the first part of the Hallel⁷ which refers to the Exodus experience⁸ immediately after the recital of the Deuteronomy account. The second half of the Hallel, when taken in connection with the first half (which speaks only in the terms of "Israel," "the poor," "the needy") applies the historical experience of the fathers to the present in the use of first person pronouns:

Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us our God is in the heavens The Lord has remembered us great is his kindness toward us It is wonderful in our eyes let us rejoice and be glad therein The Lord . . . has given us light.⁹

Ps. 115,9ff. moves from "Israel" to "You who fear the Lord" and continues in terms of the second person. Ps. 116 is even more personal, using the first person singular. Ps. 118 again moves from "Israel" (Ps. 118,1) to "those who fear the Lord" (Ps. 118,1), and continues in the first person

⁶Cf., supra, p. 53, the use of first person pronouns in Ex. 13,8.

⁷Epstein, op. cit., p. 596, mentions that the first part of the Hallel according to the school of Shammai included only Ps. 113, whereas the school of Hillel included Pss. 113 and 114.

⁸Ps. 113,7f. is certainly a poetic echo of the slavery in Egypt, and Ps. 114,1 is very explicit: "When Israel went forth from Egypt"

⁹Ps. 115,1; 115,3; 115,12; Ps. 117,2; Ps. 118,23f.

singular. This is not simply grammatical accident, but is rather the highest sort of theology. The Passover liturgy was the dynamic re-enactment of the onetime deliverance of the fathers, which did not simply recall the past, but made the past present (this is "Vergegenwärtigung") for the celebrants of each Passover.

No wonder, then, that rabbinic tradition associated the Hallel with the great historic experiences of the nation.

The Gemara reports the following traditions:

Our Rabbis taught: Who uttered this Hallel? R. Eleazar said: Moses and Israel uttered it when they stood by the Red Sea. They exclaimed, "Not unto us, not unto us," and the Holy Spirit responded, "For Mine own sake, for Mine own sake, will I do it." R. Judah said: Joshua and Israel uttered it when the kings of Canaan attacked them R. Eleazar the Modiite said: Deborah and Barak uttered it when Sisera attacked them R. Eleazar ben 'Azariah said: Hezekiah and his companions uttered it when Sennacherib attacked them R. Akiba said: Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah uttered it when the wicked Nebuchadnezzar rose against them R. Jose the Galilean said: Mordecai and Esther uttered it when the wicked Haman rose against them But the Sages maintained: The prophets among them enacted that the Israelites should recite it at every epoch and at every trouble -- may it not come to them! -- and when they are redeemed, they recite it in thankfulness for their delivery.¹⁰

It is interesting to note that this catalog of "occasions" on which the Hallel is reported by the rabbinic tradition parallels the records of notable Passovers in Egypt, in the Jordan Valley and after the return from Babylon.¹¹ The

¹⁰Epstein, op. cit., pp. 600f.

¹¹Supra, p. 48.

whole of covenant history was the record of God's salvation and redemption. This salvation and redemption was vergegenwärtigt in the celebration of each Passover.

Just as strong as the historical "remembrance" in the Passover is the eschatological element.¹² "It [the Passover] appealed by symbol, exposition, and song to a great redemptive act in the past as the pledge of a great redemptive act in the future."¹³ Thus an eschatological formula expressed the future hope: "This year, here, next year, in the land of Israel; this year, slaves, next year, free men all."¹⁴ Similarly R. Akiba's Benediction of Redemption includes the following eschatological note:

Thus shall the Eternal our God and the God of our ancestors let us attain to other seasons and festivals that come towards us in peace, rejoicing in the rebuilding of Thy city and joyous in Thy service and we shall eat there of the sacrifices¹⁵

When we remember that all the accounts of the institution of the Lord's Supper are explicitly Paschal in character¹⁶ we can begin to see striking vistas of comparison and

¹²W. G. Moorehead, The Tabernacle, the Priesthood, Sacrifices and Feasts of Ancient Israel (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Kregel Publications, 1957), p. 214; David Daube, The New Testament and Rabbinic Judaism (London: Athlone Press, 1956), p. 280.

¹³George Buchanan Gray, Sacrifice in the Old Testament: Its Theory and Practice (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1925), p. 382.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 379.

¹⁵Blackman, op. cit., p. 220.

¹⁶Supra, pp. 18ff.

enlargement opening before our eyes. The Verba Testamenti are the essential precis of Jesus' own Passover Haggadah.¹⁷ The question, "Why is this night different from all other nights?," is answered by "the night in which He was betrayed" of I Cor. 11,23. The variations between the four accounts of the Verba Testamenti diverge only in express formulation, and not in basic content.¹⁸ The differences represent various liturgical usages within the Church which had arisen as the new Haggadah.¹⁹ This diversity bears witness to the Church's "doing in remembrance" even before Paul and Luke wrote the phrase into a Gospel and an Epistle. Jeremias wisely stresses that the meaning of Jesus' words is not exhausted in calling them the Verba Testamenti words of interpretation.²⁰ The records in the Gospels and in Paul do not propose to be a court stenographer's verbatim of the Last Supper, but they all report the essence of Jesus' commentary on the Paschal elements which He chose for His Supper. And in this all the accounts coincide: "Take, this is My Body" and "This is My blood of the covenant which is poured out for many."²¹

¹⁷Daube, op. cit., p. 413.

¹⁸Joachim Jeremias, The Eucharistic Words of Jesus, translated from the second German edition by Arnold Erhardt (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1955), pp. 87-135 points out the unity in diversity.

¹⁹Ibid., pp. 127ff.

²⁰Ibid., p. 106.

²¹Ibid., p. 132.

Probably one of the most obvious questions raised by a comparison of the Passover and the Lord's Supper is "How did an annual commemoration and celebration become a weekly commemoration and celebration?" The answer to this question has been indicated by Oscar Cullmann, who stresses the importance of the post-Easter appearances of Jesus as the source of the weekly celebration of the Resurrection.²² Thus the disciples and early Christian community learned the meaning of the life and death of Jesus after the Resurrection, as Jesus explained the Old Testament to them.²³ The continued "remembrance" of the Lord was not only a process of understanding the Old Testament, but also a "remembrance" of Jesus' words to His disciples before the Passion.²⁴ This very

²²Oscar Cullmann, Early Christian Worship, translated by A. Stewart Todd and James B. Torrance (London: SCM Press, 1956), pp. 15ff.

²³Lk. 24,25ff. records that Jesus interpreted the things concerning His life and death; Jn. 2,17 and 22 mentions that the memory of the disciples recalled that Jesus had spoken of the raising of the new temple and they believed the Scriptures (of the Old Testament); Jn. 12,16 states that the disciples didn't understand the triumphal entry at first, but after Jesus was glorified they remembered that this had been written of Him (in the Old Testament).

²⁴Lk. 24,6ff. records the angels' command to remember the word Jesus had spoken to them and the fact that they did remember; Jn. 2,22 mentions the remembrance of the Lord of the new temple, with all its Resurrection connotations; Lk. 22,61 stresses Peter's remembrance of the word of Jesus about the betrayal which certainly continued to haunt Peter's memory in the subsequent years, including the time of the formation of the Gospel account; Acts 11,16 sees Peter remembering Jesus' word about John's baptism and the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

active and dynamic memory, then, plays a very important role in the background of the New Testament Scriptures and the general apostolic preaching.

In this light we must mention a fine article by Otto Piper, in which he shows how the New Testament is, in a sense, a continuation of the Haggadah of Jesus at the Last Supper, understood in the light of the Easter fact and post-Easter experiences.²⁵ We must call attention to the explicit reference to the "breaking of bread" in John 21,12f. and John's note that Jesus' words and acts are a far greater bulk of material than is recorded in his Gospel (John 20,30). This certainly indicates the close connection between the oral *κήρυγμα* and its resultant written form in the New Testament with the ongoing Haggadah. Jesus, in His post-Easter appearances, continues to explain and bring to remembrance. Even after the Ascension the "remembrance" of the disciples continues to grow.²⁶

This process of oral tradition which lies very patently behind the New Testament records does not develop in the rarefied atmosphere of cloistered theological reflection, but in the cultus of the New Israel of God, in closest connection with the early Church's obedience to Christ's

²⁵Otto Piper, "Exodus in the New Testament," Interpretation, XI,1 (January, 1957), pp. 3-22.

²⁶Cf. Jn. 14,26.

ἀνάμνησις.²⁷ It is extremely noteworthy that the description of the life of the early Church in Acts 2,42 lists "teaching, fellowship, breaking of bread and prayers," the four very basic elements of the Passover celebration.²⁸ The close connection between the Passover celebration mentioned in John 2,13 and the disciples' "remembrance" (2,22) of the Lord's words cannot be overlooked. The ongoing education of the early Church in the meaning of Christ's life and death and Resurrection occurs, logically enough, in the context of the Church centered around the Passover of the "new covenant." They "remember" with ever deeper insight, and "proclaim"²⁹ this ἀνάμνησις.³⁰

The historical remembrance of the Passover Haggadah finds its goal in the person and work of Jesus. This connection is very obvious in the sermons of the New Testament

²⁷Cf. Gustav Aulen, Eucharist and Sacrifice, translated by C. H. Wahlstrom (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1958), pp. xif. for modern exegesis' stress on the cultus.

²⁸"Teaching" is no less than the new Haggadah, which answers the question "Why do we do this" in terms of the New Exodus in Christ; "fellowship" expresses the idea of the ever-enlarging Haburah, centered around the cultic "breaking of bread" which is the Lord's Supper; the "prayers" represent the graces and benedictions of the Passover liturgy in their new and full meaning.

²⁹Cf. supra, chapter II, especially note 26.

³⁰The absence of the account of the institution from John's Gospel is less shocking when we take seriously the insight of J. Macpherson, reported in W. D. Davies, Paul and Rabbinic Judaism (London: SPCK Press, 1948), p. 110, that John 13 to 17 finds its most obvious formal parallel in the Passover Haggadah.

and in the formation of the New Testament itself.³¹ The historical character of the Lord's Supper is mirrored in the New Testament itself; thus the new Haggadah does not abrogate the history of the Old Testament deliverance in the Exodus, but sees the fulfillment in the new Exodus of the new people of God by Christ's death. The "remembrance" of the Lord's Supper is "in remembrance" of Jesus, and "shows forth" His death. This cannot be separated from the Passover's "remembrance," then; we must view the "remembrance" of Jesus against the backdrop of the prior and incomplete "remembrance" of the Exodus in the Passover.³²

The Verba of Jesus as used in the subsequent celebrations of the new Exodus in the Lord's Supper are the record that the Church did, indeed, "Do this." And as the Church "did this" it was looking backward over a theological history which began with God's choice of a people through His mighty acts at Sinai and which culminated in the new Exodus.³³ The historical character of the Passover Haggadah,

³¹Piper, op. cit.; an extremely fine study of the Exodus motif in selected portions of the New Testament is James B. Ilten, "The Old Testament Background of the Exodus Motif in Matt. 2:15; 20,28; Acts 7:36 [sic]" (unpublished Bachelor of Divinity Thesis, Concordia Seminary, Saint Louis, 1958); cf. Daube, op. cit., pp. 188ff.

³²Gray, op. cit., p. 383 stresses the importance of this "remembrance" that the supreme moments of Jesus' life occurred at Passover time as an explanation of the large number of occurrences of the word "Passover" in the New Testament.

³³Friedrich Delekat, Die heiligen Sakramente und die Ordnungen der Kirche: ein Beitrag zur Lehre von der Sichtbarkeit der Kirche (Berlin: Furche-Verlag, 1940), p. 63.

with its seeming disregard for the number of pronouns ("they" and "we" or even "I")³⁴ is made a present and dynamic reality ("all of you"; "yourselves"; "for you"; "as often as you drink it")³⁵ in the new Haggadah of the Verba Testamenti. Thus each Christian in every age finds the historic deliverance in Christ vergegenwärtigt in the Lord's Supper. Any distinction between "then" and "now" which separates the two times fails to do justice to the Hebrew concept of history as God's ongoing saving activity. "Doing this in remembrance" is not a casual recollection that something happened, but is the very real and dynamic extension and realization of the saving act of God in Jesus Christ.

The "remembrance" of the Lord's Supper is not just the memory of a past event, but it also points forward toward the future. The fact that the New Testament accounts record the so-called "Vow of Abstinence"³⁶ points up the eschatological side of the Last Supper.³⁷ Many scholars hold that Jesus Himself did not partake of the "elements" of the Last Supper Passover³⁸ to indicate the incompleteness of the

³⁴Supra, p. 53.

³⁵Mt. 26,27; Lk. 22,17 and 20; I Cor. 11,24f.

³⁶Mt. 26,29; Mk. 14,25; Lk. 22,15-18.

³⁷Jeremias, The Eucharistic Words of Jesus, pp. 165-172.

³⁸Ibid., p. 165.

total action until the Parousia.³⁹ Daube surmises that the apparent omission of the fourth cup heightens the eschatological stress of the "Vow of Abstinence."⁴⁰ Thus the words "This do in remembrance of Me" are not simply words which point memory back to the past, but which point forward to the consummation. In this connection Jeremias poses the interesting possibility that the subject of the "remembrance" is God Himself; thus the Verba include a prayer for God's final act in bringing the Parousia.⁴¹ This emphasis does not preclude the "remembrance" of the past act of God in Jesus Christ by the Church, but rather enlarges the scope of the Church's memory to include the desire for the culmination. Thus Gray states that just as the Jews at their Paschal meal recalled one act of redemption as the pledge of another and of the final act of redemption in the future, so the Christian looked back to and recited the story of the cross as the pledge of the future coming of the Lord and the consummation of their redemption.⁴²

The New Testament is extremely aware of this eschatological tendency in the Lord's Supper. Paul includes the

³⁹Delekat, op. cit., pp. 63f. and Peter Brunner, Aus der Kraft des Werkes Christi: zur Lehre von der heiligen Taufe und vom heiligen Abendmahl (München: Evangelische Pressverband für Bayern, 1950), p. 64.

⁴⁰Daube, op. cit., pp. 330f.

⁴¹Jeremias, The Eucharistic Words of Jesus, pp. 159-165.

⁴²Gray, op. cit., p. 396.

ancient prayer for the Parousia at the end of the Epistle in which he wrote to the Corinthian congregation about their life around the Lord's Supper.⁴³ The highly eschatological and liturgical Book of Revelation, which describes the seer's vision "on the Lord's day," (1,10) responds to the prophecy of the Parousia with an "Even so" (1,7) and closes with the promise "Surely I am coming soon" and its response, "Amen. Come, Lord Jesus." (22,20) The Eucharistic life of the early Church was keenly aware that it was "remembering" in the Endzeit, a time which both looked backward to God's act and looked forward to His final act of deliverance.⁴⁴ The previous table-fellowship, emblem of the final Messianic meal,⁴⁵ has come to an end after its revival in the post-Easter meals,⁴⁶ but these, too, are proleptic forerunners of the final Messianic banquet.⁴⁷

Peter Brunner summarizes this temporal bipolarity very succinctly:

An der Grenze zwischen dem Alten und Neuen steht also dieses Mahl, in dem das Neue schon in eigentümlicher

⁴³1 Cor. 16,22.

⁴⁴B. Lohse, Das Passafest der Quartadecimaner (Gütersloh: C. Bertelsmann Verlag, 1953), pp. 138ff., sees the second century celebration in Christian circles as a fair indication of what the primitive Eucharist was like, especially in its eschatological stress on the fulfillment in the Messianic meal.

⁴⁵Lk. 14,15f.; Mt. 22,4; Lk. 22,30.

⁴⁶Jn. 21,12ff.; and Lk. 24,30ff.

⁴⁷Aulen, op. cit., pp. 155f.

Weise gegenwärtig wird. Das Trinken jetzt und hier ist bereits erfüllt von der eschatologischen Heilswirklichkeit. Die vollendete eschatologische Gemeinschaft im Reiche Gottes wird mit Sicherheit einst eintreten. Zwischen dem Jetzt und dem Einst liegt eine "dunkle Pause," in der die jetzige Mahlgemeinschaft der Jünger mit ihrem Herrn nicht mehr so bestehen kann wie bisher, in der aber auch die künftige Mahlgemeinschaft in der Vollendung des Reiches noch nicht ist. Genau in diese "dunkle Pause" tritt das Sakrament des Abendmahls ein als die Brücke zwischen dem Jetzt, das nunmehr aufhört, und dem Einst, das kommt. Die Person Jesu wird in jener dunklen Pause nicht mit ihrer sinnlichen Leiblichkeit wie bisher unter den Jüngern weilen. An ihre Stelle tritt bis zu seiner Wiederkunft sein Mahl. Das von Christus gesegnete und ausgeteilte und von den Jüngern genommene Brot "empfängt in diesem Augenblick die gleiche Funktion und Wirklichkeit, die bisher Er selbst im leiblich-räumlichen Beieinandersein hatte: Dies ist Mein Leib!"⁴⁸

The Lord's Supper is, then, the Vergegenwärtigung of the mighty and saving arm of God in Jesus Christ. Time and place never did limit the Almighty, and yet God chose to become incarnate in the realm of time and place in the physical person of our Lord Jesus Christ. Similarly God's redemptive activity in the Lord's Supper does not bind God to the categories of time and space, and yet He chooses to break into our world of time and space in the physical "elements" of bread and wine. The fact of this redemptive act is not dependent on our understanding of the "how" of the Sacrament, but the fact that this Supper is "in remembrance" of Jesus is directed to our faith in the Lord of history and of the universe. As the disciples of the upper room and all

⁴⁸Brunner, op. cit., pp. 64f.

subsequent disciples "did this" and "do this," the initiative which constitutes "reality" is and remains God's -- the God Who acts. As the disciples "do this" their initiative is directed to the words "Take," "Drink," and not to a final understanding of the Sacrament which is nothing less than lese-majeste, honoring the creature more than the Creator. That the Body and Blood are present is the object of faith; how the Body and Blood are present must remain in the domain of God's mighty arm and all-powerful Word. The Tenth Article of the Augsburg Confession is a gem of precision:

Of the Supper of the Lord they teach that the Body and Blood of Christ are truly present, and are distributed to those who eat in the Supper of the Lord; and they reject those that teach otherwise.⁴⁹

The Lord's Supper was not instituted to be understood, but was instituted "for us Christians to eat and to drink" "in remembrance of" Him.

As they "do this," the Christians "remember" the past, which makes them contemporaneous with Christ, and they long for the final and perfect communion of the final Messianic meal. In each celebration and each Communion "the Lord's Supper is the form of the bodily present Christ between His exaltation and His return."⁵⁰

⁴⁹"Augsburg Confession," Triglot Concordia: The Symbolical Books of the Ev. Lutheran Church (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1921), p. 47.

⁵⁰Hans Preuss, Die Geschichte der Abendmahlsfrömmigkeit in Zeugnissen und Berichten (Gütersloh: C. Bertelsmann Verlag, 1949), p. 11, translated by this writer.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This study has attempted to sketch some of the chief lines indicated by the Scriptures for the meaning of "This do in remembrance of Me." In attempting to get at this meaning we have stressed the importance of a reconstruction of the setting of the original Last Supper, an attempt which must go beyond chronological and archeological considerations into the Gedankenwelt of Jesus and His disciples. Seen against the background of the Jewish conception of God as the active, redeeming God Who controls history and works through history, the "remembrance" aspect of the Lord's Supper looms large. But the concept of "remembrance" must be understood as Jesus and His disciples understood it.

Thus the cultic "remembrance" which was exercised by Jesus and His Passover Naburah cannot be equated with a mere notitia historica. The Passover celebration was not a bare memorial service, but it was the active re-presentation and Vergegenwärtigung of God's outstretched arm, active on behalf of His covenant people. History then (of the occurrence of the Exodus) and now (in the celebration of the Passover) cannot be separated, for the Lord's arm is not shortened by the passing of time. Rather, the passing of time vindicates God's faithfulness and His truth, both of

which are not static abstractions but dynamic and concrete action. The Passover underscores God's gracious condescension to redeem, on the terms of His promises, in each age and generation.

The line of God's faithfulness, determined by His redemptive activities in the past, reaches forward into the future. Thus "remembrance" reaches into eschatology. The Passover awaited the final deliverance on the basis of God's past salvation.

At the Last Supper, the Passover Haggadah used by Jesus reviewed the historical past of God's redemptive activity, but was filled with the explanation of His life and death in the scheme of God's plan. This instruction was not immediately understood by the disciples, but the post-Resurrection appearances of Jesus to His new Israel saw a continuation of Jesus' teaching of His role against the Old Testament. The disciples continued to "remember" with ever greater insight, under the guidance of the teaching and recalling Spirit, even after the Ascension. During this period—the table fellowship of Jesus and his disciples, influenced by the Paschal setting of the Last Supper and Crucifixion, was a continuation of the Last Supper and the Passover (enlarged by Jesus' teaching) which continued in the early Church's Eucharist.

The historical and eschatological elements of the Passover, filled with the new meaning of Christ's life and death

and Resurrection, make up the "remembrance" of the Savior and "proclaim" His death. This very active and dynamic "remembrance" cannot be mere memory, and the "elements" of bread and wine cannot be mere symbols. The reality of the Lord's Supper is the Vergegenwärtigung of the saving act of God in Jesus Christ. The early Church was not preoccupied with ontology, but with theology; the early Church did not set up logical antitheses between symbol and reality; the early Church "remembered" the past and pressed toward the future in a celebration more interested in "doing" than in "thinking."

It is very interesting to note that Luther, almost instinctively, stressed emphases indicated by this study. For Luther the words of Christ indicate God's gift of redemption as present in the Lord's Supper because the Verba say, "This is." He cautions against going into the "how"¹ of the Sacrament, since this is God's business and not fair game for man's reason.² The importance of God's word lies in the fact that God's promises are effective and effectual, whether man understands "how" or not. While Luther is ready to grant that God can and does (in the preaching of the Gospel) work without signs and symbols, the fact that Jesus chose bread and wine settles the matter for him.

¹Paul Althaus, Die lutherische Abendmahlslehre in der Gegenwart (München: Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1931), pp. 16f.

²Ibid., p. 17.

In his twofold polemic against the Roman conception of the sacrifice of the Mass and the radical rationalism of the "real absence," Luther does not rely on metaphysics, but on theology. The argument from the ubiquity of the glorified Christ points out the failure of the metaphysics of the radicals, which would limit heaven spatially; this again is fundamentally a theological argument, rather than a metaphysical one. Against the Roman position Luther argues the fact that the Sacrament is "given," it is God's gift of grace, not man's act. Here the active and dynamic character of the Lutheran doctrine continues the Scriptural view of God's activity through His choice of men and matter.

The doctrine of the "Real Presence" of Christ for Luther is indicated by his grasp of the Biblical antithesis of "flesh" and "spirit" which was misunderstood by the radical reformers. Thus the "Body and Blood" in the Sacrament are "spiritually" present not in contrast to "physically," but the physical elements of bread and wine, under the Spirit's working, are the "Body and Blood."³

Luther's stress on the "forgiveness of sins, life and salvation" offered and given in the Lord's Supper echoes the Biblical stress on the redemptive activity of God through the means of His choice. These gifts of God are presented in the Sacrament in a very real and dynamic sense. The

³Ibid., p. 26.

"remembrance" of Christ and "proclaiming" His death is the Vergegenwärtigung of "life and salvation." That this happens is the object of faith; how it happens is not a proper question.

The Lutheran "Real Presence" is amazingly similar to the Jewish approach to symbol and reality, which cannot be divorced. The Lutheran doctrine never attempted to set and fix the exact moment of "change" from bread and wine into Body and Blood. The entire actio of the Eucharist, indicated by Christ's command and promise, is the important thing for Luther.

In our day we, as Lutherans, must remember that our answers to our people and to other denominations depend on the Biblical doctrine, and not subsequent formulations, which are always prone to say less than the Scriptures say while attempting to say more. We must also recognize the fact that Calvin, Zwingli and Luther spoke to their day in the context of their historical setting; we must speak to our day. This should keep us from imputing sixteenth century doctrines to twentieth century churches and denominations without ever bothering to find out what twentieth century churches are saying today. This will tend to keep us from an unnecessary and almost neurotic pessimism which fails to realize that renewed interest in Biblical studies in our day has led the move to restudy and re-evaluate

historic formulations.⁴ This renewed interest in the problems of the age of controversy, coupled with an ecumenical return to Biblical studies, bodes well for the future.

Thus the "symbolists" dare not be approached today with the polemics of sixteenth century Lutheranism unless we are absolutely sure that Zwinglianism in its purest form still exists today, a very dubious possibility in the light of recent recognition of the Biblical sense of symbols in Reformed bodies under the impetus of Biblical scholarship. Nor dare we disregard a somewhat less widespread but equally optimistic interest in Biblical scholarship in Roman Catholic circles which threatens to soften the obdurate insistence on the traditional formulations at the expense of the Biblical foundation in that body.

But our duty is not only to realize what the two major camps against which Luther directed his polemics are doing and saying today; we must also guard against the omnipresent danger of "Köhlerglaube" in our own church and denomination. Not every possible question was solved ἐφ' ἑσθλας in the sixteenth century, nor in any subsequent century. The "now" of the Book of Hebrews prompts us to serious study of the Biblical and historical aspects of the Lord's Supper "while today is called today." Goethe's old saw still applies -- we must actively inherit our heritage by constant

⁴Ibid., p. 1.

study and restudy. We are not only under the command to "do this" ἀχρει οὖ ἐλθῆναι, but the eschatological urgency of these last days demands faithful study, seriousness and love.

In all our labors and proclamation we must finally remember that an "understanding" of this Supper is postponed by God until we reach the final Messianic meal and hear the full Haggadah. In the meantime we "do this in remembrance."

As we "do this," perhaps we should mention that the close connection between history and cultus has its implications for our appreciation and use of liturgics. The Church Year is truly "the year of grace," and should be used as such, thus keeping alive the basic idea of reliving both the past and the present toward the future in the cultus.

Similarly our almost complete disregard of the value of the Old Testament can only be rued. The "new covenant" does not abrogate the revelation of God's redemptive activity in the "old," but rather completes and fulfills it. Any approach to the New Testament without due consideration of the Old is really an impossible (and Marcionite) approach. The fullest riches of the New Testament can be appreciated fully only when we see the totality of God's dealings with His one true Israel. The "remembrance" of our worship in liturgy and in preaching is apocopated if we do less than full justice to the record of God's dealings with His

people under the "old covenant."

The acuteness of the eschatological element in the Lord's Supper should not only receive more emphasis in our Eucharistic "practice," but this almost lost emphasis, so crucial to the Christian faith and life, must receive greater justice in all areas of the Christian proclamation and activity. The Church can only be poorer for this virtually total loss of the intensity and relevance of eschatology.

The question of the Passover Haggadah, "Why do we do this?," indicates the importance of serious education of the good folk who "Do this in remembrance" in the Lord's Supper. This means not only education about worship, but, more basically, education intimately connected with the liturgical life. This is theological education in the highest sense, and as such is absolutely essential.

Above all, however, we must take seriously the implications of the early Church's frequent celebration of this Supper, lest the cobwebs of quarterly Communion collect on the "remembrance" of the good Christian folk who are commanded to "do this."

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