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A Critical and Exegetical Analysis of Exodus Twenty-Four with Special Attention to Covenant Ratification

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A CRITICAL AND EXEGETICAL ANALYSIS OF EXODUS TWENTY-FOUR WITH SPECIAL ATTENTION TO COVENANT RATIFICATION

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

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Short Title

A STUDY OF EXODUS 24; Talia; 1979

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INTRODUCTION

The Book of Exodus is a necessary sequel and a vital connecting link between the patriarchal narratives of Genesis and the subsequent parts of the Pentateuch. As a matter of fact, in the Hebrew text the book begins with the waw consecutive usually translated "now" or "and" in the English versions. Perhaps this is a reference to Jacob's twelve sons and their households who went down to Egypt (Genesis 46, although grammatically it would not necessarily imply this), identifying the Israel in Egypt with the descendants of the patriarchs and introducing those who are to be liberated from Egypt. The Book of Exodus portrays the dramatic story of liberation and the beginning of a new nation. It recounts how God fulfilled His promise to Abraham (Genesis 12, 15, 17) by multiplying his descendants into a great nation (Gen. 12:2) and redeeming them from oppression (Gen. 15:13-14). It is not only a thrilling account of the revelation of God's person and power, but also of His covenant faithfulness. This is one of the landmarks of the book, continued in the crossing of the Red Sea, and the overwhelming of Pharoah's chariots in its waves. Moses' song in chapter

15 is an appropriate culmination of all that has gone before, and a transition to what will follow.

But this is only half of the episode. Israel being redeemed, was yet to worship God at the very Mount Sinai where Moses, the liberator had met God and received his commission (Ex. 3:12). At last she stands on the plain before Sinai and, amid thunder and lightening, hears the voice of God and trembles. Here covenant is made (Ex. 24:8); Israel as a nation is born anew. This is the second high point of the book, not only in the making of the covenant, but in the giving of the covenant law that accompanies it. Epitomized in the ten commandments (Exodus 20), amplified in the "book of the covenant" (Exodus 21-23), God's very nature is expressed in moral terms, and the consequent demands on Israel are explicitly outlined.

Exodus 24 appears to be a literary unit in which four events follow each other in a regular sequence: after the introduction (verses 1, 2) we find the making of the covenant by means of a blood ritual at the foot of the Sinai (verses 3-8), the ascent of the representatives of Israel to a place from which they could behold God (verses 9-11), the ascent of Moses alone to the place of His revelation to receive the tablets of stone (verses 12-15) and the encounter at the very top of the mountain between Yahweh and Moses, hidden by the cloud (verses 15-18).

Yet critical scholars have by and large attributed

the composition of the chapter to diversified elements which are supposed to have originated from various sources ranging over a long period of time from the ninth century B.C. to the sixth century B.C. Hence, according to source analysis the unity of the chapter disintegrates completely, inconsistencies emerge and problems arise.

It seems to me that the difficulties and problems arise because Western theologians are scientifically minded. Indeed, in one sense, they import their problems into the Scriptures and then blame the Scriptures because they do not find their answers therein. Most assuredly, to the original Hebrew writers these were no problems, otherwise, they would have framed their accounts differently. I do not blame the Western theologians for being scientific, anymore than I blame the Hebrews for being pre-scientific; but we ought to learn not to ask of Scripture the answers which it is not intended to give. A candid student of the Bible must rest assured that in his unfeigned endeavor to understand all mysteries and all knowledge, he is not a stranger to that experience of divine revelation to which there is no scientifically explicatory description possible except that it is revealed to him by the Holy Spirit graciously poured into his heart. Certainly, this is beyond reason, but what is above reason need not be thought as contrary to reason.

The present writer is neither a dextrous theologian,

nor a bishop, nor a clergyman; he is a simple layman. But when is a layman forbidden the privilege of voicing his views concerning Scripture, especially when the riches of the Scripture carry with it the sand and dust of his original homeland? This is the reason for dealing with the passage under discussion. It is not an arrogation on my part to fathomless learning, nor a claim to a thorough understanding of the arcana of the Scripture. The real reason is rather an accident of birth. Due to the fact that I was born in the Middle East, raised under almost the same social conditions under which Moses lived, I have a first-hand information of the culture and life of the people of that section of the world, which by the nature of things an Occidental may not possess. And I am sure that the social conditions in many parts of the Middle East today are essentially the same as they were in the time of Moses. This is true not only from the study of the fragmentary tablets of the archaeologists and the antiquarians, precious as these tablets and discoveries are, but also from my experience as a sojourner in the "Land of the Free," that whenever I open my Bible it reads like a letter from home.

It is rather difficult for a person to understand fully and absorb a literature or a culture which has not emerged from that person's social life. One finds difficult to study the life, culture and mentality of a people

adequately from without. The mental traits, social behavior, the way of living, moral life, vocabulary and a host of other agencies which are born and not made will evade him. It is so easy to press the button of a camera and take a picture, yet it is not so easy to understand completely the inner life and patterns of thought of a race which lie beyond that picture. Indubitably, however, there have been adroit theologians and animble Bible students, but these are not of the tourist type. They have invested time, energy and much sweat in their endeavor to understand that people.

In the scope of this work, I shall first attempt to state the problem of Exodus 24. Then some space will be devoted to variant versions for the convenience of ready reference. Next, I shall spend some time on the Literary and Form Critical Methodology as concerns Exodus 24, where different viewpoints will be discussed. After this, I shall take up the literary and exegetical analysis of Exodus 24. This will be the main area of the discussion. Chapter V will include some theological and typological connections, developing such theological themes as Israel's religious commitment, the necessity of man's right relationship with God, and so forth; and such typological connections as a new and bettern covenant and a new feast. Here the New Testament will come to my aid, namely, the Epistle to the Hebrews. Finally, looking over the whole material, I shall bring the pieces together in a compendium and draw the final conclusions.

CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM

The discussion employed in this treatise, first, sets forth the original text of Exodus 24 in its original languages, in order to present the evidence for the traditional view and to test it by an examination of these languages. This rather fresh procedure has been done in order to put the case in its most favorable light, reduce the limits of uncertainty proportionally in favor of the traditional view and support the originality and integrity of the chapter in question. In this way the internal tests of the trustworthiness of these texts will be exhibited and the historic character of the passage will be illustrated by their attestation. It will be shown that there is no reason, literary or otherwise, for regarding the text to be composed of various strands coming from different authors at different periods.

The second point is the antithesis by the critics to the above thesis. The lines of literary and form phenomena which have in the main satisfied many scholars will be set forth in the following pages, but the results of special inquiries into some comparatively untrodden

departments of the subject have been added. This is done with the purpose of wrestling the weapons from the critics' own hands, and to show that there is such a wide gulf of disagreement among them that it seems superfluous to accept their hypothesis.

Finally, we shall present a summary of the conservative response, that the passage in question is not irrelevant or susceptible of interpretation; rather, it confirms the conviction of those who accept the traditional view of the Scripture and its author.

The Traditional Significance of Exodus Twenty-Four--Literary and Theological

The traditional view as it is often called may be stated as follows:

First, that Moses is the author of Exodus 24 substantially as we have it. It is not denied that Moses may have employed amanuenses, nor that these may have sometimes employed their own style of thought and language. But the acceptance and approval of what they wrote, would make the whole Mosaic. It was no ordinary work which they had to do, and it was no ordinary spirit which enabled them to do it. They were men who had learned by waiting on Him in obedience and patience in order to convey these all important truths to their succeeding generations. To borrow someone else's words: "The sacred text is wholly the work

of God and wholly the work of man, of the latter by way of instrument, of the former by way of principle cause."[1]

From a literary point of view, the narrative is quite plain, simple and according to order. A command is given by Yahweh to Moses to go up the mountain with the Israelites representatives to receive ordinances and judgments. Then Moses reads these ordinances to the people and they pledge obedience. A covenant is inaugurated and sealed. The vision of God is specially to be noticed. The boldness of the writer is noteworthy here, for both the visionary and the natural words for "sight" are used in this connection. Neither the Septuagint nor the Targums affect such boldness.

There is nothing in the passage to be taken as proof that these events are interpolations from different sources at different times. We have no right to restrict the authors in their selection of phrases, or to confine them to the use of one set of words. Neither can the privilege of employing synonyms be denied them. These writers may consult their personal taste, have regard to poetic construction in their style, and in many ways be influenced by what they think conducive to the elegance of their diction. Such has been the conviction of the

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[1]The Catholic Encyclopedia, s.v. "Inspiration" by Alfred Durand (Special ed., New York: The Encyclopedia Press, Inc., 1913), 8: 48.

traditional-view writers, and has been immensely strengthened by having been tacitly endorsed by Christ, before and after His resurrection, and by His apostles and church fathers after Him. To ignore this fact seems to be not only irreverent on the part of a Christian, but also irrational on the part of a critic. This principle lies at the root of the traditional view, and is traceable throughout the New Testament, and no motive for different editors or revisers is hinted at.

From a theological standpoint, Exodus 24 puts the "nation" of Israel in a new sense under the dominion of the God of their fathers. Moses, who at this moment, in conjunction with Aaron had been God's mouthpiece and agent during the period of disentalgement from Egypt, becomes not only the leader, but also under Yahweh the legislator of the covenanted community, and appoints judges to his people in case of disputes (Ex. 24:14).

The most significant aspect of the passage is the inauguration of the covenant. The representatives of the twelve tribes stand to it; and it is ratified with blood of victims, but there is no reference to forgiveness of sins in it. This event became like a fossil which marked the stratification of the nation. The theological implication of this aspect of the passage is presupposed and freely used not only in the later books of the Pentateuch[1] but

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[1]For example, Num. 25:12; Deut. 4:13, 14; 5:2-5.

throughout the Bible. With one accord the psalmists[1] and the prophets[2] refer back to this event of the remote past as the decisive point at which God had revealed Himself. The writers of the New Testament make a comparison between Christ and Moses,[3] between the glory of the Gospel and the glory revealed at Sinai,[4] between the old covenant and the new covenant, inaugurated by Christ.[5]

The Critical Challenge to the Traditional Position

From the very outset, the critical view challenges the origin of the text as being non-Mosaic. This involves several points and propositions which may be summarized as follows:

1. The discussion carried on by the critics is permeated by the doctrine of evolution.[6] This is one of the points about which the crucial battle has been raging for many years. The proper designation of this investigation bears the name of "natural theology." The true antithesis "is not between 'faith' and 'reason,' but between two

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[1]Psalms 105:8; 106:45; 111:5.

[2]Is. 61:9; Jer. 31:31-34; Amos 2:10; Hos. 6:7; Micah 6:3-4.

[3]Heb. 8:5-6

[4]2 Cor. 3:7-17.

[5]Matt. 26:28; Mark 14:24; Luke 22:20; 1 Peter 1:2.

[6]Cf. Julius Wellhausen, Prolegomena to the History of Ancient Israel (New York: Meridian Library, 1957), pp. 417-18.

different beliefs, of which the one uses reason on a secularistic basis, leaving God out of account, and the other uses reason on a theological basis, acknowledging God as ultimate reality."[1] The critics by their principle desire to economize in the domain of the supernatural, to bring down what is miraculous in the sacred text to a level with the rest of the history of mankind, to minimize the objective in theology and life, thus ascribing to man or to nature that which Scripture ascribes to God.

2. Since according to the theory of development and growth, the text cannot be the production of a single man, nor of one age, there naturally emerges the hypothesis of the partition of the text. The critics are led by logical necessity to introduce several subsidiary hypotheses and subordinate propositions. They claim that the text is made up of documents written by different authors who lived in different ages. These documents and their authors are represented by the letters J, E, P. According to this hypothesis the text is not the immediate product of divine revelation, rather, a final outcome of a long process of development before it petrified into its present form. All this is merely synonymous with the great alternative, and related to the previous point-Mosaic or non-Mosaic?

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[1]A. G. Herbert, The Authority of the Old Testament (London: Faber & Faber, 1947), p. 116.

"The former naturally represents revelation, the latter development."[1]

3. The subject is one of wide and important bearing, not only in the department of criticism, but also of Apologetics. The critical challenge to the traditional view touches the crux of the Christian conception of revelation. Liberal criticism has long ago become subservient to materialistic tendencies. It manifests a rational explanation[2] of the very material upon which it works. The traditional literary aspect of the text has been lost. It is no longer a matter of mere dilettantism, but of pressing and practical importance, which cannot be confined only to the lecture-rooms, but claims the interest of the Church at large.

Such in the main, are the views and hypotheses which the analytical critics propose and maintain in regard to the text in question.

Summary of Conservative Response

In the first place, a considerable portion of the Pentateuch is distinctly and authoritatively recognized in the New Testament, including Exodus 24.[3] It is referred to

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[1]Geerhardus Vos, The Mosaic Origin of the Pentateuch Codes (New York: A. C. Armstrong & Son, 1886), p. 13.

[2]Abraham Kuenen, An Historic Critical Inquiry into the Origin and Composition of the Hexateuch (London: Macmillan & Co., 1886), p. 32.

[3]Matt. 26:28; Mark 14:24; Luke 22:20; Heb. 8:8-12; 1 Peter 1:2.

by Christ and the Apostles as trustworthy and authoritative. And no reader can fail to see the reference to Sinai in the phrase, "handwriting of ordinances."[1] According to conservative conviction, all these references are declarations to be taken seriously and treated as unquestionably true, trustworthy and divinely inspired, proceeding indeed from man (Moses) but proceeding also from God. The critics' views are totally different and are incompatible with the divine authority. They claim that the text was not written by Moses or at his time, but at a later period by a group of unknown authors, compilers, redactors and interpolators, who worked on the material at hand; then they combined, selected, omitted, inserted, altered and added, each one according to his own judgment and taste,[2] the result being a conglomerate patchwork, characterized by inaccuracy and contradiction. To claim divine authorship, and authority for such a production looks like an attempt to burlesque the doctrine of divine inspiration.

In the second place, the conservative response to the doctrine of evolution as set forth and applied to the text is categorically rejected since it is incongruous with the divine inspiration and authority of the Scripture. If the critics are right in their principle, then the

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[1] Col. 2:14.

[2] C. A. Simpson, The Early Tradition of Israel (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1948), pp. 27, 28.

often-repeated formula "God said to Moses" is untrue; the account of the giving of the "law and judgments" on Mount Sinai (Ex. 24:4, 7) is a fiction. The hypothesis of the origin of these laws and judgments by evolution is thus opposed to their origin by divine revelation or inspiration. It was on this latter conviction that Lutheran Reformation against scholasticism and juridical ecclesiasticism of the Middle Ages set up the Bible as the sole authority.

Exodus 24 initiates the renewal of Israel's religious commitment after a silent period of more than four hundred years. There we see the official testimonies concerning the religious origin, that Yahweh has taken action to claim the obedience of men by setting up His kingdom over them, that they may be His people and He their God.

The burden of discrediting the integrity of the passage lies on the critic. From a traditional viewpoint, we have neither doubt nor fear as to the final result. If the ordinary is linked with the extraordinary, and the human with the superhuman, as our text testifies, and if all through the ages there has been a line of divine intervention in the affairs of man, then the mind of the conservative Bible student who follows the history down the centuries is prepared for greater confidence. Through the overruling providence of God all the critical attempts upon the text by concealed as well as by avowed critics, together with the errors of mistaken friends, will in the end contribute to the vindication of its divine inspiration and authority.

CHAPTER II

THE TEXT OF EXODUS TWENTY-FOUR

The Traditional Text

The Hebrew Text

א. ואל משה אמר עלה אל יהוה אתה ואהרן נדב ואביהוא
ושבעים מזקני ישראל והשתחויתם מרחק.
ב. ונגש משה לבדו אל יהוה והם לא יגשו והעם לא יעלו עמו.
ג. ויבא משה ויספר לעם את כל דברי יהוה ואת כל המשפטים
ויען כל העם קול אחד ויאמרו כל הדברים אשר דבר יהוה
נעשה.
ד. ויכתב משה את כל דברי יהוה וישכם בבקר ויבן מזבח תחת
ההר ושתים עשרה מצבה לשנים עשר שבטי ישראל.
ה. וישלח את נערי בני ישראל ויעלו עלת ויזבחו זבחים
שלמים ליהוה פרים.
ו. ויקה משה חצי הדם וישם באגנת וחצי הדם זרק על המזבח.
ז. ויקה ספר הברית ויקרא באזני העם ויאמרו כל אשר דבר
יהוה נעשה ונשמע.
ח. ויקה משה את הדם ויזרק על העם ויאמר הנה דם הברית
אשר כרת יהוה עמכם על כל הדברים האלה.
ט. ויעל משה ואהרן נדב ואביהוא ושבעים מזקני ישראל.

י. ויראו את אלהי ישראל ותחת רגליו כמעשה לבנת הספיר
וכעצם השמים לטהר.
יא. ואל אצילי בני ישראל לא שלח ידו ויחזו את האלהים
ויאכלו וישתו.
יב. ויאמר יהוה אל משה עלה אחי ההרה והיה שם ואתנה לך
את לחת האבן והתורה והמצוה אשר כתבתי להורתם.
יג. ויקם משה ויהושע משרתו ויעל משה אל הר האלהים.
יד. ואל הזקנים אמר שבו לנו בזה עד אשר נשוב אליכם
והנה אהרן וחור עמכם מי בעל דברים יגש אליהם.
טו. ויעל משה אל ההר ויכס הענן את ההר.
יו. וישכן כבוד יהוה על הר סיני ויכסהו הענן ששת ימים
ויקרא אל משה ביום השביעי מתוך הענן.
יז. ומראה כבוד יהוה כאש אכלת בראש ההר לעיני בני ישראל.
יח. ויבא משה בתוך הענן ויעל אל ההר ויהי משה בהר ארבעים
יום וארבעים לילה.

English Translation

1. And unto Moses he said, "Come up to the LORD, you and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu and seventy of the elders of Israel, and worship at a distance.

2. And Moses alone shall come near to the LORD, they shall not come near, neither shall the people go up with him."

3. Then Moses came and told the people all the words of the LORD and all the judgments; and all the people answered with one voice, "All the words which the LORD has spoken we will do."

4. And Moses wrote all the words of the LORD, and rose up early in the morning and built an altar at the foot of the mountain and twelve pillars according to the twelve tribes of Israel.

5. And he sent young men of the children of Israel and offered burnt-offerings and sacrificed peace offerings of oxen unto the LORD.

6. And Moses took half of the blood and put it in basins, and the other half of the blood he sprinkled on the altar.

7. Then he took the book of the covenant and read it in the hearing of the people and they said, "All that the LORD has said we will do and obey."

8. And Moses took the blood and sprinkled on the people and said, "Behold the blood of the covenant which the LORD has made with you concerning all these words."

9. Then Moses and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel went up.

10. And they saw the God of Israel, and under his feet as it were a paved work of sapphire stone and like the very heaven in purity.

11. And upon the nobles of the children of Israel did not lay his hand, and they saw God, and ate and drank.

12. And the LORD said unto Moses, "Come up unto me on the mountain and be there, and I will give you the tablets of stone, and the law, and the commandments which I have written for their instruction."

13. And Moses rose up with Joshua his minister, and Moses went up into the mountain of God.

14. And he said to the elders, "Wait here for us, until we come back to you. And behold, Aaron and Hur with you, whoever has any matter, let him come to them."

15. Then Moses went up into the mountain and the cloud covered the mountain.

16. And the glory of the LORD rested on Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it six days, and on the seventh day, He called Moses from the midst of the cloud.

17. And the sight of the glory of the LORD was like a consuming fire on the top of the mountain before the eyes of the children of Israel.

18. And Moses entered in the midst of the cloud and went up the mountain, and Moses was on the mountain forty days and forty nights.

The Septuagint

1. Καὶ Μωυσῆ εἶπεν, Ἀνάβηθι πρὸς τὸν Κύριον σὺ καὶ Ἀαρὼν, καὶ Ναδὰβ καὶ Ἀβιοὺδ, καὶ ἑβδομήκοντα τῶν πρεσβυτέρων Ἰσραήλ. καὶ προσκυνήσουσιν μακρόθεν τῷ Κυρίῳ.
2. Καὶ ἐγγιεῖ Μωυσῆς μόνος τὸν Θεὸν, αὐτοὶ δὲ οὐκ ἐγγιοῦσιν, ὁ δὲ λαὸς οὐ συναναβήσεται μετ' αὐτῶν.
3. Εἰσῆλθε δὲ Μωυσῆς, καὶ διηγήσατο τῷ λαῷ πάντα τὰ ῥήματα τοῦ Θεοῦ καὶ τὰ δικαιώματα . ἀπεκρίθη δὲ πᾶς ὁ λαὸς φωνῇ μιᾷ, λέγοντες, Πάντας τοὺς λόγους, οὓς ἐλάλησεν Κύριος, ποιήσομεν, καὶ ἀκουσόμεθα.
4. Καὶ ἔγραφε Μωυσῆς, πάντα τὰ ῥήματα Κυρίου, ὀρθρίσας δὲ Μωυσῆς τὸ πρωὶ ᾠκοδόμησεν θυσιαστήριον ὑπὸ τὸ ὄρος, καὶ δώδεκα λίθους εἰς τὰς δώδεκα φυλὰς του Ισραηλ

5. Καὶ ἐξαπέστειλεν τοὺς νεανίσκους τῶν υἱῶν Ἰσραὴλ, καὶ ἀνήνεγκαν ὁλοκαυτώματα, καὶ ἔθυσαν θυσίαν σωτηρίου τῷ Θεῷ μοσχάρια.
6. Λαβὼν δὲ Μωυσῆς τὸ ἥμισυ τοῦ αἵματος, ἐνέχεεν εἰς κρατῆρας, τὸ δὲ ἥμισυ τοῦ ἄιματος προσέχεεν πρὸς τὸ θυσιαστήριον.
7. Καὶ λαβὼν τὸ βιβλίον τῆς διαθήκης, ἀνέγνω εἰς τὰ ὦτα τοῦ λαοῦ, καὶ εἶπεν, Πάντα ὅσα ἐλάλησε Κύριος, ποιήσομεν καὶ ἀκουσόμεθα.
8. Λαβὼν δὲ Μωυσῆς τὸ αἷμα, κατεσκέδασεν τοῦ λαοῦ, καὶ εἶπεν, Ἰδοὺ τὸ αἷμα τῆς διαθήκης, ἧς διέθετο Κύριος πρὸς ὑμᾶς περὶ πάντων λόγων τούτων.
9. Καὶ ἀνέβη Μωυσῆς καὶ Ἀαρὼν, καὶ Ναδὰβ, καὶ Ἀβιοὺδ, καὶ ἑβδομήκοντα τῆς γερουσίας Ἰσραήλ.
10. Καὶ εἶδον τὸν τόπον οὗ εἱστήκει ἐκεῖ ὁ Θεὸς τοῦ Ἰσραήλ, καὶ τὰ ὑπὸ τοὺς πόδας αὐτοῦ ὡσεὶ ἔργον πλίνθου, σαπφείρου, καὶ ὥσπερ εἶδος στερεώματος τοῦ οὐρανοῦ τῇ καθαριότητι.
11. Καὶ τῶν ἐπιλέκτων τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ οὐ διεφώνησεν οὐδὲ εἷς καὶ ὤφθησαν ἐν τῷ τόπῳ τοῦ Θεοῦ, καὶ ἔφαγον καὶ ἔπιον.
12. Καὶ εἶπεν Κύριος πρὸς Μωυσῆν, Ἀνάβηθι πρός με εἰς τὸ ὄρος καὶ ἴσθι ἐκεῖ, καὶ δώσω σοὶ τὰ πυξία τὰ λίθινα, τὸν νόμον καὶ τὰς ἐντολας, ἃς ἔγραφα νομοθετῆσαι αὐτοῖς.
13. Καὶ ἀναστὰς Μωυσῆς καὶ Ἰησοῦς ὁ παρεστηκὼς αὐτῷ, ἀνέβησαν εἰς τὸ ὄρος τοῦ Θεοῦ.
14. Καὶ τοῖς πρεσβυτέριος εἶπαν, Ἡσυχάζετε αὐτοῦ ἕως ἀναστρέφωμεν πρὸς ὑμᾶς, καὶ ἰδοὺ Ἀαρὼν καὶ Ὢρ μεθ' ὑμῶν, ἐάν τινι συμβῇ κρίσις, προσπορευέσθωσαν αὐτοῖς.

15. Καὶ ἀνέβη Μωυσῆς καὶ Ἰησοῦς εἰς τὸ ὄρος, καὶ ἐκάλυφεν ἡ νεφέλη τὸ ὄρος.
16. Καὶ κατέβη ἡ δόξα τοῦ Θεοῦ ἐπὶ τὸ ὄρος τὸ Σινά, καὶ ἐκάλυφεν αὐτο ἡ νεφέλη ἓξ ἡμέρας, καὶ ἐκάλεσεν Κύριος τὸν Μωυσῆν τῇ ἡμέρα τῇ ἑβδόμη ἐκ μέσου τῆς νεφέλης.
17. Τὸ δὲ εἶδος τῆς δόξης Κυρίου, ὡσεὶ πῦρ φλέγον ἐπὶ τῆς κορυφῆς τοῦ ὄρος, ἐναντίον τῶν υἱῶν Ἰσραήλ .
18. Καὶ εἰσῆλθεν Μωυσῆς εἰς τὸ μέσον τῆς νεφέλης, καὶ ἀνέβη εἰς τὸ ὄρος, καὶ ἦν ἐκεῖ ἐν τῷ ὄρει τεσσαράκοντα ἡμέρας καὶ τεσσαράκοντα νύκτας.

Arabic Version

١ ـ وقال لموسى اصعد الى الرب أنت وهرون وناداب وأبيهو وسبعون من شيوخ اسرائيل. واسجدوا من بعيد .
٢ ـ ويقترب موسى وحده الى الرب وهم لا يقتربون. وأما الشعب فلا يصعد معه .
٣ ـ فجاء موسى وحدث الشعب بجميع أقوال الرب وجميع الأحكام . فأجاب جميع الشعب بصوت واحد وقالوا كل الأقوال التي تكلم بها الرب نفعل .
٤ ـ فكتب موسى جميع أقوال الرب وبكّر في الصباح وبنى مذبحا في أسفل الجبل واثني عشر عامودا لأسباط اسرائيل الاثني عشر .
٥ ـ وأرسل فتيان بني اسرائيل فأصعدوا محرقات وذبحوا ذبائح سلامة للرب من الثيران.

٦ - فأخذ موسى نصف الدم ووضعه في الطسوس ونصف الدم رشه على المذبح .
٧ - وأخذ كتاب العهد وقرأ في مسامع الشعب. فقالوا كل ما تكلم به الرب نفعل ونسمع له .
٨ - وأخذ موسى الدم ورش على الشعب وقال هوذا دم العهد الذى قطعه الرب معكم على جميع هذه الأقوال .
٩ - ثم صعد موسى وهرون وناداب وأبيهو وسبعون من شيوخ اسرائيل.
١٠ - ورأوا اله اسرائيل وتحت رجليه شبه صنعة من العقيق الأزرق الشفاف وكذات السماء في النقاوة .
١١ - ولكنه لم يمد يده الى أشراف بني اسرائيل. فرأوا الله وأكلوا وشربوا .
١٢ - وقال الرب لموسى اصعد الي الى الجبل وكن هناك. فأعطيك لوحي الحجارة والشريعة والوصية التي كتبتها لتعليمهم .
١٣ - فقام موسى ويشوع خادمه . وصعد موسى الى جبل الله .
١٤ - وأما الشيوخ فقال لهم اجلسوا لنا ههنا حتى نرجع اليكم وهوذا هرون وحور معكم . فمن كان صاحب دعوة فليتقدم اليهما .
١٥ - فصعد موسى الى الجبل. فغطى السحاب الجبل .
١٦ - وحل مجد الرب على جبل سيناء وغطاه السحاب ستة أيام . وفي اليوم السابع دعي موسى من وسط السحاب.
١٧ - وكان منظر مجد الرب كنار آكلة على رأس الجبل أمام عيون بني اسرائيل.
١٨ - ودخل موسى في وسط السحاب وصعد الى الجبل. وكان موسى في الجبل أربعين نهارا وأربعين ليلة .

Targum

1. ולמשה אמר סוק תכע אולפן מן קדם ייי את ואהרן נדב ואביהוא ושבעין חכימיא דישראל ותצלון מן רחיק.
2. ויקרב משה לכלחודוי קדם ייי ואינון לא יקרבון ועמא לא יסקון עטה.
3. ואתא משה ותני לעמא ית כל פתגמיא דייי וית כל סדרי דינא וענון כל עמא קל חד ואמרין כל פתגמיא די מליל ייי נעבד.
4. וכתב משה ית כל פתגמיי דייי ואקדם בצפרא ובנא מדבח בשפולא דטורא ותרתי קיימין לתרין עשרתי שבטייה דבני ישראל.
5. ושלח ית עולמיהון דבני ישראל וסדרי עלוון וקריבו נכסת קדשין קדם ייי תורין.
6. ונסב משה פלגא דדמא ושוי בספלא ופלגא דדמא זרק על גבי מדבחא.
7. ונסב ספר קיימא וקרא בשמעין דעמא ואמרין כל מה די מלל ייי נעבד ונשמע.
8. ונסב משה ית אדמה וזרק על עמא ואמר הא דמא קיימא דקיים ייי עמכון ית כל פתגמיי(א) האליין.
9. וסלק משה ואהרן נדב ואביהוא ושבעין מן חכימי ישראל.
10. והמון יוי איקר שכינתה דייי ותחות אפ (ו) פודן דרגלוי כעובד לבן דסנפרינון וכחזוי שמיא כד אינון נקיין מן ענגא.

11. ולוות עולימיהון דבני ישראל לא פשט ידיה וחמון
ית איקר שכינתה דיי והוון חדיין על קרבניהון
דאתקבלון היך אכל(י)ן והיך שתין.
12. ואמר יי למשה סוק לוותי לטורא והוי תמן ואתן
לך לווחוי אבניא ואורייתא וקיימא די כתבית למלפא
יתהון.
13. וקם משה ויהושע שמשוי וסלק משה לטורא דאתגליית
עלוי איקר שכינתה דיי.
14. ולחכימיא אמר ת(י) בן אמתינו לי הכא עד זמן די
נחזור לוותכון והא אהרן והור עמכון מן דאית עסק
דין דמלין יקרב לוותהון.
15. וסרק משה לטורא וכסי ענגא ית טורא.
16. ושרת אייקר שכינתיה דיי על טורא דסיני וכסי
יתיה ענגא שיתא יומין וקרא למשה ביומא שביעיא
מן גו ענגא.
17. וחיזו איקר שכינתיה דיי כאשתא אכלה אשא מתכלה
כריש די טורא לעיני בני ישראל.
18. ואתא משה בגו ענגא וסלק לטורא והוא משה בטורא ארבעין
יומין וארבעין ליליו.

ا. ولمحمد يمنع: نعم لهم: نعم: نعم: نعم:
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٩. صعب جدا هذا السؤال فلم يجب أحد: حاول مرة أخرى يا محمد.

١٠. صعب جدا: هذا السؤال صعب جدا: محمد هذا السؤال صعب جدا: حاول مرة أخرى.

١١. جيد جدا: هذا الجواب جيد جدا: أحسنت يا محمد.

١٢. صعب: هذا السؤال صعب: حاول مرة أخرى.

١٣. صعب جدا: هذا السؤال صعب جدا: حاول مرة أخرى.

١٤. جيد جدا: هذا الجواب جيد جدا: أحسنت يا محمد.

١٥. صعب: هذا السؤال صعب: حاول مرة أخرى.

١٦. صعب جدا: هذا السؤال صعب جدا: حاول مرة أخرى.

١٧. جيد جدا: هذا الجواب جيد جدا: أحسنت يا محمد.

١٨. صعب: هذا السؤال صعب: حاول مرة أخرى.

١٩. صعب جدا: هذا السؤال صعب جدا: حاول مرة أخرى.

٢٠. جيد جدا: هذا الجواب جيد جدا: أحسنت يا محمد.

ك. مصطفى محمود : العالم بين العلم والإيمان.

ل. أحمد : أحمد لا يذهب : هذا الكتاب لمن : أحمد الذي يحب القراءة : هو الذي يذهب إلى المكتبة.

م. محمد : محمد يحب الرياضة : هذا الكتاب عن الرياضة.

ن. الطالبة المجتهدة : هذه الطالبة : نجحت.

س. الطالب الذي يحب الرياضة : هذا الطالب : نجح.

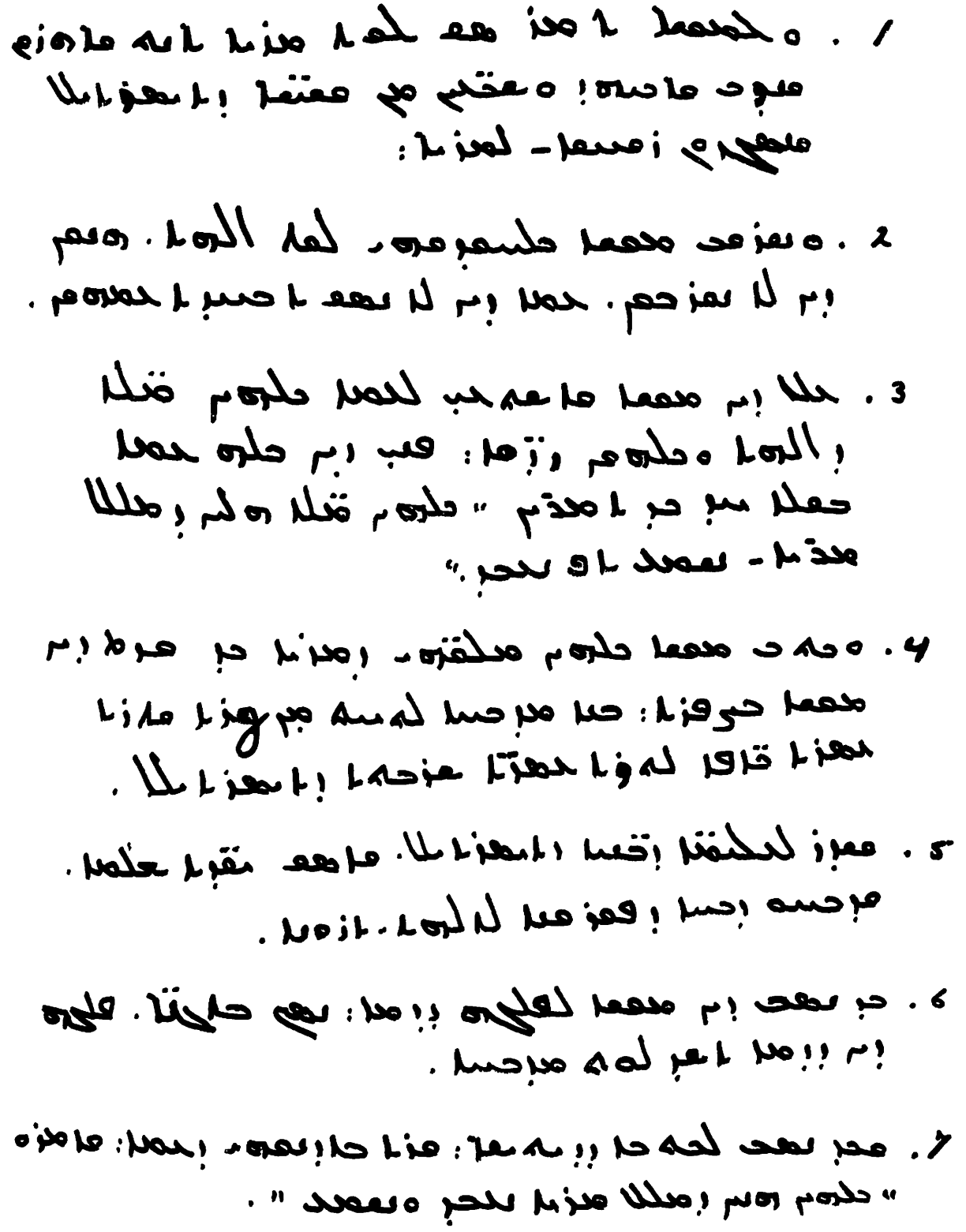
ع. الطالبة التي تحب القراءة : هذه الطالبة : نجحت.

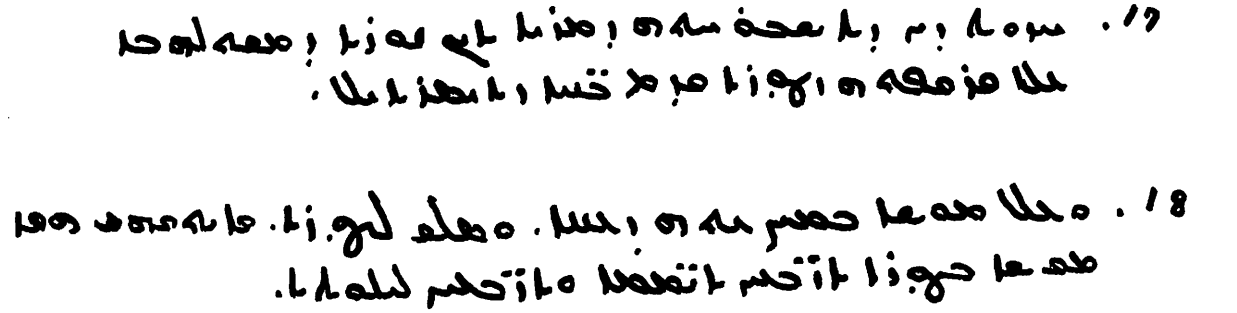
ف. الطالب الذي يحب الرياضة : هذا الطالب : نجح.

ص. الطالبة التي تحب القراءة : هذه الطالبة : نجحت.

ق. الطالب الذي يحب الرياضة : هذا الطالب : نجح.

Syriac Version





The Samaritan Text

1. ולמשה אימר סק ליד יהוה אתה ואהרן נדב ואביהוא אלעזר ואיתמר ושבעים מן חכימי ישראל ותסגדון מרחיק.
2. ויקדם משה לורה ליד יהוה ואנון לא יקדמון ועמה לא יסק עמה.
3. ואתא משה ותנה לעמא ית כל ממללי יהוה וית כל פשרוניה ואגיבן כל עמה קל אחד ואמרו כל ממלליה דמלל יהוה נעבד.
4. וכתב משה ית כל ממללי יהוה ואקדם בצפרא ובנא מדבח שפול ותרתי עסרי אבנין לתרים עסר שבטי ישראל.
5. ושלח ית רבאי בני ישראל ואסקו עלאן ודבחו שלמים ליהוה פרים בני תורין.
6. ונסב משה פלג אדמה ושבי באגנן ופלג אדמה על מדבחה .
7. ונסב ספר קיאמה וקרא במשמוע עמה ואמרו כל דמלל יהוה נשמע ונעבד.

8. ונסב משה ית אדמה וזרקה על עמה ואמר הא דם קיאמה דקטע יהוה עמוכון על כל מלליה האלין.
9. וסלק משה ואהרן נדב ואביהוא אלעזר ואיתמר מן חכימי ישראל .
10. ודעלו מן אלהי ישראל ואתר צמותין כעובד ספירה שומיה לזגג.
11. וליצטרי כרי ישראל לא שלח אתרה ואחדאו עם האלהים ואכלו ושתו.
12. ואמר יהוה למשה סק לידי לטורא והוי תמן ואתן לך ית לוחי אבניה ארהותה ומצוותה דכתבת למוראתון.
13. וסק משה ויהושע משמשה וסלק משה לטור האלהים.
14. ולחכימיה אמר תבו לנן בדן עד דנעזר לידכון הא אהרן והור עמוכון מן ממהן מלים יקדם לידהון.
15. וסלק משה לטורא וכסה ענגא ית טורא.
16. ושרא כבוד יהוה על טור סיני וכסיה ענגא שתת יומים ואזדעק למשה ביומה שביעאה מכגו ענגא.
17. והוב כבוד יהוה כאש אכלה כריש טורא לעיני בני ישראל.
18. ועאל משה בגן ענגא וסלק לטורא והוה משה בטורא ארבעים יום וארבעים לילי.

Textual Criticism of Exodus Twenty-Four

24:1. Many commentators find difficulties in the construction of the initial verse, "and unto Moses he said," instead of the ordinary Hebrew style, "and he said unto Moses," as in 19:21, 24; 20:22; 34:1 et passim. A. H. McNeile[1] remarks and S. R. Driver[2] concurs that Yahweh had previously been doing something or speaking to someone else in a portion of the narrative now lost. Likewise, this is the contention of C. F. Keil and Franz Delitzsch.[3] But a relationship has to be noticed between this verse and Ex. 20:21. The construction of 24:1 follows the events of chapter 20. In Ex. 20:21 God had just ended His address to the Israelite congregation at Mount Sinai. Now in a special tone and to a particular person He turns to Moses. Therefore, the emphasis as J. G. Murphy[4] suggests and U. Cassuto[5] confirms is on Moses. Hence the construction.

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[1]A. H. McNeile, Westminster Commentaries: The Book of Exodus, Vol. 2 (London: Methuen & Co., 1908), p. 146.

[2]S. R. Driver, The Book of Exodus (Cambridge: University Press, 1911), p. 252.

[3]C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament, Vol. 2, trans. James Martin (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1891), p. 155.

[4]J. G. Murphy, The Book of Exodus: A Critical and Exegetical Commentary (New York: I. K. Funk & Co., 1881), p. 172.

[5]U. Cassuto, A Commentary on the Book of Exodus, trans. Israel Abrahams (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1967), p. 310.

Most versions retain the Masoretic rendering except that the Arabic follows the normal grammatical procedure, "and he said unto Moses," a matter of free translation.

The Septuagint has the word "pray," "bow down"[1] (προσχυνησουσι) in the third person plural for the Hebrew word "worship" in the second person plural (והשתחויתם) and adds at the end "to the Lord" (τῷ χυριω).

The Targum also has the word "and you pray" (וחצלון) in the second person plural and uses the "wise men" (חכימיא) for elders. This agreement calls for some explanation. Most probably this combination suggests the existence of two differing Hebrew readings underlying the Septuagint and the Masoretic text, but without questioning the legitimacy of the Masoretic text (compare for the lack of emendation in Biblia Hebraica No. 3).

The Samaritan text freely adds the other two sons of Aaron, "eleazar and Ithamar," mentioned in Ex. 6:23; 21:1; Lev. 10:1; Num. 3:2-4 and 26:60.

24:2. The Septuagint employes the words "τον Θεον" instead of Masoretic words "אל יהוה ." Also the

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[1]According to Hatch and Redpath, the word "προσκυνειν" meand "pray," "bow down," "worship." A Concordance to Septuagint (Graz-Austria: Akademische Druk-U. Verlagsanstalt, 1954), pp. 1217-18.

plural "μετ αυτων" " instead of Hebrew singular " עמו ." Perhaps this difference merits some explanation, since throughout the chapter the Septuagint employs the word "theos" as a substitute for "Yahweh." Maybe this shift in name usage is due to a freedom of the Greek translator based on the context, or to two underlying Hebrew texts. But in the present writer's opinion there is a much deeper reason than that. We may rightly assume that the translators were quite aware of the implementation of the name "kurios." The Ptolemies were called "kurioi"[1] and Caesars were worshipped. Hence, to obviate the confusion between the Lord and lords, the translators introduced the word "theos" without changing the meaning thereof.

All the texts agree with the Masoretic text except the Syriac[2] which supports the Septuagint. It uses the words "to God" ( ) and "with them" ( ) for Hebrew " עמו ." Presumably in dependance upon the Greek.

24:3. The Septuagint has the words "τον θεον" for Hebrew "Yahweh." Moreover, the words "χαι αχονσομεθα"

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[1]The writer is deeply indebted to Dr. Martin Scharlemann for this illuminating piece of information.

[2]In general, the Syriac version follows almost literally the Septuagint, while Pashitta and Arabic versions follow the Hebrew text.

are added. Again, the Syriac follows the Septuagint, except that the order of the last three words is reversed; instead of "we will do and hear," it reads, "we will hear and do."

24:4. The Septuagint, the Samaritan and the Syriac texts use respectively the word "stones," "λιθους," " אבנים " and " ܐܒܢܐ " for Hebrew "מצבה."

This rendering is worthy of consideration. The Hebrew word "מצבה" meaning "pillar," "statue," "erect image," is derived from the verb " נצב ," meaning "to stand." Twice in Exodus alone it is referred to in an idolatrous sense; Ex. 23:24, " . . . and you shall surely break their pillars." And Ex. 34:13, "You shall tear down their altars, and break their pillars." In Deut. 16:22 there is an admonition against erecting pillars. "Thou shalt not set up a pillar, which thy Lord God hates." It is in this latter sense about which Brevard Childs remarks that this Greek "change" is an echo of Deuteronomy's protest against erecting pillars.[1] Also perhaps to match with Ex. 20:24, "An altar of earth you shall make for me. . . . " The Septuagint usually adopts the word "stele" (στηλη) for the Hebrew word "pillar." In any

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[1]Brevard S. Childs, Exodus: A Commentary (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1947), p. 498.

event, the use "pillars" appears to be the more original reading.

24:5. The Septuagint reads "τω θεω" for Hebrew "to Yahweh." The Syriac text follows Septuagint, literally. The Samaritan text reads, "בני תורים," perhaps slipped into the text as a gloss. The Targum has only "תורין" for Hebrew "פרים," a free translation on the part of the translator.

24:7 Pashitta and the Samaritan texts freely reverse the order of the last two words, instead of "we will do and hear," they read, "we will hear and do," a smoother way of rendering it. The Arabic also, adopting a free translation, adds "to Him" (له) at the end of the verse.

24:9. The Septuagint uses the word "γερουσιαζ" for elders, a word which according to Hatch and Redpath[1] could also mean "zaqan" (זקן). The Syriac which follows Septuagint has rendered the word "priests" (معتمد), a matter of free rendering. The Samaritan text repeats the names of Eleazar and Ithamar of verse 1.

24:10. The Septuagint reads "the place where he stood" (τον τοπον ου ειστηχει εχει) to which R. B. Girdlestone makes an interesting observation by

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[1]Hatch and Redpath, A Concordance to Septuagint, p. 240.

saying that "The Septuagint had not the courage to translate this literally, but rendered it 'They saw the place where the God of Israel stood.'"[1] A theological interpretation must have led to this translation. God is not seen, only the place where He stood can be seen. The passage clearly demonstrates the antianthropomorphic trend of the Septuagint.

The Syriac supports Septuagint; the Targum uses "the glory of Yahweh's shekinah," and "purer than cloud." Literally, the Hebrew description means, "like the very bone of heaven in purity."

24.11. There is a wide gap between the Hebrew text and the Septuagint. The latter reads, "And of the elect of Israel there was not a single one absent," or "there was nobody missing (perished)," evidently, because the expression "the hand of God" had to be avoided.

The Syriac version which follows Septuagint throughout reads, "and they were seen in the place of God," not a serious change to be noticed.

Most interesting is the reading in the Samaritan text which reads "and they were happy" (ואחראן) for the Masoretic "saw" (ויחזו).

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[1] R. B. Girdlestone, Synonyms of the Old Testament: Their Meaning on Christian Doctrine (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1948), p. 39.

The Targum is closer to the Samaritan text at this point. Besides the expression, "They saw the glory of Yahweh's shekinah," it reads, "and they were happy that their offerings were accepted," probably in both cases a matter of free translation is plausible.

24:12. The Septuagint, Syriac and the Samaritan texts omit the word "and" (Heb. ו) before "the law," probably understanding it as "epexegetical." The use of this word will be dealt with in Chapter V below.

The Arabic version freely uses the dual form, "two tables of stones" (لوحي الحجارة), a better grammatical construction.

The Targum, instead of the word "commandments" has employed the word "covenant" or "testament" (קיימא) to connote a better and more meaningful relationship between God and man than the imperative commandments.

24:13. The Septuagint employs a plural form of the verb (ανηβησαν) to match the plural noun "Moses and Joshua," while Hebrew uses the singular verb to match the singular noun, since it makes Moses alone to go up.

The Targum omits the word "Elohim" and adds "and it was revealed upon him the glory of Yahweh's shekinah." This is a characteristic expression of

the Targum version. The translator is overwhelmed by Yahweh's glory and makes much use of it.

24:14. The Targum has "wise men" (חכימיא) for Hebrew word "elders," while the Pashitta renders it "old men" (ܥܬܝܩ). In both cases the translators have taken freedom of rendition.

24:15. The Septuagint adds "and Joshua" (χαι Ιησουζ). The difference may be due to either two underlying Hebrew texts or to a personal taste in translation.

The Pashitta here is brief; it does not mention the object, for example, whether the cloud covered Moses or the mountain, since both are masculine singular nouns.

24:16. Both the Septuagint and the Syriac read "of God" (του θεου) for "Yahweh," and add "the Lord" (χυριοζ) in the second half of the verse. Perhaps a grammatical construction is justified. Having omitted the personal name in 16a, now it identifies the subject in 16b. But this explanation is rather problematical. Since the Pashitta follows the Hebrew text throughout, it deviates from it at this point and follows the Septuagint. Hence, we may rightly assume that there were two Hebrew texts from which these translations were made. And to the question, which is original? is everybody's guess.

The Arabic text has the verb "call" in the passive form (دعي) which suits the literary structure well.

24:17. The Pashitta uses the phrase "before the eyes of all the house (instead of children) of Israel"; a minor item in the personal attitude of the translator.

24:18. The Septuagint omits the word "Moses" in the second part of the verse and uses the word "εχει" to smooth out the Hebrew text.

The Syriac which has supported the Septuagint throughout, follows the Masoretic text at this point, a free rendition by the translator.

CHAPTER III

THE HISTORY OF MODERN LITERARY AND FORM CRITICAL METHODOLOGY OF EXODUS TWENTY-FOUR

The so-called "Historical-Critical Methodology" as devoted to the study of the Old Testament is a technical investigation composed of the three disciplines: literary criticism, form criticism and redaction criticism. The roots of the so-called scientific investigation can be traced to three movements on the continent: Deism in England, Encyclopedism in France and Rationalism in Germany.

Literary source criticism claimed to be a literary discipline and accordingly confined itself to the document at hand. It attempted to describe the circumstances in which one book or more achieved its present form. Form criticism is not an alternative for but a supplement to literary criticism, attempting to place the literary material in their pre-literary situation (Sitz im Laben). This latter discipline has become an almost undisputed canon of critical methodology, and what is decided by it is decidedly "authoritative."

The thesis set forth in the scope and pages of this chapter will present a compendium of both literary

and form criticism in which proponents of critical methodology have applied critical tools in their exegetical interpretation of the twenty-fourth chapter of Exodus. The present writer who takes issue with some of the presuppositions and the resultant conclusions of the literary and form critical study of Exodus 24, deems it also necessary to express his disagreement with the authors whose views are under scrutiny.

Literary Criticism of Exodus 24

Exodus 24 conveys the account of the inauguration of the fulfillment of a new covenant God made with Israel at Mount Sinai, after a national liberation under the leadership of Moses. Israel's history has taken a decisive turn; it has entered a new era--the advent of God's new rule and covenant with His people.

Ex. 24:1-11 records the ceremonies of the covenant and the sealing thereof. Ex. 24:12-18 describes the story of Moses ascending Mount Sinai to receive the tablets of stone from the Lord, and the Lord's instruction concerning the construction of the tabernacle as well as the regulations for further worship in the sanctuary (Ex. 25:1 to 31:17).

Beginning with the literary criticism of the text of Exodus 24, modern exegetes assume that the text reflects multiple sources blended together in the construction of the chapter. Heterogeneous elements are suggested because of certain problems observed in the text.

Gerhard von Rad

Von Rad isolates two sections (3-8 and 15b-18) from Exodus 24 and labels them E and P respectively, and entertains some doubts about the rest of the material in the chapter.[1] Verses 9-11 he shrouds with a vast question mark after J,[2] and does not specify the sources for the balance of the material in the text. Von Rad maintains that the above P-section (15b-18) belongs to one of the oldest elements in P's Sinai periscopes.[3]

Artur Weiser

Weiser attributes Ex. 24:3-8 to the Elohist stock,[4] in view of its linguistic characteristic, cult usage and theological exclusiveness. The section of verses 16-18 he ascribes to P,[5] in which revelation to Moses is emphasized. The rest of the material according to Weiser, is intermixed between J and E.[6]

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[1]Gerhard von Rad, The Problem of Hexateuch and Other Essays, trans. E. W. Trueman Dicken (London: Oliver and Boyd, 1966), p. 16.

[2]Gerhard von Rad, Old Testament Theology, Vol. 1, trans. D. M. G. Stalker (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1962), p. 254.

[3]The other pericopes being, Ex. 25-31; 34:29-35; 35-40; Lev. 8-10; 16; Num. 1-4; 8:5-22; 9:15-23; 10:1-10.

[4]Artur Weiser, The Old Testament: Its Formation and Development, trans. Dorothea M. Barton (New York: Associated Press, 1961), p. 119.

[5]Ibid., p. 136.

[6]Ibid., p. 112.

Walter Beyerlin

Walter Beyerlin finds difficulties in the opening verses of the chapter. Although the Lord is presented in the introductory words as speaking to Moses, the appellation "Yahweh" is portrayed in the third person, as though a third party was instructing Moses to go up to Yahweh. Beyerlin points out five different tradition-units in the text. Of the first unit (1b-2) he writes:

> Chapter 24 is no more homogeneous than chapter 19. The opening verse is fragmentary, as appears from the words that are set at the head of the chapter, "and he said to Moses." . . . There is a break to be felt between the two halves of the first verse: vv. 1b-2 reverse the sense of 1a, which orders Moses, Aaron, Nadab, Abihu and seventy elders to go up the mountain (sc. to God), whereas verses 1b-2 keep them at a distance and permits only Moses to come near. 24:1b-2, therefore, should be treated as a distinct unit of tradition. 24:1a is continued in verse 9, which describes exactly how the divine command in verse 1a was fulfilled.[1]

Beyerlin assigns the above unit to the E-source and labels it as a "theological correction" which, with its ideas "afar off" and "Moses alone" corresponds to the E stratum.

The second unit comprises verses 1a, and 9-11. According to Beyerlin this section must be regarded as a separate unit of tradition which deals with the theophany and the covenant reaffirmation represented by the people mentioned in verses 1 and 9. In Beyerlin's view this section might be a later insertion attached to the original

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[1]Walter Beyerlin, Origins and History of the Oldest Sinaiatic Traditions, trans. J. S. Bowden (Oxford: Nasil, 1965), p. 14.

account, although it is older than the first unit (1b-2).[1] The section belongs to the E-source because of the concept of God residing on the mountain that appears in verses 1a and 9, which is obviously understood to be an E-concept. Furthermore, because of the usage of the divine name "Elohim" in verses 10 and 11, and because of the conception of 1a, 9-11 to 13a and 14, Beyerlin ascribes these passages to E.[2]

A third unit conjectured by Beyerlin is found in verses 3-8 which report that Moses "told the people all the words of the Lord and all the judgments," and that he ratified the covenant with sacrifice and sealed it with sprinkling of the blood on the altar and on the people. Beyerlin admits that this section is a unity with the exception of the phrase, "and all the judgments" in verse 3. He also remarks that this unit of verses 3-8 happens to be achieved by two originally parallel sources in view of the parallelism of verses 3 and 7. The author advises:

> This passage, Exodus 24:3-8 is obviously a unity apart from the phrase "and all the judgments" in verse 3, which has been added later as a result of the subsequent insertion of the Book of the Covenant. In view of the parallelism of verses 3 and 7, however, it seems that in this unit of tradition two originally parallel versions of the proclamation of the divine will and the subsequent express promise of the people to obey have been combined in an organic unity.[3]

Furthermore, Beyerlin thinks that a series of commands has been attached to the unit in question, where mention is

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[1]Ibid., p. 14.

[2]Ibid., p. 17.

[3]Ibid., p. 15.

made of "words" and "a book of the covenant" which is to be found in the Decalogue (Ex. 20:2-17). Beyerlin suggests that Ex. 20:1 connects 20:2-17 with the tradition-unit of 24:3-8 by referring to the Decalogue as "words in view of 24:3, 4, 8.[1] The unit according to Beyerlin falls into the category of E, because of the similarities of 24:3, 7b and the Elohistic source of 19:7, and because of the strength of verse 4 which relates the erection of pillars in a way similar to the account mentioned in Gen. 31:45, a presumed E-passage.[2] Although this section and the previous one belong to E, nevertheless, Beyerlin thinks that they both come from two different strata.[3]

A fourth piece of tradition consists of the verses 12-15a and 18b which deals with Moses' ascent of Mount Sinai and his long stay there before Yahweh. The tradition unit is characterized by the divine mandate "come up" and with the additional adjunct "be there" (verse 12 as in verse 1). The reason for the formation of this unit is not difficult to account for according to Beyerlin. Because Moses is expected to remain for sometime on the Mount, Beyerlin finds textual justification to attach verse 18b to 15a, and makes 18b constitute the conclusion of the unit. Beyerlin explains:

> What else could "moses delayed to come down from the mountain" (32:1a) refer to, if not to the forty days

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[1] Ibid., p. 16.

[2] Ibid., p. 17.

[3] Ibid.

> and nights which Moses spent on the Mountain (24:18b)? On the other hand, 24:18b originally followed 24:15a quite well. In its present position verse 18b provides a satisfactory chronological framework for the following oral advise in the matter of the Tent, the ordination of priests, altar sacrifice, etc.[1]

Verses 12-15a are regarded by Beyerlin as the amalgamation of two different traditions since they speak of two different groups of people. Verses 12, 13b, 15a and 18b originate from a source which accentuate the mission to Moses alone, while verses 13a and 14 emerge from another stratum which speak of Joshua, Aaron and Hurr.[2]

This fourth unit (12-15a, 18b) Beyerlin assigns to the E-source for reasons mentioned above. He recognizes in this section the blending of the two Elohistic traditions: 12, 13b, 15a and 18b which emphasize Moses alone ascending the mountain, and 13a and 14 where Joshua is introduced as a companion to Moses on the ascent. The former tradition, according to Beyerlin, is supposed to be Elohistic because behind the verse is the idea of God dwelling on a mountain; the latter tradition, because of its emphasis on northern Israel in the supplying of names of leaders from northern tribes.[3]

The final tradition-unit Beyerlin finds in verses 15b-18a, which according to the German scholar, comprises another description of the Sinai manifestation related in Ex. 19:16-20. Beyerlin is persuaded that verses 15b-18a

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[1] Ibid., pp. 2, 3.

[2] Ibid., p. 16.

[3] Ibid., pp. 16, 17.

introduce the lengthy section, Ex. 24:15b to 31:18a, which provides information on the construction of the tabernacle, its furnishings and the worship to be carried therein.[1]

As to the literary roots of this section, Beyerlin places them in P-soil, introducing the long section 24:15b to 31:18a which he casts back five chapters to connect it with 19:1-2a and then fifty-three chapters forward to join it with Ex. 34:29 to Num. 10:10, respectively. The unit 24:15 to 31:18a is considered Priestly in view of the account it provides of the diverse Israelite institutions such as sacrifices, altar, pillars and so forth.

Martin Noth

Noth generally agrees with Beyerlin's analysis of the tradition-units in the text of Exodus 24, with few minor differences. Noth distinguishes the following as units: Verses 1-2, 3-8, 9-11, 12-15a and 15b-18. Other scholars identify units of tradition similarly, with some variations.

Noth maintains that the first section (1-2) is the most original element of the Sinai narrative.[2] He also sees it as an introductory passage to 9-11, largely reworked by a redactor containing E and other sources,

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[1]Ibid., p. 2.

[2]Martin Noth, A History of Pentateuchal Tradition, trans. B. W. Anderson (Englewood, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1972), p. 162.

sources, but separated by the section that follows it.

The critic writes:

> In this section (24:1-11) two different literary strata may easily be distinguished. In vv. 1f and 9-11 the covenant is made on mountain, in vv. 3-8 on the other hand at the foot of the mountain. Verses 1f contain the introduction to the passage 9-11; these passages which obviously belong together, are separated by the narrative vv. 3-8. We are thus given in this chapter two versions of the account of the making of the covenant which, while dealing with the same subject, are widely different in their individual details.[1]

According to Noth, the reason for this difference is not hard to find. Noth believes that the initial verses suffer a lack of literary order, or that something more is needed to convey the essential meaning. The writer explains in a footnote:

> The word order at the beginning of Exodus 24:1a indicates that previously something has fallen out. There is no connection with the Book of the Covenant which now precedes. Though framed by E elements, this Book is not part of the original E, indeed perhaps not even of the secondary material of this source. It can no longer be determined at what stage in the history of the development of the Pentateuch it was inserted at its present place.[2]

Concerning the Book of the Covenant (Ex. 20:22 to 23:33), Noth expresses his judgment:

> It is probable that this collection once formed an independent book of law which has been inserted into the Pentateuchal narrative as an already self-contained entity. We can no longer say with certainty at what

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[1]Martin Noth, Exodus, trans. J. S. Bowden (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1962), p. 194.

[2]Noth, A History of Pentateuchal Tradition, p. 36, fn. 139.

> stage of the literary growth of the Pentateuch this insertion was made; no clear relationship to one of the Pentateuchal narrative "sources" is recognizable. . . . All that we may say then is that at some time which can no longer be discovered with any accuracy the Book of the Covenant has been inserted into the Sinai section at the place between the narrative of the theophany (19:1 to 20:21) and of the making of the covenant (24:1-11).[1]

From the above argument, Noth goes on to discuss unit 3-8, in which he finds a logical justification for his questions concerning the source of the passage. Since the source of the Book of the Covenant is not identifiable, neither can the source of 24:3-8 be identifiable, a section which is to be connected with 20:22 to 23:33. In a lengthy section Noth presents his argument:

> The question of the larger literary content to which this narrative version of the making of the covenant belongs is not easy to answer. The source J, which suggests itself because of the use of the divine name Yahweh, cannot be involved, as in it the making of the covenant only follows in the context of what is narrated in chapter 34. . . . The reference to the "words of Yahweh" in 24:3-8 presupposes the delivery of such words. But then the most obvious thing is to think of the words of Yahweh which have been reported immediately beforehand, i.e., to be the "Book of the Covenant" by 24:7. In that case 24:3-8 may be given a literary connection with the Book of the Covenant. . . .[2]

The content of verses 9-11, the making of the covenant, Noth assigns to the E-source due to the initial clause, "God of Israel" in verse 10 and the conclusive clause "also they saw God" in verse 11b, although he finds it difficult to see how it is to be fitted into the category

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[1]Noth, Exodus, p. 173. [2]Ibid., p. 198.

in consideration of the disconnected portions of the source. Even the introduction is of no help, since manifestly it does not represent its original form.[1]

The section 24:12-15a introduces detailed instructions which Moses is to receive from Yahweh and to transmit to the people. Noth presupposes that the passage in question belongs to the older source which is present in chapters 32 and 34. As a matter of fact, according to Noth, the section is a preparatory scheme for the account of chapters 32 and 34.[2] Perhaps a parallelism of a few verses of the three chapters will make plain what Noth desires to convey.

	Ex. 24	Ex. 32	Ex. 34
1.	v. 2 Moses alone must go up		v. 3 Moses alone must go up
2.	v. 4 Moses rose up early in the morning		v. 4 Moses rose up early in the morning
3.	v. 12a The Lord commanded Moses to go up the Mount	v. 1 Moses is already up	
4.	v. 12b Law and commandments	vv. 15f, 19b tables of testimonies	v. 1 tables of stone
5.	v. 13a Moses and his minister Joshua	v. 17 Joshua and the people	
6.	v. 14 Aaron and Hurr in charge of the people	v. 1f Aaron in charge of the people	

[1] Ibid., p. 196.

[2] Ibid., p. 200.

7.	v. 15b and a cloud covered the mount	v. 5a the Lord descended in the cloud
8.	v. 18b Moses on the mount forty days and forty nights	v. 28a Moses on the mount forty days and forty nights

It is on the basis of these meagre similarities that Noth finds literary justification to attribute the same literary source of Ex. 24:12-15a to chapters 32 and 34, without taking into consideration the major portions of the chapters which deal with different themes, such as the broken covenant (Ex. 32:6f.), Moses' intercession on behalf of the people (32:29f.), the renewal of the promise in possessing the land (34:10-17), and the commandment concerning the ceremonial law (34:18f.).

The final section according to Noth, marks the beginning of a long and continuous P-section, namely, 24:15b to 31:18 in which Moses receives detailed description for building the sanctuary and its apparatus for cultic worship. Noth connects 24:15b-18 with the P-passage of 19:1-2a. In noth's view the P elements are obvious in the passage: the "glory of the Lord," the "cloud" and the "devouring fire." Yet it is more than that. Noth comments:

> For P the whole significance of the events at Sinai is that Moses receives these words (25:1-31:17, for which 24:15b-18 serve as the introduction) and that the instructions for the establishment of the cult which they contain are subsequently carried out. . . . For P the encounter with God at Sinai repre-

> sents the beginning of the legitimate cultic worship, which is of course in P's view of the fundamental importance for the continuance of the relationship between God and people. . . .[1]

Here P terminates any further mention of the covenant making at Sinai, as he had not made any mention of any cultic ceremony before Sinai. The instruction given at Sinai for the establishment of the tabernacle is carried through the wilderness and right into the Promised Land, and the only legitimate cultic worship spot is the Jerusalem Temple.

Otto Eissfeldt

Eissfeldt has introduced into his critical scheme a different element, namely, the "Lay source" (L), which he thinks is the oldest, while P is the most recent. The sequence of the sources then, according to Eissfeldt is L, J, E, P.[2]

Eissfeldt distributes the verses of Exodus 24 as follows: 1-2, 9-11, 13a, 14-15a. These verses, Eissfeldt assumes, form an essential residium and belong to the L-source because of their antique flavor. The German scholar writes:

> That L is to be the oldest narrative strand is proved primarily by the fact already mentioned that this

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[1] Ibid.

[2] Otto Eissfeldt, The Old Testament: An Introduction, trans. Peter R. Ackroyd (New York: Harper & Row, 1965), p. 194.

> strand reveals the crudest and most primitive original elements. . . . It appears that the L strand is the primeval history pictured men as nomads, whereas J and P clearly think of them as husbandmen.[1]

A second reason for the antiquity of this source in Eissfeldt's supposition, is the obvious dissonance which this strand casts in the sequence of events. Eissfeldt elucidates:

> Furthermore, it is an indication of the age and nature of L that, unlike J it is aware of a disharmony (underline mine) at Sinai. J pictures Israel as departing from Sinai in the liveliest hopes and with its joy uncoloured in the prospect of the land which is flowing with milk and honey, and Yahweh as accompanying them in the form in which alone this is possible, namely, in the Ark. But L knows of a disharmony with which Israel's sojourn at Sinai came to an end, and this had the result that Israel's departure from Sinai appears rather as a dismissal from the presence of Yahweh than as a joyous march into the Land of Promise.[2]

As to the terminus a quo of this source, Eissfeldt roots it in the reign of David.[3]

Next, Eissfeldt ascribes verses 3-8, 12, 13b and 18b to E, on the basis of its strong Israelitish "self-consciousness" and the blazing pride of the people. Furthermore, unlike J the tie between the religious and the national elements is less strong than in J.[4] The specification is not national with religious augmentation, rather a decisively religious legacy. One further note: Eissfeldt links verses 3-8 not with the enormous block of material of the book of the covenant (20:22-23:33) but

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[1] Ibid., p. 195.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Ibid., p. 197.

[4] Ibid., p. 201.

with the Decalogue (20:2-17), since it is the latter which furnishes the groundwork to the former. Eissfeldt expounds:

> But in reality the reference of 24:7, to the Book of the Covenant is not intended to apply to the complex 20:22-23:33, but to the Decalogue of 20:2-17. For it is obvious that the identical expression "all these words" in 24:8, "all the words of Yahweh" in 24:3, 4, "all the words which Yahweh has spoken" in 24:7 refer to the same entity as the expression in 20:1, "all these words," namely, the Decalogue of 20:2-17. It is thus the Decalogue which formed the basis of the covenant concluded in 24:3-8.[1]

The final section (15b-18a) Eissfeldt ascribes to P. According to Beyerlin, Noth and Eissfeldt, P is an independent tradition-unit. Most critics are unanimously agreed in separating it. It too, is a narrative account with present and future interest and continuous chronology.

Form Critical Analysis of Exodus 24

Current critical investigation of a specific passage of Biblical literature involves the determination of one or more literary forms of scriptural verses under consideration, the Sitz im Leben of each type and the circumstantial transmission of the "isolated unity" of type (termed a "tradition").[2]

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[1] Ibid., p. 213.

[2] A thorough introduction to the methodology of modern form critical analysis is offered by Klaus Koch, The Growth of Biblical Tradition: The Form Critical Method, trans. from 2d German ed. by S. M. Cupitt (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1969), pp. 34-39.

The purpose of the following pages is to demonstrate how these modern investigative techniques have been applied to Exodus 24 by critics whose views we are to consider. Three scholars will occupy our attention: Gerhard von Rad, Artur Weiser and Walter Beyerlin.

Gerhard von Rad

According to von Rad, since Exodus 24 constitutes a part of the "Sinai pericope," the form critical analysis must relate itself to this chapter which forms part of Sinai tradition.

First, von Rad enunciates the thesis that the redemption story of exodus and settlement on the one hand, and the people's experience at Sinai on the other, stand over against each other as originally independent traditions.[1] Furthermore, von Rad theorizes that the Sinai tradition came to be coalesced into the canonical scheme of the people's history at a very late period. Von Rad expresses his judgment:

> If we hold the account of the theophany at Sinai to be a sacral tradition, it must of course follow that, in the literary form in which it appears in the hexateuchal sources J and E, it must be regarded relative to antiquity of the tradition itself, as a late stage in its long history, perhaps indeed the final one. Both the Yahwist and the Elohist rely on a complex of tradition which was already firmly established as an independent entity in all essential features. It

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[1]Von Rad, The Problem of Hexateuch, p. 13.

> may be that here, too, we can postulate a canonical scheme from which both J and P derive, as we saw clearly in the tradition of exodus and conquest.[1]

In von Rad's judgment, the predominating and central elements in Sinai tradition are the theophany and the making of the covenant. Upon these essential features the literary sources agree.

The second point raised by von Rad concerning the Sinai tradition is that he treats it as a "cult-legend" of a specific occasion of its own Sitz im Leben.[2] He characterizes this occasion as the festival of the renewal of the covenant between Yahweh and the people, and, on the basis of the reading of the law referred to in Deut. 31:10b-11 and Nehemiah 8, identifies this festival with the Feast of Booths.[3] In the earliest days this ceremony of covenant renewal took place annually at Shechem.[4]

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[1] Ibid., p. 19.

[2] Ibid., p. 22. Von Rad states (ibid., pp. 21-22), "The Sinai narrative in its canonical form (compared with which even J and E must be reckoned secondary) is itself prior to the cultus and normative for it. Indeed, the whole authority of the cultus itself stands or falls by the Sinai narrative, which is in other words, the cult-legend of a particular cultic occasion." Von Rad assumes that the legend preceded the cultus and helped shape the cultus, that is, the public religious activity of the Israelite community which grew out of and in response to the tradition presented in the legend.

[3] Ibid., p. 35.

[4] Ibid., pp. 36-39. Von Rad associates the cultic ceremonies described in Joshua 8:30-35; 24 and Deut. 11:29-32 and 27 with the festival of covenant renewal.

In von Rad's view, it was the Yahwist who incorporated the written form of the Sinai tradition into his account so as to support the outline scheme for his entire narrative, namely, the settlement tradition. As to how and in what manner he did it, we are unable to pass any certain judgment, but certainly the fusion of the two traditions was not attempted, and obviously the Yahwist did not find the material ready at hand.[1]

In what way does the Sinai tradition serve the Yahwist's theological purpose? Von Rad answers:

> Even though the interpretation of one tradition by the other still fails to achieve complete harmony, the settlement tradition is theologically enormously enriched by its absorption of the Sinai tradition. The former bears witness to Yahweh's generosity, but over against this, at the very heart of the Sinai tradition, is the demand of Yahweh's righteousness. Thus by its absorption of Sinai tradition the simple soteriological conception of the settlement tradition gained new support of a powerful and salutary kind. Everything which the Yahwist tells us, as he unfolds the plan of his tradition, is now colored by the divine self-revelation of Mount Sinai. This is above all true with regard to the underlying purpose of that tradition, which now becomes the record of the redemptive activity of one who lays upon man the obligation to obey his will, and calls man to account for his actions. The blending of the two traditions gives definition to the two fundamental propositions of the whole message: Law and Gospel.[2]

From the above explanation, it seems that von Rad perceives two theological themes, that the Yahwist narrative gradually brings to light the cryptic growth of the fedemptive grace extended to the sinful race of mankind

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[1]Ibid., p. 53.

[2]Ibid., p. 54.

(salvation history); and along with this he asserts the developing power of sin in the world and the consequent ever-widening abyss between the elusive God and wayward man.

The conclusion of von Rad's critical examination of the Sinai tradition may be considered to have application also to Exodus 24, the chapter which stipulates the essential concluding facets of the essence of the Sinai tradition. It may be presumed that, in the various stages of the pentateuchal accounts, the purpose of chapter 24 is regarded by the majority of critics to be a continuation of the Sinai tradition emphasis on the divine giving of law, and as such a complement to the most dominant hexateuchal message, the operation of a gracious God on behalf of his own people in particular and of the world of men in general.

Von Rad sees the rest of the material constituting Sinai tradition, of minor important traditional elements of an aeteological nature associated with the central -raditional elements of the Sinai theophany.[1]

Artur Weiser

In response to von Rad's theory, Weiser regards his (von Rad's) detachment of the Sinai tradition from the

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[1]Ibid., pp. 17-18. Von Rad holds that the subject matter of these less important traditional elements, presented in Ex. 32 and 33 convey no historical relationship to the account of the theophany and the covenant, and that the literary connection of the former with the latter was only secondary.

settlement as an imposed simplification and unacceptable in the light of the evidence in the Pentateuch.[1] Weiser accepts von Rad's thesis that the traditions are distinct but discards von Rad's conclusions drawn from the fact that there would not have been space for both of these traditions side by side in the same festival cult. As Weiser perceives it, the two traditions were intimately related from the earliest days of Israel's national history. He discerns these two components of festival ceremony already at the foundation of Israel's amphictyony at the Shechem celebration (Joshua 24), and thinks that they served as the axis of worship in normally recurring cultic festivals of covenant renewal (held in Autumn; compare Deut. 31:11), of which the assembly at Shechem was the first in the series. In his estimation the cultic usage afforded a fundamental, formative and directing influence on the literary products of the pentateuchal sources.

Weiser agrees with von Rad's assumption that it was the Yahwist who first affected the combination of the Sinai and settlement traditions which were originally distinct. Weiser asks:

> What could have induced him (the Yahwist) to effect wuch a decisive operation on the tradition if he was not tied to what was already handed down in the cult

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[1] Weiser's views are summarized on pp. 81-99 of his The Old Testament: Its Formation and Development.

> regarding the intimate connexion between the traditions of Sinai and the conquest? Could the "canonical" weight of just this combination of the traditions of Exodus, Sinai and the conquest which has been recognized in the general plan of all the Pentateuchal sources, and even beyond them, be understood as the consequence merely of the literary undertaking of a single individual whose work, moreover, von Rad wants to render intelligible as a late appearance in the whole development? The linking together of the two sets of tradition was not carried out first by the Yahwist, but was handed down to him as an established datum.[1]

Walter Beyerlin

Exodus 24 is a portion of the so-called "Sinai pericope," labeled by Walter Beyerlin as Ex. 19:1-Num. 10:10, and thus forms a part of the "Sinai tradition in the Hexateuch."

Beyerlin contends that the Sinaitic and Exodus traditions were connected together from the earliest days of Israel's national history.[2] In his Origins and History of the Oldest Sinaitic Traditions, Beyerlin expounds his thought in an expanded section:

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[1] Ibid., pp. 88-89.

[2] Cf. Beyerlin, Origins and History of the Oldest Sinaitic Traditions, pp. 169-70 et passim. He establishes his argument on the basis of covenant-form vouched in Hittite treaties of the fourteenth and thirteenth centuries B.C., that underlies the Decalogue which he considers as the basic law of the Sinaitic covenant. The historical prologue in the Hittite suzerainty treaty in which the benevolent acts of the king are described, Beyerlin points out in the Decalogue preface. Yahweh's beneficent deeds in saving Israel from Egyptian bondage is referred to. Hence, the Sinai and Exodus settlement traditions were already linked at this early period.

> The Sinai traditions and their individual elements differ from one another in many respects: they stem from quite different and in part wholly separated, historical situations and consequently their motives and aims are very different. Different forms and ideas were used to give them shape and they were finally given literary expression in two different sources. Yet in spite of all this variety all the pieces and elements of the Sinai traditions have one Sitz im Leben: the history of the sacral tribal confederacy of Israel. Substantial elements of this tradition, among them the original nucleus of the Decalogue very probably go back to the historical beginning of the covenant with Yahweh in the desert-period (probably in Kadesh).[1]

In the above passage, it is evident that Beyerlin is attempting to convince his readers, via traditio-historical inquiry that the "individual elements" of the Sinai tradition can be traced to the historical beginning of the Israel's covenant with Yahweh in the desert period; and that the development of this tradition was achieved by the "tribal confederacy." It will be a profitable historical endeavor to discover how and in what detailed "pieces" Beyerlin traces the roots of these "individual elements" of the Sinai tradition in Exodus 24 to Israel's early period.

In three and a half verses, namely, Ex. 24:1a, 9-11, Beyerlin points to three tradition elements which may be discerned in the larger section of the text.

Firts, there is the reference to the elders[2] who represent the covenant people. Reference to the elders as people's representatives occur in Joshua 24, in several

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[1]Ibid., p. 167.

[2]Ibid., p. 27.

passages in 1 and 2 Samuel and in 1 Kings 8. Beyerlin reasons that the tradition of their appearance on the Mount as recorded in Ex. 24:1, 9 must have originated during the period of the pre-monarchic amphictyony.

Secondly, God's presence[1] on the Mount is described in the same block of material (Ex. 24:10-11). The designation "God of Israel" is envisioned with the cult at Shechem before Israel became a state, in view of other references where the designation is employed, Gen. 30:20; Joshua 8:30; Ex. 24:2. The divine appearance portrayed as accompanied by a brightness like sapphire stone is thought to follow a well-established tradition since in several other passages (Ex. 13:21-22; and 34:20-23), Yahweh's appearance is connected with shining of light. On this item, Beyerlin adds a further thought:

> As the shining appearance of Yahweh's kabod seems to have arisen in close connection with the Ark and the name "elohe yisrael" must have been linked with the Ark, and since, moreover, Yahweh's feet are thought of chiefly in connection with the Ark, while the crystalline platform for God's feet, according to the evidence of Ezekiel, seems to be modeled on the covering lid of the Ark-shrine. There are good grounds for believing that the tradition of God's appearance in Exodus 24:10 was influenced by the ideas which were connected with the theophany above the Ark. Bearing in mind that this piece of tradition, in which the elders of Israel make their appearance and in which the expression "elohe Yisrael" is used to describe God, took shape in the historical period of the pre-monarchical tribal confederacy. . . . We should not be surprised if the Ark of Yahweh, as the central shrine of the amphictyony, has in fact left its mark on this tradition.[2]

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[1] Ibid.

[2] Ibid., pp. 32-33.

The third traditional element which Beyerlin brings out in Exodus 24:1a, 9-11 is the meal[1] which Israel's representatives enjoyed in God's presence (11b). The author conceives of this particular phenomenon as a covenant-meal and considers the reference to it as reflecting very old sacral usage.[2] He argues that the participation in such a sacrificial meal was often conducted in the ratification of a treaty or covenant during the periods both of Israel's patriarchs and the conquest (Gen. 26:26-31; 31:44, 54; Joshua 9:14-15). The record of the God of Israel making a covenant with His people, insofar as He lets Israel's representatives eat and drink in His presence, Beyerlin feels presupposes ancient usage--together with the other tradition-units, the premonarchic tribal union.[3] And by way of conclusion, the author suggests:

> It may be said to be established, therefore, that the tradition of Exodus 24:1a, 9-11 originated in the context of ancient Israel's amphictyony and that it presupposed the amphictyony in several respects.[4]

The second form of tradition and an addition to 1a, 9-11 is Ex. 24:3-8. In Beyerlin's estimation the two

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[1]Ibid., p. 33. [2]Ibid.

[3]See the following on the ancient treaties: George E. Mendenhall, Law and Covenant in Israel and the Ancient Near East (Pittsburgh: Biblical Coloquium, 1955), pp. 24-50; D. J. McCarthy, Treaty and Covenant (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1963), pp. 16-167; D. R. Hillers, Covenant: The History of a Biblical Idea (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1969), pp. 25-168.

[4]Beyerlin, Origins and History of the Oldest Sinaitic Traditions, pp. 34-35.

sections are variant records dealing with the making of the covenant at Sinai, and both are approximately the same age.[1] Beyerlin offers two reasons for the antiquity of the tradition of verses 3-8. The first is authenticated by the ceremony of the twofold sprinkling of blood (a reference to which is made nowhere in the Old Testament), and secondly, the appointment of the Israelite young men who were not priests, to offer the covenant sacrifice (a practice reported nowhere in the Old Testament).[2] The sprinkling of the sacrificial blood for the purpose of establishing a covenant with God is presumed by the author to be a ritual which originated in the Yahwistic community's nomadic past, inasmuch as it appears in the pre-Islamic Arabs who sought to bind themselves to the deity by means of similar blood ties.[3] The fact that the young men are involved in the act of covenant-sacrifice points to an early Israelite period, prior to the establishment of the Levitical priesthood. Beyerlin also conjectures that the mention of these lay functionaries suggests an ancient custom in Israel, according to which at the annual ceremony of covenant renewal a new generation of young men was occasionally received into the covenant people by being given an opportunity actively to participate in "making the covenant."[4]

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[1] Ibid., pp. 36-37.

[2] Ibid., p. 38.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Ibid., p. 39.

Further assumptions are made by Beyerlin with regard to the early nature of the tradition in Ex. 24:3-8. Moses' declaration of the divine will in verses 3 and 7, and the people's response of obedience to Yahweh is reported twice; once orally, second, in writing. Beyerlin regards this declaration as a doublet and the two occasions as rival, and as a cultically repeated proclamation of the law and promise of obedience, such as took place particularly in the worship of Yahweh at Shechem.[1] Ancient cultic usage is observed, too, in Moses' writing down the words of Yahweh and the erection of pillars (verse 4), since a similar recording of the divine words and the setting up of a stone is reported in Joshua 24:26 as having taken place at the amphictyonic assembly at Shechem. Beyerlin assumes that in both cases the reference to the writing down of the words of God constitute aetiological explanations of amphictyonic laws.[2]

The presence of Joshua in Ex. 24:12-14 presents a distinctive feature to Beyerlin who feels that Joshua had no place there originally.[3] That the reference to Joshua came to be inserted, Beyerlin proposes, may be traced to the influence on the Sinai tradition of the "Shechemite covenant cult," the cult which had installed Joshua as the primal figure of its tradition. It is in

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[1] Ibid., pp. 40, 41.

[2] Ibid., pp. 43, 45.

[3] Ibid., p. 48.

the Shechemite covenant-cult that the Sinai tradition was presumed to have had its Sitz im Leben. Beyerlin concludes:

> His (Joshua's) appearance in Exodus 24:13a could be a fresh indication . . . that the Sinai tradition was transmitted and given shape in close connection with the institutions and history of the amphictyony.[1]

An Appraisal of the Literary and Form Critical Analysis of Exodus 24

Literary Critical Analysis

It should be borne in mind that the source critical analysis of Exodus 24 as demonstrated in the preceding pages, is generally established on the fundamental presupposition that the text of this chapter belongs to diverse literary strata, inserted into the body of the structure of the chapter by different authors at different periods; it is uneven and nonhomogenous. Its composition can be best explained by tracing the material to composite authorship. The critical theory insists that the present form of Exodus 24 is a product of various redactors having blended into one single account several pieces of tradition each of which the critics differently ascribe to different sources.

The critics' assignment of the different units of tradition present in Exodus 24 to several sources seem to be subjective, arbitrary and conjectural. Subjectivity

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[1]Ibid., p. 49.

has become in many instances the determining factor in influencing the critics' conclusions to a great magnitude, and has forced upon them the urgency of their theories. The arbitrariness and conjecture are evident by the fact that the scholars whose views are considered above are not in agreement either on the precise delineation of the different tradition-units or on the sources to which these units ought to be attributed, as the tabulation of the following pages illustrate. For example: Ex. 24:1 has been assigned to E by B. Baentsch[1] but to a different stratum from verses 3-8. Beyerlin[2] also ascribes it to E, although he thinks that it is older than E. S. R. Driver[3] and Philip Hyatt[4] attach it to J although they admit the lack of evident criteria. The problem here is that nowhere else in J is God pictured residing on Mount Sinai in this way and being seen by men. B. D. Eerdmans combines the verse with Ex. 19:24 a J-passage.[5] Martin

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[1]Bruno Baentsch, Handkommentar zur Alten Testament: Exodus-Leviticus-Numeri (Gottingen: Vandenboeck und Ruprecht, 1903), pp. 213-19.

[2]Beyerlin, Origins and History of the Oldest Sinaitic Traditions, p. 14.

[3]S. R. Driver, Exodus (Cambridge: University Press, 1953), pp. 168ff.

[4]P. Hyatt, Exodus (London: Marshall Morgan & Scott Ltd., 1971), pp. 253-58.

[5]B. D. Eerdmans, Alttestamentliche Studiem (Giezen: Verlag von Alfred Topelmann, 1910), pp. 66-71.

Noth[1] contends that it is the most original source of the Sinai tradition containing E and other sources. O. Eissfeldt[2] connects it with 19:18 and finds the most ancient source L. This combination does not work convincingly. The description of the appearance of God in 24:1 is so utterly different from that of 19:18 that it hardly could go back to the same tradition. T. C. Vriezen[3] stamps it as an editorial hint lacking originality, and O. Procksch[4] attributes it to P.

Ex. 24:2. Ex. 24:2 has been assigned to E by Beyerlin[5] and Noth;[6] to J by Driver,[7] but Julius Wellhausen[8] and Vriezen[9] show that it has a literary relation to Ex. 20:18-21, a passage intermingled with J and E elements. Hyatt[10] demonstrates

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[1]Noth, A History of Pentateuchal Traditions, p. 162.

[2]Otto Eissfeldt, Hexateuch Synopse (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1922), p. 151.

[3]Theodore C. Vriezen, Oudtestamentische Studien, Vol. 17 (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1972), p. 103.

[4]O. Procksch, Theologie des Alten Testaments (Gutersloh: Bertelsmann, 1950), p. 83.

[5]Beyerlin, Origins and History of the Oldest Sinaitic Traditions, pp. 16-21.

[6]Noth, A History of Pentateuchal Traditions, p. 162.

[7]Driver, Exodus, pp. 168ff.

[8]Julius Wellhausen, Die Composition des Hexateuchs (Berlin: Walter De Gruyter & Co., 1963), pp. 94ff.

[9]Vriezen, Oudtestamentische Studien, 12: 103.

[10]Hyatt, Exodus, pp. 253-58.

that it belongs to J; so also J. E. Carpenter and Harford Battersby[1] who assume to be an echo to Ex. 19:22 and 20: 22-23 attribute it to J.

Ex. 24:3-8. Ex. 24:3-8 have been attributed to E by Beyerlin[2] because of their affinity to Ex. 24:3, 7b; 19:7 and Gen. 31:45 a supposed E passage where the erection of pillars is mentioned. Eissfeldt[3] suggests that they must belong to E because of their strong Israelitisch tone. Von Rad,[4] Weiser[5] and A. Kuenen[6] ascribe them to E. Driver[7] thinks that they are a sequel to Ex. 23:33, a presumed E verse, while Noth[8] doubts if the source of these verses can be identified. Carpenter and Battersby[9] mix them with E and

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[1]J. Estlin Carpenter and Harford Battersby, The Hexateuch, vol. 2 (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1900), p. 119.

[2]Beyerlin, Origins and History of the Oldest Sinaitic Traditions, pp. 14ff.

[3]Eissfeldt, Hexateuch Synopse, pp. 151ff.

[4]Von Rad, The Problem of Hexateuch and Other Essays, pp. 16f.

[5]Weiser, The Old Testament: Its Formation and Development, pp. 119f.

[6]Abraham Kuenen, An Historic-Critical Inquiry into the Origin and Composition of the Hexateuch (London: Macmillan & Co., 1886), p. 152.

[7]Driver, Exodus, pp. 168ff.

[8]Noth, Exodus, p. 198.

[9]Carpenter and Battersby, The Hexateuch, p. 119.

J. Procksch[1] argues for E_2. Baentsch[2] thinks that they are the work of R, while Hyatt[3] adds more sources, E, R_D.

Ex. 24:9-11. One of the most fascinating passages of Exodus 24 is verses 9-11. It has been described as containing "Some of the most astonishing and inexplicable verses of the Old Testament."[4] The critics have presented several solutions to these verses. We shall offer a small selection of the most important analyses.

1. Some scholars accept the original relation of verses 9-11 to 3-8; for example, U. Cassuto[5] and R. Schmid.[6]

2. Eissfeldt[7] suggests combining these verses (9-11) with 19:2a, 12, 13ab, 18; 20:18ac; 24:1, 2, 13a, 14, 15a; 32:17, 18, 25-29; 33:3b, 4; 34:10-12 and to find in them the ancient source L.

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[1]Procksch, Theologie des Alten Testament, p. 90.

[2]Baentsch, Handkommentar zum Alten Testament: Exodus-Leviticus-Numeri, pp. 213-19.

[3]Hyatt, Exodus, pp. 253-58.

[4]G. Henton Davis, Exodus (London: S. C. M. Press, 1967), p. 193.

[5]U. Cassuto, A Commentary on the Book of Exodus, trans. from the Hebrew by Israel Abrahams (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1967), p. 313.

[6]R. Scbmid, Das Bundesopfer in Israel (Munchen: Kosel-Verlag, 1964), p. 78.

[7]Eissfeldt, Hexateuch Synopse, p. 152, and a new article, "Die Alteste er Zahlung von Sinaibund," Zeitschrift fur die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft (1961), pp. 136ff.

3. Driver[1] coordinates the last six verses of chapter 19 with our passage and assumes that they belong to J.

4. Walter Eichrodt[2] and Hyatt[3] assign them to J in spite of the name "Elohim" in the verses and no traces of J.

5. Baentsch[4] and Wellhausen[5] admit that there are Elohistic elements in verses 9-11, yet they do not think that they can be attributed to the original E. Baentsch allots them to E_1 and Wellhausen relates them to Ex. 20:20.

6. Noth[6] supposes that these verses might be the continuation of Ex. 20:18-21 and the end of the E-narrative of the making of the covenant (Ex. 24:3-8).

7. On the basis of the relation with Ezek. 1:26, Eerdmans[7] attributes the verses to a young E-source (E_2).

8. Prochsch[8] divides the verses into two parts: 9-11a belong to P; 11b to E_1.

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[1]Driver, Exodus, pp. 168ff, 252ff.

[2]Walter Eichrodt, Theology of the Old Testament, vol. 1 (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1961), p. 36.

[3]Hyatt, Exodus, pp. 253-58.

[4]Baentsch, Handkommentar sum Alten Testament, pp. 213ff.

[5]Wellhausen, Die Composition des Hexateuch, p. 89.

[6]Noth, Exodus, p. 160.

[7]Eerdmans, Alttestamentliche Studien, pp. 66f.

[8]Procksch, Theologie des Alten Testament, pp. 83, 306.

9. A recent contribution to the problem is the proposal of J. M. Schmidt[1] who connects the passage with Ex. 18:1-12, a passage mixed with E and J sources.

Ex. 24:12-15a. This passage has been attributed to E by Driver[2] and Hyatt,[3] supposing it to be a sequel to verses 3-8. Noth's analysis is to attach the section in question to Ex. 19:10-15; 32 and 34:1, and ascribe it to J.[4] Vriezen[5] assumes that J must have incorporated this section in the account.

Ex. 24:15b-18a. The only point of general agreement among the critics about the text of Exodus 24 is in assigning verses 15b-18a to the Priestly source.

It is evident from the preceding pages that the arbitrariness of much of this reasoning does not increase confidence in the suggested source analysis. The eighteen verses of Exodus 24 have been attributed by the critics to seven different sources, E, E_1, E_2, E, R_D, J, L and P. This sort of survey could make one somewhat pessimistic: so many men, so many minds! What some call E, is mentioned

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[1]J. M. Schmidt, "Erwagungen zum Verhaltnis Von Auszugs und Sinai--Tradition," Zeitschrift fur die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft (1970), pp. 15f and 21f.

[2]Driver, Exodus, pp. 168ff, 252ff.

[3]Hyatt, Exodus, pp. 253-58.

[4]Noth, Exodus, pp. 196-200.

[5]Theodore C. Vriezen, The Religion of Ancient Israel (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1963), p. 145.

by others as J, or L, or P. A spate of opinions like in this case, might be a reason for pessimism. The fact that after more than two hundred years of critical study, scholarly unanimity in this respect has not been approached, let alone achieved, illustrates, in Dewey Beegle's words, "how much subjectivity is involved in a chain of reasoning which attempts to solve inner details of tradition and their development."[1] And William H. Green describing the endeavors of the critics, writes:

> The critic is engaged in solving an indeterminate equation. The line of partition depends upon the criteria, and the criteria depend upon the line of partition; and both of these are unknown qualities. Of necessity the work is purely hypothetical from first to last, and the liability to error increases with every step of the process.[2]

Thus, it is by no means obvious that Exodus 24 falls short of any homogeneity. Conversely, the affirmation should be made that the text presents an essential unity. The sequence of thoughts, of sections and paragraphs is ingenuous, coherent and logical. The narrative related in the eighteen verses does not contradict the characteristic style of the Semitic mode of thought of millennia ago. The account provides a methodical and orderly recitation of actual historical occurrences; there is no need to suppose that variant units of originally variant and dis-

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[1]Dewey Beegle, Moses, the Servant of Yahweh (Grand Rapdis: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1972), p. 249.

[2]W. H. Green, The Higher Criticism of the Pentateuch (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1896), pp. 117-18.

junctive traditions have been artificially imported and intercalated into the text. Writing under the rubric, "Modern Theology and Biblical Criticism," C. S. Lewis shows how impossible this work of the critics is. The author relates from his own personal experiences and from his books how at times he has been accused of borrowing from other writers, or how other writers have been accused of borrowing from him. The author illuminates the point with a particular incident. He relates how once some of his friends told him that a fairy tale by his friend Roger Lancelyn Green was influenced by his fairy tale, or that Green had borrowed from Lewis, a point which Lewis categorically denies.[1] Then the author goes on to illustrate by saying that in spite of the overwhelming advantages the modern reviewers and critics possess, when they reconstruct the history of a book written by someone whose native tongue is the same as theirs, educated like themselves, living in the same social, mental and spiritual environment, yet when they review a book or criticize a text, they usually miss more than they hit.[2] And as to his verdict, "I am not yet persuaded that their judgment is equally to be respected,"[3] in connection with Biblical criticism, he explains:

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[1]C. S. Lewis, Christian Reflections, ed. Walter Hooper (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1967), p. 160.

[2]Ibid.

[3]Ibid.

> The superiority in judgment and diligence which you are going to attribute to the Biblical critics will have to be almost superhuman if it is to offset the fact that they are everywhere faced with customs, language, race-characteristics, class-characteristics, a religious background, habits of composition, and basic assumptions, which no scholarship will ever enable any man now alive to know as surely and intimately and instinctively as the reviewer can know mine. And for the very same reason, remember, the Biblical critics, whatever reconstructions they devise, can never be crudely proved wrong. St. Mark is dead. When they meet St. Peter there will be more pressing matters to discuss.[1]

From what has preceded we can say that there is no compelling evidence that Ex. 24:1b-2 is to be thought of as a tradition quite different from 1a, 9-11 or labelled a "theological correction" (see p. 48). In verse 3, the phrase, "and all judgments," cannot be regarded as a later addition to the text by a redactor's inclusion in the Book of the Covenant (Ex. 20:22 to 23:33) in the Sinai tradition, since it fits the text well and makes good sense. We do not have to have a critical explanation for it.

And why should verses 3 and 7 be considered doublets when Hebrews (like all other Semites) were well known for repetition, to which the Old Testament is a conspicuous witness? There are neither linguistic nor cultural reasons for seeing verses 3-8 and 9-11 as contradictory accounts of the same ceremonial covenant ratification. Much less is the reason to be found in verses 12-15a and in 18b to be attached together to compose two different

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[1]Ibid., p. 161.

tradition units. Verses 15b-18a by no means can be regarded as another version of Sinai described in Ex. 19:16-20.

Hence, a better and a more satisfactory explication of the origin of the text in question which has every possibility of being a direct account of occurrences which transpired in a coherent sequence, is that it had a single author, namely, Moses himself. To cite Green once more, he writes, not only of Exodus, but of Pentateuch in general:

> . . . The unity of theme and unity of plan create a presumption that these books are, as they have been traditionally believed to be, the product of a single writer; and the presumption thus afforded must stand unless satisfactory proof can be brought to the contrary.[1]

Moreover, the Mosaic authorship of Exodus 24 is based on enormous evidence presented by the Pentateuch itself and numerous other Biblical passages.[2] The twenty-fourth chapter of Exodus itself twice refers (verses 4 and 7) to the fact that Moses prepared a literary account of the Lord's instructions. Other Pentateuchal passages speak

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[1]Green, The Higher Criticism of the Pentateuch, pp. 29-30.

[2]The present writer shares the conviction of Gleason L. Archer, Jr. in his A Survey of Old Testament Instruction, rev. ed. (Chicago: Moody Press, 1975), p. 109: "When all the data of the Pentateuchal text have been carefully considered, and all the evidence, internal and external, has been fully weighed, impression is all but irresistible that Mosaic authorship is the one theory which best accords with the facts."

of Moses recording legal and historical matters.[1]

Extra-biblical material regarding Mosaic authorship is equally striking. The Jewish writer Josephus, a contemporary of St. Paul, writing against Apion, says:

> We have not a countless number of books, but only two and twenty, which are rightly accredited. Of these five are the books of Moses containing the Law and the history of generations of men up to his death. From the death of Moses to that of Artaxerxes.[2]

The Jews in our Lord's day unhesitatingly assigned the Pentateuch to Moses. It is affirmed in the opening sentence of Pirke Aboth (The Sayings of the Fathers) that

> Moses received the Torah from Sinai, and he delivered it to Joshua, and Joshua to the elders and the elders to the prophets, and the prophets delivered it to the men of the Great Synagogue.[3]

There was the same certainty in the days of the Maccabees who were in power for a hundred and fifty years before the New Testament era dawned. The books of the Old Testament are freely used as authentic and authoritative. The names of the Patriarchs and prophets

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[1]Cf. Ex. 17:14; 20:25; Num. 31:1-2; Deut. 31:9, 22; Joshua 8:31; 1 Kings 2:3. These considerations render the possibility that Moses wrote the remaining portions of the Pentateuch. Indeed the authorship of Torah is always ascribed exclusively to Moses. Such passages we find in Ezra 6:18; Neh. 13:1; Dan. 9:11-13; Mal. 4:4; Matt. 19:8; Mark 7:10; Luke 20:37; John 7:19; Rom. 10:19; 1 Cor. 9:9; and 2 Cor. 3:15. This belief in the Christian Church is evident by the fact that in Luther's translation of the Bible each of the Pentateuchal books is entitled a "book of Moses."

[2]F. Josephus, "Against Apion," 1:8 quoted from Archer, A History of Old Testament Introduction, p. 67, n. 1.

[3]Charles Taylor, The Sayings of the Fathers (New York: KTAV Publishing House Inc., 1961), p. 11.

were on the lips of the people.[1] "The holy books of the Scriptures" were their encouragement,[2] and the Law in its entire corpus was recognized as "of Moses,"[3] and the "Song of Moses" is quoted verbatim as his.[4]

Finally, it should be noted that no ancient text (see Textual Criticism, Chapter II) supports the critics' conclusions. There are no serious differences in these texts. When the Septuagint, for example, uses the word "theos" instead of "kurios," it was pointed out that there was a theological justification for this shift of names, namely, "antianthropomorphism" (see Chapter II, pp. 41-42). The Pashitta, for instance, a second century version literally follows the Masoretic text, and so other versions in most cases. When minor variants occur, this is mainly due to the author's usual way of expressing his type of thought and style. Yet it should be added that textual critics with their "slash-and-slice" theory have greatly overused this method and have imposed upon texts that do not for some reason suit them a rather subjective and arbitrary judgment as to what the ancient author could or could not have said.

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[1]Charles Taylor, The Sayings of the Fathers (New York: KTAV Publishing House, Inc., 1961), p. 11.

[2]1 Mac. 2:52-60.

[3]1 Mac. 12:9.

[4]1 Esd. 1:6, 11; 5:49.

[5]2 Mac. 7:6.

Form Critical Analysis

Several objections may be presented against the preceding form analysis of Exodus 24 delineated above. First of all and fundamentally, the assumption that the material in chapter 24 is a piece of "cult-legend" (as the Sinai tradition has been classified) appears to be highly speculative. A meticulous study of the passage in question leads rather to a more plausible deduction, that its form and content is of a straightforward historical narrative. The account in the chapter seems to be the work of a single writer, most probably an eyewitness of the events narrated such as Moses.

Instead of conjecturing that the Shechemite cult-legend originated and shaped the so-called Sinai tradition, including the part of it preserved in Exodus 24, as Hexateuchal form criticism would have us believe, a more valid suggestion is, that the cult preserved a received and written record of all the occurrences connected with Israel's sojourn at Sinai and gave considerable weight to the precise and periodic representation of this record of Israelite worship on subsequent occasions.[1]

If we accept the view that a written account of the events connected with Israel's sojourn at Sinai was produced a short time after the occurrence of these events and carefully heeded in Israel's cultic practice thereafter,

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[1]Such occasions, for instance, would be: Deut. 11:26-32; 31:9-13, 27; Joshua 8:30-35; 24.

then other conclusions of the form critical analysis of Sinai narrative in general and of Exodus 24 in particular need to be summarily rejected. For instance, a Shechemite or any other cultic conjecture of originally variant and disjuncted sources of tradition into a single Sinai tradition will not be entertained.

The conclusions of form criticism are not airtight. Beyerlin's attempt to demonstrate through traditio-historical investigation that many aspects of the Sinai tradition as retained in Exodus 24 and elsewhere can be traced to the historical beginning of the nation in the desert period is interesting, but not at all useful. Moses, Yahweh, Sinai and Israel can be seen as the original Sitz im Leben of the Sinai tradition, not Kadesh or Shechem, or tribal confederacy, or any other Sitz im Leben. The amalgamation of Sinai tradition with Exodus tradition cannot be ascribed to either Yahwist or the Elohist, but to the author of the Pentateuch who had known the ways of the Lord, witnessed His mighty deeds in Egypt and on Sinai and had recorded them in a coherent, orderly and historical manner.

In conclusion it may be asked what plausibility is gained by using the so-called scientific Historical-Methodology to analyze the sacred Biblical text?[1] To be

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[1]On the use of Historical Methodology, see "Criticism of the Bible," by Dr. Richard Klann, in

more precise, what tangible contribution has this method since its inception contributed to the church of God?

In the present writer's opinion, many fallacies arise because many scholars either misrepresent the Old Testament culture or misinterpret its language. The inspired writers of the Scripture were neither speculative theologians nor critical analysts; they were deeply religious men expressing the religious and the moral needs of their communities. The course of theology has always been from West to East, the course of religion has always been from East to West. The Eastern mind has not yet fully comprehended the scholarly world. Therefore, to apply scholarly tools and scientifically sophisticated methodologies to explain religious convictions is unworthy of the dignity of the Scripture and an inadequate method of explication of the mentality of its authors. Man needs a religion deeper than criticism, and a faith that is a great divine foolishness, yet wiser than the highest critical wisdom of men, and in no way to be squared with the existing worldly philosophical systems.

"Occasional Papers," published by Affirm (Milwaukee: 1973). Also, in the same paper: "Some sobering Reflections on the Use of the Historical Critical Method," by Dr. Martin Schlarlemann; "May the Lutheran Theologian Legitimately Use the Historical Critical Method?" by Dr. Robert Preus; "Gospel and Bible," by Dr. Horace Hummel.

CHAPTER IV

AN EXEGETICAL ANALYSIS OF EXODUS 24

The initiation for the establishment of the covenant which began with chapter 19:1-25 and the laws and the commandments that follow immediately in chapters 20-23, lead to the solemn ratification of the covenant described in chapter 24. The process of completion involves two ceremonial practices: the first, God through Moses, and with the assistance of young men conclude a covenant with all the seed of Abraham at the foot of Mount Sinai, employed distinctive blood ritual as a testimony and as a reminder of the words spoken. The second, Israelite delegation consisting of four leaders and seventy elders ascend the mountain; they are given a silent vision of the God of Israel and partake of a sacred meal. Thereafter, Moses and Joshua approach the mountain to receive the tablets of stone of the commandments. The seventy elders with Aaron and Hur stay behind to judge in cases of dispute. The stage is set for chapter 32.

Exodus 24:1-2 Divine Instruction

Worship

After liberation, God's first mandate to Israel is a call to worship. In chapter 19 this injunction is stated in a negative form; Israel is categorically forbidden to worship any foreign gods or graven images. Here in these opening verses Israel is commanded to worship the only true God, her Redeemer.

An extensive vocabulary illustrates the essential concept of worship in the Old Testament. The verbs used are, "avad" (עבד), "to serve," "to labor as a servant," and "shahah" (שחה), "to prostrate oneself," "to draw near before another person in a reverential manner," "to seek the face of Yahweh," and so forth.[1] The present writer inclines to agree with the classification presented in The New Bible Dictionary which equates the Hebrew words "avad" (עבד) with the Greek "latreia," and "shahah" with "proskoonein."[2] A study of these words reveals a difference in meaning. The first term conveys the idea of a servile attitude, a connotation befitting more of a slave or servant, a person held in subjection; enslaved. In 2 Kings 10:19, 22, 23, the word used for the worshippers of Baal is

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[1]G. H. Davis, "Worship in the Old Testament," The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible (New York: Abingdon Press, 1962), p. 879.

[2]G. D. Douglas, et al., The New Bible Dictionary (London: The Inter-Varsity Press, 1962), p. 1340.

"avad," signifying servants or slaves. The latter word means, "to prostrate," "to bow down," applied to human acts of reverence to superior and supernatural, involving physical and emotional expressions appropriate to one who comes into the presence of the holy majesty of God, bows down, prostrates himself in an "oriental fashion," as in Ex. 4:31, "then they bowed their heads and 'worshipped.'" It is interesting to observe that when the question of picture "worship" was heatedly debated at the Seventh Ecumenical Council, held in Nicaea in 787, the word "proskoonein" = shaḥah was introduced into the formula, and the term "latreia" = avad was carefully avoided.[1]

Another Hebrew word as well as Aramaic and Arabic (see Chapter II, Variant Versions), is "sagad" (סגד), meaning "bow down," "prostrate," "kneel down," occurring in Is. 44:15, 17, 19; 46:6 and Dan. 2:46.

Although a study of terminologies, vocabularies and language cannot by itself commensurately convey all that is involved in worship, yet it can reasonably serve as a suitable directive in comprehending what is in the mind of an ethnic people that commonly employ such terms.

Let us begin with the assertion concerning who God is and what He has done for Israel. The characteristic feature of the Old Testament for God is, "The Holy One of

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[1]Bengt Hagglund, History of Theology, trans. Gene J. Lund (St. Louis, Mo.: Concordia Publishing House, 1966), p. 153.

Israel," and what He has done for Israel is "The decisive event which determines Israel's faith and practice in the exodus from Egypt."[1] It is an event the impetus of which is constantly associated with the concept of "ge'ullah," redemption.[2] From this point onward, Israel's history and religion truly begin. Therefore, at the heart of Israel's worship is an expressed gratitude for God's saving activity.[3] For Israel there is only one resort of worship, power, help and authority; and that is Yahweh the Redeemer. Whatever forms and media are employed, the fundamental quality of Israel's worship is categorically conditioned by the object of worship, the Righteous, Gracious One and the sole Ruler of Israel. On the basis of this relation, a covenant relationship between God and Israel, Israel rejected all forms of alien gods and detested every foreign yoke.

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[1]A. S. Herbert, Worship in Ancient Israel (Richmond, Va.: John Knox Press, 1959), p. 7.

[2]Max Kadushin, Worship and Ethics: A Study in Rabbinic Judaism (New York: Northwestern University, 1964), p. 93.

[3]The present writer is inclined to disagree with J. D. Douglas et al., for their emphasis on one aspect of worship, viz., "to serve," The New Bible Dictionary, p. 1340. In our text the emphasis is not so much on the servile status, rather on man's obligation to fulfill his Lord's will. The term servant in the sense of worshipper is a characteristic feature of Semitic religion, not of Greek thought; yet the content does not suggest servitude, but relationship in faithfully discharging one's duty. It should also be added that in Hebrew the word "avad" (עבד) denotes service and worship.

Moreover, the worship at Sinai inaugurates a wider perspective; it introduces a national worship. The individual and family worship take a broader dimension. H. H. Rowley opens the second chapter, "From Exodus to the Founding of the Temple" of his book, Worship in Ancient Israel, with an elucidating comment: "In the Patriarchal period we read only of individual worship, but from now on our records are predominantly of corporate acts of worship."[1] According to the law of the desert, worship was an essential part of the community and the god was the god of the tribe or of the nation. A good case in point is the modern Islamic pilgrimage to Mecca. Once a year as many Moslems as possible participate in common worship at one sacred spot to "bow down" before their Allah. Israel was no exception; Yahweh was the God of Israel; in fact, He claims Israel as His own people.[2] In antique societies, worship was stimulated and regulated by the motives and sanctions of the communities. W. Robertson Smith has expressly stated the case:

> In ancient religion, as it appears among the Semites, the confident assurance of divine help belongs not to each man in his private concerns, but to the community in its public functions and public aims; and it is this assurance that is expressed in public acts of worship, where all the members of the community meet

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[1] H. H. Rowley, Worship in Ancient Israel (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1967), p. 37.

[2] Ex. 5:1.

> together to eat and drink at the table of their God, and so renew the sense that he and they are altogether at one.[1]

Israel's worship at Sinai demanded exclusive devotion and loyalty to Yahweh, abstention from all idolatry, rejection of all images, keeping the Sabbaths, regulating feasts and fasts and honoring the name of Yahweh. Again in the words of Smith: "This implies a measure of insouciance, a power of casting off the past and living in the impression of the moment. . . . "[2]

Thus, God's call for people to worship at Sinai is a call for obedience, moral obligation, prayer and ritual practice. Israel, in word and deed has constantly to pay unlimited fealty for His determinative acts of salvation in the days of Moses and for His subsequent renewal events of her history.

Afar Off and Near

There is an order in worship, and even a degree of nearness to God in the divine instruction given in verses 1-2. Three positions of approach are described in these two verses.[3] The common people are at the foot of the Mountain; Aaron, his sons and the seventy elders

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[1]W. Robertson Smith, The Religion of the Semites (New York: Meridian Library, 1956), p. 266.

[2]Ibid., p. 257.

[3]G. H. Davis, Exodus: Introduction and Commentary, p. 193.

are higher, between the people and Moses; only Moses is near God. This denotes that the people were to stay at a distance, only God's mediator and spokesman should go up to receive the message and then deliver it to his congregation.

Exodus 24:3 Voluntary Assent of the People

If man is to respond to God's claims, then he is to know something about God, and is responsible to do what is expected of him. The revelation at Sinai is also a response to the divine call. The listeners have met God, confronted pragmatic issues, and experienced Yahweh's power over nature and in human affairs. These unusual phenomena now justify significant decisions and the people consent to declare their response.

The word "do" (עשה) in Hebrew usually allies itself in meaning with the words with which it stands related, and among its variant significations, besides "to do," it carries the meaning of: "offer," "make," "act with effect," "constitute," "produce," "prepare," "acquire," "put in order," "appoint," "bring about," "cause," and "use."[1] It is rendered "offer" in forty passages, mostly in Leviticus and Numbers.[2] Sometimes it refers to the

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[1]Francis Brown, S. R. Driver and Charles Briggs, A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1907), pp. 793-95.

[2]Some passages being: Lev. 5:10; 9:22, 19; 15:15, 30; 16:24; 17:9. Num. 6:11, 17; 15:3, 14.

service of the priest and sometimes to the acts of the individual who brings the offering and appoints what particular animal he will offer. Naaman, the Syrian, is represented as using the word in 2 Kings 5:17; and it is used of Jehu's offering in the house of Baal, 2 Kings 10:24, 25. The word occurs first in this sense in Ex. 10:25, where Moses declares before Pharoah: "Thou must give us also sacrifices and burnt-offerings that we may sacrifice (עשינו) unto the Lord our God." Also it occurs in Ex. 29:36, 38, and 39 bearing the same meaning.

In addition to the above meaning, the word is used in the sense of "preparing," or "arranging" the animal or meat-offering or drink-offering.[1] It may also be added, that " עשה " is employed in making or ordaining of feasts.[2]

The Greek rendering in these passages is invariably " ποιειν " "to do," or "make"; the Vulgate commonly adopts the word "facere," and sometimes "offerre," and Luther usually uses "machen" and occasionally "opfern."

One meaning of this term has not adequately arrested the attention of the commentators, namely, "to keep." F. Brown, S. R. Driver and C. Briggs have

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[1]For example, Num. 15:5, 6, 8, 20; Judg. 13:15, 16; Ezek. 43:25, 27.

[2]Cf. Judg. 14:10; 1 Kings 3:15; Ezra 3:4, 6.

rendered one meaning of it, "to observe" in niphal form.[1] It is this meaning of the term " שמר " which the present writer is inclined to adopt in our passage and it is this rendering which suits best the people's response to God's claims. This meaning of the word is not lacking in the Old Testament. For example, in Ex. 12:48, we have, " . . . will keep (עשה) the passover to the Lord." In one chapter of the book of Numbers alone, more than ten times this meaning is repeated in vivid statements.[2]

And now it may be in place to ask: "keep what?" The verse (3) actually says: "The words and ordinances of Yahweh." According to one source,[3] this may refer to all the words contained in the previous four chapters, or in the Decalogue alone. According to Martin Buber, this has reference to the words of the covenant, the Ten Words,[4] and Cole maintains that by "words" is meant the "categorical law," (corresponding to the Ten Words of Martin Buber), while ordinances mean "judicial decisions,"

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[1]Brown, Driver and Briggs, A Hebrew and English Lexicon, p. 795.

[2]Cf. Num. 9:2, 3, 4, 5, 10, 11, 12, 14. Also, 2 Chron. 30:1, 2, 3, 5, 13; 35:18; Ezra 6:19.

[3]J. C. Murphy, The Book of Exodus: A Critical and Exegetical Commentary (New York: I. K. Funk & Co., 1881), p. 173.

[4]Martin Buber, Moses (London: East and West Library, 1946), p. 110.

"case laws."[1] Childs interprets the "words" to mean, "Decalogue," while "ordinances" refer to the laws announced in Ex. 21:1.[2]

The people, by employing the term " עשה " in their response to Moses' challenge, carry a heavy responsibility and commitment. "We will keep what the Lord has spoken." And this writer can envision on the basis of personal observation among the nomadic tribes how this could have been gestured. When such a response is made (as the one in our text), the person responding lifts his hand heavenward and promises to keep what has been said or done between the parties involved. Hence, the voluntary assent of the people carries with it a solemn assertion, a promise to fidelity; it is binding oneself to a vow. In connection with this, it should be noted that the oath precedes the finalizing of the covenant, or the sacrifice. This point has somehow been overlooked by exegetes.[3]

The term for "words" used in Ex. 24:3 is "דברי," which has a multitude of definitions: "speech," "word," "discourse," "saying," "utterance," "matter," "affair,"

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[1]R. Alan Cole, Exodus: An Introduction and Commentary (Downers Grove, Ill.: Inter-Varsity Press, 1973), p. 76.

[2]B. S. Childs, Exodus: A Commentary (London: S. C. M. Press Ltd., 1947), p. 505.

[3]D. J. McCarthy observes this point in "The Three Covenants in Genesis," Catholic Biblical Quarterly 26 (1964): 179-89.

"occupation," "business," "advice" and "counsel."[1] In the Septuagint this word is usually rendered " λαλεω " and the nouns generally "logos" (λογος) and "rhema" (ρημα).

In accordance with the general idea of "the words of the Lord," we find not only the "Ten Commandments" expressing the righteous will of God,[2] but also the "judgments," regulating the social life of Israel,[3] and the "ordinances" governing the religious life of that would-be nation.[4] These three features of the Mosaic covenant form "the law," as the phrase is usually interpreted in the New Testament.[5] The Israelites are obligated to "keep" (שמע) and act upon, and their keeping and acting is the hinge upon which all history of Israel revolves. Israel's answer to these words is reported three times: in Ex. 19:6-7; 24:3, and finally during the solemn covenant ratification (Ex. 24:7).

According to the Hebrew strict religious rule, it was categorically imperative that a person be obedient to the law of Yahweh. Although it may seem anachronistic, yet for the sake of clarification let us cite two later prophets at this juncture. Amos declared: "Seek good and

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[1]Brown, Driver and Briggs, A Hebrew and English Lexicon, pp. 180-84.

[2]Ex. 20:1-26. [3]Ex. 21:1 to 22:31.

[4]Ex. 23:1-33. [5]Matt. 5:17-18.

not evil, that ye may live, and so Yahweh, the God of hosts shall be with you as you have spoken."[1] Jeremiah admonishes in the same vein: "But this thing I commanded them (fathers) saying, obey my voice, and I shall be your God and you shall be my people; and walk in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well with you."[2] This is the standard of all the law and all practice; a guide in speculation and life for Israel. The people have to conform to and walk by the message given by God through Moses. The rejection of this message is a lamentable experience. Thomas Carlyle, the English stylist, has put it vividly: "Woe to him that claims obedience when it is not due; woe to him that refuses it when it is."[3] And A. Hertzberg describes the Israelites under the covenant obligation:

> By obeying the divine commandments the people that God has chosen will experience His nearness to a degree greater than that of all other people. . . . It is the way of regular encounter with God. Law in Judaism is not the enemy of mystical experience; it is that experience, generalized and regularized for all kinds and conditions of men.[4]

Hence, these words of Yahweh, to which people assent, bind the descendants of Abraham to a task of being an obedient

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[1]Amos 5:14. [2]Jer. 7:21.

[3]Thomas Carlyle, On Heroes, Hero-Worship, and the Heroic in History, ed. J. Chester Adams (New York: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1907), p. 276.

[4]Arthur Hertzberg, Judaism (New York: George Braziller, 1962), pp. 27-28.

people, a corporate priesthood and a holy nation. They must keep His ordinances as described in the Book of the Covenant (Ex. 21:22 to 23:33). These ordinances are, however, unbreakable. They will be punished for their sins and judged by the stricter standards than those God applies to the non-covenanted people.

Exodus 24:4-8. The Ceremonies of Covenant Ratification

These verses (4-8) constitute the most essential part of the Sinaitic core. In fact one modern scholar considers them the most significant passage in the whole Old Testament. He writes:

> These verses recount the most important event of the entire Old Testament. The length of a narrative is not important. The narrative of the institution of the sacrament of the New Covenant in the Gospels are even shorter.[1]

The Writing of the Words

According to the then prevailing custom, any covenant required a public recital, acceptance of its terms and recording of the words. The reference here, in our passage is, probably to the Book of the Covenant (Ex. 21:22 to 23:33). Moses is here making an account of what is taking place at a most solemn moment. The fact that he is recording the "laws and the ordinances" is an indi-

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[1]George Auzou, De la Servitude au Service (Paris: Orante, 1961), p. 268; cited by James Plastaras, The God of Exodus (Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Co., 1966), p. 228.

cation to emphasize the seriousness of realizing precisely the responsibility to which the people are committing themselves with a reverential allegiance.

Some critical voices have arisen as to the mode of writing these words. Was Moses able to read? Could he write? On what did he write? and so forth. Certainly, Moses could read and write. It would be preposterous to surmise his being raised in the royal court of Egypt and yet remaining illiterate! Although he moved in a nomadic environment, yet he had spent his first forty years in one of the most civilized regions of the ancient world. In that part of the world, writing existed perhaps around 3500 B.C.,[1] probably in Mesopotamia, and not long after that it invaded Egypt, that is, two millennia before Moses' time. It is not at all far-fetched to say that by the time of Moses, vast literary means prevailed in both the Nile and the Euphrates valleys. Besides, Babylonian cuneiform tablets and the Egyptian hieroglyphic characters at Serabit el Khaddam, in the Sinai desert, fifty miles northwest of the Mount Sinai have yielded alphabetic inscriptions dating around 1500 B.C., containing later Hebrew letters.[2]

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[1]J. Finegan, Let My People Go: A Journey Through Exodus (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1963), p. 119.

[2]J. Vergote, Joseph en Egypt (Louvain: Publication Universitairas, 1959), p. 210, fn. 2.

Besides these extra-Biblical significations, we possess particular references in the book of Exodus to Moses' writing and recording. At one point we read: "Write this as a memorial in a book."[1] Again, "And Moses wrote all the words of the Lord."[2] "Then he took the book of the covenant and read it in the hearing of the people."[3] "And he wrote on the tablets the words of the covenant, the ten commandments."[4] We cannot escape these pungent references to Moses' writing and recording important events in his life and the life of his people. Moses might have been a stutterer in his speech, but certainly a stimulator in his writing. Martin Buber, describing Moses' effectiveness of writing, says: "Each word (is) charged with dynamism of a historical situation."[5]

As to the second question, "were they actually written codes on some material?" Again, the answer is in the affirmative. The Sumarian Code of the city of Ur dates from 2050 B.C.[6] The Akkadian Code from about 2000 B.C., and the Hammurabi Code probably dates from the eighteenth century B.C.[7] If these codes were written

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[1]Ex. 17:14.

[2]Ex. 24:4.

[3]Ex. 24:7.

[4]Ex. 34:28.

[5]Buber, Moses, p. 136.

[6]Finegan, Let My People Go, p. 119.

[7]Ibid.

centuries before Moses, why is it impossible that Moses' code could not have been written?

The material upon which Moses wrote is called "luḥoth (לחת), a flat sculptured slab called in Greek, "stela." The use of these stelae goes back to hoary antiquity. The Code of Hammurabi is inscribed on such a stela. Martin Buber tells us that Babylon and Greece used these means of writing.[1] This ought to convince us of the art of lapidary in the ancient world. Therefore, in light of these evidences, there is no difficulty in maintaining that Moses wrote the words of Yahweh at Sinai; in fact, there is every probability that he did so. He did harder things than writing of books.

The Building of the Altar

The Hebrew name for altar is "Mizbeach" (מזבח), derived from "zabeach" (זבח), literally meaning, "a place of slaughter," or "slain offering."[2] The Arabic word is "mathbah" (مذبح) and Syriac, "mathbḥa" (ܡܕܒܚܐ see Chapter II, Textual Criticism). The Septuagint adopts the term "thusiasterion" (θυσιαστηριον). The fundamental idea which an Israelite would connect to an altar would necessarily depend upon his view of the word "Zabeach" (זבח). In that case the altar would be

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[1]Buber, Moses, p. 138.

[2]Cf. Brown, Driver and Briggs, A Hebrew and English Lexicon, p. 258.

the appointed place on which the blood of the slaughtered beasts was to be sprinkled and their fat burned. And whatever was burned upon the altar and regarded to be consumed by God, was considered a divine approbation and the offerer accepted by Him.

Clay Trumbull argues a case to connect the word "altar" with "table" in the Assyrian sacrificial practices,[1] and shows the influence of the latter in Hebrew sacrificial system, especially in later Hebrew sacrificial performances. Indeed, Trumbull argues that the very word "surquinu" in Assyrian language which means altar, was exactly the word used for "table" which later became known as the communion table between the gods and the worshippers.[2] Based upon this ancient rite, Trumbull suggests that there is this interchangeable use of the words "altar" and "table" in the Old Testament. For example, Malachi cries, "And you say wherein have we despised thy name? You offer polluted bread upon mine altar. And you say the table of the Lord is contemptable."[3] In the same tone Isaiah declares: "But you that forsake the Lord, that forget my holy mountain, that prepare a table for fortune . . . you shall all bow down for slaughter."[4]

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[1]Clay Trumbull, The Blood Covenant (Philadelphia: John D. Wattles, 1893), p. 167.

[2]Ibid.

[3]Mal. 1:6-7.

[4]Is. 65:11.

Professor Trumbull's argument has not convinced many scholars; his theory does not carry much weight so far as the "altar" idea is concerned. And if it does at all, it is to be sought in later sacrificial practices and not in Patriarchal period or in Moses' time.[1]

In our text of Ex. 24:4, Moses built an altar upon which the victims were to be slain and their blood sprinkled. But an altar also indicates the presence of God in covenant with His people. Later on, Moses sprinkled half of the blood against the altar, signifying God's presence.

Moses also erected twelve pillars. The Hebrew name from which the word pillar is derived is, "natzav" (נצב), meaning "to stand," "to plant," "to erect"; it is first referred to in an idolatrous sense in Ex. 23:24, where the command is given to break down the images of the Canaanite gods; also in Ex. 34:13, where it is connected with "groves." The Septuagint avoiding any connection with forms of idolatry uses the word "stones" in our text (see Chapter II, the Septuagint). Probably these pillars were erected in a circle round the altar indicating the presence of the twelve tribes before God in this

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[1]The "table" does not seem to be provided in the Pentateuch, but a reference is made to it in Ezek. 40:39. There, it serves a different purpose from the altar. The animal was slain on the table but its blood was sprinkled, its fat burned, and, in the case of olah, all the pieces were burnt on the altar.

solemnization of the covenant. It is doubtful if they had any monumental significance since we hear no more of them.

The Offering of the Sacrifices

Animal sacrifices as religious obligation appeared to have existed since the dawn of human history. But the Pentateuchal system of this practice claims to have been developed and elaborated under divine ordinance during the wilderness sojourn and settlement period. Yet this old Mosaic system was only a chart drawn in shadowy lines directing God's people to the work which was to be accomplished once for all by divine grace, through the God-Man when the fulness of time would come.

The popular religious system of ancient Israel could be summarized in one word--"sacrifice," which R. de Vaux defines as "any offering animal or vegetable, which is wholly or partially destroyed upon an altar as a token of homage to God."[1] This divinely ordained feature in the religious fabric of the Hebrew people was "a means of grace" by which an Israelite could approach God and whereby the covenant relationship between God and Israel was secured. Yet, ironically enough, it was this divinely ordained practice which became the most corrupt custom, and

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[1]R. de Vaux, Ancient Israel: Its Life and Institutions, trans. J. McHugh (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1961), p. 415.

at which the later prophets directed their vituperative speeches. This religious system which embodied features of lasting religious worth, easily degenerated into an unethical and superstitious ritualism, becoming a substitute instead of the complement and expression of true religion and proper conduct.

Nevertheless, sacrifice is not, as is sometimes claimed, unimportant either for the understanding of the Old Testament or for the religion of the New.[1] Although the sacrificial system is abandoned by the Jews, and Christians considered it as having been surpassed and superseded, yet, it occupied a prominent position in the religion of ancient Israel and provides an essential concept of the New Testament theology.

Although sacrifice as an idea and an institution is deeply grounded in the Old Testament thought, nevertheless, nowhere is its rationale explicated. The institution, says Vincent Taylor:

> Is taken for granted as a divine ordinance, and the only principle laid down is that "the blood is the life." This attitude was maintained in Rabbinical Judaism, and only in comparatively modern times have attempts been made to ascertain its underlying idea.[2]

Several theories have been advanced regarding the essential nature and the motivating purpose of the sacrifice.

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[1]M. Burrows, An Outline of Biblical Theology (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1946), p. 5.

[2]Vincent Taylor, Jesus and His Sacrifice (London: Macmillan Co., 1937), p. 49.

Robertson Smith affirmed that a sacrifice was enacted to affect communion meal. It "is not a mere payment of tribute but an act of social fellowship between the deity and his worshippers."[1] This concept is elaborated by Professor Smith in his extensive work on Semitic religions in which he argues that the central thought in the sacrificial practice of the Semites was not that of a gift presented to the deity, "but an act of communion, in which the god and his worshippers unite by partaking together of the flesh and blood of a sacred victim."[2]

Smith's theory is denied by G. B. Gray who maintains that sacrifice is essentially a piacular (for example, expiatory) gift. By examining the terminology of the word, Gray asserts that "with one or two possible but scarcely probably exceptions, none of these terms, . . . stands related to the idea of communion or fellowship."[3] And he concludes by saying that "whenever in later times the Jew sacrificed he was consciously intending his sacrifice to be a gift to God."[4]

It should be mentioned that there is no good reason, however, for maintaining that these theories are

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[1]Smith, Religion of the Semites, pp. 254-55.

[2]Ibid., pp. 226-27.

[3]G. B. Gray, Sacrifice in the Old Testament: Its Theory and Practice (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1925), p. 19.

[4]Ibid., p. 20.

mutually exclusive. It must be noted that while each emphasizes his own viewpoint, neither excludes other elements. Therefore, Professor W. A. Elmslie is justified in maintaining that "the desert attitude to sacrifice was both 'communion' and 'gift,'"[1] whereas T. R. Glover throws a pale of doubt by saying that "Sacrifice was language used by all men, but understood by none."[2] T. H. Gaster points out that sacrifices are of diverse and variant origin, not only in their form, but also in their motivation and importance. "They cannot be derived from any one single principle, and, in respect of them, all monogenetic theories of the origin of sacrifice may be safely discounted from the start."[3] H. H. Rowley arrives at the same conclusion that "no simple idea will suffice to explain the meaning of it all."[4]

Besides the foregoing viewpoints, other scholars have amassed a formidable array of theories to support their theses. For example, S. I. Curtiss[5] and E. B.

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[1]W. A. Elmslie, How Came Our Faith (Cambridge: University Press, 1948), p. 150, fn. 1.

[2]T. R. Glover, Jesus in the Experience of Men (New York: G. H. Doran, 1921), p. 63.

[3]R. de Vaux, "Sacrifice and Offering in the Old Testament," The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible 4

[4]H. H. Rowley, "The Meaning of Sacrifice in the Old Testament," Bulletin of John Rylands Library 33 (1950-51): 83.

[5]S. I. Curtiss, Primitive Semitic Religion Today (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1958), pp. 480ff.

Tylor[1] secularized the notion of sacrifice and maintained that it was offered to a god to seek his help. E. Westermark[2] and W. Eichrodt[3] humanized the idea of god more and asserted that it was food presented to god to sustain him.

It is not our purpose to inquire into the origins and nature of sacrifice in general or what may be discovered of its original significance. Neither shall we attempt to examine in detail all the types of Israel's sacrificial system at the present stage of the discussion. Since our text (Ex. 24:5) mentions only two forms of sacrifice, burnt-offering (עלה) and peace offering (שלמים), these two forms will demand our attention.

Animal sacrifice was an ancient religious element among the Semitic people. The Bible portrays it as old as man himself. Abel[4] offered sacrifices, and so did the Patriarches.[5] Balaam, it is reported offered sacrifices on seven altars.[6] Jezebel's false prophets erected an altar and offered sacrifices on Mount Carmel,[7] and Jethro, Moses' father-in-law who was not an Israelite priest is

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[1]E. B. Tylor, Religion in Primitive Culture (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1958), pp. 480ff.

[2]E. Westermark, The Origin and Development of Moral Ideas, Vol. 2 (London: Macmillan Co., 1908), p. 611.

[3]W. Eichrodt, Theology of the Old Testament, trans. by J. A. Baker, Vol. 1 (London: S. C. M., 1961), p. 141.

[4]Gen. 4:4.

[5]Gen. 22:13; 31:54; 46:1.

[6]Num. 23:1-3, 14, 29.

[7]1 Kings 18:26ff.

recorded to have offered numerous offerings and sacrifices.[1]

Two types of sacrifices are mentioned in the text of Ex. 24:5 that were practiced before the settlement and continued to be practiced during the Old Testament period. These are "burnt-offering" (עלה) and "peace-offering" (שלמים).

The word "olah" (עלה), according to Gesenius, means, "to go or come up," "to mount," "to be high," "to lift up," "to bring up," "to put or lie upon."[2] The term first occurs in Gen. 8:20 after the flood, and according to William's Dictionary of the Bible, the word "kalil" (כליל), for example, "perfect," occurs as a substitute in poetry, "holokarposis" (in Genesis), "holokautoma" (in Exodus and Leviticus) and "holocaustum" (in Vulgate).[3] The term is derived from "olah" (עלה), meaning "ascend" and it is applied to the offering which was wholly consumed by fire on the altar,[4] and the whole of which, except the ashes, "ascended" in smoke to God. Hence, it corresponds in a way to the word "holokautoma," the "whole burnt-offering."[5]

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[1]Ex. 18:12.

[2]William Gesenius, Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament (New York: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1825), pp. 783ff.

[3]H. B. Hackett, William Smith's Dictionary of the Bible (New York: Hurd & Houghton, 1870), p. 335.

[4]Ibid. [5]Ibid.

H. B. Hackett points to three types of this offering: first, daily burnt-offering (Ex. 29:38-42), double burnt-offering on the Sabbath (Num. 28:9-10) and burnt-offering at great festivals (Num. 28:11 to 29:39).[1]

The term "olah" (עלה), has also been connected with the Hebrew word "esh," meaning "fire," based on the Sumerian cognate term "iesh," fire.[2] G. B. Gray maintains this view, although he admits that originally the word meant, "to be friendly." But this latter meaning gradually was lost, and the functional definition of the term became known by its characteristics, namely, "to ascend" to the altar, or the smoke of which ascends to God.[3]

According to de Vaux, the purpose of the whole burnt-offering was designed to express obedience to God and win his favor by some gift.[4] In Leviticus this is described as "sweet savor."[5] This is the sacrifice and this is the (ריח ניחוח) expression as used in Gen. 8:21 when Noah offered sacrifice after the deluge. Moreover, de Vaux also argues by saying that this form of sacrifice was rather rarely found in the early days of Israel, but

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[1]Ibid., p. 2772.

[2]Rowley, Worship in Ancient Israel, p. 120.

[3]Gray, Sacrifice in the Old Testament, pp. 9ff.

[4]R. de Vaux, Studies in Old Testament Sacrifice

[5]Lev. 1:9, 13, 17.

gradually it dominated the peace-offering.[1] In fact, de Vaux argues "that the Israelites in the desert were not yet acquainted with holocausts and communion sacrifices.[2] In his view the only type of sacrifice known to the pre-settlement period would have been the passover sacrifice; the rest they borrowed from the Canaanites.[3] De Vaux bases his argument on two debatable passages in the Old Testament, namely, Amos 5:25 and Jeremiah 7:22, where the prophets seem to imply that there were no sacrifices in the desert.

De Vaux's argument has not persuaded all scholars. W. H. Robinson, thinks that the sacrifices of the ancient nomadic Semites were apparently of the type later known as the "peace-offering," a type of communion sacrifice, in which the blood of the slain animal was drained out on a sacred stone, while the offerer and his family partook of the flesh. "It was probably within Canaan, and from their Canaanite kinsfolk that the Hebrews derived the 'burnt-offering,' to be interpreted a simple gift to the deity."[4] Professor H. Rowley denies that the passover was a type of offering; he rather maintains that it was a sacrifice

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[1] R. de Vaux,"Sacrifice in the Old Testament."

[2] Ibid., p. 20. [3] Ibid., p. 19.

[4] H. W. Robinson, Redemption and Revelation (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1942), p. 249.

offered at a specific time of the year.[1] He also questions de Vaux's interpretation of Amos 5:25 and Jer. 7:22. Amos speaks of "zebachim" and "minhah," while Jeremiah speaks of "olah" and "zebhah." And since the passover was called a "zebhah" in the Ritual Decalogue (Exodus 34), therefore, it cannot be excluded from the sayings of Amos and Jeremiah.[2]

A familiarity with the term "olah" in the Old Testament leads one to conclude that the fundamental objective of the term is that of "attention," "attraction." A few examples may demonstrate this function. Balaam[3] communicates with God to permit him to curse the Israelites. He erects seven altars and offers "olah." After the olah, Yahweh speaks to the pagan prophet near the altar. The keyword in the episode is the verb, "near" (קרב).

To elucidate this notion (for example, "attention," "attraction") adequately, let us turn to another passage. Elijah encounters the false priests of Baal, on Mount Carmel.[4] Elijah advises the cult prophets to erect an altar and offer sacrifices. The nature of the sacrifices offered by these prophets is not stated, but its parallel by Elijah is termed "olah." The Baal prophets fail to

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[1]Rowley, Worship in Ancient Israel, pp. 115, 116.

[2]Rowley, "The Meaning of Sacrifice," pp. 340ff.

[3]Numbers 23.

[4]1 Kings 18.

evoke their god, while Elijah succeeds in doing so. In Elijah's case, the means of attraction, besides "olah," include water poured around the altar at a time of drought. At Elijah's prayer, fire descends from heaven, laps up the water and consumes the olah on the altar. The specific objective of the olah here is in Elijah's challenge: "The God who responds in the form of fire, he is the true God."

Another incident comes from the career of Gideon (Judges 6). Gideon is ordered to destroy the Baal altar used by his father and build a new one instead for Yahweh on the site. Gideon does so, and offers olah to demonstrate Yahweh's presence.[1]

One final interesting feature of this function of olah comes from the Moabite King (2 Kings 3:26-27), who offered his first-born son on the walls of his city as an "olah" when the battle with the Israelites was going against him. The Moabite god had not responded to previous entreaties, but certainly he would when approached with such an extreme act of offering. After the "olah," the wrath of the god was unleashed against the Israelites. Here again, the "olah" is utilized when the objective is a response from a god presumed to be distant and who ought to be evoked, attracted.[2]

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[1]See also W. F. Albright, Yahweh and the Gods of Canaan (New York: Garden City, 1968), pp. 173-74.

[2]The word "wrath" (קצף) is in most cases associated with divine wrath, almost always with Yahweh's wrath against Israel.

The "olah" sacrifice, was perhaps, by no means peculiar to Israel, it obviously obtained peculiar characteristic during the development of Israel's worship service. There can be little doubt that the ceremonies connected with "olah" at Sinai (Ex. 24:5) were designed to produce a moral and spiritual effect upon the Israelites at this new spot of their meeting with God. It ought to be mentioned that these sacrifices were not "sin-offering" (חטא) sacrifices. The connection between these sacrifices and the making of the covenant is a call to obedience, to the law of Yahweh, and a life of righteousness. In the words of a commentator, "They (Israelites) were committing themselves and entering into a close and binding communion with their Redeemer."[1]

Shelamim

Besides burnt-offering, our text mentions "peace-offering," called in Hebrew "shelamim" (שלמים), a term most probably derived from shalom (שלם), meaning "peace," "well-being," "sound," "complete," "prosperity," "security."[2]

The exact sense of the term "shelamim" has baffled many scholars, and its function as a rite has

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[1]C. Pfeiffer and E. Harrison, The Wycliffe Bible Commentary (London: Oliphants Ltd., 1962), p. 74.

[2]Brown, Driver and Briggs, A Hebrew and English Lexicon, pp. 1022-23.

constituted an elusive interpretation for many generations. This is mainly due, inter alia, to several different renderings of the term in the Septuagint versions, to variant Biblical books and to diverse interpretations in early Jewish literature. The Septuagint uses three terms for this offering: to soterion,[1] and its related forms: "that which saves," "preserves"; teleiosis,[2] and its related forms: "complete," "perfect"; and eirenikos,[3] and its related forms: "that which concerns peace," "well-being," and so forth.[4]

In the early 1920s Rene Dussaud[5] pioneered the concept that has been widely popular among the Biblical scholars that the term "shelomim," somehow precipitates "harmony," "well-being," "peace," "security" and "prosperity," endemical to the root s-l-m, and as a form of sacrifice it conveyed the idea of "communion" between God and the worshipper, a "covenant relationship," a "harmonious ritual fellowship."

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[1]Ex. 24:5; 32:6. [2]Judg. 20:26; 21:24.

[3]1 Sam. 13:9; 1 Kings 3:15.

[4]On the translation of the term "shelamim" in the Septuaging, cf. Suzanne Daniel, Recherches sur Le Vocabulaire De Culte Dans La Septante (Paris: Librairie C. Klincksieck, 1966), pp. 273-79.

[5]Rene Dussaud, Les Origines Cananeennes Dussacrifice Israelite (Paris: Ernest Leoux, 1921), pp. 99-101; Le Sacrifice en Israelet Chez Les Pheniciens (Paris: Ernest Leoux, 1914), pp. 25-29; and J. Tigay, "Psalm Seven and Ancient Near Eastern Treaties," Journal of Biblical Literature 89 (1970): 182-84.

This idea of communion, covenant, fellowship, has its roots in W. Robertson Smith's work (vide supra, p. 98) on Semitic religions, although scholars later modified his interpretation to a considerable degree.[1] Robertson stated:

> The one thing directly expressed in the sacrificial meal is that the god and his worshippers are commensals, but every other point in their mutual relations is included in what this involves.[2]

Scholars, endorsing the communion-covenant-fellowship, have based their theses on one passage in Solomon's prayer (1 Kings 8:61) which reads: "And let your hearts be perfect (שלם), (Septuagint, teleiai) toward Yahweh our God to walk in his ordinances and to keep his commandments at this very day." In the very next verses (8:62-63) the writer proceeds to tell us that the king and all the people offered the shelamim sacrifices. It would appear that here we have the functional definition of the term "shelamim" expressing the appropriate interpretation of the relationship between Yahweh and His worshippers. It was Sigmund Mowinckel in his extensive work on the Biblical Psalms who argued most trenchantly for the cultic origin and provenience of the Psalter that the Israelites maintained a prominent significance to their ritual covenant renewal. Mowinckel stated in an exegetical structure that an annual enthronement at the Feast of Tabernacles in the Autumn of every year took place for the renewal of early

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[1] Smith, Religion of the Semitics, pp. 244-68.

[2] Ibid., p. 269.

covenants between Yahweh and Israel, as part of Yahweh's periodic enthronement. Hence, the sacrifices that were employed on the occasion came to be related to covenant, communion, and so forth.[1] De Vaux strongly emphasizes this aspect and remarks: "But it is shelamim which specifically designates the communion sacrifice."[2] Taking the derivitives of the word from the Ugaritic, š-l-m, meaning, "pledges of peace," de Vaux argues that this sacrifice "is a tribute to God to establish or re-establish good relations between Himself and His faithful. The shelamim might then be called a covenant sacrifice.[3]

In a recent work, a Jewish scholar has tried convincingly to argue against this complex of notions communion, covenant, fellowship, gift, tribute, and so forth as far as shelamim is concerned.[4] Basing his exegesis on Ugaritic evidences, on the Sumerian, Assyrian and Akkadian terminologies, and on certain Israelite convocations, mainly at the installation of rededication of the kings,[5] Professor Baruch Levine attempts to prove that shelamim

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[1]S. Mowinckel, The Pslams in Israel's Worship, Vol. 1, trans. D. R. Ap-Thomas (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1962), pp. 155-60.

[2]De Vaux, Studies in the Old Testament Sacrifice, p. 37.

[3]Ibid., p. 38.

[4]Baruch A. Levine, In the Presence of the Lord (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1974), pp. 3-52;

[5]Such as at Gilgal, 1 Sam. 11:14, 15; 1 Kings 8:62-63.

was sacrifice associated with kings.[1] No type of sacrifice in itself served as a special means for enacting the covenant between Yahweh and His people, for in a certain sense the whole ritual presupposed a covenant relationship.[2] So far as the enactment of the covenant is concerned, the sacrifice represented only one of the means for the sanctioning of the covenant.[3] Therefore, according to Professor Levine, shelamim was in no way singled out as a covenant sacrifice.[4] The purpose of shelamim as a sacrificial rite, in Levine's view was related to royal and/or national celebration of a distinctive feature, "such as initiation of kings and for the celebration of victory,"[5] and which only subsequently was incorporated into the Israelite cult.[6]

The peace-offering, taken in its simple form designates good relations between God and His worshippers, a happy communion. Most of the allusions to this type of sacrifice portray a joyous occasion.[7] The sacrificial celebration consists of the blood of the victim being sprinkled on the altar, the fatty portions of the entrails

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[1]Levine, In the Presence of the Lord, p. 32.

[2]Ibid., p. 37.

[3]Ibid.

[4]Ibid., p. 38.

[5]Ibid., p. 29.

[6]Ibid., p. 34.

[7]Lev. 3; 7:11-37; 19:5; 1 Sam. 11:15; 13:9; 2 Sam. 6:17-18; 24:25; 1 Kings 3:15; Num. 6:14; Ezek. 46:2.

and the kidneys offered to Yahweh by burning them on the altar, and the breast and the thigh presented to the priest. This is one of the reasons they are called "communion sacrifices," or "shared offerings."[1] In Ex. 24:5, we have a technical usage most likely expressing the notion of securing good relations with God. This would seem to fall well in order with the idea of "peace," "communion," "well-being," and the realization that man's peaceful condition and well-being are essentially determined by his proper relation to God.

We shall conclude this discussion by making a few remarks. The Mosaic sacrificial system, had, of course, its manifest inadequacies. First, it was greatly abused. It was not intrinsically evil. Of importance to the discussion here is the recognition that God Himself gave this ritual to Israel.[2] But it was so misused that later prophets denounced it vehemently.[3] As sacraments of the Sinaitic covenant, these sacrifices motivated the Israelites to the realization of a fellowship with their God. The ground of this fellowship was the covenant relationship, by which from henceforth, Israel was, so to speak, wedded to Yahweh. Hence, Robinson has suitably called the Hebrew

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[1]De Vaux, Studies in the Old Testament Sacrifice, p. 31.

[2]Lev. 17:11.

[3]Is. 1:11-17; Jer. 7:22-23; Amos 5:21-26; Micah 6:6-8.

sacrifical system a "multiplied renewal" of the covenant.[1] Second, this pehnomenon also took sin seriously. God cannot overlook it. It has to be removed, wiped out, atoned. Its underlying assumption was, that sin creates an inseparable gulf between God and man, and disrupts the relationship between the two. Third, it was deduced from the above point that the whole gist of the sacrificial practice was the expiation of sin.[2] The ancient burnt-offering and the peace offering had a piacular element in their limited scope, it sharpened the worshipper's conscience that sin cannot be treated lightly. Fourth, the blood, the symbol of the victim represented man's life as the basis of his fellowship with God as well as with his neighbor. There can be little doubt that the rites connected with the sacrifice were designed to produce a moral affect upon the person. Every time an Israelite brought an unblemished animal to be slain he was reminded of God's merciful disposition towards him; he was thus stimulated to live in conformity with His laws, and to deal mercifully with his poorer brother. Nor can it be doubted that the death of the animal, followed by the sprinkling of the

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[1]Robinson, Redemption and Revelation, p. 227.

[2]For sins of deliberate rebellion against God no sacrifice could atone: they put the sinner outside the covenant (Num. 15:30-31). However, sacrifice was not the only organ of atonement in the Old Testament; there could be pardon in response to a genuineness of penitence (2 Sam. 12:13).

blood and the burning of the fat, would impress the pious Israelite with a recollection of the fact that sin brought death into the world, and that he himself had sinned. He would thus have what the Scripture calls "a broken heart" (Ps. 51:17); and his sacrifice would be a strong call to righteousness (Ps. 4:5), to obedience (1 Sam. 15:22), to joy (1 Sam. 27:6) and to mercy (Hos. 6:6). Where the sacrifice had not this spirit, it lost all its value and significance. Vincent Taylor points out that the Israelite in his sacred sacrificial worship was reminded of his needs and his sins within his clan, while in his meal which he shared with others, "he enjoyed . . . the sense of God's presence and favor."[1]

This system, noble as it was, was only for a particular people, under a particular covenant, for a time and but for a time. It passed away by the passing of that covenant and by the introduction of the new. Raymond Abba has aptly characterized the type:

> The animal sacrifices of the Levitical Law, important and significant as they were, had only a limited range of effectiveness: they operated only for unwitting sins--sins committed in ignorance or through human weakness; for deliberate acts of rebellion against God no sacrifice could atone.[2]

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[1]V. Taylor, Jesus and His Sacrifice, p. 57.

[2]Raymond Abba, "The Origin and Significance of Hebrew Sacrifice," Biblical Theology Bulletin 7 (1977): 137.

The Reading of the Book

The Book referred to in Ex. 24:7 is the official document of the Book of the Covenant (Ex. 21:22 to 23:33) in which the events at Sinai are recorded. The sequence of events narrated in verses 3-8 constitute the main elements of the covenant rites: Moses receives Yahweh's words, reports them to the people who respond to Yahweh's terms. Then Moses writes the words in a book and reads them to the congregation. These events appear in some way in all the Old Testament descriptions of subsequent covenant practices.[1]

The word "read" (Heb. קרא), means "proclaim," "preach," "recite," "read aloud," "summon" and "name."[2] In Neh. 6:7, we read: "Thou hast appointed prophets to 'preach' or 'proclaim'" (Heb. קרא). In Jonah 3:2, we hear God telling Jonah: "Arise, go to Nineveh . . . and 'preach' (קרא) against it." The word "qara" also signifies what is to be read as opposed to what is written (כתיב). Another meaning is to indicate "invocation" or "calling" upon the name of the Lord in prayer and worship (Gen. 4:26). The English translators have rendered this verse (Gen. 4:26): "Then men began to call upon the name of the Lord." Luther has it: "Then began men to preach concerning the name of the Lord." The Septuagint

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[1] Deut. 27:2-10; Jos. 8:32-35; 24:19-28.

[2] Cf. Brown, Driver and Briggs, A Hebrew and English Lexicon, pp. 894-96.

uses different terms for the word "qara": "epikaleo," "proskaio" and "anegaio."[1]

Most scholars agree that Moses read the Book of the Covenant, or the Decalogue, or both in the hearing of the Israelites.[2] In Ex. 24:3, Moses had reported the words of Yahweh, now he solemnly recites them. The former voluntary assent of the congregation was the initial step for the solemn covenant ratification. This unanimous assent after a second reading and hearing was the formal acceptance of the covenant stipulation. These Semitic nomads felt it necessary to accompany their hearing of the words with their symbolic action which would express in a vital way, the establishment of a covenant community.

The Covenant and the Sealing Thereof

Revelation, or God's self-manifestation to man is one of the grandest phenomena of the Old Testament religion. Heathen inscriptions remind us that man is seeking God

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[1]Num. 21:3; Deut. 15:2; Is. 43:7. It is interesting to observe two different words adopted by Septuagint translators in Gen. 4:17, 25 and 26. In the first two instances when a city or child is named, the word "eponomase" is employed, whereas in verse 26, "to call upon the name of the Lord," the term "epikaleo" is used.

[2]To name just a few writers: de Vaux, Studies in the Old Testament Sacrifice, p. 19; James Plastaras, The God of Exodus (Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Co., 1966), p. 204; J. L. McKenzie, A Theology of the Old Testament (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1974), pp. 77-78; Buber, Moses, pp. 114-15.

(Acts 17:26-27), but Israel's history and faith assure us that God is seeking man (Is. 45:19). On the basis of this conviction the Israelites believed that they were not like the rest of the people. They firmly believed that their society possessed a particular and unique character. This special character had its roots in covenant relationship, and thus put Israel in a specific category--a covenanted community.

In all times, especially in early earnest times, the establishing of a covenant was a familiar feature among the Semites. When two tribes wanted to live peacefully, or to reconcile and end all blood feud, they formed a covenant. A few familiar covenants are referred to in the Old Testament: at Beer-Sheba,[1] Abraham made a covenant with Abimelech, Jacob and Laban,[2] formed a covenant, Joshua and the Gibeonites,[3] Jonathan and David,[4] Israel and Canaanites,[5] Solomon and Hiram,[6] Ahab and Benhadad,[7] Syria and Israel[8] and Judah and Israel.[9]

The Hebrew word for covenant is "berith" (ברית), derived from "barah" (ברה), Assyrian "baru," meaning,

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[1]Gen. 21:32. [2]Gen. 31:44.

[3]Jos. 9:6. [4]1 Sam. 18:3.

[5]John Adams, Israel's Ideal: Studies in Old Testament Theology (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1909), p. 95.

[6]1 Kings 5:26. [7]1 Kings 20:34.

[8]1 Kings 15:19. [9]Ezek. 16:61.

"bind," hence "biritu," a covenant.[1] The Pashitta uses the word " קיים ,"[2] and the Syriac transliterates the Greek word, while the Arabic version substitutes "ahad" (عهد), "compact" (see Chapter II, Variant Versions for different usages of the term). The term means "covenant," "pact," "compact," "constitution," "ordinance," "agreement," "pledge," "treaty" and "alliance."[3]

Translators have not been unanimous in supplying a uniform rendering to the word berith. Several expressions have been employed such as "treaty," "covenant," "alliance," and so forth, yet these terms although representing the nature of berith between man and man, they are not adequately satisfactory in setting forth the nature of God's gracious dealings with man. The Septuagint uses the word, "diatheke," in every passage except Deut. 9:15 where it is rendered "marturion," a testimony, and in 1 Kings 11:11 where the word "entole," a commandment is used. Perhaps the translators of this version felt the difficulty and instead of using the word "suntheke," which probably would be the natural term for a covenant,[4]

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[1]Cf. Brown, Driver and Briggs, A Hebrew and English Lexicon, p. 136.

[2]Cf. Pashitta, Ex. 24:8, where "covenant," is rendered "deqyama," and "the blood of the covenant," "demma "deqyama."

[3]Brown, Driver and Briggs, A Hebrew and English Lexicon, p. 136-37.

[4]McCarthy expresses his surprise why the Septuagint has chosen "the rather unusual diatheke, 'testament' to

adopted "diatheke," which signifies a legal transaction, hence, a testament.[1]

The term "berith" has an interesting history. One of Wellhausen's attempts to present his view of the evolutionary development of the Old Testament religion was based on the evolutionary development of the concept of berith.[2] Although this view was greatly influential, it did not escape scholars' sharp criticism,[3] for it developed a covenant based on pure legalism devoid of any element of grace.

More than three decades ago, some philosophical attempts were exerted to unveil the meaning of the term. A work was set forth by Professor Joachim Begrich[4] in which he argued that the essential meaning of "berith" was a legal contract forced by the superior upon the inferior. This is known as one-sided, unconditional covenant, without any stipulations on the behalf of the powerful party. The

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translate the Hebrew "berith." D. J. McCarthy, Old Testament Covenant (Richmond, Va.: John Knox Press, 1972), p. 1.

[1]According to Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 5th ed., literally, "testamentum," meaning, "bear witness, make one's will."

[2]J. Wellhausen, Prolegomena to the History of Ancient Israel (New York: Meridian Library, 1957), pp. 1ff.

[3]Cf. H. W. Robinson's criticism in his Inspiration and Revelation (Oxford: The University Press, 1946), pp. 153-55.

[4]Joachim Begrich, "Ein Beitrag zur Enfassung einer Altestamentlichen Denkform," Zeitschrift fur die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft 60 (1944): 1-11.

crucial problem with this point of view is, whether there are such unconditional covenants, or even unconditional promises. At least in our text of Ex. 24, the people's response in verse 3, "All the words which Yahweh has spoken we will do," and in verse 7, "All that Yahweh has said we will do and obey," is an indication of the condition for the fulfillment of the covenant obligations. Most assuredly, God alone provides the covenant, and that covenant is absolutely "gratia gratis data," man does not earn it; yet every covenant has its definitions, conditions and stipulations.

Further philological endeavors were made by L. Kohler who employed three phrases regarding covenant to three different parties: The phrase "cut a covenant" (כרת ברית) is made between parties of equal footing; "cut a covenant for/with" (כרת ברית ל/אם) is a covenant imposed by a superior, and "raise or establish a covenant" (הקים ברית) is granted by God because undoubtedly He will make it stand.[1]

It was Walter Eichrodt who advocated a different theory of the concept of covenant. He took the idea in its theological implication as the central thought of the Old Testament religion. From that central theme, Eichrodt

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[1]L. Kohler, "Problems in the Study of the Language of the Old Testament," Journal of Semitic Studies 1 (1956): 4-7.

established the historical validity of the Israel's religion, the knowledge of Yahweh's will through the Law and an assurance of His keeping the covenant as long as Israel abides by the obligations of that covenant.[1] Apparently, in Eichrodt's view such a covenant is necessarily conditional. It should be pointed out that Eichrodt recognizes only one covenant of prime importance, namely, the Sinaitic covenant; all the rest of the covenants are subordinate.[2]

Recent studies have thrown new light on the formulation of the Old Testament covenants and the seeming analogy of the ancient Near East treaties. The type of treaties in question were called "suzerainty treaties" which flourished in the Hittite kingdom from 1450-1200 B.C. and preserved in the Hittite documents.[3] Viktor Korosec was the first to set forth the fundamental element of the suzerainty treaty without the slightest notion of the Old Testament parallels.[4]

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[1]Eichrodt, Theology of the Old Testament, pp. 10-33.

[2]Ibid., pp. 37ff.

[3]George E. Mendenhall, Law and Covenant in Israel and Ancient Near East (Pittsburgh: Biblical Coloquium, 1955), pp. 24-41. Also see J. A. Thomas, "The Near Eastern Suzerain-Vassal Concept in the Religion of Israel," Journal of Religious History 3 (1964): 1-19.

[4]Viktor Korosec, Hethtische Staatsvertrage (Leipzig: Theodor Weicher, 1931), p. 23, as cited by Mendenhall, Law and Covenant, p. 27.

The first exploration of the analogy between Biblical covenants and Near Eastern treaties was ushered by George Mendehall. According to Mendenhall, Israel's relation to God was based on a covenant relationship, a relationship which was purely religious.[1] Yahweh the King dictates to His covenanted vassals absolute terms, terms consisting of case laws and absolute commands.[2] Basing his reconstruction on Korosec's work, Mendenhall finds the Hittite elements in the Decalogue as it appears in Exodus 20 and Deuteronomy 5. The Hittite treaty elements are six: (1) Preamble, (2) the historical prologue, (3) the stipulations, (4) the regular reading of the treaty, (5) the list of gods and witnesses, (6) the curses and blessings formula.[3] All these elements, according to Mendenhall, are evident in the Old Testament covenants, particularly in the Decalogue.

Following in the footsteps of Mendenhall, D. Hillers has found parallels between these Hittite treaties and the following passages in the Old Testament: Ex. 20:1-17; 24:3-8; Leviticus 26; Deuteronomy 23, 38; Joshua 8:34; 2 Sam. 2:6 and 1 Kings 12:7.[4] And M. G. Kline has dis-

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[1]Mendenhall, Law and Covenant, pp. 36, 37.

[2]Ibid., pp. 7ff. [3]Ibid.

[4]D. Hillers, Covenant: The History of a Biblical Idea (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1969), pp. 24-71. Also, see Hillers' "Note on Some Treaty Terminology in the Old Testament," Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research (1964): 46-47.

covered an analogy between the opening words of Deut. 1:1 "These are the words which Moses spoke . . . " and the words of Sun Mursilis, the Great Hittite King, "These are the words of Sun. . . . "[1]

These views of Mendenhall and his associates have not gone unchallenged. Several writers have given considerable thought to this covenant-treaty analogy and found it wanting. H. J. Kraus finds no compelling evidence between the Israelite covenant and the ancient treaty forms.[2] And Martin Noth thinks that it is a waste of effort and a valueless attempt to investigate this or that historical point of view outside the tradition as recorded in the Biblical text itself.[3] W. R. Roehrs in an article argues that all the Old Testament covenants are of the same nature, God provides the covenant and although the covenant takes the treaty form, yet vassalship is missing.[4] And Gene Tucker has demonstrated that the Old Testament covenant is not that of the contract

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[1]M. G. Kline, "Dynastic Covenant," Westminster Theological Journal 23 (1961): 1-15.

[2]H. J. Kraus, Worship in Israel, trans. Geoffrey Buswell (Richmond, Va.: John Knox Press, 1966), pp. 136-40.

[3]Martin Noth, Developing Lines of Theological Thought in Germany (Richmond, Va.: Union Theological Seminary, 1963), pp. 1-18.

[4]W. R. Roehrs, "Covenant and Justification in the Old Testament," Concordia Theological Monthly 35 (1964): 538-602.

found in the Near Eastern texts. Professor Tucker argues that the ancient Near Eastern treaties are more business transactions, listing parties, describing legal contracts, stating the witnesses, and so forth, whereas Old Testament treaties are religious and moral in nature.[1]

Dennis McCarthy considers the covenant made at Sinai "the covenant par excellence."[2] It was a covenant to constitute the union between Yahweh and the new nation of Israel. McCarthy does not accept the theory that the Sinaitic covenant is a treaty form. He sees strinking differences. First, in the Sinai narrative there is no formula of curses and blessings.[3] Second, and of great importance is Yahweh's self-manifestation at this spot. "Even here it is the theophany which predominates as the introduction and ground for the presentation of Yahweh's will."[4] A third difference which McCarthy points out is between word and sacrifice. In the treaties, at least in the Hittite treaties, it is the word that produces effect, while at Sinai it is the sacrifice.[5] And finally, McCarthy concludes by saying: "It (the Sinai story in Exodus 19 to 24) reveals an idea of covenant which is

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[1]Gene M. Tucker, "Covenant Forms and Treaty Forms," Vetus Testamentum, 15: 487-503.

[2]Dennis McCarthy, Treaty and Covenant (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1963), p. 152.

[3]Ibid., p. 157.

[4]Ibid., p. 158.

[5]Ibid., p. 163.

somehow different from that exemplified in the treaty. The manifest power and glory of Yahweh, ceremonies effecting a union, these are the things which ground and confirm alliance more than history, oath, threat and promise. It is an idea of covenant in which the ritual looms larger than the verbal and contractual."[1]

Thus far different views have been presented concerning covenant and treaty patterns of the ancient Orient. Now it is necessary to make a concluding observation in relation to the covenant made with Israel at the slopes at Sinai. It does not seem convincing that the Sinaitic covenant was a purely treaty form. It should be borne in mind that this was a national call for a new relationship and mutual fellowship with God. The election of Israel by Yahweh and the acceptance of Yahweh by Israel, is entirely new to Israel at this point and unparalleled in the surrounding nations. The general idea of this covenant is, that God is drawing near to man in grace and manifesting Himself to His people, a feature lacking in treaty forms. The Israelites are not vassals, and the covenant of Exodus 24 is not an individual contract, but a national covenant with moral and religious tone, by which the history of Israel as a new nation grandly begins. The Hebrews are from henceforth to set themselves apart as a kingdom of priests, a holy nation (Ex. 19:3-6). In the

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[1]Ibid.

words of Martin Buber, "Yahweh would be the Melek (King) and Israel His mamlakah (kingdom), Yahweh would be the owner and Israel especial personal property chosen by Him, Yahweh would be the hallowing leader and Israel the goy hallowed by Him, the national body made holy by Him."[1]

This is another way of saying that God chose Israel as His own property. Israel's faith was grounded on the belief that she was God's chosen people. Yahweh's choice of Israel had been made by means of two complementary acts. First, He chose Abraham and his seed, by taking Abraham out of Ur of the Chaldeans and bringing him to the promised land of Canaan.[2] Second, He chose Abraham's seed by liberating them from slavery in Egypt, bringing them out of bondage under Moses, renewing the Abrahamic covenant with them in an amplified form at Sinai and setting them in the promised land as their national home.[3] Each of these acts was a pure act of grace, and His initiation of these two covenants to make Israel His possession had no merit on Israel's part. Israelite faith looked back to these two acts as having created the nations.[4] It is interesting to observe that Moses' speeches on Deuteronomy

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[1]Buber, Moses, p. 137.

[2]Gen. 11:31 to 12:7; 15; 17; 22:15-18.

[3]Ex. 3; 6-10; Deut. 6:21-23.

[4]Cf. Is. 43:1; Acts 13:17.

stress this fact. When He chose Israel, God "set His love on Israel."[1] Thus election made the Israelites His people and He their God in covenant together. This election set them apart. They were not to be like other people; He took them as His inheritance[2] and treasure.[3] This nation's Ruler was to be Yahweh; its constitution was the law given on Mount Sinai; its central shrine was the Tabernacle; its bond of unity was the worship of the one true God and its national hope was the "Prophet like unto Moses."

Thus the Israelite religion is essentially based on a covenant relationship unparalleled in ancient religions. The form of the covenant may not be original, even if it is, the purpose of originality is not novelty, but sincerity. There could be striking coincidental homologies between the Old Testament covenant and the ancient treaties, yet there are striking differences. Israel was to be guided by this covenant principle; she was to become what she had never been before. From Sinai onward, the history of Israel, through every meanest and noblest moment of it rests on a covenant relationship between God and the people of God. No other ancient Semitic religion conceived the relation of its god and his worshippers in such a collective act of the people.

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[1]Deut. 7:7; 13:5.

[2]Deut. 4:20; 32:9-12.

[3]Ex. 19:5.

The sign of this covenant was blood. Moses sent young men who offered burnt-offerings and peace offerings. He took half of the blood and put it in basins and the other half he sprinkled on the altar, indicating God's presence. Moses acting as the intermediary between God and his people, confronts the congregation with God's message and reads the book of the covenant in the hearing of the congregation. The people express their willingness to abide by the covenant terms and to enter into a permanent relationship with the God of their deliverance. Then Moses sprinkled the rest of the blood on the people making a public challenge, binding them with the words: "behold the blood of the covenant which Yahweh has cut with you concerning all these words" (verse 8). Thus the covenant is sealed. This is one of the most solemn occasions in all of Hebrew history. The blood is that which atones, reconciles and creates a new relationship between the parties involved, and therefore, it lays the foundation for sealing a covenant of peace; hence, it ratifies the covenant; and in our text of Ex. 24:8, it signifies a unanimous concurrence to the terms of the covenant and the lordship of Yahweh.

The ceremonial manipulation of blood was a reverential practice in Hebrew ritualism. The Israelites viewed blood with sanctity and awe, for they understood it to be life of soul (Lev. 17:11). Perhaps Robertson Smith is

partly justified in maintaining this "life-theory" of blood. "In the most primitive form of the sacrificial idea the blood of the sacrifice is not employed to wash away an impurity, but to convey to the worshipper a particle of holy life."[1] In this case, the blood represents "the solemn presentation of life, life surrendered, dedicated, transformed to God."[2] Prominent among those who advocated this theory was Dussaud who argued that life was liberated by the shedding of the sacrificial blood, and part of this blood carried away sin and part introduced covenant with God.[3]

The expiatory element in the blood of the Hebrew sacrifices has occupied the attention of most scholars, although Wellhausen denies any early traces of this aspect.[4] He recognizes this principle of atonement in the blood, but he locates it in the reign of Manasseh, whereas R. J. Thompson finds an element of expiation in the blood of most sacrifices.[5] And commenting on Ex. 24:3-8, Thompson

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[1]Smith, Religion of the Semites, p. 427.

[2]Douglas, New Bible Dictionary, p. 160.

[3]Daussaud, Les Origines Cananeennes du Israelite, p. 27ff.

[4]Wellhausen, Prolegomena, pp. 421, 486.

[5]R. J. Thompson, Penitence and Sacrifice in Early Israel Outside the Levitical Law (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1963), p. 15.

agrees with Davidson[1] that the blood rite here has a "piacular" element for the consecration of the people upon their entering a new relationship with Yahweh,[2] and with Leon Morris that here the blood is "to signify the entry into a new state marked by cleansing from previous defilement and consecration to a holy purpose."[3] Hence, according to Professor Morris the blood rite of Ex. 24:3-8 is twofold. "It seems that both these thoughts are present in Exodus 24 and that we are to regard the blood as both piacular and consecratory cleansing the people from their sin and sanctifying them for their part in the covenant."[4]

Thus, the general idea among the scholars about the blood in the Hebrew sacrificial system is that of expiation. "The basic principle underlying all the blood sacrifices (zebaḥim) was atonement (kippur) by the substitution of an innocent life for the guilty."[5]

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[1]A. B. Davidson, "Covenant," Dictionary of the Bible, Vol. 1, ed. James Hastings (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1898), p. 512.

[2]Thompson, Penitence and Sacrifice in Early Israel, p. 71.

[3]Leon L. Morris, The Apostolic Preaching of the Cross (London: Tyndale Press, 1955), p. 71.

[4]Ibid.

[5]Gleason L. Archer, A Survey of Old Testament Introduction, rev. ed. (Chicago: Moody Press, 1975), p. 243.

The application of the blood to the altar had a considerable atoning measure, it was part of all animal sacrifice, but the blood ritual was particularly elaborate in the expiatory sacrifice called the "sin-offering," and most of all in the impression ceremonies of the day of Atonement. The killing of the victim may be done by a layman, but the blood manipulation required a priest.

The occasion of the ritual described in Exodus 24 is rather unique. This is the first notable instance of Moses' relation to sacrifice. The blood ritual of sacrifice was absolutely a priestly function. None but a priest could manipulate the peculiar function of the sacrificial blood, whether in applying it to the altar or sprinkling it on the worshippers. Moses on this unique moment performs what was the most conspicuous priestly part of the sacrificial ritual. From this peculiar instance, one may consider how far Moses was conceived as priest.

Ex. 24:9. The Role of the Elders and the Sons of Aaron

The Elders

The Hebrew word for elder is always zaqan (זָקֵן). In Hebrew, Arabic and Syriac, it literally means, "beard," "bearded," "gray-haird," "old man" (see Chapter II, Variant Versions). In the Septuagint the word "presbyter" is adopted.

Among the ancient Semites and among the present-day Arabs, age is viewed as invested with authority, experience, discernment, knowledge and wisdom, fitted to represent the people and administer the affairs of the society. In fact Targum uses the word "wise men" for these elders (see Chapter II, Targum). This was true not only for the Semitic society, but of the most socieities. J. A. Selbie pointedly remarks:

> Under the primitive conditions of society that prevail in the early history of all nations, age is an indispensable condition of investment with authority. (Cf. the gerontes so frequently mentioned by Homer . . . , the gerousia of the Dorian states, the patres and Senatus of the Romans, the Presbus at Sparta, and the Sheikhs in Arabia.)[1]

From the beginning, the institution of elders was not unfamiliar to the Hebrew people, and the term in the ancient days did not convey an ecclesiastical function with which it is now associated. In the early days of the Hebrew people, a form of government consisted mainly of appointed elders. These people had authority over local communities. This function of elders goes back to the days of bondage (Ex. 3:16-18; 19:7; 24:9; Num. 11: 16-17), and the office still continued until Sinai and thereafter. They are said to have served as judges of persons who had killed someone (Deut. 19:12), conducted

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[1]J. A. Selbie, "Elder," A Dictionary of the Bible, Vol. 1, ed. James Hastings (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1895), pp. 676-77.

investigation (Deut. 21:2), heard and solved family problems (Deut. 21:18-20, 21:18f), settled matrimonial disputes (Deut. 22:15; 25:7), and settled cases of controversy at the gates of the cities (Ruth 4:2). In Ex. 17:5; 18:12 and 19:7, the elders are referred to as lay representatives of the people. They represented various tribes of Israel, and obviously were quite distinct from the Levites and priests. Their position and function is described by Wellhausen: "What there was of permanent official authority lay in the hands of the elders and the heads of houses, in time of war they commanded each his household, and in peace they dispensed justice each within his own circle."[1]

The seventy elders referred to in the text of Exodus 24 are called "the elders of Israel," apparently because the author considers them as the representatives of the people as a whole, designated for their special task,[2] as later again seventy are chosen;[3] a third time seventy elders are found in Ezek. 8:11f.

According to A. Kapelrud, the seventy elders in our text may have ordinary symbolic meaning, indicating here

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[1]Wellhausen, History of Israel and Judah, p. 15, cited by Hastings, A Dictionary of the Bible, 1: 677.

[2]Cf. 2 Sam. 5:3 where all the elders of Israel came to David. He made a covenant with them and they annointed him king.

[3]Num. 11:16-17.

the fullness of the representation,[1] but it is nevertheless interesting to see the number of guests invited to a religious festival meal,[2] while W. Zimmerli considers the seventy elders as a sort of collegium.[3]

The seventy elders in our passage may be a loose traditional number, representing either the twelve tribes of Israel, or Jacob's seventy descendants. Perhaps we can envision on the basis of meagre information and with the stretch of imagination, that these "sheikhs" later formed the permanent feature of Israel's tribal structure (Numbers 1).

The Sons of Aaron: Nadab and Abihu

The name Nadab means "noble," "generous";[4] and Abihu means, "he is my father." Nadab was the first-born son of Aaron.[5] According to Ezek. 28:1, these sons of

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[1]A. S. Kapelrud, "The Number Seven in Ugaritic Texts," Vetus Testamentum (1968): 494ff.

[2]In the Baal-myth, the god invites "the seventy sons of Ashirat." C. Gordon, Ugaritic Textbook (Rome: Pontifical Library Institute, 1965), p. 45.

[3]W. Zimmerli, Ezekial, Vol. 1 (Zurich: Zwingli-Verlag, 1954), p. 216, thinks that there was a "durch alte tradition geheiligte institution der 70 Altesten als Vertretung Israels." He also brings the number in connection with the seventy translators of the Septuagint.

[4]J. Orr, The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, Vol. 4 (Chicago: The Howard-Severance Co., 1915), p. 2108; Madeleine Lane Miller, Harper's Bible Dictionary (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1952), p. 476.

[5]Ex. 6:23; Num. 3:2f.

Aaron were associated with their father in priestly office. John McKenzie[1] suggests that they were the heirs of this office, but because of their guilt and sudden death, the succession passed to their brothers, Eleazar and Ithamar. The actual story of their end is recorded in Lev. 10:1-10. Cole remarks that this illustrates their failure to appear later in the account, as well as it "assures us of the authenticity of the tradition, for no one would have inserted their names here in the account of such an important event.[2]

Ex. 24:10-11. The Vision and Feast on the Covenant Basis

The ascent to a certain point on the mountain side to which the reference was made in the first verse, is now accomplished. It is important to mark the fact that now when the covenant has received its solemn and final ratification, the people have access to God, and enter into His presence. Now Moses, Aaron, Nadab and Abihu and seventy of the elders of Israel climb up the mountain. There something unusual happens of which the narrator breaks into poetic words as though he were quoting verses of bygone generations:

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[1]John McKenzie, Dictionary of the Bible (Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Co., 1965), p. 602.

[2]Cole, Exodus, p. 184.

They saw the God of Israel,
At His feet the work of a sapphire pavement;
As the very heaven in purity,
And they ate and drank.

At first glance this might seem a contradiction in the light of Ex. 33:20, in which Yahweh warns Moses that man cannot see Him and yet live. However, in verse 23, Moses is allowed to see God's back. In our narrative it is equally stressed that the elders could not look higher than God's feet, perhaps they could not owing to the blue sky like a sapphire pavement. God's only role is to be seen, their only role is to see. Nobody says anything, nobody is harmed.

The enigmatic verbs here used for "seeing" are: "ra'ah" (ראה) in verse 10 and "ḥazah" (חזה) in verse 11. The verb "ḥazah" in the prophetic realm of experience conveys more inner appropriation of what is seen than "ra'ah." The word "ra'ah" bears more relation to objective exterior.[1] At this point Hirsch makes an interesting comment, " . . . those called up to hear Yahweh were gripped by the hand of Yahweh, and accordingly they saw (ראה), (a very high degree of seeing), while those at a distince, He did not send His hand, and saw (חזה), denoting an inner vision."[2] Perhaps then, it is possible

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[1]Brown, Driver and Briggs, A Hebrew and English Lexicon, pp. 302-3; 906-8.

[2]S. R. Hirsch, The Pentateuch, Vol. 2, trans. Isaac Levy (London: Honig and Sons, Ltd., 1967), p. 425.

but not probable to say that as the deputation went up the mountain, they met God, they saw His dwelling place (to use Septuagint rendering, see Chapter II), and they had a vision (חזה) of Him.

The visio dei in this event is a wonderful point and very exceptional in the Old Testament. Although in many texts seeing God is considered to endanger life,[1] yet more than one text hands down stories of God's revelation to certain persons: to Moses (Ex. 33:11; Num. 12:8; Deut. 5:24), to Jacob (Gen. 32:31), to Micah ben Emlah (1 Kings 22:19), to Ezekiel (1:1).

The revelation of God to the Israelite delegation surpasses all other events. God revealed Himself with such brilliance and glory that the elders and their descendants after them marvelled at the fact that they had been able to live through it. It was axiomatic that "no man can see God and live."[2] We are informed from manifold incidents in the Old Testament visions that a person was allowed to behold only some manifestation or efflorescence of God, but never a direct vision of God in His full splendor. Certainly, Isaiah proclaims regarding his vision of Annunciation, "I saw Yahweh sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up."[3] We picture Isaiah standing in the

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[1] J. Barr, "Theophany and Anthropomorphism in the Old Testament," Vetus Testamentum 8 (1959): 31ff.

[2] Is. 6:1; Ezek. 1:1. [3] Is. 6:1.

Jerusalem Temple gazing at the Holy of Holies, where the Ark of Yahweh was situated--the throne of God. The trains fill the Temple and obviously the prophet could not see the form of the One sitting on the throne. Yet he says: "mine eyes have seen the King, Yahweh of Hosts."[1] The description suggests that he had seen the heavenly throne only, but the Lord Himself remained shrouded in His train which filled the Temple. Only thus we can imagine the unusual setting on Mount Sinai where the Israelite representatives "see" God. One modern writer describes the occasion in this manner:

> The representatives of Israel came to see Him on the heights of Sinai. They have presumably wandered through clinging, hanging mist before dawn; and the very moment they reach their goal, the swaying darkness tears asunder (as I myself happen to witness once) and dissolves except for one cloud already transparent with the hue of the still unrisen sun. The sapphire proximity of the heavens overwhelms the aged shepherds of the Delta, who had never before tasted, who had never been given the slightest idea, of what is shown in the play of early light over the summits of mountain. And this precisely is perceived by the representatives of the liberated tribes at that which lies under the feet of their enthroned Melek.[2]

It is difficult to come closer to explaining this sort of mystery. Neither Moses, nor Isaiah,[3] nor Ezekiel,[4] nor Micah ben Emlah[5] explicitly tell us about these mystical experiences. All we can gather from these saga is that

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[1] Ibid.

[2] Buber, Moses, pp. 117, 118.

[3] Is. 6:1.

[4] Ezek. 1:1; 1:3-28.

[5] 1 Kings 22:19.

God intervenes in earthly affairs and lets Himself be seen in human experiences on certain significant occasions.

Verse 10 seems rather difficult, partly owing to the vision and partly to the description thereof: "A paved work of sapphire stone, the substance of heaven for purity." Or, "A pavement of sapphire stone, like the very heaven in purity."[1] B. S. Childs suggests that the description "A pavement of sapphire," fits well with the work of blue "lapiz-lazuli," well-known in the art of ancient Mesopotamia,[2] and used many times in the ancient Near East for building of sanctuaries and palaces.[3]

The closest parallel to the phrase in our text is in Ezek. 1:22-26, although the word sapphire is found in Ex. 28:18; Is. 54:11; and Job 28:6. In Ezek. 1:22-26, the prophet sees God as seated on a sapphire throne. In our text the description is yet more delicate, because not even His throne, but only the pavement under His feet is spoken of. The spectators on the mount can only describe the outwardly visible glory as "a paved work of sapphire." However, the description is of a scene of matchless

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[1]It seems more plausible to translate the phrase, "A paved work of sapphire stone," since sapphire is a color (and perhpas many colors), and the word, "work" (מעשה) is usually connected not with color, but with the material, the art, the product.

[2]Childs, Exodus, p. 507.

[3]B. Meissner, Babylonien und Assyrien, Vol. 1 (Heidelberg: Carl Winters Universitasbuchhandlung, 1920), pp. 269-72, 350f.

splendor, transparancy and brilliance, a description fitted for heaven alone.

Several meanings have been suggested for the word "purity" (טהר), such as, "clearness," "lustre," "purity" (morally and ceremonially),[1] "clearness,"[2] "whiteness," "brightness." Cassuto thinks that the stem "ṯhr" is attested by Ugaritic mythology to signify the brightness of the sapphire.[3]

The Hebrew word, " עצם " in verse 10 means "bone," "substance," and "self."[4] Hence, the description would read: "A paved work of sapphire stone, like the very substance of heaven in purity." Nothing less than the spotless and unblemished purity and lustre of the heavens is worthy to be compared with the inexpressible beauty and grandeur of that which was beneath the feet of the God of Israel and which the representatives saw. With this short sentence, ends the description.

Then the deputation has a meal (verse 11) on the mountain, or, more likely at the foot of the mountain

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[1]Brown, Driver and Briggs, A Hebrew and English Lexicon, pp. 372, 373.

[2]C. H. Gordon thinks that this meaning fits the passage better, Ugaritic Textbook, p. 406, glossary No. 1032, under "ṯhr."

[3]Cassuto, A Commentary on the Book of Exodus, p. 315.

[4]Brown, Driver and Briggs, A Hebrew and English Lexicon, pp. 782-83.

after they had descended. Qualified commentators have claimed that the meal here described is the ratification of the covenant.[1] The supposition is rather problematical. Theologically, it relegates the blood to a secondary position, for the sanctioning of the covenant is in the sprinkling of the blood. It seems to be simply an earthly function referring to the representatives partaking of their peace-offerings on their descent.

Ex. 24:12. The Giving of the Tables of Stone, The Law and the Commandments (or "judgments," "ordinances")

In verse 12 Moses is commanded to go up and enter the holy of holies. Yahweh tells him that he is to receive the tables of stone on which the commandments were written. They are also known as "the tables of testimony,"[2] "the two tables of stone,"[3] "the tables of the covenant."[4] These tables expressed God's character and holiness, and from henceforth they were to be employed as instrumental tools for guiding the life of this newly formed community.

The syntax of verse 12 has eluded many commentators. The "waw" (ו) before the word "torah" has occupied many pages. Childs suggests three ways for explaining it: As a "conjunction," as "explicative" and as a "copulative."[5]

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[1] Wellhausen, Prolegomena, p. 71; Smith, Religion of the Semites, p. 269; Hillers, Covenant: The History of a Biblical Idea, p. 57.

[2] Ex. 31:18.

[3] Ex. 34:1, 4.

[4] Deut. 9:9, 11, 15.

[5] Childs, Exodus, p. 499.

Since the first two present problems as to the content, the choice falls on the third.

The letter "waw" is the general connecting particle, not necessarily always to be rendered by and. It "is used very freely and widely in Hebrew, but also with much delicacy, to express relations and shades of meaning which Western languages would usually indicate by distinct particles,"[1] for example, and, now, then, but, or, notwithstanding, howbeit, so, thus, therefore.[2] With this range of meaning of "waw" how are we supposed to render the sentence? There is only one equivalent use of this "waw" to this sort of construction in the Arabic language; that is, by connecting a subject to a previous clause already completed in meaning. The subject or object connected does not have to be logically included in the principle predicate. This "waw" which is followed by an object is called in Arabic "واو المعية," that is, "waw of association," "waw of accompaniment," "waw of with." It also bears the meaning of and, also. Two examples of this waw in the Book of Exodus will support this view.[3] The first instance is in Ex. 29:3, "You shall put into one basket, and bring them in the basket, the bullock and (ו) the two rams." The other case is in Ex. 35:22, "They came men

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[1]Brown, Driver and Briggs, A Hebrew and English Lexicon, pp. 52-54.

[2]Ibid.

[3]See also Gen. 1:6b; 2:9b.

and women, as many as were willing hearted, brought bracelets, and earrings, and rings and tablets. . . . " The Revised Standard Version has translated the waw in our passage by with. So also Davis[1] and Cole.[2] Perhaps this is the closest and safest rendition.

These laws and commandments are for the instruction of the people. It is interesting to note that the terms law and instruction (תורה and תורת) both have the same Hebrew root, meaning "to teach," "to lead," "guide," "throw," "shoot," "point," "direct," "give" and "command." Hence direct and instruct.[3] The verb "yarah" (ירה) whence it is derived signifies to project, to point out or teach. The law of God is that which points out or indicates His will to man. It is not an arbitrary rule; it is rather to be regarded as a course of guidance from above. The verb and noun are found together in Ex. 24:12. It is generally, though imperfectly represented in the Septuagint by the word "nomos" (see Chapter II, Septuagint).

These laws and commandments are to become henceforth living cultural and religious forms to instruct

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[1]Davis, Exodus, p. 196.

[2]Cole, Exodus, p. 187.

[3]Brown, Driver and Briggs, A Hebrew and English Lexicon, pp. 250 and 434-35.

the seed of Abraham. The law is God's manifestation of His will for this liberated society. For an ordinary Israelite, the most important part of God's revelation is the Torah. It is exceedingly important for man to obey it, for it is the divine constitution for the regulation of man's life.

Ex. 24:13. The Appearance of Joshua

The first mention of Joshua occurs in Ex. 17:8 during Israel's struggle against the Amalekites. There Moses instructed Joshua to choose mighty men for engaging in raids against Amalek. Hence he becomes Moses' servant, attendant, or the captain of the army. Then suddenly this new leader and would-be hero disappears until Ex. 24:13 where he makes his appearance.

Moses and Joshua leave the scene together to climb the mountain, but it seems that Joshua might not have been in the presence of Moses when the latter received the laws.[1] The Septuagint remarks that they went up into the mount of God. The Hebrew text seem to harmonize Ex. 24:13 with Ex. 32:15 where Moses alone comes down from the mountain with the two tablets of stone. Thus it provides no reference to Joshua's whereabouts. Davis suggests that he accompanied Moses but remained on the lower slopes of the mountain.[2] Moses' ascent is mentioned in verse 13b

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[1]Harrison and Pfeiffer, Wycliffe Bible Commentary, p. 74.

[2]Davis, Exodus, p. 196.

before giving his instruction to the elders in verse 14, and before his ascent in verse 15.

Joshua is described in our text as Moses' minister, attendant, or adjutant. His presence has not been noticed among those who went to the mountain. He must have been in attendance upon Moses. He may have been one of the seventy elders, but his youth militates against this view. However, from now on Joshua will assume a significant role in connection with the meeting-tent (Ex. 33:11), and later with his astounding leadership and organized campaigns.

Ex. 24:15-18. Moses in the Presence of the Infinite

The concluding verses in the chapter provide the material from which the instructions concerning the Tabernacle are given. They possess a symmetry not be returning to the theme of the people,[1] but by beginning with Moses called by Yahweh and ending with Moses in His presence.

Before leaving the camp, Moses commanded the elders to wait his return, and appointed Aaron and Hurr as his representatives to the people. He now finally ascends into the mountain.[2] Six days he waits in the precincts of the

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[1]As Childs suggests in Exodus, p. 508.

[2]Probably this is the first time Moses might have climbed all the way to the top of the mountain and stayed there forty days and forty nights. At previous tours there was hardly time to do so.

cloud, and on the seventh day he is summoned into the presence of the majesty on high. The sons of Israel gazed with solemn awe upon the glory of the Lord displayed on Mount Sinai which appeared to them as a vast flame of consuming fire. In this flaming mountain, Moses, at God's command ascended and remained in that wondrous scene forty days and forty nights. The stately march of the narrative through this passage corresponds with the matchless grandeur of the occasion. All the symbols of God's self-manifestation and glory are in these verses: the cloud, the fire and the voice.

The cloud covered Mount Sinai, an indication of God's presence and holiness. This cloud is the covering of the glory which is external of His presence.

The root meaning of the Hebrew word "glory" (כבוד) is "to be heavy."[1] In mundane parley a person's glory was that which was "heavy," "weighty," and "burdensome" on him;[2] hence, important. The Israelites took it for granted that no mortal can see God; he can only see His glory, and this glory was God's self-revelation in time and space, in nature and history. The Hebrew word "shakan" (שכן) meaning, "dwell," "abide," "settle," is later employed in a technical sense of God's "shekinah,"

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[1]Brown, Driver and Briggs, A Hebrew and English Lexicon, pp. 458-59.

[2]G. Ernest Wright, The Challenge of Israel's Faith (Chicago: University Press, 1944), p. 41.

His outward manifestation among men. In the New Testament the Greek assonant form of this word is "skene," meaning, "tent" (Authorized Version, "tabernacle"). This is the word used in John 1:14 " . . . and dwelt among us."

The covenant at Sinai began with thunder, lightening and fire (Exodus 20) and ends with cloud and fire (Exodus 24). Although this covenant initiated Israel's history, religion, national and social life, yet it was only a type of a <u>better</u> covenant made not only with Israel, but with all mankind. This better covenant must find room in the Suffering Servant, the Son of Man. A personal third party, God-Man is from now on inevitable.

CHAPTER V

THEOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS AND TYPOLOGICAL CONNECTIONS

Theological Implications

A Renewal of Israel's Religious Commitment

Certain historical events make certain spots historically significant, and what is decided at these spots is absolutely historic in the memory of men. Many people at different times, before and after Caesar, crossed the Rubicon but these crossings never contributed one jot of importance to that small river. The Rubicon has remained an everlasting treasure in the minds of historians since 49 B.C. when Caesar crossed it with his army and overthrew the Roman Republic.

So with Sinai. Many people at different times, before and after Moses, visited Sinai but never made that mountain an important site. The importance of Sinai lies in a particular time when God made it a trysting place with His people.

More than six silent centuries have elapsed, and now the seed of Abraham many thousands were assembled at Mount Sinai. It is the end of inextricable delusion, dupery

and deception. Finally the enthralling yoke of the oppressing Egyptian masters has been broken. The old Egyptian gods and goddesses, nefarious in the sight of God and man have subsided. Superficially long confused generations have ended; much has ended, reality begins. It is the end of oppression, the beginning of a nation.

Sinai also marks the place of commitment, of permanent relationship with the God of the fathers. Its message may be summed up in a few great words, namely, national reconstruction, religious reaffirmation and covenant ratification. Sinai is for Yahwism what October 31, 1517 is for Protestantism.

The establishment of the Sinaitic coveantn "was an event of the first magnitude in the history of the people of God,"[1] and it is recorded in chapters nineteen to twenty-four of the book of Exodus, but unfortunately it has not caught the attention of the ordinary Bible reader because its importance has been overshadowed in reverence for the Ten Commandments, which form a part of the story. Thus the glory of a part has dimmed the glory of the whole.

The cardinal elements in instituting this Sinaitic covenant were as follows:

1. God proposed to establish a new covenant with

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[1]Albertus Pieters, The Seed of Abraham (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1950), p. 25.

Israel on condition of obedience that Israel might be a people for His own possession, a kingdom of priests, a holy nation.[1]

2. The people pledged themselves to this obedience and accepted the terms of the covenant.[2]

3. Accompanied by terrifying manifestations of earthquake, fire and smoke, God announced the ten great fundamental requirements of the covenant.[3]

4. These requirements were written in a book called "The Book of the Covenant."[4]

5. Finally, the covenant was sealed with a solemn sacrifice, the blood of the victims being sprinkled both on the altar and on the people, followed by a covenant dinner at the foot of the mountain.[5]

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[1]Ex. 19:3-6; 24:4, 7.

[2]Ex. 19:7-8; 24:4, 7.

[3]Ex. 19:1-17; 24:3-8.

[4]According to critics, for example, see Artur Weiser, The Old Testament: Its Formation and Development, trans. Dorothy M. Barton (New York: Associated Press, 1961), pp. 121, 122, The Book of the Covenant "derives its name from its present literary connection with Ex. 24:7, but this is secondary. Originally, 'the record of the covenant' probably meant the Decalogue. It is not certain what position in the Elohist strand was formerly occupied by the Book of the Covenant. The most likely conjecture is that it was fitted in after Joshua 24. In Joshua 24:25 it is recorded that Joshua gave the people in Shechem 'a statue and ordinance' and wrote 'these words in the book of the law of God.' In that case the Book of the Covenant would have been in E's scheme that record of the law which was connected with the making of the covenant at Shechem. When the Pentateuch was later worked into a unity (perhaps when Deuteronomy was inserted) it was dislodged from its original position and attached to the Sinai-narrative."

[5]Ex. 24:3-8.

All this was to the intent that Israel might be not merely a nation, but a nation that should at the same time be a church, a body civil and religious, conscious of her high mission in the world and fit for God's planned redemption. Israel had to leave behind (although difficult) Egyptian fetishism and animism and make a new permanent relationship with Yahweh her Lord. She might have forgotten the promises made to Abraham six hundred years earlier,[1] but God had not. Hence the new[2] covenant at Sinai was a renewal, a reaffirmation of the Abrahamic covenant with the seed of Abraham.

This new covenant did not in any way alter the terms of the old covenant under which they already were, nor did it annul it. For this argument we have the words of St. Paul:

> Now this I say, a covenant confirmed beforehand by God the law, which came four-hundred and thirty years after, does not disannul, to make the promise of non effect.[3]

It is interesting to observe a strange comment made in the Scofield Bible, page 20. The footnote reads: "The dispensation of promise ended when Israel rashly accepted

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[1]Genesis 12, 15, 17.

[2]New in comparison with the Abrahamic covenant, but technically called "The Old Covenant," a name derived from 2 Cor. 3:14, where Paul calls it by this name, and from Heb. 8:13 in contrast with the new covenant made in Christ.

[3]Gal. 3:17.

the law . . . ; but at Sinai they exchanged grace for law." This remark is directly contrary to the apostolic doctrine of St. Paul just stated in Gal. 3:17 and to Luther's exposition of the verse.[1]

Furthermore, since the covenant at Sinai was made with the offspring of Abraham, the children of Israel only, no one under the Abrahamic covenant could refuse to accept this new contract without losing his standing as a member of the Abrahamic group.

Finally, this Sinaitic covenant, while it was a grand work of God for a high and holy purpose, namely, to train for Himself a people in whom and through whom He might carry on His redemptive enterprise for the whole world, was in its nature and purpose temporary, to be superseded when its work had been accomplished. Its work was accomplished, and hence it was removed as a scaffolding is removed from a completed building. This assertion is made for us in one of the greatest prophecies in the whole Bible[2] with which every Bible student must be thoroughly familiar.

The basis of the renewal of this Mosaic covenant was religious, and the sole religious leader was none other than Moses. In the barren desert of Sinai the crisis

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[1]Cf. Luther's interpretation of the verse.

[2]Jer. 31:31-34.

demanded a religious giant, a prophet who could stir the hearts of his men and arouse their religious memories which had become dormant in the lotus land of Egypt, and to their love of freedom which is such a precious feature among the Semitic nomads. John Bright has rightly written: "No reason exists to doubt that her (Israel) faith was communicated to her in the desert by some great religious personality, namely, Moses."[1] Professor Abraham Sachar, a Jew from Brandeis University, adds more cubits to Moses' stature when he writes:

> The central hero of the exodus and what follows is Moses, who . . . makes Sinai seem puny to his grandeur, and who is to Napoleon the one man of mark in all Biblical history, not excluding Jesus . . . the maker of the nation and the organizer of the Hebrew religion.[2]

According to Professor John Bright and Professor Sachar, and many others, these familiar facts prompt the nature of the religious concepts and customs which were the heritage of Moses from the Semitic past. At Sinai, a new religion was ushered in, or, the old religious principles were revived when Moses committed to the Israelites the premise that human relations ought to be regulated by religious principles and that these principles are a manifestation of Yahweh's will. For more than three millennia the voice of these principles at all times has kept sounding

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[1]John Bright, A History of Israel, 2d ed. (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1972), p. 144.

[2]A. L. Sachar, A History of the Jews, 4th ed. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1953), p. 16.

in the ears and hearts of so many. A new society was established where none had existed in ages past, a society based not only on blood, but also on a new religious commitment and moral decisions.

Thus Moses under divine injunction "hewed Israel from the rock." As a leader, he created a nation in the desert, introduced her into a permanent relationship with the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and guided her through the infinite vicissitudes to a stable abode. As a priest, he regulated a definite form to the worship of Yahweh. As a prophet, he gathered together all that was best in the faith of his age and race, and fusing them, he gave his people a new living religion. "For crystalizing, it became the religion of the Jew; being perverted it degenerated into Mohammedanism; and, expanding it developed into Christianity."[1] Perhaps it is this religious characteristic, his undeviating fidelity to the religious principles of Yahweh that prompted Michelangelo to elevate Moses to the summits of religious history in his deathless monument.

It has often been said, and may well be true, that the purpose of originality is not novelty but sincerity. Moses was an original leader, creating a novel

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[1]Charles F. Kent, A History of the Hebrew People (New York: Charles Scribner's & Sons, 1899), p. 5.

society founded on a new obedience, commitment and sincerity to the law of God and the covenant obligation.

The Necessity of Man's Right Relationship with God

When the Israelites were delivered from the Egyptian oppression and set free in the barren wilderness, they had not the slightest notion how to adjust themselves to the new mode of life and freedom. The picture we have is one of a "mixed multitude,"[1] unfamiliar with the scenes and uncertain as how to get along with one another and with their Redeemer. The uncertainty and unfamiliarity, however, were assuaged by the forming of the covenant community. It was this covenant structure issued at Sinai (Ex. 24:8) with Yahweh which made the Israelites relationship to one another and to God fundamental. In fact it was the covenant bond of Exodus 24 which defined the nature of Israel's relationship and service to God.

Necessary to the covenant relationship was "the fact that Yahweh was to be Israel's sole and sovereign Lord."[2] And in all probability such is the essential meaning of the first four commandments.[3] At the foot of that fearful peak Israel was placed before a choice.

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[1]Ex. 12:38.

[2]Paul Achtemeier and Elizabeth Achtemeier, The Old Testament Roots of Our Faith (New York: Abingdon Press, 1962), p. 51.

[3]Ex. 19:3-7.

Having been delivered by Yahweh, she was now asked to have a permanent and right relationship with Him. And perhaps Professor Charles Kent is right by remarking that there was a feeling of absolute and inevitable unity to a supernatural being, who would give special heed to the need of the community,[1] a religious phenomenon so striking in the Semitic people of the three millennia ago. That need was miraculously satisfied at a diacritical point when God's voice rang from the summit of the mountain to Moses, "come up unto the Lord . . . " (Ex. 24:1). Through the mediation of Moses, God's ordinances and judgments were related to the congregation of Israel, and in turn, the people avowed to maintain what they had heard and enter into a new relationship which had not existed in former generations. Semitic people before and after Israel, had intimate relationships with their gods. The ancient Sumerians, Assyrians, Egyptians, Canaanites and Babylonians found their ultimate security in the elements of nature. It was for the purpose of regulating, appeasing and harmonizing these natural phenomena that their relationship with their gods manifested itself in the cultures of these peoples. They found the center of their life in the invincible forces of nature. However, nature teaches only in symbols, and these symbols cannot always be clearly

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[1]Kent, A History of the Hebrew People, p. 42.

read and interpreted."[1] Nature's revelation is not adequate as a rule for man as a moral agent.

It was quite different with Israel. At Sinai Israel was asked to surrender to a power beyond nature. God had revealed Himself through the media of historical events; hence, His will and holiness were not to be sought in natural forces but in historical revelation through His deeds, such as visiting His enemies with terrible plagues, killing the first-born of the Egyptians and finally culminating in a superhistoric event, the crossing of the Red Sea; and through His uttered words (Ex. 24:3, 7). Israel was commanded to cleave to these historic words, obey His voice and maintain an unconditional and unbroken relationship with Him. He had identified Himself with no existing society. He had created a new one. "It had a definite beginning at a definite point in time. . . . It depended on a covenant, a deed of necessary partnership."[2]

From Israel's vantage the necessity of her right relationship with God entailed an exclusive fealty to Him. "I will be your God, and you shall be my people."[3] In the authenticity of these divine words, Israel promised to put

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[1]Joseph S. Exell, The Preacher's Complete Homiletic Commentary, Vol. 2 (New York: Funk & Wagnalls Co., n.d.), p. 431.

[2]W. O. E. Osterley and Theodore H. Robinson, Hebrew Religion: Its Origin and Development (New York: Macmillan Co., 1930), p. 140.

[3]Lev. 26:12.

her absolute confidence by responding, "All the words which the Lord hath said we will do,"[1] and a little later these words are further voluntarily augmented, "All that the Lord hath said we will do and be obedient."[2] This sort of relationship offers a strong impetus to worship, a structured spontaneous ritual, expressing man's commitment to his master. By covenant bond each worship to the deity was an expression or a symbol of union and communion. Perhaps this might have been the initial step toward monolatry which prevailed among the Edomites, Moabites and Amorites who crossed over from the desert at some time to a settled residence preceding to the Hebrew settlement in the Promised Land. The relation of each of these people to their god was most intimately connected with an artful and devised act of worship. A good parallel case in point comes from the Moabites. These people called themselves "the people of," their god.[3] In the name of Kemosh they went to war, and to him were presented the fruits of their success. He was worshipped with sacrifices and offerings in much the same way as the Hebrews worshipped Yahweh.[4] Yet Hebrew worship was quite unlike their neighbors. The Israelite worship was constantly designed not only to

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[1]Ex. 24:3.

[2]Ex. 24:7.

[3]Kent, A History of the Hebrew People, p. 43.

[4]Ibid.

stimulate and express natural piety, but far more "to educate the people to think Torah, to sing Torah, to live in the Torah world, to believe Torah and to practice Torah,"[1] for it was God's direct word and thus absolutely binding for the generations to follow. It carried a heavy weight of God's nearness to His people and as commandment to fulfill religious obligations as given in the Torah.[2] The Israelite worship "required kavannah, immersion in, awareness of reflection upon the text."[3] To any ordinary Israelite, worship was a reminder of the covenant authenticity, a fulfillment of the fourth commandment.[4] The worshipper drew God's attention to him. The observance of the Sabbath was a constant recollection that Yahweh had graciously and mightily delivered Israelites and had drawn near to them. Having been freed from bondage and servitude, "Israel was able to consecrate one day of each week to God, which undoubtedly was not possible as long as the people served Egyptian masters."[5] Through regulated feasts, fasts and seasons, the Hebrews were always aware of the

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[1]Daniel J. Silver, A History of Judaism: From Abraham to Maimonides, Vol. 1 (New York: Basic Books, 1974), p. 316.

[2]Exodus 20; 24; 30; Leviticus 23.

[3]Silver, A History of Judaism, p. 316.

[4]Ex. 20:8.

[5]Samuel J. Schultz, The Old Testament Speaks, 2d ed. (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1960), p. 69.

fact that their holy God required a proper and holy worship; that they were God's holy people approaching Him daily through their worship and sacrifices. In Ex. 20:24, we read of the instruction for building an altar, of different kinds of sacrifices and animals, and of places of worship. The passage is a part of the covenant pericope, which suggests that in the covenant which Israel ratified at Sinai (Ex. 24:3-8), the faithful observance of these prescribed elements was a part of the commitment (Ex. 24:3, 7).

In the New Testament, worship has been given a profounder spiritual significance, spiritual not in a primitive or evolutionary sense, but because it is connected with the Holy Spirit who is the fulfiller and perfecter. It constitutes the priesthood of all believers in the superior priesthood of Christ. One passage describes our worship in an important way:

> Come to him, to that living stone, rejected by men but chosen by God and precious; and like living stones be yourselves built into a spiritual, a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. . . . You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a chosen people, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.[1]

In the words of one commentator, and in accordance with the above passage, "Jesus . . . is the priest of the new covenant, and all the baptized share in His priesthood by

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[1] 1 Peter 2:4-5, 9.

sharing His worship. . . . "[1] The necessity of man's relationship to God is accomplished only through the magnetic field of worship through the priesthood of the One far greater than Moses.

Worship leads to communion. A covenant relationship involves communion. In fact we noticed that some scholars have argued that the sacrifice in the making of the covenant (Ex. 24:3-8) was for the purpose of communion.[2]

What is communion? Perhaps a couple of definitions may aid us. "The fundamental connotation is that of sharing something (genitive) with someone (dative). . . . "[3] According to another source, "Communion (koinonia) is a term literally meaning 'sharing' and particularly important in connection with the covenant relation between God and His people, between God and individuals and in relation to Israel's hope."[4]

With the above definitions in mind, perhaps a few Biblical images may clarify the concept. In the Old Testament we read that Yahweh is like a father who trains and

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[1]John J. Wright, "Church and Priesthood: A Perspective on Ordained Ministry," Communio International Catholic Review 4 (1977): 267.

[2]Supra, pp. 100-17.

[3]J. D. Douglas et al., The New Bible Dictionary, (London: Inter-Varsity Press, 1962), p. 245.

[4]The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, 4 vols. (New York: Abingdon Press, 1962), p. 664.

protects His children.[1] He is like a mother who never abandoned the fruit of her womb.[2] He is like a shepherd who cares for His sheep and ready to render any service.[3] He is like a husband whose love is sufficiently strong to win back His faithless bride, the apostate people.[4]

The covenant of Exodus 24 involves the closest fellowship between God and His people, based upon the sovereign grace of God (verse 1). This fellowship or communion is often represented in different objects at different times of Israel's history. It is represented in the cloud,[5] in the ark which represents and mediates it,[6] and in the angel of the Lord.[7] In the later Old Testament period, the presence of God among His people is portrayed by the Temple at Jerusalem with all its ceremonial practices.

The entire notion of the covenant implicates the idea of communion between God and man, although this is generally implicit and not actually expressed in terms of communion.

In our text (Ex. 24:11), we read that the Israelite representatives held a sort of communion, a happy festivity (according to the Samaritan text and Targum, ante, p. 52)

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[1] Hos. 11:1-4.

[2] Is. 49:14-16.

[3] Ezekiel 34.

[4] Hos. 2:14-22.

[5] Ex. 33:7-11.

[6] Num. 10:35:36.

[7] Ex. 23:20-21; 32:34.

with the Infinite after covenant ratification. And what do the words "They ate and drank" (verse 11) mean except that they had the closest possible fellowship with the God who invited them. They were not only permitted to "see" Him, they were His guests.[1] And who enjoys a meal,[2] with a king? Only the highest official, ministers or ambassadors from allied foreign countries, or those who are truly His friends. In our text, the meal, the communion, or fellowship clearly serves this purpose. This is particularly important in the nomadic and agricultural world. Here the communion is the same as becoming confederates. By having eaten together the partners have become brothers, they are "bone and flesh" of each other, as the Israelites say to David.[3] Yet Moses' communion with God was far greater and higher than the communion of these representatives and all the prophets thereafter. "And there has not arisen a prophet since in Israel like Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face."[4] No wonder Philo speaks of the relation between God and Moses as "koinonia."[5]

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[1]In Exodus 24 it is not stated that God was taking part in the meal. The idea of God Himself eating is theologically altogether excluded in Israel. Also Gen. 18:8 does say so; here the text deliberately has disguised the point.

[2]"Meal" may also be alternated with "eating bread," Gen. 31:54.

[3]2 Sam. 5:2. [4]Deut. 34:10.

[5]F. H. Colson, Philo (Cambridge: University Press, 1959), pp. 277ff.

In the New Testament, the Christian experience of communion between God and man has been founded on a new and deeper sense in Jesus Christ of the New Testament. Through His life, death and resurrection and glorification, the new covenant has been brought into being, and a new communion has been ushered in.[1] Man's communion with God is now in and through Christ, and the believer's life is a life in Christ. The Apostle Paul uses this latter phrase 126 times in the New Testament, signifying the essence and the significance of Christian experience of communion. It is with this idea of communion and fellowship that Paul and the rest of the New Testament writers sum up their Gospel in the words: "We beseech you brethren on behalf of Christ . . . that in him we might become the righteousness of God."[2] This call is a call to a union and communion with Christ but also to be proclaimed to others. It is the Church's permanent task to draw as many as possible to this communion with Christ. Lowell Green, commenting on 1 Cor. 11:26, remarks:

> The task of the Church, standing between the Lord's first and second coming, is to proclaim Christ's death. In the practical task of the Church, we speak of stewardship and evangelism. . . . And every time that we commune, we are confessing our faith in this Christ who once died, but is risen and will return to judge the quick and the dead. And as Kasemann suggests, the command to do this in memory of Christ means

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[1] Mark 14:22-25; 1 Cor. 11:23.

[2] 2 Cor. 5:20-21.

> not only to partake of the sacrament again and again, but faithfully to proclaim the Gospel till Christ comes at the end. At that time, the Lord's Supper will be changed into the Great Supper of heaven.[1]

Man's Obedience to God's Terms

Israel's voluntary decision at Sinai, "All the words which the Lord hath said we will do and be obedient,"[2] was not made in a vacuum. The Israelites had seen how Yahweh had overcome Pharoah, "the personification of all forces of darkness,"[3] and how He had led them through the Red Sea and brought them safely to Sinai. Hence, Israel's response was, therefore, one to be made in the context of these mighty and gracious acts of God. She was asked to make a decisive choice and abide by God's terms as dictated to her through the agency of Moses (Ex. 24:3). Later, in a striking evangelical message, commonly known as the "eagles wings passages," Yahweh categorically reminds His people of their obedience to His covenant terms:

> You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself. Now therefore, if you obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be a kingdom of priests, a holy nation.[4]

A little later in another passage, yet with more emphatic tone, God pronounces His terms in explicit don't's and do's:

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[1]Lowell C. Green, "God's People in Fellowship at the Communion Table," Concordia Theological Quarterly 41 (1977): 11.

[2]Ex. 24:7.

[3]Horace D. Hummel, "Critical Study and the Exodus Pericope," Biblical Studies Series 3 (1973): 10.

[4]Ex. 19:4-6.

> I am the Lord your God. You shall not do as they do in the land of Egypt, where you dwelt, and you shall not do as they do in the land of Canaan, to which I am bringing you. You shall not walk in their statutes. You shall do my ordinances and keep my statutes and walk in them. I am the Lord your God.[1]

What does all this amount to? It amounts to saying that Israel was to be holy, laid aside, separated and set apart like no other people on earth, for she was to be God's distinctly holy nation, through whom God would carry on His redemptive enterprise. Therefore, the people of God were to find the norm of their life in no human social entity, but in the will of God which transcends and differs from the cultural formulations of all human societies. They were to obey God's ordinances and statutes and not merely memorize them. In Pirke Aboth (The Sayings of the Fathers), it is said that Rabbi Ishmael is reported to have said that the essence of the Torah does not lie in the mere studying of its do's and don't's, nor even in transmitting its teachings to others. Its significance lies predominantly in deeds; that is, in the observance and application of its precepts and commandments.[2]

This then, was to be the nature of the covenant obligation into which Israel entered. When Israel heard God's demands on the mountain, she made her choice, dedicated herself to God and promised to abide by His terms, "All the words which the Lord has spoken we will do and

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[1]Lev. 18:2-4.

[2]Pirke Aboth, 4.226.

be obedient" (Ex. 24:7). Of her own free will Israel agreed to be God's, binding herself to accept the covenant obligations without any reserves and obey its precepts in the divine promises. Sin was an act of rupture and infidelity, an injustice in the Biblical sense of the term. It was a "betrayal of Him who wished, by means of the covenant, to place man in a privileged state and enable him to share more intimately in the divine holiness."[1] Yet ironically enough, the Old Testament story is one of the infidelity of this chosen people and the unspeakable fidelity of their Lord.[2] No wonder God's heavy judgment upon this "holy nation" was severer than any judgment against any other nation. Nation after nation invaded the land which God had given to Israel, exile followed exile, and this chosen community was scattered throughout the world for more than fifteen hundred years of its history.

Typological Connections

In these last pages we pass from the old covenant to the new covenant, from the "shadows of heavenly things" to the substance thereof, from the smoke of a multitude of sacrifices to the once-and-for all Sacrifice, from Aaronic priesthood to the priesthood after the order of Melchezedek with which mortal men could not be invested;

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[1] J. Giblet, The God of Israel and the God of Christians, trans. Kathryn Sullivan (Glen Rock, N.J.: Deus Books, 1961), p. 27.

[2] Ibid., p. 28.

from type to antitype, from the seeds of Abraham to the Seed of Abraham, from Mount Sinai to Mount Calvary.

A New and Better Covenant (Heb. 9:15-17)

This particular passage is of importance enough to warrant notice. The reference here is to the usage of Exodus 24. In his discussion of Christ as the mediator of the new covenant, the writer of Hebrews makes use of Exodus 24 to prove that even the first covenant was ratified by means of blood. He then reviews Moses' role in reading the commandments, sprinkling the people with the blood of victims and pronouncing the words, "This is the blood of the covenant which the Lord has made with you concerning all these words" (Ex. 24:7).

The writer of Hebrews begins his theme of the new covenant in chapter 8:1 using Jer. 31:31ff as his proof-text. In chapter 9:13-17 he begins to contrast the mediatorship of Christ's new covenant with that of Moses, and chooses the picture of the Old Testament tabernacle in order to illustrate the regulation for worship. This leads him to describe the duty of the high priest on the Day of Atonement in his use of the blood of goats and calves and the ashes of the heifer. Then he turns to describe the ratification of the Mosaic covenant as reported in Exodus 24 still using the previous imagery of the high priest's role in the tabernacle.

In the comparison of this typological parallelism the writer introduces a new and better covenant. This is the thought which constitutes the foundation of all the remaining argument. Everything else now rests on this.

The Mosaic covenant of Exodus 24 contemplated and promised, but could not confer ultimately and definitively. It was a pact, a treaty, a contract between God and God's people through which God renewed His Abrahamic promise to the children of Abraham. It was a fresh reminder to this newly organized group to abide by His terms and fulfill His purpose. It was a voluntary agreement by which two parties entered into a permanent relationship. Its sacrifices could not atone for sins. The definitive forgiveness of sin lay outside its confines. Hence it was limited. It was ineffectual to remove the transgressions done under it and offer perfection.[1] Therefore, a new and better covenant involving a far greater death for the redemption of transgressions was inevitable to bring the promise into realization.[2] The old was too weak to liberate people from their meshes, while the new through the offering of the Son accomplished what the old vainly strove after; it procured perfection, and enabled the covenant to issue in the promised inheritance.[3]

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[1]Heb. 7:11, 18.

[2]Martin Luther, "Lectures on Titus, Philemon, and Hebrews," Luther's Works, Vol. 29 (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1968), p. 213.

[3]Heb. 10:14.

The writer of Hebrews 9 casts verses 13 and 14 in the form of a fortiori argument,[1] that is, advancing from the lesser to the greater:

> For if the blood of bulls and of goats and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctify to the purging of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ who through the eternal spirit offered himself without spot to Got purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God.

Then follows a very condensed verse (15), stating first, the object contemplated by a new covenant (they who have been called), and second, the means by which this object has been attained (a death having taken place), and third, the result (the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first covenant). From this verse, the author of the Epistle draws his conclusion and states his reason, that Jesus Christ is a better Mediator of this new and better covenant. The term "mediator" must be taken in its full sense, as meaning one with power to make the proceedings of the covenant, in the same manner as the mediator (Moses) of the first covenant (Exodus 24) made the proceedings of the old covenant. In verse 16 He is alluded to as making the covenant or conveying the inheritance, something which the old covenant of Exodus 24 was unable to attribute. It could be gathered from the above argument that all things connected with the making of the covenant or the conveying of the inheritance

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[1]See also, Heb. 2:3; Rom. 5:8.

are absolutely put into His hands. He does not stand in the line of prophets and priests of Judaism. He is not a defender, or a reformer of the ancient system; He is not only personally greater than Moses and all the interpreters of the Mosaic institutions; He is the Mediator of a new and better covenant.[1] His mediation brought about a new condition by truly putting away sin and sanctifying the people,[2] something which the Mosaic covenant of Exodus 24 did not even claim to do.

Verses 16 and 17 have been the occasion of great perplexity to many commentators in this Epistle. The question in dispute is, whether we ought to interpret these verses as referring to a testament, a will, or whether we ought to retain the idea of a covenant. The same Greek term denotes both.[3] Up to this point in the argument of the Epistle it hardly admits of dispute, that it ought to be translated not testament, but covenant. Indeed this researcher believes that in every other passage in the New Testament Scripture it stands not for testament but for covenant.

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[1]R. W. Dale, The Jewish Temple and the Christian Church (London: Rodder & Stoughton, 1896), p. 217.

[2]Heb. 10:10; 13:12.

[3]Vaughan remarks that "diatheke has the comprehensive sense of an arrangement whether of relations (covenant) or of possessions (testament)." He finds that this latter usage in Heb. 9:16, is in vogue among most recent commentators, including Weiss and von Sodden. Cited by Alexander B. Bruce, The Epistle to the Hebrews (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1899), p. 359, fn. 1.

It seems certain that although the word bears the sense of covenant everywhere else in the Epistle, and everywhere else in the New Testament, nevertheless, here in these verses, the idea of a disposition or arrangement of property by a testament must be employed.[1] With this meaning of the term the Jewish Christians would be quite familiar.[2] Although there seems to have been little power under the Mosaic law for a person to distribute his property by will, nonetheless, the customs and laws of other nations, specifically the Roman law, must have made them acquainted with the practice, and it had, no doubt, become common by this time among Hebrews.[3]

Moreover, the foregoing verses suggest nothing that would compel us to think of a testament. But

> with kai the writer himself presents this new and additional thought viewing the bloody death of Christ from this great angle, which is so important for his readers because a dead Messiah was beginning to appear like no Messiah to them. The answer to them is, that without His death He would be no Messiah. His death is necessary. No death, no testament in force![4]

The writer of the Epistle seems to make his readers feel that the death of Christ is to be regarded a necessity,

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[1]Luther, interpreting Chrysostom, uses the word "diatheke" in this sense. Luther's Works, 29: 213.

[2]Dale, The Jewish Temple and the Christian Church, p. 218.

[3]Ibid.

[4]R. C. H. Lenski, The Interpretation of the Epistle to the Hebrews and of the Epistle of James (Columbus: Lutheran Book Concern, 1938), p. 298.

a transcendent and significant fact, as the death of the victims was significant in inaugurating the covenant of Exodus 24 (verses 18-21). He therefore, employs the word "diatheke" in its most common secular meaning. It is as if he had remarked, that this death of Christ which is both foolishness and a stumbling block to the world, is as indispensable to the establishment of the covenant under which you are to possess the everlasting inheritance, as the death of the testator is, to the efficacy of the will under which his heirs possess their secular inheritance.[1] "Where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is of force after men are dead, otherwise it is of no power while the testator liveth."[2]

There is a profound truth hinted at in the sudden transition of this meaning of the term. It is not a mere play on words.[3] Our inheritance does not rest on a play on words. It is a free gift; it has to be received with gratitude rather than purchased by our merits or obedience. It comes to us by the terms of a will, rather than what we secure by fulfilling the provisions of a bond.

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[1]To this idea Westcott remarks: "The death of Christ was a chief difficulty of the Hebrews, and therefore the writer presents it in different aspects in order to show its full significance in the Christian dispensation." Quoted from Bruce, The Epistle to the Hebrews, p. 360, fn. 1.

[2]Heb. 9:16-17.

[3]As A. B. Davidson suggests, The Epistle to the Hebrews (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1950), p. 182.

The promise of the "eternal inheritance" is the actual fulfillment, the substance promised, the object attained.[1] Three times in a way that is pungent, the author uses the word "eternal." "Eternal redemption in Christ,"[2] "by means of (his) eternal spirit,"[3] and that we may "receive the promise of eternal inheritance."[4] This is not accidental, but intentional. Those who are called have full rights to an eternal inheritance, whether they lived in the past, are living now, or shall yet live in future generations. "He left the legacy only to those who fear His name and believe in Him. . . . "[5] In this life they have the pledge of their inheritance, namely, the Holy Spirit of the promise,[6] and thus taste of the powers of the world to come already in this life,[7] and then, remaining true to their call by faith, at death they receive the promised inheritance in heaven. How closely the terms testament and inheritance correspond!

The basis of this inheritance is rooted in the sprinkling blood of Christ. St. Peter in his first Epistle presents to us the fundamental truths of the

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[1]The "good things to come" of verse 11.

[2]Heb. 9:1. [3]Heb. 9:14.

[4]Heb. 9:15.

[5]Luther, Luther's Works, 29: 214.

[6]Eph. 1:13-14. [7]Heb. 6:5.

Christian faith, with particular emphasis on atonement.[1] He states that our election is according to God's foreknowledge and the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.[2]

The "sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ," here, is no doubt, a reference to the Sinaitic covenant (Ex. 24:5-8). It was not only a cleansing of the people but also the sealing of the covenant of union between God and the Israelites including a pledge of obedience on the part of the people.[3] The rationale of animal sacrifice of the Sinaitic covenant involved two principle elements in it, the victim's death and the ritual or sacerdotal acts connected with the disposal of its blood.[4] Vincent Taylor describes the nature of covenant sacrifice in Exodus 24:

> In this narrative (Ex. 24:1-11) a distinction is drawn between the blood sprinkled upon the altar and that which is sprinkled upon the people. The former is the symbol of the people's obedience; . . . The latter . . . is dedicated blood that Yahweh has accepted, and the sprinkling means that the people now share in the blessings and powers which it represents and conveys. It is this blood which is described as "the blood of the covenant."[5]

It is rather difficult to say how far forgiveness or remission of sins was directly or indirectly involved under the old covenant. But certainly forgiveness figures

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[1]Peter 1:2, 3; 2:21, 24; 4:1.

[2]1 Peter 1:2.

[3]Ex. 24:7.

[4]Edward G. Selwyn, The First Epistle of St. Peter (London: Macmillan & Co., 1946), p. 120.

[5]Vincent Taylor, Jesus and His Sacrifice (London: Macmillan Co., 1937), p. 137.

prominently in the new covenant which Jeremiah says is destined to replace the old.[1] Hence, it is not surprising to find them prominent when in the New Testament covenant sacrifice is used to illustrate the meaning of the death of Christ. In the account of Exodus 24 the blood had functioned as only part of the ceremony of ratification and did not focus on the forgiveness of sins. In the New Testament, according to the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews as well as to 1 Peter, the writers have transformed the ceremony into an essential aspect in which the entire emphasis now falls on the forgiveness of sin through the shedding of the blood of Jesus Christ. Indeed, according to St. Mark this aspect is emphasized by our Lord Himself. Mark records our Lord explicitly fusing the idea of covenant and of atonement. "This is my blood of the new covenant which is shed for many,"[2] thus interpreting Exodus 24 in the light of Isiah 53. St. Matthew stresses the teaching still stronger by adding, "for the remission of sins."[3] If Mark was Peter's interpreter, we may infer that it was in this sense that the Apostle understood the new covenant by sprinkling of Christ's blood. In Heb. 12:24, the writer associates the "new covenant" with the sprinkling of the blood of the Mediator. Therefore, we may conclude by saying that in reality the thought of

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[1]Jer. 31:31f.

[2]Mark 14:24.

[3]Matt. 26:28.

cleansing and of entering into the new covenant with God by sprinkling of the blood of Christ are inseparably connected in St. Peter as in Hebrews.[1]

Christ is a greater Mediator than Moses because He is the Son, the Heir in the house in which Moses is a servant, and He is a Testator who has put the legacy in force through His shed blood, therefore, He is the sole One to bring about redemption of transgressions (Heb. 9:15). Christ's death and the sprinkling of His blood concealed the sins committed by Israel in the past, the very sins through which Israel lost the Mosaic testamentary promises and its land of Canaan. Luther comments on this verse: "Therefore he touches . . . on the nature and power of the law when he mentions the transgressions committed under the former covenant."[2] These transgressions which accumulated throughout the entire period of the Mosaic covenant are mentioned because the two covenants, the two kinds of deaths and of blood are here contrasted. There is no thought of limiting the transgressions for which Christ died. Probably the author is addressing former Jews and is indicating to them what the Mosaic covenant failed to accomplish for them, and what the new covenant and its Mediator did accomplish. The Mosaic covenant was ushered

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[1]H. B. Masterman, The First Epistle of St. Peter (London: Macmillan Co., 1912), p. 64.

[2]Luther, Luther's Works, 29: 212.

"because of the transgressions,"[1] the more to drive Israel to the promise in the covenant to Abraham and conserved all the types of Christ in the ceremonial practices of the Mosaic covenant. Thus the entire past, the entire present and the entire future rest on the death that occurred on Calvary. The Messiah who dies is the absolute necessity no matter in which direction we look. Without Him as the Mediator of the new covenant all that God gave to Abraham and then to Moses and Israel would be a sheer mockery. Absolutely everything for the redemption of transgressions hinges on this Mediator and the mediation of His bloody piacular death.

Furthermore, Christ's sacrificial, expiatory death leads to sanctification "by" the spirit (1 Peter 1:2a). The sacrificial death of the victims of Exodus 24 had neither salvatory nor sanctifying force. The expression here (1 Peter 1:2a) may be an echo of 2 Thess. 2:13, "God who chose you from the beginning unto salvation through sanctification of the spirit." The preposition "en" might be instrumental here as often in Hellenistic Greek, "in virtue of."[2] Professor Hunter translates it "in virtue of hallowing by the spirit,"[3] taking the phrase

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[1]Gal. 3:19.

[2]J. H. Moulten, A Grammar of the New Testament Greek, Vol. 1, 3rd ed. (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1919), p. 237.

[3]Archibald M. Hunter, "The First Epistle of Peter," The Interpreter's Bible, Vol. 12 (New York: Abingdon Press, 1957), p. 90.

as subjective genitive,[1] a reference to reception of the spirit at baptism. The sanctification (Hagiasmos) has reference to status rather than to personal conduct, to destination rather than to character. Perhaps this interpretation would be in accord with Luther's explanation: "God has predestined us to be holy. . . . "[2]

A New Feast: Eucharist (Luke 22:20)

There has been a change of covenants. The Mosaic covenant with all its ceremonial practices given to Israel at Mount Sinai is done away with and the new covenant promised through Jeremiah[3] the prophet has been introduced. This is the New Testament teaching, and certainly it is a serious departure from it to ascertain that the new covenant is reserved for the end time when it is to be established, not with the church but with the remnant of Israel. Such a view is contrary to the words of the Lord himself. When instituting the Lord's supper, He said according to the account given in Luke 22:20 and 1 Cor. 11:25 "This cup is the new covenant in my blood." In Matt. 26:28 the wording is slightly different, and the variation itself is very interesting. The expression, "the new covenant," taken

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[1]So also, Selwyn, The First Epistle of St. Peter, p. 119.

[2]Luther, Luther's Works, 30: 6.

[3]Jer. 31:31-34.

from Jeremiah's prophecy is not found, but by some sort of definite design, the wording of Ex. 24:8 is adopted. There Moses had said: "Behold the blood of the covenant." In Matthew we read: "This is my blood of the covenant which is shed for many for the remission of sins."

One cannot miss the obvious reference in Luke. As the old covenant was not established without blood (Ex. 24:8; Heb. 9:16), "so through the blood of Christ was the new covenant which God now concluded with man (Jer. 31:31-34), confirmed and sealed."[1] Moses at Sinai was inaugurating a covenant between God and his people and was sealing it with sacrificial blood; so also our Lord was inaugurating a new covenant, to take the place of that made through Moses at Sinai, and He was sealing it with sacrificial blood in like manner, with His own blood.

In all four of the accounts which we possess of the institution of the Eucharist, the sacrament stands related to the new covenant. The Supper itself, with the eating of the bread and the drinking of the blood, corresponds to the solemn congratulatory and confirmatory sacred meal which the elders of Israel partook of in the presence of Yahweh, a joyous occasion, a happy communion. Yet there is more in the new communion. "The sacrament

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[1]John Peter Lange, Commentary on the Holy Scriptures, Vol. 16

[2]Ex. 24:9-11.

of the Supper represents Christ not merely as a lamb to be slain for a sin-offering, but as a Paschal Lamb to be eaten for spiritual norishment . . . an act of communion with God."[1]

There is no sacrificial body without sacrificial blood, and vice versa is true. The Scriptures never teach of the glorified blood. In the words of one commentator, "the miracle in the sacrament to-day is not that Christ makes us partakers of His glorified body and blood, but of the body given and the blood shed for us on the cross."[2] This is practical advice. The sacrament draws on Calvary not on heaven. This researcher deeply regrets this unfortunate slip in Calvin's, Zwingli's and Bezae's theology.

In the new covenant, we have a willing, suffering and sin-bearing Savior. In the New Feast, Christ's body is offered to us for eating--a perfect illustration of appropriation, assimilation, incorporation; and His blood is an act by which we profess our faith in His atoning sacrifice.

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[1]J. Willcock, The Preacher's Complete Homiletic Commentary, Vol. 24 (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, n.d.), p. 554.

[2]R. C. H. Lenski, The Interpretation of St. Mark's and St. Luke's Gospels (Columbus, Ohio: Luthern Book Concern, 1934), p. 662.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

There can be no doubt that a hazy feeling of disquietude has been aroused by multitudinous inquiries, in the past as well as in the present, (and perhaps more in the present than in the past) into the age and compilation of the Pentateuch in general and of Genesis and Exodus in particular. Opinions have been advanced which tend to shake our faith in the traditional view concerning certain books, notably those which are professedly the oldest; and the historical character of the writings, as well as the moral probity of the writers have suffered in proportion. There has been a tendency to fashion inconsistencies and discrepancies out of diversities, to bring down the date of a whole book to that of its latest utterance, to doubt the truth of a narrative if we have it in two variant accounts, to create new writers wherever new words or views are detected. The foregoing pages dealt with only one passage of the Old Testament, namely, Exodus 24.

The course of the argument may be recapitulated thus: In Chapter I, the reader was led back to consider some "general features" as a preparatory step to subsequent

themes, and as a reminder of the importance of the items treated therein. For if these fall, the rest will be seriously and materially affected thereby.

Then it became necessary to deal with the text of Exodus 24 in Chapter II. The text was presented in eight different versions for the convenience of the reader and at the same time to observe the divergencies and approximations among these texts. In working out this discussion we have sought to be rational and reverential. We have taken into consideration such possibilities as free translation, chronological misplacements, editorial revisions, theological implications, oriental ways of expression and such like. The purpose of these variant versions was also intended to show that these ancient texts do not support the theory of the critics. Critics are sometimes inclined to forget or neglect the first principle of their art, namely, that we should give due respect to what a writer says of himself, and to what his object is, and to the spirit with which he carries it out. Many of our difficulties will be removed if we bear in mind that the books we have are written in a style and language with which we have nothing parallel and contemporary. Indeed, it would be strange if these books written at such sundry times and in such diverse manners, and dealing with such ancient and often abstruse subjects, presented no difficulty to the modern student.

Hence, a third step was employed in Chapter III, namely, to show how critics have dealt with the passage in question. In this discussion it was demonstrated that the critics' judgment was subjective and arbitrary. They have bent fact to theories, imported modern scientific methodologies into ancient books, and attributed the text of Exodus 24 to seven different sources. Such scholarship casts a pall of doubt and suspicion upon itself. The chapter was concluded by showing that the text as we now have it is in the main as Moses and his immediate followers left it. There is no reason, literary or otherwise, for regarding it as fabrication of a later age.

Chapter IV constituted the main corpus of the discussion, and the larger part of it was devoted to the "ceremonial of covenant ratification." Keywords and phrases were exegeted in the light of their original texts and in reference to other passages.

The final chapter dealt with "theological implications and typological connections." Under the former rubric, the basic aspects of Israel's social, moral and religious life are discussed. Under the latter, it was argued that the old covenant was only a type of a new and better covenant. The first was only a shadow, the second, the substance; the former passes away, the latter remains. It was new because it was foretold by Jeremiah the prophet (31:31-34); it was better, because if the first had been

perfect there would have been no reason for the introduction of the second. Besides, the new covenant was ushered in by a better Mediator, validated by the death of the Testator for the redemption of transgressions and sanctification of His people. The meal of which the Israelites partook on the mountain was but a type of a new and better feast in the new covenant.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

THE DIVINE NAME--YAHWEH

The name Yahweh[1] (יהוה) which occurs about 5,500 times in the Old Testament, has quickened the exegetical genius of exegetes across centuries. The word LORD, spelled in small capitals has been substituted for it. The Septuagint adopts the term Kurios, Lord; and Vulgate Dominus.

Some of the shorter forms of this name, yah (יה), yahu (יהו), yahah (יהה), yo (יו) and y (י) occur in personal names and in some sections of the Old Testament. Brown, Driver and Briggs[2] suggest that yah (יה) occurs only in early poems; Smith and Fuller[3] claim that it occurs only in poetic Psalms, and John Davis[4] believes that it

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[1]According to John D. Davis, A Dictionary of the Bible, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1954), p. 361, Jehovah is a wrongly formed word, a European pronunciation current since the days of Petrus Galatinus, confessor of Leo X, A.D. 1518.

[2]Brown, Driver and Briggs, A Hebrew and English Lexicon, p. 219.

[3]William Smith and J. M. Fuller, A Dictionary of the Bible, Vol. 1, pt. 2 (London: John Murry Press, 1893), p. 1506.

[4]John D. Davis, A Dictionary of the Bible, 4th rev. ed. (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1927), p. 350.

exists in a couple of Psalms and in two places in Isaiah.[1] In the last quarter of the nineteenth century, Friedrich Delitzsch propagated the thesis contrary to the normally accepted opinion, that yah (יה) or yahu (יהו) was the original name of the God of Israel and continued to be always the popular name.[2] The name Yahweh, according to Delitzsch, was a later modification of yahu, designed for the purpose of establishing a connection with "to be" or "to come to be."[3]

Professor Fritz Hommel, the well-known assyriologist and professor of Semitic languages at Munich, writes in the same vein basing his argument on the Assyrian-Babylonian and Arabic etymologies. He deems it advisable to employ personal names as a touch-stone, exhaustively compares the different names of Yahweh with other contemporary names of similar formation and sets forth the evidence in a clear and convincing manner to render all further argument of no avail. He maintains that Yahweh is an Arabic rather than a Hebrew form of the ancient verb "hawayah," meaning, "to be" (Heb. hayah), "to come into existence," and belongs to the time of Abraham and Moses, prior to the time of

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[1]The Psalms are: 68:4; 89:9; and Isaiah passages: 12:2; 26:4.

[2]F. Delitzsch, Wo Lag Das Paradies? (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrick's sche Buchhandlung, 1881), pp. 158-59.

[3]Ibid., pp. 160-66.

Canaanitish ascendancy. From the time of Judges onwards, Hommel argues, the name Yahweh came to be pronounced more like "Yihyeh," and is actually written "Ehyeh," signifying, "I will be," as in Ex. 3:14.[1] Another important observation by Hommel is that he relates the names, ya, yo, yah to the Babylonian deity Ai, or Aa, or Ea, queen of heaven.[2] Since according to Hommel, the Hebrew name Yahweh appears only in personal names as Yah, or Yahu (such as: Joseph, Joel, Jochebed, and so forth), and since Moses tells us (Ex. 6:3) that this was an entirely new name, Hommel makes the following deductions: that yah, or yahu was the original form and not a later abbreviation of Yahweh. Furthermore, a new signification was bestowed on this ancient sacred name by compounding it with the Hebrew verb "hawaya," that is, "to exist," or "Yahvi," thus forming "Yahweh," meaning "He exists," "comes into existence," "reveals Himself."[3]

Professor Theophilus Pinches supports Hommel's view and states the matter as his opinion that the god yah (יה) or yahu (יהו) was not only worshipped by the Hebrews, but by the Assyrians, Babylonians, Hittites and other Middle Eastern nations as well, and that the Hebrews had no objection to the use of heathen names.[4] Professor

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[1]Fritz Hommel, The Ancient Hebrew Tradition (New York: E. & J. B. Young and Co., 1897), pp. 100-101.

[2]Ibid., p. 114.

[3]Ibid., pp. 114-15.

[4]Theophilus G. Pinches, The Old Testament: In the

Hugo Bonk makes the attempt to show that yahu (יהו) is the oldest and the latest form and that yo (יו) is intermediate, belonging to the earlier post-exilic period until the time of Chronicles.[1]

G. R. Driver has provided an elaborate roster containing all the theophorous names related to the tetragrammaton found on stones, seals, potsherd and many other objects in the Aramaic papyri found at Elaphantine in Egypt, in Assyrian royal annals and on Babylonian tablets containing legal documents. The list ranges roughly from the ninth to the second century B.C. Professor Driver begins with the Israelite ostraca discovered by the American archaeologists at Samaria, dated in the latter half of the ninth century B.C. The divine name, according to Professor Driver's investigation always takes the form of Yo, both at the beginning and at the end of proper names.[2] From 850-700 B.C. the tetragrammaton transcribed into cuneiform of the annals of the Assyrian kings as Ya, Yau, at the beginning, and Yau, Ya or Au at the end in the names of various kings.[3] From 700-650 B.C. the divine name takes

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Light of the Historical Records and Legends of Assyria and Babylon (New York: E. and J. B. Young & Co., 1902), pp. 5960.

[1]Hugo Bonk, "Uber die Verwenbarkeit der Doppelformigen mit und Anlaudenen Namen im Altentestament Alten fur die Historische Quellenkritik," Zeitschrift fur die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft 11 (1891): 125-33.

[2]G. R. Driver, "The Original Form of the Name Yahweh: Evidence and Conclusion," Zeitschrift fur die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft 46 (1928): 8.

[3]Ibid.

the form of a component element as suffix to the proper name.[1] From 495-407, the Egyptian Aramaic papyri have only one form of the name, namely, "Yah" (יה).[2]

As can be seen, Professor Driver attempts to show a progressive development from the shorter to the longer form of the tetragrammaton. He summarizes his argument by saying that no Semitic race abbreviates the names of its gods. Secondly, the reason that the shorter forms were used in proper names may be an explanation that they did not convey heavy theological implication, were held less sacrosant and more suitable for use. Furthermore, the primitive names given to gods tend to be short, vague and unexplainable. Finally, the attempt to expand these primitive sacred names is usually the work of later pens.[3] The unpronounced sacred name is an interesting feature in the Greek Old Testament as we have it in the ancient and valuable codices of the fourth and fifth centuries, Sinaiticus, Alexandrinus, Vaticanus and Ambrosianus. In the Torah the Hebrew word YHWH appears in these Greek manuscripts sometimes as "Kurios o Theos," and sometimes as "Theos" alone.[4] Of this striking feature, C. H. Dodd

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[1]Ibid., pp. 9-10.

[2]Ibid., pp. 17-18.

[3]Ibid., pp. 23-24.

[4]W. G. Woddell, "The Tetragrammaton in the LXX," Journal of Biblical Studies 45 (1944): 158-61.

remarks, "By merely eliminating the name of God, the Septuagint contributed to the definition of monotheism."[1] This is undoubtedly true of the later forms of the Septuagint, and even of the forms of the second century A.D. The abbreviation "Ks" (for Kurios) is attested by the Baden Papyri 65[2] and by the Chester Beatty Papyri of Numbers and Deuteronomy[3] (dated by Kenyon in the first half of the second century). There is one exception found in the Oxyrhynchus papyrus, a fragment of Genesis dated in the third century A.D. in which the tetragrammaton is abbreviated as a doubled yod (). This construction is probably based upon the initial letter of YHWH written in the form of a  , with a horizontal stroke through the middle and carried without a break through both letters.[4] Another interesting feature comes from F. G. Berkitt who maintains that the sacred name is normally written in the Cairo Museum, that is, Yahweh is translated in old Hebrew letters similar to those employed in the Siloam inscription and on

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[1]C. H. Dodd, The Bible and the Greeks (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1935), p. 4.

[2]F. Bilabel, Griechische Papyri: Urbunden, Briefe Schreibtafeln Ostraka, etc. (Heidelberg: Handschuhsheimer, 1924), pp. 24ff.

[3]F. G. Kenyon, The Chester Beatty Biblical Papyri: Description and Text of Twelve MSS on Papyrus of the Greek Bible, Vol. 5 (London: Emery Walker Ltd., 1935), pp. 2f.

[4]A. S. Hunt, The Oxyrhnchus Papyri, Vol. 7 (London: Horace Hart Publishing, 1910), p. 2.

Jewish coins.[1] This quite unexpected phenomenon however, according to Berkitt, is in harmony with Origen's express comment on Ps. 2:2 and parallel to Jerome's statement at the beginning of his "Prologus Galeatus."[2]

A similar view is presented by Professor Taylor who shows that the tetragrammaton is written וה וה with sloping uncials in what remains of the versions of Aquila, Symmachus and the Septuagint in the Hexaplar Fragment and in the old Hebrew letters 𐤉𐤄 𐤉𐤄 in the other Cairene relics of Aquila's version.[3]

A recent contribution, though providing not much illumination, comes from the Judaean desert, from the caves of Qumran. Professor Jonathan Siegel has made a notable investigation on the divine name in the Qumran scrolls. Two forms of this name are found in the scrolls, yah (יה) and Yahweh (יהוה), both written in palaeo-Hebrew characters and square script. The rationale for writing the tetragrammaton in palaeo-Hebrew characters, Siegel contends, is that the scribe did so "to insure that

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[1]F. C. Burkitt, Fragments of the Books of Kings: According to the Translation of Aquila (Cambridge: University Press, 1897), pp. 15ff.

[2]Ibid., p. 15.

[3]Charles Taylor, Hebrew-Greek Cairo Genizah Palimpsests: Including a Fragment of the Twenty-Second Psalm According to Origen's Hexapla (Cambridge: University Press, 1900), pp. 27, 72.

under no condition would the name be erased,"[1] whereas prepositional prefixes could, since they do not share in the sacredness of the name. As to which is the original form, Siegel does not inform us.

Apart from the name Yahweh, and its shorter forms connected with the proper names, only one shorter form, yah (יה) appears in the Old Testament, mostly in poetic style: Ex. 15:2 (cited in Is. 12:2 and Ps. 118:14); Ex. 17:16; Is. 26:4; Ps. 94:7, 12; 115:17, 18; 122:4; 130:3; 135:3, 4 and in hallel Psalms.[2]

The evidence for the original usage of the shorter form is not compelling. Yahweh is probably as archaic as any other shorter form although at the Exodus is received a special significance, and can hardly have been altogether new to the Hebrews before their departure. A new name would imply in those days a new god.

As early as Genesis chapters 2-3, the combined name, Yahweh-Elohim is repeated twenty times, which at least suggests that it was in frequent usage. In chapter 4:26 we read, " . . . then men began to call upon the name of Yahweh."

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[1]Jonathan P. Siegel, "The Employment of Palaeo-Hebrew Character for the Divine Names at Qumran in the Light of Tannaitic Sources," Hebrew Union College Annual 42 (1971): 159-72.

[2]The hallal Psalms fall into three groups: 104, 105, 106; 146-150; 111, 112, 113, 115, 116, 117.

No doubt, the Hebrews in Egypt had intimate connections with the desert tribes. Moses spent one-third of his life there; his relatives, the Kenites and Medianites associated themselves with the Hebrew people.[1] The Rechabites (perhaps Kenites in origin), were fervent worshippers of Yahweh.[2] These features at least indicate whether the name Yahweh was not also known in the Sinaitic Peninsula.[3]

The name "Yahweh" is not a class name, but a personal proper name, everywhere denoting the person of God alone. The Hebrew may speak of "the Elohim," but never of, "the Yahweh," for Yahweh is the only true God. He may say "my God," but not "my Yahweh," for by the first he means the second. He may speak of "the God of Israel," but never of "the Yahweh of Israel," for there is no other Yahweh. He may speak of "the living God," but never of "the living Yahweh," for he cannot conceive of Yahweh other than living.

The etymological probability of the name Yahweh is to be looked for in Ex. 3:14, which defies translation. The Greek translators understood it " ὁ ὢν " (the one who is), and the Vulgate, "qui est" (he who is). The pronunciation of the name has undergone constant reconstruc-

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[1]Judg. 1:16. [2]2 Kings 10:15.

[3]Cf. Ex. 18:11; Deut. 33:2f.; Judg. 5:4-5.

tion in modern times, since the vowels were absent from the original Hebrew text, and the Jews scrupulously avoided the true pronunciation, probably grounded upon the erroneous conception of Lev. 4:16 from which it was deduced that the sheer mention of the name implied a major offence.[1]

At this point the etymological significance of the term Yahweh should be pointed out. Different notable scholars have expressed variant opinions based upon Ex. 3:14. James Orr[2] interprets the words, ehyeh asher ehyeh to refer to God's ontological existence, "The Self-Existence One." A second interpretation has been advanced by W. F. Albright[3] and D. N. Freedman.[4] Albright ingeniously reconstructs the phrase, taking the verb as hiphil, construes it into, yahweh asher yihweh, "he brings into being what comes into being," "he causes to be." It is rather difficult to explain why this phrase should have been modified. Moreover, the objection is that the verb never takes a hiphil form[5] anywhere in the Old Testament. Still, the

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[1]Targum Onkelos states: "And whoever utters the name Yah killing shall be killed, stoning shall be stoned. . . . "

[2]James Orr, The Problem of the Old Testament (New York: Scribner and Sons, 1926), p. 225.

[3]W. F. Albright, From Stone Age to Christianity (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1940), pp. 16, 261.

[4]D. N. Freedman, "The Name of the God of Moses," Journal of Biblical Literature 79 (1960): 151-56.

[5]Cf. Brown, Driver and Briggs, A Hebrew and English Lexicon, p. 128, where it says: "But most take it as Qal. . . . "

name Yahweh never takes the role of creator in the Old Testament; that falls under the name Elohim.

Others have denied any relation of the name Yahweh with the verb "to be." J. T. Meek[1] suggests that it comes from the Arabic word, "hawa" (هوا), meaning, "to blow," "wind." The danger in this interpretation is that it equates Yahweh with some "storm-god" of the Sinai Peninsula, and thus introduces a polytheistic notion intolerable to any Hebrew.

The revelation at Sinai was a "name revelation" of supreme significance. In Semitic archives "to know the name" was more than a catchword or an identification tag; it was to experience and know the nature of the thing named.[2] It was to the name of Yahweh that Solomon built his temple,[3] and when Yahweh took His dwelling place there, "He put His name there."[4] The name was a manifestation of the self-revelation of Yahweh. In Biblical language if the name of a deity were unknown he could not be conjured. The sophisticated Greeks could write: "To an Unknown God," but to the religious Semites such a notion was unknown.

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[1]T. J. Meek, Hebrew Origins (New York: Harper & Row, 1960), p. 116.

[2]Johannes Pederson, Israel: Its Life and Culture, Vols. 1-2 (Oxford: University Press, 1926), pp. 245-59.

[3]1 Kings 3:2, 5; 17:19.

[4]Deut. 12:5; 14:24.

Therefore, although the verb means "to be," "to exist," and that is the equivalent verb used in Arabic (هيا), Armaic (הוה) and Syriac (ܗܘܐ), yet it is more than mere existence. It also conveys the idea of a new relationship, state, condition, to happen anew.[1] For example, Boaz entered a new relationship when Ruth became (and the verb hayah is used) his wife.[2] Joseph entered a new state, condition, relationship when he was made (again the verb, hayah) the governor of Egypt. Hence, the name in our context should be taken in a covenantal content which accords suitably well with further affirmation in Ex. 6:7: "I will be (ehyeh) their God and they shall be (yihyu) my people." That is, they will enter into a new relationship with me, they will be my possession.

Therefore, this sublime notion of an ever-living, absolute, self-existing and unchanging God began to operate itself out in the mind of Israel into a substantial and covenantal reality at Sinai. Here we grasp the full significance of the name Yahweh. While Elohim portrays God's creative activity, El-Shaddy presents His omnipotence and bounty, Yahweh sets forth His revelation, grace and unchanging love who delivers His people, dwells among them and receives their worship.

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[1]This also is the view of Gleason L. Archer, Old Testament Introduction, rev. ed. (Chicago: Moody Press, 1975), p. 123.

[2]Ruth 4:13.

The presupposition which is of greatest significance for the entire Hebrew religious life and history, is simply this: God is. God's existence for the Old Testament writers was never questioned. Prophets and priests, psalmists and historians stress with full naivete that the whole universe bears witness to His existence. Unlike the modern man, God's existence posed no problem to any Israelite.

The Hebrew also knew that God was righteous, and demands righteousness from His worshippers. Righteousness entails obedience to His will, and any form of unrighteousness elicits a breach in the covenant.

Another characteristic of Yahweh portrayed in the mind of the Israelites is that He is gracious. He shows loving kindness to the third and fourth generation toward those who obey His laws and ordinances.

The Old Testament also speaks of Yahweh as being jealous. The second command advises: "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image . . . for I the Lord they God am a jealous God." The Hebrew word "jealous" (קנא) carries the idea of jealous as well as of zealous. Idols are intolerant to Him as well as to any Israelite thinker.

With this refreshing simplicity of faith, the Israelites believed God, accepted His terms and enteres into covenant with Him, when He called Moses at Sinai, to be their God and they to be His people, quite different from those around them.

APPENDIX B

THE DATE

The events of Exodus Chapter 24 took place at Mount Sinai immediately after the exodus. According to 19:1, the Israelites encamped before the sacred Mount in the third month after their departure from Egypt. The date, however, remains somewhat nebulous; it can only be determined inferentially, due primarily to our lack of knowledge on important aspects and to difficulties involved. In the first place, the Bible deals only generally with the question (1 Kings 6:1); second, the Egyptian history is silent on the matter. Neither unearthed papyri nor exquisite monuments and tombs of ancient Egypt provides the slightest information connected with the exodus. There is no mention of the departure, or of the Israelite oppression, or of the plagues, or Moses standing before Pharoah. The inscription, "Israel is wasted, her seed is not, khal (Palestine) has become as a (defenceless) widow before Egypt,"[1] inscribed on the stele erected by Merneptah, king of Egypt about 1230 B.C.

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[1]H. R. Hall, The Ancient History of the Near East, 5th ed. (New York: Barnes & Noble, 1920), p. 367.

does not shed direct light on the exodus situation, but gives a terminus ad quem.

In general, three views have been adopted in regard to the dating of the exodus.

1. Some scholars date the exodus in or just after the long reign of the powerful king Thotmose III, of the eighteenth dynasty. His date according to H. R. Hall[1] and Professor J. H. Breasted[2] is 1479 B.C. In this case Amenhotep the II, his son (1448-1420) was the king before whom Moses stood and demanded freedom for his people.

This early date of the exodus is primarily established upon two Biblical texts. According to 1 Kings 6:1, the exodus from Egypt took place 480 years before the fourth year of Solomon. The Temple of Solomon was begun in the fourth year of his reign, that is, in 967,[3] or shortly after. This would simply mean that the exodus would have occurred approximately 1447 B.C. in the second year of Amenhotep II (1448-1420). It is interesting to

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[1]Ibid., p. 233.

[2]J. H. Breasted, A History of the Ancient Egyptians (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1905), p. 426.

[3]The year 967 B.C. is E. R. Thiele's date, Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1951), p. 254. M. F. Unger prefers the date 961, Archaeology and the Old Testament (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1954), p. 141. Albright computes it at 958, "Some observations on the New Material for the History of the Alphabet," Bulletin of American Schools of Oriental Research 17 (1954): 26.

observe that John J. Davis who accepts the early date says that the name of the month appearing in 1 Kings 6:1 is the archaic form and not a late one.[1]

Of equal importance in the discussion of the early date of the exodus is the statement attributed to the judge, Jephthah (Judg. 11:26), in which he placed three hundred years between Israel's sojourn at Heshbon and about the second year of his judgeship. The statement by this judge is in remarkable agreement with the date given in 1 Kings 6:1. If one should add 38 years to cover the period from the exodus to Heshbon, and about 144 years from Jephthah to the fourth year of Solomon, the total number of years between the exodus and Solomon's fourth year would total out to 482 years.

Another form of evidence also exists which supports the early date of the exodus. That evidence is drawn from the excavations at the site of Jericho, Tell es-Sultan, by both John Garstand and Kathleen Kenyon. Garstand worked at Jericho between 1930 and 1936. On archaeological grounds, he discovered that the Late-Bronze level (City IV) was related to the period of the conquest.[2] In addition to that, he felt he had dis-

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[1]John J. Davis, Moses and the Gods of Egypt (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1971), p. 29.

[2]John Garstand and J. B. E. Garstand, The Story of Jericho (London: Marshall, Morgan & Scott, Ltd., 1948), pp. 107-8.

covered the walls of Jericho which dated to Joshua's period. The later excavations of Kathleen Kenyon between 1952 and 1958 required a reidentification of the walls discovered by Garstand. Rather than belonging to the Late-Bronze Age period, they represented a much earlier phase, Early Bronze.[1]

2. The second view holds that the Israelites were driven out of Egypt during the religious revolution of Akhenaton (1383-1366 B.C.), or during Harmhab's (1350-1315) restoration of the traditional religion. Arthur Weigall strongly supports this view.[2] This theory would place the exodus about 1350 B.C.

3. The late date theory dates the exodus still later during the nineteenth dynasty, regarding Ramesses II as the Pharoah of the oppression (1290-1224 B.C.). This view is advocated by W. F. Albright,[3] John Bright[4] and Jack Finegan.[5] If this is a true account, the Pharoah

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[1]Kathleen Kenyon, Digging Up Jericho (London: Ernest Benn Ltd., 1957), pp. 170-72.

[2]Arthur Weigall, The Life and Times of Akhenaton (London: Thornton Butterworth Ltd., 1922), p. 29. It is worthy to note that Josephus connects the expulsion of the Jews from Egypt with this religious movement.

[3]W. F. Albright, From the Stone Age to Christianity (New York: Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1957), p. 13.

[4]John Bright, A History of Israel (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1959), p. 121.

[5]Jack Finegan, Light From the Ancient Past (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1946), p. 108.

of the exodus was the same monarch who reigned for about ten years (1233-1223 B.C.).

Within the last five decades the late date theory has been adopted by many archaeologists and the Old Testament scholars who are committed to a documentary view of the origin of the Pentateuch. It might also be said that among scholars adopting this view there are very few who hold to a unified movement of all twelve tribes from Egypt and into Canaan under the leadership of Moses and Joshua. Notable exceptions to this would be K. A. Kitchen[1] and R. K. Harrison,[2] both of whom are conservative scholars who defend Mosaic authorship and a unified exodus.

The present writer inclines to agree with the first view. This view agrees better with the Biblical account in Judges 11:26, 1 Kings 6:1 and with Paul's statement in Acts 13:19-20, where he places 450 years from the exodus (when the Israelites left Egypt) down to the date of David's capture of Jerusalem (ca. 995). This means that the 450 years of Acts 13 includes the period from 1445 to 995 B.C.

Also this early date is supported by the term "Habiru" in the Tel el Amarna Letters (1400-1360 B.C.)

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[1]A. Kitchen, Ancient Orient and Old Testament (Chicago: Inter-Varsity Press, 1966), pp. 57ff.

[2]R. K. Harrison, Introduction to the Old Testament (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1969), pp. 174-80.

who are described as attacking the cities of Canaan, and it would be difficult to dissociate them from the Hebrews. Besides, this view provides a regal lady to be the foster mother of Moses, the great queen Hatshepsut, sister of Thutmose III, who reigned with him, who was hated by him and finally was overthrown by him.

APPENDIX C

THE SUPERNATURAL: MIRACLES

Recently a theory has been advocated by a host of scholars, associating the supernatural events at Mount Sinai with some outburst of volcanic activity occurred in that region. Had there been such an outbreak, one might suppose that it would have been introduced into the Egyptian records and made a distinguishing mark for an important historical incident. The Semitic people connected (they still do) the supernatural and the unusual natural phenomena with certain dates. According to the Arab history books and the tradition, Mohammed was born in the Year of the Elephant, Qur'an was delivered on "laylat el Qader" (the Night of Power),[1] and the present writer's birthday is well remembered in the family because it is connected with a massacre. Events like these form a part of the calender for the Semites.

However, if one accepts God's miraculous revelation

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[1]The twenty-seventh night of Ramadan, the Moslem month of fasting, when the first revelation came to Mohammed. It is said that on this night the gates of paradise are open, so that any request made to God or to the Prophet Mohammed on this particular night goes directly to them without any mediation.

given at Sinai, God's manifestation of Himself to the whole nation at His headquarters is decisive and definitive. Here the people come to know something about the holiness of God; they were convinced that Moses was not a legend but the mediator between God and God's people, and the architect of the foundation of the moral, religious, social and ceremonial systems. The supernatural act of the covenant given and accepted at Mount Sinai is one of God's great activities at which reason stumbles.

APPENDIX D

THE SITE OF SINAI

Several attempts have been postulated to identify Mount Sinai, the location of the first pronouncement of the Israelite law. Most of these attempts have been based on the theory that it is to be located in the Sinai Peninsula. The claims discussed have been of Jebel Musa (The Mount of Moses), Jebel el 'Ejma, Jebel Um 'Alawi, Jebel Zebir-Katarina and Jebel Serbal.

The Bible uses two names for the mountain in question, Horeb and Sinai. The proponents of the Documentary Hypothesis ascribe the first appellation to E and D, the second to J and P.

There are three sites that are usually given weighty consideration: to the west, to the east and to the southwest.

1. Jebel Musa. This is the traditional locale, the apex of Sinai Peninsula, to the west soaring eight thousand feet high. Professor G. E. Wright, F. V. Filson[1]

[1]G. E. Wright and F. V. Filson, The Westminster Historical Atlas to the Bible, rev. ed. (Philadelphia: Westminster Press), p. 38.

and A. H. Sayce[1] recognize this site as the location of Mount Sinai, although this identification does not go back further than Justinian's time (A.D. 527-565), when the emperor officially recognized it as such and the Christian anchorites flocked to that neighborhood.

2. Midian. A group of scholars headed by Edward Meyer[2] and Hugo Gressman[3] have sought to determine Mount Sinai to the east of the Gulf of 'Aqabah. These people who seek to locate the Mount in this part of the Peninsula proceed from the assumption that the mountain once was a volcanic activity. The thesis, however, is not convincing; there is no evidence of any volcanic mountain in the Peninsula.

3. A third view holds that Sinai was located southwest of Edom, in the wilderness of Paran. The view is based on Num. 10:12, where the wilderness of Sinai is a synonym for that of Paran, and that in the blessings of Moses (Deut. 32:2), Sinai, Seir and Paran are thought to be the site of the mountain. A similar note is heard in the song of Deborah (Judg. 5:4), one of the oldest pieces of Hebrew poetry in which Mount Sinai was in Edom.

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[1]A. H. Sayce, The Early History of the Hebrews (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1897), p. 188.

[2]Edward Meyer, Die Israeliten und Thre Machbarstamme (Halle: Verlag von Max Niemeyer, 1906), p. 4.

[3]Hugo Gressman, Mose und Seine Zeit (Gottingen: Dandenhaed und Rupreht, 1913), p. 24.

The present writer prefers the first view, because it harmonizes with the statement of Deut. 1:2 that the journey from Sinai to Kadesh was eleven days, a span of time to enable the Hebrews arrive to their destination. Also the location is near copper and turquoise mines which Kenites (smiths) of Judges 4:1 plied. These Kenites tribes most probably must have settled in that spot. Whatever theory is held, still on the slopes of Sinai the name of Yahweh was made known to man and His laws promulgated.

APPENDIX E

THE RELIGIOUS IMPORT

For Israel, the climax of God's self-manifestation was the crossing of the "Red Sea" (or the Sea of Reeds) and the instituting of the covenant at Mount Sinai. At this spot, at God's holy mountain, Israel through faith realizes a new meaning of existence displayed in objective historical demonstration. Here revelation has occurred and Sinaitic theophany augments the social, ethical and religious relationship in which Israel now stands as a community before God of her salvation.

The peremptory significance of Exodus 24 is God's proposal of the covenant, the people's pledge to that proposal and the final sealing of the covenant with a sacred meal. It is a distinguishing mark of the covenant relationship and a constant reminder of God's revelation in the historic actuality. The assimilation of idolatrous practices, the intrusion of foreign beliefs and the toleration of pagan worship are categorically proscribed. Israel is challenged to be a people for Yahweh's possession, a kingdom of priests, a holy nation (Ex. 19:6).

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