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THE CONFLICT OF BAALISM AND
HEBREW PROPHECY

by

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In the Years to Come.

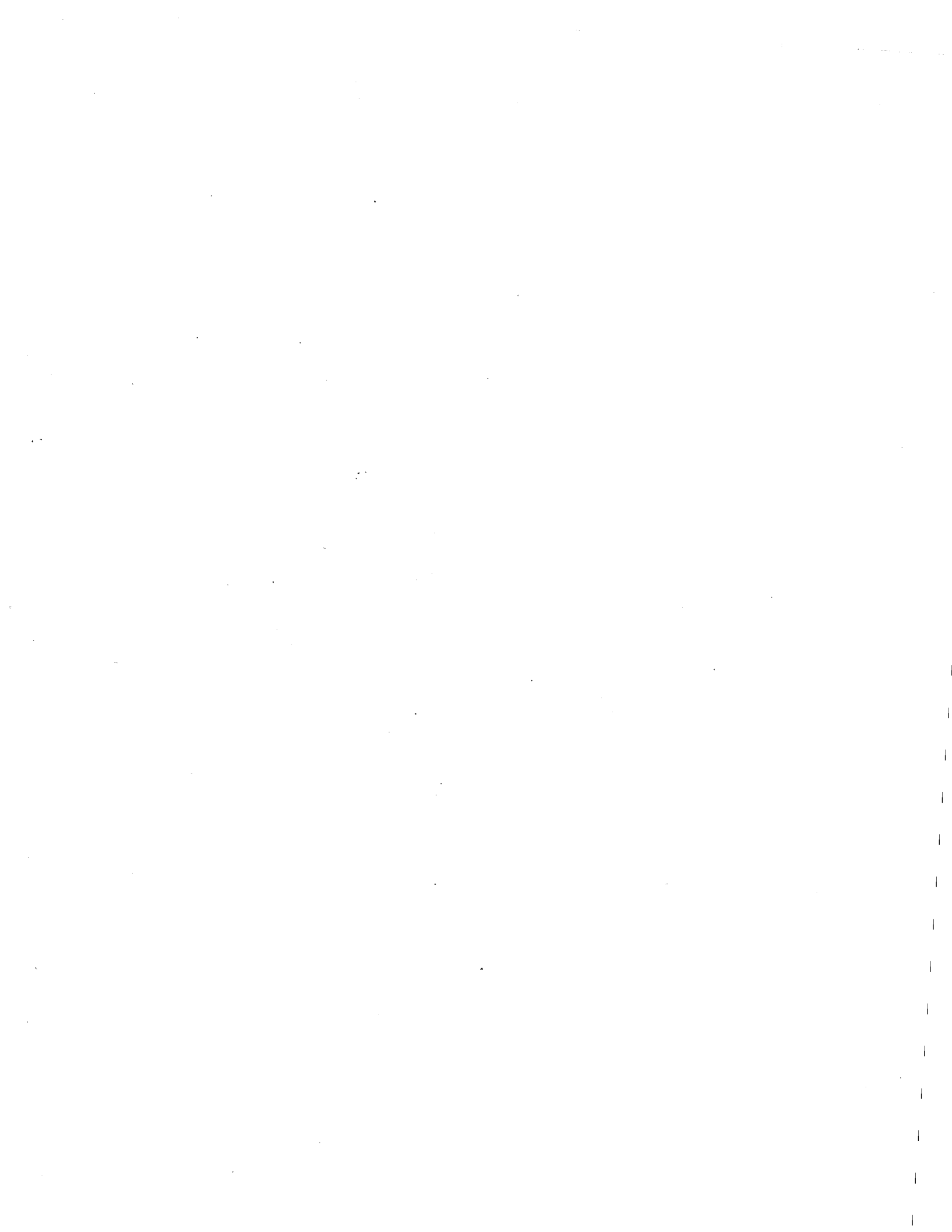


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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

THE SUBJECT AND ITS JUSTIFICATION

- A. The Subject Defined
- B. The Subject Delimited
- C. The Subject Justified
- D. Methodology - Modus Operandi

THE CONFLICT OF BA'ALISM WITH
HEBREW PROPHECY

CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

THE SUBJECT AND ITS JUSTIFICATION

A. The Subject Defined.

The history of religion in the world of men presents to the casual observer of labyrinth of such increasing complexity that the average individual turns away despairing of untangling the intertwining strands of influence. Yet the religious world today is irretrievably tied up with the manners and customs of yesterday. And these yesterdays were once 'todays' and had their own 'yesterdays' in turn. To point this fact Emil Brunner gives us a classic description of the city of Zürich:

"Looking down at night from the mountain top upon Zürich, the traveller sees a broad luminous strip in the midst of the confusing welter of the twinkling lights of the city. It is lovely and attractive although one does not understand the significance of the aggregation of lights. It is the park square in front of the railway station; each of the hundreds of lights is in its place, but the wayfarer on the heights above knows nothing of this perfect order. Only the chief electrician knows why this arrangement was made and not some other. He has

the blue-print and can grasp the whole plan at a glance; it is his insight, his will that orders and guides the whole." ¹

To us the early religion of the Israelites often seems to be "a broad luminous strip in a confusing welter of twinkling lights." It is hard for us to grasp the processes of the master mind behind it all. It is the purpose of the present study to draw near to the weltering confusion that was the world during the period of Israel's rise to nation-hood and the subsequent decline of her national autonomy with the express purpose of discovering what elements entered into the foundation of the Jewish concept of Religion as that concept has been portrayed by her prophets.

When the Israelitish tribes entered Canaan the purity of their desert-religion was brought face to face with a religion equally developed, a religion that was almost overwhelming in its appeal to the imagination, and to the physical and material aspects of the lives of the new-comers. This religion was the worship of Baal. We shall seek to point out the distinctive qualities of these two conflicting concepts of man's relation to God and to discover how the religious leaders of the Jewish tribes reacted to the new environment. We shall inquire as to what portions, if any, of the teachings, ritual, or ideology of ba'alism were incor-

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1. Brunner, Emil, "Our Faith", Tr. by John W. Rilling, p. 20, 21.

porated into the religion that later became known as Judaism.

The word "Ba'al" is taken to mean the sum total of the manifestations of worship that were ascribed to the local deities of Canaan during the Israelitish occupation of that country. Ba'al is sometimes ascribed personality. He was everywhere the same, yet everywhere different:

"In Semetic religion the relation of the gods to particular places which are special seats of their power is usually expressed by the title Ba'al (pl. Ba'alim, Ba'alath). As applied to men ba'al means the master of a house, the owner of a field, cattle or the like; or in the plural the ba'alim of a city are its freeholders and full citizens. . . . In a secondary sense, in which alone the word is ordinarily used in Arabic, ba'al means husband; but it is not used of the relation of a master to a slave, or of a superior to his inferior, and it is incorrect to regard it, when employed as a divine title, as a mere synonym implying lordship over men. . . . When a god is simply called "the Ba'al", the meaning is not 'the lord of the worshipper' but the possessor of some place or district, and each of the multitude of local Ba'alim is distinguished by adding the name of his own place. Melcarth is the Ba'al of Tyre, Astarte the Ba'alath of Byblos; there was a Baal of Lebanon, of Mount Hermon, of Mount Peor, and so forth." 1

B. The Subject Delimited.

The subject of Hebrew origins is so largely yet a matter of disagreement that we feel justified in avoiding its controversial issues. Yet, on the other hand, there are certain aspects of the Origin of the

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1. Smith, W. Robertson, Religion of the Semites, p. 92.

Religion of Israel that have a bearing upon our subject and will have to receive definite treatment. These phases will include the nature of the religion as it was practiced by the Semitic tribes who later become known to us as Israelites during characteristic epochs of their history: the prelude in Canaan, the interlude in Egypt, the prelude in the desert, and the final conflict of the tribes with the religion of the native dwellers in Canaan.

The key center of the conflict between the worship of Ba'al and the worship of Jehovah came during the reign of Ahab in the ninth century (875 - 853 B.C.)¹ when the organized cult of the Tyrian ba'al was allowed a foothold, and later under Jehu (c. 891 B.C.) who relentlessly exterminated every member of the house of Ahab (dynasty of Omri) and led the reform movement for a purified Yahweh worship. Here the ground was prepared for the work of the great prophets of the eighth century B.C.: Amos, and Hosea, Isaiah, who sought to accomplish by example and instruction what Jehu could not attain by the cruelty of the blood purge. To them was given the great task of creating religious forms, and of giving meaning content to

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1. Hastings, James, ed., Dictionary of the Bible, 1930, p. 17.

those forms, that would lead their people into an understanding of the true nature of God: His Fatherhood, His sovereignty over human affairs, but above all else, His love.

Sources for the present study will be limited to the works of these prophets named above and to the historical-poetical books that portray the same period: Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings. An analysis of these books will be presented showing the occurrences of the ideas implicit in the worship of ba'al. A correlation between these occurrences and the political, historical, and religious background of the contexts will then be sought.

C. The Subject Justified.

To the student of religion there is nothing that quite holds the interest as does the story of how the world was prepared for the coming of Christ. There is one phase of this story that has been very largely neglected: the real history that lies behind the development of an ethical monotheism by the Israelites, and the part that the land of Canaan with its indigenous religious practices had in this development. Bertholet in his History of Hebrew Civilization emphasizes this point when he says:

" .. the life of Israel was gradually and inevitably permeated by certain elements of Canaanite civilization. But apart from that it seems to be an unchangeable law, verified in history of all religions, that religion somehow clings to the soil of a country . . . whoever enters a new land is bound to do homage to the gods of it." ¹

Even in the Christianity of the present day there may be found survivals of ritual and custom that had their origin not in the Yahweh worship of the desert days of Israel but in heathen practices, even pagan rites. These have been taken up, purified, even sanctified, the good that was inherent in them, taken and, once cleansed of its imperfections, made fit vehicles for the conveyance of the truth of the fact of God, and of His presence with mankind. Bertholet goes on to say:

"In one way or another something of the ancient temple peers out in the newly consecrated church, and something of the former church can still be seen in the mosque. To every place of worship there clings something of the character of the rites that belong to it . . . When new-comers try to adapt themselves to these they find they must also adopt the pious customs and festive occasions that form part of the daily life, however hard they may try to reinterpret these to suit their own religion, or even to suppress them by force. In all directions . . . Israel's encounter with Canaan brought about a decided intermixture of civilizations." ²

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1. Bertholet, History of Civilization, p. 146.
2. Ibid., p. 147

This problem is therefore one of great importance theoretically and practically. We believe that the Reformation was necessary to set aside pagan survivals in the Christian Church and that no less than the Reformation could have accomplished this transformation. The place of the Reformation in the history of the Christian Church is analogous to the place of the great prophetic protest of the eighth century in its effort to rid the worship of Jehovah of the impedimenta of the old, native, Canaanite religion. The influence of Ba'alism may be claimed to be rather important, certainly important enough to be the object of independent research. Moreover, because of the perenniality of human behavior, the subject has a permanently pragmatic value.

D. Methodology - Modus Operandi.

In executing this study we shall seek to apply the historical approach to the developing culture and religion of Israel. Five approaches are proposed, namely, (1) a survey of the conservative position relative to the development of the Hebrew nation and religion in four stages: a) prelude in Canaan, b) the Egyptian interlude, c) the prelude in the desert, and d) the conflict with ba'alism in Canaan; (2) a study

of the Canaanitish background with reference to ba'alism;
(3) a presentation of the interpenetration of the two conflicting concepts of God in our religious sources, followed by (4) a study of the historical-prophetic literature of the Old Testament: Joshua, Judges, the Books of Samuel and Kings, seeking correlation between the ba'al occurrences and the sociological, political and religious contexts, and finally, (5) a study of the place of the Eighth Century with its outstanding prophets, Amos, Isaiah, and Hosea in the development of Hebrew history giving particular emphasis to the prophet Hosea. This will be followed by a concluding chapter presenting permanent values and contributions.

CHAPTER TWO

A STUDY IN HEBREW ORIGINS WITH PARTICULAR EMPHASIS UPON THE RELIGIOUS PRACTICES CHARACTERISTIC OF THE VARIOUS STAGES OF HEBREW DEVELOPMENT

- A. Introductory
- B. Sources for Such a Study

- C. Prelude in Canaan
- D. Egyptian Interlude
- E. Prelude in the Desert
- F. Conflict with Ba'alism in Canaan
- G. Conclusion



CHAPTER TWO

A STUDY IN HEBREW ORIGINS WITH PARTICULAR EMPHASIS UPON THE RELIGIOUS PRACTICES CHARACTERISTIC OF THE VARIOUS STAGES OF HEBREW DEVELOPMENT

A. Introductory

Much of mystery must always veil the true facts regarding the origin of the Hebrew race. Mystery likewise surrounds their earliest religious customs. We know that the God who revealed Himself through Moses at Sinai was a different God from He who had been worshipped by the Israelites of the Bondage. Perhaps we can state the same truth more auspiciously by saying that God was able at Sinai to get His children to accept a more perfect revelation of His true nature and being. In the same way a further step forward was made over the Mosaic concept of God by the prophets of the eighth century. So it was that eventually Christ Himself was able to build upon all that had gone before and present to the world a perfect self-revelation of God. Today we denominate God in terms of the life of Jesus. How far short of this revelation was the concept held by Abraham, by Moses, even by Amos and Isaiah!

A study of origins, once we recognize the dangers of dogmatism, will yield much of value - pointing as it does the long, long road that man has travelled searching to satisfy the inner urge that dictates: "Thou shalt worship." The late Dr. D. D. Luckenbill of the University of Chicago has these words concerning the study of origins:

"There is a peculiar fascination in the study of origins. The beginning of social and religious institutions, the elements which have gone into the mental and physical structures of man, the genius of life itself, both in the animal and in the vegetable kingdom, the origin of our earth and of the solar systems of the universe -- these are the problems toward the attempt of whose solution man seems to be drawn as irresistably as the moth to the candle. . . . We grow restive as we arrange in order the well-attested events of history or analyze the character of even the most daring innovator; but when we turn from these prosaic tasks to the study of a people's myths and legends, to the problem of extracting therefrom what we choose to regard as the underlying facts and of combining these with those scraps of historical narrative which are always imbedded in the 'early history' of nations, we are immediately placed in a position where hypotheses are necessary, and we are happy." 1

We should note that Dr. Luckenbill himself realized the dangers implicit in any study in origins. There is always a possibility that the 'moth' will get too near the 'candle'. Today we find ourselves in a po-

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1. Luckenbill, D. D., On Israel's Origins, American Journal of Theology, Vol. 22, p. 24f., Univ. of Chic. Press., 1918.

sition to take advantage of all the benefits that have accrued to Bible criticism as a result of what is commonly called the Wellhausen theory of the evolutionary origin of the Biblical records. The Christian church protested against the attack of the German scholars; but at the same time this 'attack' forced conservative theologians and Bible scholars to make sure of their position. This has resulted in a saner view of much that is contained in our sacred Book. We have found that to admit other than Davidic authorship of the Book of the Psalms, for example, does not invalidate the poignancy of that Book. But on the other hand an acknowledgement of various authors gives to us a larger concept of the Great Mind that could take the writings of unknown men and weld the whole into a homogeneous mass that taken together reveals to us the very heart of God. We no longer are afraid to acknowledge the part that man had to play in the creation of the divine book, and in admitting that part, we have made the divine element all the more wonderful. It is from this point of view that we approach our survey of the study of origins.

B. Sources for Such a Study

It must be recognized that there are only two classes under which source material for a study must be listed, the Biblical and the Extra-Biblical. For purposes of Old Testament chronology there is no problem of greater importance than that of the manner in which the conquest of Canaan was effected by the Israelitish tribes. The fact of such a conquest is made the keystone of all Jewish history by the Biblical writers; it is almost the sole motive for their appeal for devotion to the God whose strong arm effected that conquest, with the attendant note of the deliverance from the bondage of Egypt which preceded it. Consequently the fact of the conquest of Canaan should also be corroborated in secular history and there also find a central position if the Biblical narrative is to be accepted at face value: so argue the critics.

On the whole, however, it is true that archeological data are few and far between. What they show is of basic value, but it is idle to say that they are essential. Many times the critics have continued their theorizing even in the face of contrary archeological evidence. In the past, the making of theories has been too largely a purely literary process.

Quoting from Dr. Lewis Bayles Paton:

"No problem of Old Testament history is more fundamental than that of the manner in which the conquest of Canaan was effected by the Hebrew tribes. If they came unitedly, there is a possibility that they were united in the desert and in Egypt. If their invasions were separated by wide intervals of time, there is no probability that they were united in their earlier history. Our estimate of the Patriarchal and Mosaic tradition is thus conditioned upon the answer that we give to this question." ¹

1. Extra - Biblical Sources

The fact of such a conquest can no longer be doubted. The burned walls of Jericho have been laid bare. Not only so but two series of documents have been uncovered and translated that are of the utmost importance to the student of Old Testament History. These are The Tell-el Amarna letters written by local potentates in Canaan at the time of the Habiru invasions to the Pharaoh in Egypt whom they considered as their sole protector against the incoming hordes. These letters portray for us in unmistakable clarity exact events at the very time that the conquest was in progress. The other documents have been called the Ras Shamra epics. They do for us in the field of religion what the Amarna letters do for us in the field

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1. Paton, Lewis Bayles, Israel's Conquest of Canaan, Journal of Biblical Literature, Vol. 32, p. 1f. 1913, Society of Biblical Literature and Exegesis, Boston.

of politics. They are contemporary with Moses and give us an exact picture of ritual and religious thought as that thought was carried on by the people with whom the early Israelites came in contact. The Ras Shamra epics are still in progress of translation, yet even now their influence is being felt and some results can be denominated.

A very fine example of how the Tell el- Amarna letters are substantiating the Biblical narratives is given by A. T. Olmstead, Professor of Oriental History at the University of Chicago in his book, History of Palestine and Syria:

"According to the epic, Joshua led Israel across the Jordan and into Canaan. Now it is a remarkable coincidence, if coincidence it is, that a historical Joshua actually is mentioned in an Amarna letter; he is in company with other men of good Hebrew name, Job, king of Pella, and Benjamin, and he is east of Jordan in Gilead. In the epic, the ~~cross-
ing~~ is located between Shittim and Gilgal, known in antiquity for its sacred images (Jud. 3:19), and still marked by a circle and a sacred tree, but an earlier tradition placed the crossing at Adam, southwest of Gilead (Josh. 3:16). Name, place, and time seem to force an identification of this historical Joshua with the Joshua of the epic." 1

Professor Olmstead goes on to show the actual excavations of the site of Jericho substantiate exactly what the Biblical records state to have happened at the beginning

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1. Olmstead, A.T., History of Palestine and Syria. p. 197.

of the conquest of the new land:

"Jericho, so the excavations prove, fell about the beginning of the fourteenth century, in other words, at the time when the Habiru were entering Canaan, and when Joshua appears in the letters. From the epic we learn that Jericho was devoted to the deity and utterly destroyed; the excavations show over the whole site houses burned to the ground, charred timbers and ashes, stone cracked and adobe turned to hard red brick by the intense heat of a great fire, the walls fallen down the slope or completely destroyed. Joshua, we are told, cursed the site; the excavations prove that only a few squatters dared the curse for half a millennium. (Josh. 10:12) ¹

Writing in the Modern Churchman for October, 1937, Professor S. H. Hooke stresses the importance of these two classes of extra-Biblical sources and their effect upon the whole field of Biblical criticism. He says:

".. The most important of these discoveries was the finding and decipherment of the Ras Shamra tablets, written in a new form of cuneiform alphabetic script, and in a language which has been described by experts as an early and hitherto unknown Canaanite dialect. The texts, dating from about the middle of the second millenium, B. C., have provided us with the first contemporary evidence concerning the pantheon, the mythology and the ritual system of Canaan about the time when the Hebrews were beginning their settlement in Canaan The Ras Shamra tablets may be said to have done for the religion of Canaan what the Tell el-Amarna letters did for the political history of the country." ²

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1. Olmstead, A. T., History of Palestine and Syria. p. 198
2. Hooke, S. H., The Church and Modern Historical Research and Biblical Criticism, Modern Churchman, Oct., 1937, p. 271.

The publication of the translation of these texts force us to accept at least the possibility that Canaanitish religion at the time of the conquest had already undergone an integrating and organizing process and that the various magical practices already in existence had been welded "into one great ritual pattern, with local differences, but possessing common characteristics, the central importance of the king-god, the death and resurrection of the god, the sacred marriage, and a common body of myth representing the story of the sacred drama." ¹

One thing is certain, the student of religion is no longer under the necessity of postulating hypotheses² but may rest on the sure ground of scientifically attested fact, both as to the nature of the political set up, and the religious practices of the Canaanites at the very time when the Conquest was in progress. Some scholars even go so far as to state that the Amarna letters contain the Canaanite version of Israel's conquest basing that claim on the fact that no letters come from cities that the older sources of Joshua and Judges say expressly to have been captured by Israel. These cities would include Jericho, Bethel, Gibeon,

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1. Hooke, S.H., The Church and Modern Historical Research and Biblical Criticism, Modern Churchman, Oct., 1937 p. 274.
2. Cf. Luckenbill., Op. Cit., p. 24., quoted supra, p. 8

Shiloh and Hebron. On the other hand all the letters come from cities in Canaan that are expressly said not to have been so captured.¹ When this fact is coupled with Professor Olmstead's identification of the historical Joshua with the Joshua of the Biblical narrative, the importance of these texts can hardly be over estimated.

2. Biblical Sources.

When using our Biblical records with the express purpose of determining the concept of God held by various individuals and groups at various times in the history of Israel we shall have to bear in mind that the Bible in its present form is largely the work of the religious leaders of the southern kingdom of Israel.

We recognize that the Books of our Bible as they are arranged are a direct result of the Inspiration of God, and that men were moved to compile the documents with the didactic end in view. In and of themselves they are masterpieces never to be excelled. Yet at the same time there is a legitimate end to be served in seeking within the bounds of the literature of the Bible whatever hints there may be concerning the histori-

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1. Cf. Paton, op. cit., p. 38

cal religion of such characters as Abraham, Joseph, Moses, Joshua, and Amos. If it is true that these men actually existed as individuals and are more than mere eponyms under which the experiences of a particular tribe or group of people are personified, then it must also be true that as individuals they had religious experiences of God, and that these experiences were largely responsible in moulding the religious life and thought of the entire nation. It must further be true that these experiences were not identical, but were progressive in the degree to which God was enabled to reveal His true nature and being.

In beginning a survey of our Biblical records for outstanding religious characteristics of the leaders there presented we may begin with a review of certain facts already stated. The Exodus from Egypt is an historical event. Likewise the Conquest of Canaan is corroborated by secular findings. Moses and Joshua are likewise historical characters. Even Abraham emerges as a historical personality as we identify him in his sojourn with his wife Sarah in Egypt with the period of the Hyksos domination of that country. It should now be possible to turn to our Biblical accounts and reading these in the light of contemporary historical happenings, ascertain the gradual unfolding of the

monotheistic principle among the Hebrews. The important question here is "How was God conceived at this particular period; and under what aspects was He worshipped?" We shall also want to ask: "How did this particular concept of God influence the later religious history of the nation as a whole?"

A rather detailed account of the religious political development of Israel would be necessary for an adequate understanding of this later development.

C. Prelude in Canaan

Our story begins with the coming of certain Aramean nomads from Ur of the Chaldees to Harran. From this settlement at Harran, a certain group of individuals under the stress of a great religious impulse and under the direct leadership of Abraham departed for Canaan, a land at that time emerging from the fusion of Hittite and Amorite elements. The prophet Ezekiel has preserved for us the Biblical tradition of these elements in the background of Jewish development when he writes:

"Thine origin and thy birth is of the land of the Canaanite; an Amorite was thy father, and thy mother was an Hittite." (Ezk. 16:3)

A word in regard to the historicity of our characters is in order. Here I should like to quote from Elmer A. Leslie of Boston Theological Seminary.

"The earliest discernable stand of the Hebiru with which the Old Testament is concerned are the

Hebrew Fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the traditions concerning whom we have in three great cycles. Of basic importance for our discussion is the question as to their existence as historical individuals. The view advocated by Edward Meyer that they were originally Canaanite deities whom the Israelites came to revere as heroes and ancestors, is no longer seriously held. Of greater importance is the interpretation of the names of the Fathers as eponyms to the tribes, wherein a tribe is represented by the imaginary personage bearing its name, who is called into existence for the purpose of expressing its unity. From this point of view it would be natural to translate the seeming affinities of the various tribes into the family relations of father, son, brother, husband, wife, etc., of eponymous ancestors. In this view there is abiding value, for there is no question that such genealogical treatment of tribal relationships often was for the Hebrew historians a conventional symbolism perhaps more transparent to them than to us. But the exclusively eponymous interpretation which denies the Fathers historical reality must be and has largely been surrendered."¹

Leslie goes on to say:

"The Fathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are rightly viewed not primarily as eponyms of tribes but as actual historical individuals. This does not mean that the narratives of the Fathers contain no traditions of tribal movements or relationships. It was characteristic of the Israelite conception of a man and community that no sharp distinction was made between the history of the individual and that of the tribe. They were accordingly, . . . 'the Fathers who take part in the life of the tribe.' The tribe forms about a man and is called after him, and he exerts himself on their behalf. 'He is not removed by death from his tribe, but continues to live in it and share its adventures . . . He is at the same time the tribe and its father, and to

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1. Leslie, Elmer A., Old Testament Religion in the Light of Its Canaanite Background, p. 56, 57.

everyone who joins the tribe he thus becomes a Father.'" 1

At the time of the migration of Terah from Ur of the Chaldees to Harran, which was the most strategic point between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, Mesopotamia was under the control of the new dynasty founded by Sargon. His empire was by far the greatest that the world had known up to this time. There was a distinct and well-defined pantheon of gods carefully arranged into a graduated hierarchy. Idolatry was dignified by the patronage and impulse of the royal household. All Chaldea and its dependencies were irrevocably committed to it. Priestcraft in all its degradation was foisted upon a submissive people. Abraham must have been a witness to many magical rites of divination and had seen the awful horror of human sacrifice practiced in his own land. This situation threatened to become universal with the spread of the Chaldean influence over the western world. Then all at once, we know not exactly why, Terah moved his family to Harran. Yet even here Terah continued to follow worship of the God SIN who had long been worshipped there. Such was the religious background of the man Abraham.

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1. Leslie, *op. cit.*, p. 57, who quotes Pederson, J. Israel, Its Life and Culture, p. 14.

Suddenly there came to Abraham a new impulse, an impulse that could have no connection with his previous religious history. It could not have been an evolution using his past experience to arrive at new truth. Rather was it a mutation, to use the biological metaphor. Something new had happened in the world. A man became convinced that he had been a part of a system of utter wrongness. A man became convinced that he had been selected to start a new order of things. He became convinced that he had been in direct communication with a God whom he could not see, but could profoundly feel, and to this God he later gave the name "God Most High", -El Elyon. So he obeyed the mystical impulse and got him up and left his father's house and his kindred and departed to find a country, he knew not where. We can follow his travels to Canaan, stopping at Shechem, Bethel, and Hebron, later going to Egypt.

This story when read in the light of our extra-Biblical sources reveals a typical Aramean nomadic warrior, in charge of a rather large band of mercenary soldiers, a confederate of local kings, intent on personal gain and honor of family, like any ordinary man. Yet there is something distinctly different about the man that appeals to our imagination. He is possessed

of a religious sense that is new to the world of men, a worshipper of a new divinity, El Elyon. And with the worship of this new deity there went also an implicit refusal to partake in the universal worship of idols. It is true that our epic stories when judged by modern standards do not present either the worshipper or his God as morally perfect; we find that Pharaoh claims to be shocked by Abraham's amorality (Genesis 12:10 f). Abraham is particularly partial to oaks and terebinths when in communion with the spirit of his God. We find him erecting crude altars and anointing them with oil. He utilizes a system of sacrifice. At one time in his life, he even consents to the possibility of engaging in human sacrifice. He was partial to the number seven (7), setting aside seven ewes as a seal to a covenant. We find him planting a sacred tamarisk in calling upon the name of El-Elyon.

In summing up Abraham's concept of the relation of God to man, it may be said that he took the first bold step from a polytheism uncorrelated with morality in the direction of an ethical monotheism. He was superstitious, and at times descended to methods of deceit and trickery. This was characteristic also of the patriarchs who followed him, Isaac and Jacob. Abraham's

biggest contribution was the conception that God might be approached as one personality to another. This rapprochement was best accomplished by means of the legalistic covenant, usually attended by sacrifice. We have no way of determining what part the presence of the sacred trees and the sacred altars played in the patriarchs' consciousness of the presence of God. However, in the patriarchal period a complete break with idolatry was never made. We find Jacob, for instance, erecting an altar to God whom he called El-Elohe-Israel, and almost immediately afterward advising his household to put away their foreign gods. (These gods had been obtained by Jacob's wives in Aram-Naharaim.) The important thing for us is that with a definite sense of contact with Elohim there came also the incongruity of the worship of lesser gods.

D. Egyptian Interlude.

Among Bible Critics it has always been very popular to challenge the historicity of the sojourn in the land of Goshen, many of them basing their criticism on the fact that a continuous occupation by Hebrew tribes in Canaan has long been an established fact. Critics have loved to point out that the Biblical narrative itself has pointed out two different approaches to the

land of Canaan, one from the south, through Kadesh Barnea, and the other from the east, through Jericho. Then too, it has been established that Hebrew tribes settling in North and Central Canaan and across the Jordan had no traditions of a sojourn in Goshen nor of an Exodus therefrom.

"The remains of pottery and of civil or military buildings uncombed by excavation in the Holy Land show that there had been no break of continuity between Canaanite and Israelite civilization" ¹

Scholars today are beginning to realize, however, that there must be some basis of fact for so persistent a rumor as that of the Bondage and escape from Egypt. Olmstead, for example, says:

"On the other hand, the tradition of a captivity in Egypt is so persistent, it fits so well with contemporary conditions, it is so unthinkable that any people could have invented an episode so little to their credit, that we must assume a solid basis for the belief. Now even the latest writers remembered that only seventy souls went down into Egypt, while but two midwives were required by the whole Hebrew community just before their exit from the Nile Valley (Gen. 46:27, Ex. 1:15)." ²

And when we remember the historical differences that always existed between the tribes of Israel, and the difficulty that always obtained in getting the north and the south to act together on any one question,

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1. Lods, Israel, p. 7.
2. Olmstead, History of Palestine and Syria, p. 247

the very ease with which the Kingdom divided under Rehoboam after the brief period of enforced unity under David and Solomon we are led to wonder as to what deep seated cause could account for this 'unnatural' animosity. There is at least a possibility of truth in the theory that not all of the Hebrews were in Egypt, that some of them never left their abode in Canaan. This would agree with the Biblical records as to the numbers who entered Egypt under the direction of Joseph, and the numbers who came out. This theory would also help to explain the success the Israelites had when they re-entered Canaan and again took their places among their own brethren. Then too, our records in their present form are largely the work of leaders of the southern part of Judah - and if it be true that Judah and Levi were in Goshen, the very tribes that later appropriated the centralized worship of Yahweh, we have an adequate explanation for the central place assigned to the stories of the bondage and the exodus as they occur in our records.

This view has a claim to historical support. Pharoah Merneptah (1225-1215) has left us two contemporary documents that have a very direct bearing upon our problem: 1) a document known as the 'Hymn of

Victory' in which the name Israel occurs as among his conquered ones; and 2) a letter from a frontier official stating that he has completed the passage of the Shasu tribes of Edom through the fortress Merneptah-Hotepirma in Theku to the pools of Pithom to keep them alive and their herds in the Pharaoh's domain.¹ Two things should here be pointed out: 1) in the 'Hymn of Victory' Israel is accorded the place of a nomadic tribe whereas all the others mentioned are settled countries, and 2) the extreme similarity between the letter of the frontier official and our Biblical story of the entrance of Jacob into Goshen. The burden of probability seems to be that at the same time that he was persecuting and seeking to subject some of the Hebrew tribes in Canaan, Merneptah gave asylum to some of their brethren in his own domain.

Another historical document is of interest at this point in that it comes from the same time as those already referred to. It is quoted by Olmstead² who takes it from William F. Albright's article appearing in the American Journal of Semetic Languages, Vol. XLI, 1925, p. 73. It pertains to our problem in that it proves the prevalence of "Ba'al" names prevalent even

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1. Cf. Olmstead, History of Palestine and Syria, p. 227.
2. Olmstead, op. cit., p. 248

in Egypt at this early period and also contains the first historical clue to the origin of the name 'Moses.'

This is Olmstead's quotation:

"A frontier official, stationed perhaps at Sillu, penned scribbles of great interest. The thirteenth of the ninth month of the third year Ba'alroi, Zippor's son, of Gaza, went up with letters for Kharu, one for the infantry captain Khay and one for Ba'al-remeg, chief of Tyre. On the seventeenth came to Silly the officers of the bowmen of the Spring of Merneptah in the mountains, perhaps Mene-phtoah near Jerusalem. A few days later arrived Thuity, son of Zekerem, and Methdet, son of Shem Ba'al, both of Gaza. Sutkhmose, son of Epher-degel, of Gaza had with him gifts and a letter for Khay; Sutekh represents a Syrian deity, mose is Moses, and perhaps we have here a clue to the original Moses name . . ."

The tribes that found asylum in Egypt were permitted to settle in Goshen, the present Wadi Tumilat. Wadi Tumilat is a triangular bit of land, rather fertile. It is enclosed on two sides by the desert and on the third by an irrigation canal from the Nile to the Red Sea. Its area is less than a hundred square miles and W. M. F. Petrie, in his book, Egypt and Israel, p. 30, suggests that four thousand nomads would be the maximum number of nomads that the district could possibly support. Here the Hebrews settled and enjoyed perfect freedom, religious and social. Later however they were compelled to build the store cities of Pithom and Raamses. Then it was that Moses appeared with another revelation from God.

Moses became the spiritual successor to Abraham. But here we shall have to ask, "What preparation was there during the 'interlude in Egypt' for the spiritual advance made by Moses?" In other words, the important thing is to discover, if we may, what were the characteristics of the religion of the Semites as that religion was practiced by the Israelites in Egypt before the oppression by the Pharaoh began. Sources here are admittedly scarce.

Upon his entrance into Goshen Jacob's name for the Deity is El Shaddai - God the Almighty One (Gen. 48:3). In his blessing to Joseph he makes the direct connection between this God and the "God before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac did walk." Perhaps this is the chief contribution of the Interlude in Egypt; namely, the consistent worship of the God of Abraham, even in the face of the pantheon of Egypt. Jacob ascribes sustenance to this God, for he says in Gen. 48:15 - "the God who hath fed me all my life long unto this day."

It is probably true that while in Egypt, as well as before the sojourn there, the Israelites used certain representation to aid them in their concept of the presence of the deity. With the coming of Moses, we note the

respect for 'holy places', for he put off his shoes when he perceived the phenomenon of the burning bush. There seemed to be a peculiar veneration for the serpent. We remember that later Moses raised a brazen serpent, in the wilderness, and this serpent became an object of worship, legitimized by the very command of Jehovah. Even while in Egypt it is noteworthy that the Rod of Moses and Aaron was in the form of a serpent and later this serpent was given life and swallowed up the serpents of the magicians. It was this Rod that was connected with the plagues in the land that were so intimately connected with the deliverance of the children of Egypt from out from under the control of the ruling Pharaoh.

A place called 'Levi-El' - 'Levi is God' is on record among Egyptian manuscripts.¹ Several of the Levite names are connected with serpents. There is a tradition that the decoration of certain Israelite altars were serpentine in form up until the time of Ahaz. It may even be possible that the name Levi has some etymological connection with the 'Leviathan, the coiling monster'.

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1. Gen. 34; 49:5-7; Deut. 33:8-11; Muller, Egypt, Res., I, 49, cited by Olmstead, op. cit., p. 248

We should be very careful here to distinguish between the veneration of the serpent and the worship of idols. There is no connection whatever. The use of the magic serpentine rod by Moses is a very fine example of the purification of an older fetishism; of the pouring of new meaning into old forms. The serpent was no longer a visible god to be worshipped - rather it came to be a symbol of the presence of a Deity who could not be seen, but could be felt. In all their philandering with other deities throughout their entire history the Israelites never lost their sense of the one-ness of God. Sometimes they were led into ascribing to Him manifestations on a purely physical and sensuous level - but this never became idolatry as it was practiced by the paganism all around them, even when the forms and practices of that paganism were taken and incorporated into their worship of the national Deity there was a subtle difference that made possible the great contribution of the Hebrew race to the world. This fact should be kept in mind when we are forced to consider such things as the calf-worship at Sinai, and the later Bull-worship as it was instituted in the Northern Kingdom.

In summarizing the effect of the Interlude in Egypt upon the developing religion of the Hebrews it

should be said that the main contribution was the sense of continuity with the God of Abraham - and the beginning of the sense of mission that was coming to the Race. God the All-Powerful One had protected them in times of famine and war, times when other Semitic tribes were being mercilessly murdered and plundered by the Egyptian power. Even in time of persecution in Egypt He was in the process of raising up a deliverer, one who was destined to make the next great advance toward monotheistic ethicalism - Moses. Even while worshipped under what has been falsely called the fetishes of tribal gods, the Interlude in Egypt helped to fix in the minds of those particularly chosen to be the conveyancers of the divine truth - the sense of the One-ness of God.

E. Prelude in the Desert.

The life of Moses must be given a place second only to that of Abraham in the developing culture of Hebrew religion. For with ^{him} there is introduced the specific characteristics of the worship that has become known as Yahwism - a name which we through the blunderings of a thirteenth century student have termed Jehovah. To Moses God again was able to reveal Himself

in this new aspect - The Great I Am. This name became of all things most holy - and was never pronounced, only whispered, and then only once a year. What the pronunciation of this word was, no one today is in a position to tell. Here Olmstead cites a good summary:¹

"All extra-Biblical information bearing on the pronunciation is collected, D. D. Luckenbill, Am. Jour. of Sem. Lang., XL, 1924, 277 ff.; G. R. Driver, ZAW., NF. V, 1928, 7 ff. Assyrian transliteration of Hebrew names demands Yahu or Yeho, as do the YHW of the Elephantine papyri and the Iao and the like of Greek magical papyri. In the Bible it is Yahu, later Yah at the end, and Yeho, later Y at the beginning of proper names. However, it is difficult to fit this pronunciation to the letters YHWH, and a plausible case may be made out for an original Yahwoh In the present uncertain state of the question, I have reluctantly employed the commonly used Yahweh, for which there is no evidence before the Christian writers, unless we count the punning allusion of Ex. 6:3. The form Jehovah is a blunder of a thirteenth century student ignorant of the most elementary principles of Hebrew."

One of the biggest contributions of the years of wanderings in the desert brought to the history of religion, was the fact that for the first time in history there occurred a 'Teaching situation' with regard to religion. We have a master instructor in full control of a large group of people who acknowledge his leadership. The lesson material is the added concept of the Great I Am - identified as He was with the God

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1. Olmstead, op. cit., p. 250, 251.

of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob.

Moses' contribution to the history of Jewish religion can hardly be overestimated. The national deity before the time of Moses seems to have been Yahu; after him it is universally written YHWH. How this latter name was pronounced we shall probably never know. But we do know that it connoted the absolute inscrutibility of God. He was the "I Am That I Am." It has sometimes been called the "Mysterious I Am." The name implied that Jehovah was in process of revealing His true nature to all those who would undergo the discipline of following Him.

The benefits accruing from the Interlude may be said to be the benefits accruing from the life and work of the great leader Moses. Moses was first and foremost a teacher. Moses is found teaching various groups on succession: Aaron, the Israelites in Egypt, Pharaoh in the court, the magicians. He is largely responsible for the instruction that resulted in the observance of the first passover. He is teaching in the wilderness when the manna is given, at Raphidim after the battle with the Amalekites, and in Midian near the home of his father-in-law Jethro. He teaches the elders of the people at the foot of Mount Sinai. His teaching of the idolatrous followers of the golden

calif takes the form of bitter denunciation and clarifying example. We find him undertaking one of the most tremendous teaching projects ever conceived and carried out - the building of the tabernacle. There seemed to be but one object in view: to present to the people the knowledge of the kind of a God who had revealed Himself to the man Moses. Above all he hoped to make Jehovah, the Creator, the One true God, real to his fellow Hebrews. He hoped to make this God the center of their lives, to establish and maintain standards for a high moral life and to stimulate the Hebrew people to take their place in the Plan of Jehovah to be His conveyancer to the nations of the earth.¹

This was a great task, yet it was very largely accomplished. Yet we must not forget that Moses was dealing with nomadic people, and that their civilization, or rather lack of it, many times revealed itself in their reactions to their neighbors and their environment. Many times they seem utterly cruel and barbaric to us, until we realize how great was their advancement over those of their contemporaries who were still steeped in paganism and idol-worship of the basest order.

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1. Cf. Gettys, The Book of Exodus viewed as Exhibiting a Philosophy of Hebrew Education, p. 43.

During the Prelude in the Desert the Hebrew tribes involved, probably two or three at the most, became welded together in so far as their worship of a single common deity was concerned. For the first time in history we have the spectacle of the beginnings of a great nation following a God whom they could not see, but could only feel all around them. This will continue to be one of the greatest miracles of all time. Their conception of Jehovah was not always of the highest order. It remained for the prophets of the eighth century to purify much that was characteristic of this period, and this purification could not come until the disharmonies in their system were thrown into high relief by the religion which the tribes encountered upon their settlement in the land of their fathers -- Canaan.

During the days of the wanderings in the desert, the people learned the lesson of explicit obedience - yet learned it at great cost. The characteristics of their God were those of the desert, "simple and austere; He was connected with the storm, on whose wings He rode;" the phenomena of the epiphany at Sinai have suggested to some that there was also connection with volcanoes. His ritual was equally simple. As with other nomad deities, no image set forth his appearance. His abode

was a tent, from which he went forth in a pillar of cloud by day and by fire by night to lead his people. Desert feasts and sacrifices and burnt offerings from the flocks and herds completed the worship."¹

F. Conflict With Ba'alism in Canaan.

In crossing the Jordan the Israelites crossed more than a river: stepping over the boundary line between two ways of life, they left one world to enter another. They had been nomads of the desert - they sought to become agriculturists in a land of grain, and of the olive tree. The land that they entered was the home of a civilization far above them in its development and culture. The religion of Canaan had gone through the formative stage, and was now formally organized. Most of the rites of magic connected with the idea of moving the gods of the land by sympathetic reactions had been collected and collated into a set pattern of ritual and sacrifice to the Ba'als of the land. This religion was now on the decline and was infested with every corruption imaginable, corruptions which, due to the proverbial conservatism that always clings to religious rites and practices were allowed to continue long after

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1. Olmstead, History of Palestine and Syria, p. 251, 252.

the popular mind was rejecting them as unmoral and even anti-social.

Here it will suffice to briefly outline what happened when these two systems of civilization and of religion were fused together. At first there was not a great deal of distinction made between the "Ba'al" and the national deity who was considered under the same connotation as "Adonai" meaning also "Lord."

"It is necessary to say here that in these early times, Ba'al and Yahweh had practically the same meaning. Not till the mission of Elijah against the worship of the Tyrian ba'al did the word appear heathenish in the eyes of the devotees of the Hebrew faith. Previously it was not a proper name at all, but a colorless term signifying 'Lord' and capable of being applied to any deity whatever in the country where his authority was recognized." ¹

Soon the Yahweh worship of the Hebrew had appropriated unto itself the holy places and sanctuaries of Ba'alism. Then there followed an appropriation of the very ritual with its degrading and sensuous practices connected with the fertility idea around which all of Ba'alism was built. At last even the ruling monarch seeing the higher type of civilization and privileges enjoyed by his neighbor the king of Tyre, married the daughter of this king and with her accession to his

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1. Macalister, R. A., A Century of Excavation in Palestine, p. 282

throne, sought also to introduce the benefits of her civilization by giving legal authority to her religion. So it came about that the reign of Ahab in the northern kingdom became the turning point in the history of the religion of the Hebrews. For he reared a temple to the Tyrian Ba'al, and the gauntlet was down: was it to be Jehovah or Ba'al, for a time the answer hung in the balance. It was the prophets who turned the tables. But that is a story that must be told in a further chapter. Chapter Three will be devoted to a study of the Canaanitish Background With Reference to Ba'alism.

G. Conclusion

It was the purpose of this chapter to bring a rapid survey of the influences that were brought to bear upon the lives of the leaders of the Hebrew race that resulted in the formation of a new religion devoted to ethical monotheism in protest to a world in almost complete subserviance to idolatry of the grossest sort. This has been considered under such heads as the Prelude in Canaan, the Interlude in Egypt, and the Prelude in the Desert, leading up to a final survey of the Conflict with Ba'alism in Canaan. Stress was laid upon the influence of two increasing concepts of God that could in no way be considered as emerging by

a mere evolutionary process from the religious experience of the race: the contributions of Abraham and the contribution of Moses. Both of these were seen as preparatory to the great testing time that was to come as soon as the pure desert worship should be brought face to face with the organized worship that dominated the entire land of Canaan - Ba'alism. It shall now be our purpose to present the picture of Canaan as it existed just prior to the Israelitish conquest. Such a picture should give us a more adequate conception of why the conflict that came in the eighth century was inevitable.



CHAPTER THREE

A STUDY OF THE CANAANITE BACKGROUND WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO BAALISM

- A. Introduction.
- B. Geographical Implications.
- C. Historical Implications.
- D. Sociological Implications.
- E. Religious Implications.
- F. Conclusion.

CHAPTER THREE

A STUDY OF THE CANAANITE BACKGROUND WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO BAALISM

A. Introduction.

It is the purpose of this chapter to present a picture of the land of Canaan as that land existed at the exact time of the Israelite settlement. In order to give an adequate picture of the situation as a whole, the geographical, historical, sociological and religious aspects of Canaan will be given successive treatment.

There are two possible views concerning the origin of Judaism: (1) the evolutionary view that it progressed on a purely horizontal plane and (2) the supernatural view that it was the result of divine intervention in the affairs of men. But no matter which of these views is espoused, the part that Canaan and its religion played in the growth of the Jewish concept of God remains unchanged. Professor Lods speaks of the "Hebrew Miracle" coming to pass at a definite period in the history of the world and lying as the "spring of the

religious and moral life of mankind."¹

The land of Canaan became the battleground where two diametrically opposed theogonies clashed. For a time the native ideology seemed triumphant and almost to have completely reduced the ritual and practice of the invaders to its own level. It would seem that the purity of the worship of Jehovah as practiced by the desert tribes had been completely Canaanized in the period between 1400 B.C. and 900 B.C. But the forces for a restoration of the purity of the desert days received a new infusion of life - instigated by the wholesale adoption of Ba'alism by King Ahab. The great prophets arose in protest.

The story of this conflict is one of the most thrilling known to man and one that is fraught with untold possibilities for the history of the religions of mankind. Upon this conflict hung the destinies of Judaism, Christianity and of Islam.

To us in recent years there has been opened a great new storehouse of definite information concerning the religion of Canaan in the decipherment and translation of the tablets found at Ras Shamra in northern

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1. Lods, Israel, p. xi

Syria. For these we are indebted to the work of M. Virolleaud, R. Dussaud, G. A. Barton, J. A. Montgomery, T. H. Gaster, Z. Harris and E. Dhorme.

We must abandon the older idea of a multitude of local deities, each with its own distinctive ritual, sacrifice and priesthood, and bearing no connection with the other deities of the land. In its place we have the picture of a well developed Canaanite pantheon. It could almost be called a syncretized hierarchy. The correspondencies between the ritual texts of Ras Shamra and our Old Testament are too striking to be overlooked. Perhaps here we have a key that shall ultimately unlock for us a more adequate conception of the influence of the religion of Canaan upon the development of Monotheism by the Israelites. Many of these texts are still in the process of transliteration and translation. The fact that these texts are contemporaneous with the Mosaic period makes them all the more important in their bearing upon the whole philosophy of religion. A detailed treatment of the Ras Shamra epics will be given at the close of this chapter.

B. Geographical Implications.

The land of Canaan is in reality the only bridge

connecting three continents: Africa, Asia and Europe. All travel and communication was forced over this narrow strip of fertile territory that lay between the Great Sea on the one side and the Great Desert on the other. This is the stage upon which the drama of Israel's destinies unfolded itself.

The name 'Canaan' comes to us from the indigenous inhabitants from the Tell el-Amarna period. It was sometimes applied to the country south of Mount Carmel, or it might be applied to embrace the whole of Phoenicia.

The eastern coast of the Mediterranean sea is about 600 kilometers long - some 375 miles. The central part of this coastline is bordered by the Lebanon range of mountains rising precipitously from the sea. In the interior of the country parallel to the Lebanon range there runs another like unto it - the Antilebanons. And in between the two is Hollow Syria - the valley of valleys. Mount Hermon rises at the south of Antilebanon to the height of 2,759 meters in a majestic dome. This sudden ending of the two ranges of mountains forms an immense natural boundary to the land of Palestine itself. It extends to the southward about two fifths of the entire Syrian coast.

The Geography of Canaan had vast influence upon

her history, both religious and political. It was hemmed in on three sides - to the north was the Lebanon, to the west the Great Sea and to the east and south the Syrian and Arabian deserts. The mountains and the sea guaranteed a relative isolation to the inhabitants, the many low hills of the country itself, allowed family groups and clans to lead an isolated and independent existence. Individuality and division grew up as a matter of course. Yet by the very nature of its position Canaan was an indispensable link; in fact, it was the only bridge that united the two great centers of civilization in the ancient world - Egypt and Mesopotamia.

Professor Lods sums up this relationship thus:

"Here mingled the great streams of thought, art, industry, and customs from Egypt and the plains of the Euphrates, and the Tigris, higher Asia, Arabia, Cyprus, the Cyclades, Greece. . . . Syria was ever the prize of victory in the contest between the mistress of the Nile and the power that dominated the Euphrates, whether Babylon, the Hittite empire, or Assur, Persia, the Greek empire of Alexander, or that of the Seleucids; whether it were the caliphs of Bagdad or the Sultan of Constantinople, in the time of Mehemet Ali, for example, or in 1914-18."¹

The inhabitants of Canaan have always tended to fall apart into regional groups corresponding to the physical make-up of the country. The very ease with

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1. Lods, Israel, p. 19

which life was possible tended to this same result. The one exception was the burning plain of the Jordan, called the "steppes" or Arabah. So it came about that for a long time, unity in matters of religion as well as politics was well nigh impossible. This helps to account for the numerous local gods that we find in the land at the time of the Conquest.

The wind and the rain played an important part in the daily life of the inhabitant of Canaan and as a result, in his religion as well. There is a definite alternation between land and sea breezes, and every day the peasant waited for the cooling breeze from off the sea to offset the heat of the day. The east wind was particularly feared. It came from off the desert and was burning hot in summer and freezing cold in winter. It always presaged destruction of crops and property. It was this wind that was later typified as the "wind of Jehovah" (Isa. xl:7)

"The fact that the divine wind is not the kindly and regular sea-breeze, but the destructive and capricious sirocco, is characteristic of the religious mentality of the Semite, who finds the divine not in the normal course of nature but in its breach, in the unforeseen and incalculable, in the forces of nature which strike man with terror rather than in those which are beneficent."¹

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1. Lods, Israel, p. 30.

All agriculture and even life itself in Canaan is dependant absolutely upon the amount of yearly rainfall, and so the Canaanite peasant felt himself absolutely at the mercy of whatever powers sent down the kindly waters from above. The fertility of his fields, and even of his flocks depended upon the descent of this life-giving water. This desire for the fertilizing water formed the key-note of all the religious practices that developed indigenously in Canaan. Ordinarily there were three periods of rain which lasted from November to April:

- 1) the early rains of autumn, Moreh - which make ploughing possible,

- 2) the great winter rains, the Geshem,

- 3) the season of the spring rain, enabling the crops to withstand the burning heat of summer. After April there is no rainfall, but there is usually very abundant dew.

Other geographic features of religious import included the presence of volcanoes, extinct even in the historical period, and the intensity sometimes obtained by the infrequent storms.

C. Historical Implications

1. Prehistoric Palestine.

The earliest historical reference to the land of Canaan comes to us from the Tell el-Amarna correspondence (Kinahhi, Kinshi, Kinahna, c. 1400 B.C.) and the Egyptian monuments from the reign of Seti I (Pe-Kanan, c. 1300 B.C.) Nevertheless the land was inhabited long centuries before history records their actual habitation there. If we can discover something of the pre-historic nature of the people who dwelt in the "fertile crescent" before the dawn of written records¹, we shall have a basis from which to begin in our consideration of the later religious development of these people. However, a brief summary should be sufficient for our purposes.

The prehistoric period in Canaan may be divided into three periods: 1) the Quaternary Epoch from which we have a few worked flints found in Moab and Ammon; 2) the Palaeolithic period represented by many objects of flaked flint belonging to the same general types into which European Stone Age remains have been classified. Hunting provided food and clothing. Shells that have been pierced show that he was beginning to ornament his rough clothing. A human skull found in 1925 at Tagha, near the sea of Galilee is

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1. Karge, Rephaim, ad. loc.

Neandertal in characteristics.¹ These people were cave dwellers; their food consisted of stags, antelopes, wild goats, perhaps even some of the larger animals. 3) The third period is the Neolithic or period of polished stone. Here we find some of the towns so important to later Canaanite history beginning to be inhabited. Chief among those that have been excavated is Gezer giving us abundant proof of the type of life lived by these people. Sickles, plowshares and mill-stones have been found. The bones of cows, sheep, pigs and camels, prove them to have been also herdsmen. They were able to weave cloth for their own clothing. The dead they cremated. These remains show a continuous occupation from 4000-2500 B.C. when they suddenly stop.² It would seem that about 2500 B.C. the old inhabitants of Gezer were displaced by newcomers. Herodotus preserves a tradition that the temple to Melqart in Tyre was built in 2750 B.C.³

We have a few remains proving that the religion of these early dwellers in Canaan were disposed to appease their gods with sacrifices. A rock platform

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1. Lods, Israel, p. 38
2. Vincent, Canaan d'apres l'exploration recente, Paris, Gabalda, 1914, p. 211.
3. Lods, p. 40.

at Gezer and a similar one at Jerusalem where the Dome of the Rock now stands have been recovered. Both bear cup-marks and channels for the conveyance of the sacrificial blood., leading to a cave beneath the rock, probably thought to be the dwelling place of the deity.

2. The Palestine of Historical Times.

It would be impossible here to trace the comings and goings of the peoples who figure in the early period of historical Palestine. A brief survey of the changing condition of the balance of power in the Syrian world will suffice for the tracing of the history of religious influence in the lands along the eastern border of the Mediterranean Sea.

There fell in succession three great powers who, during the preceding centuries, had sought to establish an empire embracing the whole of western Asia; namely, Babylon, Egypt, and the Hittite kingdom. Since Assyria, as yet in the early stages of its rise, only interposed occasionally in the affairs of Canaan up to the ninth century, Tiglathpileser I being the only king to reach the Mediterranean, the small states of the Syrian coast had a breathing space of about 400

years in which they were free to develop without being crushed by the superior weight of the great empires.¹

About 1500 B.C. we find Egypt in complete control of Canaan, and the Tell el-Amarna letters give us ample historical information of the effect of Egypt upon the life and thought, and especially upon the religious practices of the land of Canaan. This fact has been proved also by excavations, mainly those conducted by Professor Montet in Phoenicia. Of special importance is the fact that Amenhotep IV, also called Ikhnaton, was really the founder of a new religion in Egypt, a religion that approached a type of monotheism, and that long before the Hebrews proclaimed monotheism to the world.

Professor Breasted has these interesting statements concerning two of the hymns of praise composed by Ikhnaton:

"Either for the temple service or for personal devotions the king composed two hymns to Aton, both of which the nobles had engraved on the walls of their tomb chapels. Of all the monuments left by this unparelled revolution (the religious revolution of Ikhnaton), these hymns are the most remarkable; and from them we may gather an intimation of the doctrines which the speculative young Pharaoh had sacrificed so much to disseminate The one hundred

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1. Lods, Israel, p. 52. For another point of view cf. Rostovtzeff, History of Ancient World, p. 105.

and fourth Psalm of the Hebrews shows a notable similarity to our hymn both in the thought and the sequence . . . "1

For example, there is one passage reading, "How manifold are all thy works! They are hidden from before us, O thou sole god, whose powers no other possesseth" is almost identical to Psalm 104:24, etc.

Breasted adds, page 376:

"He grasped the idea of a world-dominator, as the creator of nature, in which the king saw revealed the creator's beneficent purpose for all his creatures, even the meanest; for the birds fluttering about in the lily-grown Nile-marshes to him seemed to be uplifting their wings in adoration to their creator; and even the fish in the stream leaped up in praise to God."

The Egyptian god Re had been worshipped from early times in Egypt - ultimately he became recognized as divine king. Ikhnaton made him the state god, depicted as the Sun-disk with its life-giving rays. This disk was called the Aton, or Aten.

Ikhnaton was very thorough in his revision of the religious practices of Egypt. He attempted the abolishment of idolatry. The all-powerful Aton, and the recognition of his loving fatherhood was enforced upon all foreign lands under the control of Egypt. Canaan was one of these lands. Truth and justice were

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1. J. H. Breasted, History of Egypt, p. 371

proclaimed on the basis of their ethical merits. In order to escape the possible pollution of the new religion through the influence of the priests of Amon, the older regime, Ikhnaton removed his capital from Thebes, and founded a new capital at Akhetaton, the present Amarna. Here the royal archives were kept. These have been recovered and the Tell el-Amarna letters have come down to us and have been translated many times, the last one being made by Knudtson.

It is at least remarkable that at the same time that Ikhnaton was trying to enforce monotheism upon his subject states, there was going on in Palestine a syncretism of the Canaanite pantheon resulting in the absolute supremacy of the one god - El, as is shown by the Ras Shamra texts. The fact that Ikhnaton's monotheism was short lived in Canaan explains why the monotheism of the Hebrew invaders had such a difficult time there.¹

Ikhnaton was a thinker and no statesman. Soon the Egyptian empire passed away and the balance of power lay with the powerful Hittite empire. The struggle between Egypt and the Hittite power lasted

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1. cf. Olmstead, History of Palestine and Syria, p. 171 ff.

many long years, and in it, as Rostovtzeff has so well said, "there were no conquerors, but only conquered."¹

The two empires both faced dissolution and dismemberment. A time of general anarchy came upon the world. Egypt continued to decline and the Hittites as a people disappear from the annals of history in the twelfth and eleventh centuries B.C. There follows next a period in which it appears that the Aegean culture is dominant in Asia Minor and in Syria. We know very little of the movements of this period. A Mycenaean empire had been formed as early as the 14th century B.C. The kings of Mycea figure as suzerains of a great many feudal lords, constantly at war. From this period comes the Greek tradition of one of these wars, preserved by the Greek poet Homer, in the Illiad, presenting the story of Mycenea against Thebes, and the war of the Mycenaean coalition of Achaeans against Troy. Their culture became widespread throughout the Mediterranean world. The Mycenaean pottery and art penetrated far into inner Syria, and into Egypt itself.

But in the 13th century this Mycenaean world itself broke up in its own turn. Again the world wit-

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1. Rostovtzeff, op. cit., p. 107.

nessed a widespread movement of peoples, probably coming from the north - possibly Thracians. We hear of new peoples coming to the shores of Canaan forced to seek new homes by the pressure of the on-coming tribes - the Philistines and the Sakkari. About this time Pamphylia in Asia Minor is occupied by Achaeans. Fragments of the ruined Hittite empire continue to exist side by side with new kingdoms. Lydia was such a remaining fragment. Amid this world confusion Palestine for a time became the strongest power. For long years Palestine had been under the direct domination and influence of either Egypt or Babylon - now she was free to develop her own culture. But here two new peoples were in control. Palestine had been colonized by Amorites, a Semitic people. These later were subdued by Canaanites, another Semitic people. Now at last the stage has been set for the appearance of still another group of Semites - the Hebrews.¹

D. Sociological Implications

We are now ready to look at Palestine at the time of the Israelite conquest. Two factors are important here: 1) the peoples inhabiting the land at the

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1. Lods, p. 52

time of the coming of the Hebrews, and 2) the type of civilization in the land at the time of the actual settlement.

1. The Peoples of Palestine at the Time of the Conquest.

When the tribes of Israel arrived in the promised land they found the country already occupied. The people of the land presented a rather homogeneous picture as far as outward culture and development are concerned. However, they were of widely divergent origins and racial groupings. The original dwellers in the land had long since been driven forth and now there lived there a stratification of peoples.

At least five distinct elements should be recognized. The first group includes the Canaanites and Amorites. The Canaanites are sometimes called Phoenicians. These were immigrants coming either from the shore of the Red Sea or the Persian Gulf. An early reference to the Canaanites occurs in Genesis 13:7 in connection with Abraham and Lot and their times:

"And there was a strife between the herdsmen of Abram's cattle and the herdsmen of Lot's cattle: and the Canaanite and the Perizzite dwelt then in the land."

This same combination occurs in Gen. 34:30:

"And Jacob said to Simeon and Levi, Ye have troubled me, to make me odious to the in-

habitants of the land, among the Canaanites and the Perizzites."

The story of the conquest under Joshua as given in Judges 1:4,5, likewise makes the same two-fold division:

"And Judah went up; and Jehovah delivered the Canaanites and the Perizzites into their hand; and they smote of them in Bezek ten thousand men."

Lods maintains that the Perizzites were the dwellers in the perazoth, the unwalled villages. The Kena'ani would therefore be those that lived in the cities that were protected by walls. At any rate we know that the Phoenicians called themselves Canaanites. It is at least possible, as Lods suggests, that the Canaanites were a conquering people who seized the cities, and compelled the earlier inhabitants out into the open country.

The Amorites seem to have been closely allied in custom and language to the Canaanites. They are supposed to have been driven up into the north country by the advance of the conquering Canaanites (Phoenicians). For example, Joshua 5:1 reads:

"And it came to pass, when all the kings of the Amorites that were beyond the Jordan westward, and all the kings of the Canaanites, that were by the sea, heard how that Jehovah had dried up the waters of the Jordan, etc"

Further testimony to the migration of the Amorites northward is given in the forms of the names applied to Syria by the Babylonians and Egyptians. The Babylonians who had been in contact with Syria since the third millennium gave the name Amurru, 'Land of the Amorites' to the entire country, since at that time the Amorites were the principal people there, and were especially near to them. But the Egyptians who became active in Syria about 1600 gave the name Emur to northern Syria only, calling southern Palestine by the suggestive name pa-Kana'ana. Likewise in the Tell el-Amarna letters the same transfer occurs.

The fourth group was made up of various nomadic tribes, akin in blood and in language to the conquering Hebrews. These included such tribes as the Ammonites, the Moabites and the Edomites, but these are not at that time inside the classical limits of Palestine.

In the fifth place there was the migration of the Philistines in the time of Ramses II, who settled along the Syrian coast. The Philistines were of Aegean origin and settled along the Syrian coast, founding five little principalities each under a 'Tyrannos' in the southwest coast of the land now called by their name - Tyre.

Such was the picture of the peoples dwelling in the land of Canaan at the time that Joshua sought to lead his people across the Jordan and into the promised land.

2. Palestinian Civilization at the Time of the Israelite Settlement.

In the above section it has been pointed out that the people who dwelt in the land of Canaan at the time of the Israelitish conquest were of various origins, and presented a picture of sociological stratification. Yet at the same time it must be remembered that they possessed a common culture that was nearly homogeneous. This culture was really quite advanced. From Taanach or Megiddo in the north to Gezer and Lachish in the south much the same customs and religious ritual prevailed. The cult rites seemed to be everywhere the same. There must have been a very great physical appeal to these cult rites in order to explain their adoption so very quickly by incoming peoples. For instance, we find the Philistines worshipping the Canaanitish god Dagon as their principle deity only 150 years after their settlement in the land.¹

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1. Cf. Lods, op. cit., p. 89.

Indeed this is a common sociological phenomena. The conquerors adopt the religion and the culture of the conquered, largely through feminine influence. The history of the barbarians converted to Christianity after they had settled in the Roman Empire is a parallel case.

The Egyptian historians have left us records of spoil brought back from battle-fields in Canaan.

"For example, Thothmes III brought back from Megiddo . . . horses, chariots - one of which was plated with gold and fitted with a gold chariot pole - breastplates of bronze, tent-pegs plated with silver, cups and vases of various kinds, one of which was described as a 'great bowl of Syrian workmanship' - swords, litters, ivory couches, a gilded bed, a statue of gold, ebony, and lapis-lazuli, and in addition, more than 207, 400 sacks of corn."¹

The people were distinctly agricultural in the entirety of their conceptual outlook. The cultivation of the vine and the fig tree was far advanced. Several oil and wine-vats have been found which date from the earliest Canaanitish times. Their complete dependence upon the crops and pasturage for their herds and flocks cannot be over-emphasized in its relation upon their religion and the development of the rites that

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1. Cf. Breasted, Ancient Record of Egypt, Vol. II Passim.

were intended to facilitate the fall of the life-giving rain. Indeed this emphasis on rain colors all later Judaism. Compare the treatise on Taanith in the Mishnah.

The Canaanites were well skilled in the building of fortifications and in the art of war. They were able to build strong walls and dig tunnels that are a matter of astonishment even to men of today. Examples of these are the tunnels at Gezer.

Weaving and the more simple crafts were commonly practiced. The potters art was highly developed.

Writing was rather widely known. The development of the alphabet itself is to be attributed in whole or in part to Canaanite scholars. Before the development of this alphabetic script all communication was in cuneiform, requiring long years of intensive study for its mastery. The scribes of the Canaanite kings vary greatly in the knowledge of the language which they wrote. These are known to us through the Tell el-Amarna letters, and transliterated Canaanite words into cuneiform. The Ras Shamra texts are the earliest complete attempt to create an alphabet on the basis of cuneiform writing, and they are Canaanite.

The Canaanite peoples were by no means segregated

in their own land. Both Babylonish and Egyptian influences penetrated far into the interior of the land. The interesting fact is that we find nowhere evidence of the religious influences of these scribes. Even though they studied the religious texts of Babylon in their attempts to master the language, there is no evidence that the content material of these texts affected their work in their own country in any way. The scribes were only craftsmen in their way. Religious leadership is strikingly absent in paganism, even in such a highly civilized land as Babylonia. Religion was kept alive by conservatism, mainly that of the women. We may well assume that one reason why the religion of Jehovah won over Ba'alism in spite of many difficulties was that there was in it the towering influence of the great leader, Moses, who had been a prophet, scholar, priest, general, and king - and that after him came other great men standing out in history in a glorious succession. In Babylonia, for example, there was no such dominating personality to give color to all succeeding religious thinkers.

Egyptian influence was by no means lacking. The cedars that grew on the Lebanons attracted the merchants of Egypt. They were considered indispensable in the manufacture of coffins and in the building of boats for the Nile. Statuettes of Egyptian deities, particularly

Bes, Anubis, Sebek, Ptah, Isis, Bast, Sekmet, have been found in great numbers on Canaanitish soil.¹ But we already noted that artistic culture does not necessarily mean religious influence.

Not only did the Canaanites import Egyptian articles, they even imitated them in manufacture. A mould used in manufacture of statuettes of the grotesque Egyptian god Bes has been found at Gezer. Other objects have been found in which motifs from Babylonian and Egyptian sources have been indiscriminately fused in the process of home manufacture. There is also some evidence that Cretan and Mycenaean influences in pottery and design were evident in Canaan dating from about 1900 B.C.

It has been shown thatⁱⁿ almost every phase of life the people of Canaan were borrowers. They were eclecticists. Every influence that came to bear upon them from Egypt, from Babylonia, and from Crete, was taken and appropriated to their own uses. There were two fields, however, in which the Canaanites excelled in their own right. The first, the development of their peculiar and all important alphabet, is outside the range of this study. The second is

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1. Lods, op. cit., p. 66.

the field of religion; for here in spite of foreign influences, the Canaanites kept and developed their own ideas and practices. They hold a unique place in the history of religion in the East.

E. Religious Implications

1. Influence of the Hittites upon Canaanite Religion.

Whatever the characteristics of the people dwelling in the land, Syria, Canaan, and in fact all of Asia Minor succeeded, down to the dawn of the Christian era and for long years afterward, in maintaining the worship of the so-called Mother Goddess. Garstang in his 'Hittite Empire' agrees that the worship of the Mother-goddess was the religion of the land from the remotest times.¹

In historical times this goddess has borne the names of Ma, Ishtar, Ashtoreth, Astarte, Atargatis, Hera and Cybele. With her there was usually associated the worship of a Son-consort, later known by the name of Tammuz, Sandon or Heracles.² His name among the early Hittites was Terepinush.³

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1. Garstang, John, Hittite Empire, p. 305
2. Garstang, op. cit., p. 114.
3. Hrozny, Fr., Article, The Hittites, Enc. Britt., 14th ed., p. 606 b.

These two deities were usually represented by some form of the lion, and the names Lion-Goddess and Lion-Son are common. The lion seems to have had some connection with the idea of soil, in the minds of these early peoples.

For the purposes of this present study it is most interesting to discover that from early Hittite times, this Mother-goddess was in some way connected with the fertility of fields and flocks. Especially is this important when it is remembered that this same idea is so outstanding in the cultus as revealed in the Ras Shamra epics, some centuries later. She was also guardian of the dead and of cities. By her power the dead earth revived each spring, and this eventually gave rise to the myth of the revivifying of the Son each spring.¹ That the ideas underlying this fertility aspect of religion originated with the Hittites and was kept by them in their isolation among the tribes of Canaan after the break down of the Hittite Empire is probable. From the Canaanites its influence was brought directly to bear upon the incoming Semitic tribes.

The Hittites also are important to the history

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1. Cf. Garstang, op. cit., p. 149

of religion in that they carried on the tradition of an all-powerful Father-god, the creator of all things. This is the first historic reference to this idea. Prof. A. T. Olmstead, in Palestine and Syria, p. 116 suggests that the idea of this Father-god, later conceived as consort of the Earth Mother-goddess, came to the Hittites through Aryan tribes that appeared in Asia Minor about the beginning of the second millennium.

The indigenous worship of the Great-mother and her Son-consort, with their lion attributes, was blended with the Indo-Aryan Heaven-god or Weather-god and his consort, the Earth-mother. The Father-god is thus Aryan and the Mother-goddess indigenous with the Hittites, and through them transmitted to the Canaanites. These three deities, Father, Mother, and Son, together with the myths of the death and awakening of Spring form the center and hub of all religion as far as Syria and Asia Minor are concerned beginning with the period of the Hittite domination of the East. The union of the two great deities was thought to bring about the annual renewal of the dead earth. We meet an almost identical duplicate of this ritualistic conception in the Canaanite ritual as set forth on the Ras Shamra epics. The fact of the prevalence of

this cultus in Hittite times pushes the sphere of influence back several centuries. The amount of influence brought to bear upon the incoming Hebrews was thus cumulative in the effectiveness of its impact, for it had been indigenous to the land for so many centuries.

From the Hittites also comes the first mention of the "sacred groves" and the "sacred forest" so prominent in the writings of the Hebrew prophets of the eighth century.

2. The Ba'al Cult.

The religion of Canaan had cruel aspects. Nature itself was often harsh in its effects upon human life and destiny. The desert wind of destruction, perhaps the earthquake, the occasional disastrous drought, the burning tropical sun, all had a part in the Canaanite mind-set.

The sharp contrast between the seasons was reflected in myths. It was to be expected that the idea of a dying vegetation god would give rise to cruel developments of religion. Moreover, these myths kept alive ancient racial experiences in the desert habitat and experience of the Phoenicians.

Whenever springs or natural fountains occurred,

the greatly enhanced verdure of the spot gave the very natural impression that some supernatural force was at work in that particular spot. This force, or power became personified, and we have a purely local god, or ba'al, as the result.

Ba'alism in its every aspect reeks of the earth. It is tied to the soil. The word 'ba'al' is technically not a proper name at all, but is generic and qualitative meaning 'Lord' or 'owner' - owner of the earth, the soil. It was applied to many divine beings. When used alone it is always accompanied by the definite article, 'the' - 'the lord.' Generally a place name was added to distinguish the particular ba'al designated.

Ba'al was the husbandman's god par excellence. It was his essential prerogative to give fertility ✓ to the specific region that belonged to him. Water is indispensable - it may be provided either as rain, or in the form of springs. Later the very sunshine was attributed to the activity of the ba'al.

Each ba'al was conceived to have a definite dwelling - a single tree, a particular spring, a stone pillar or Baityl. We are reminded that Jacob

set up as a pillar the stone upon which he had rested his head, because he had become conscious of the presence of God. He called the stone Beth-el, the house of God. Then he poured sacrificial oil upon the stone that it might reach the numen dwelling within it. This act of Jacob throws light upon an ancient Canaanite rite.

Another point of view is sponsored by Dr. James Orr. In his book, The Problem of the Old Testament, he rejects the theory that the worship of the early patriarchs was influenced by the religious practices of their neighbors in words that are sufficiently important to be transcribed here:

".. Biblical history . . . does not lend support to the view that tree-and-stone-worship, ancestor-worship, totem-worship, teraphim-worship, human sacrifice and the like, were prominent features of the religion of the patriarchs, or of the people who came out of Egypt with Moses. How, then, is the theory made out? . . . by rejecting the history we have, and substituting for it a construction evolved from a general theory of the origin of religion; . . . by reading back the disobediences and corruptions of the later history into the original form of the religion, and fastening on stray passages and incidents an interpretation contrary to the general impressions of the narrative. The method can best be illustrated by observing it at work.

1. The Book of Genesis gives us a clear and intelligible account of how places like Bethel, Hebron, Beersheba, Shechem, came to be regarded with peculiar veneration by the Israelites. They were places hallowed by the residence and worship of their fathers, and by the revelations of God. These stories form part of the patriarchal history, and we have sought to show that there is no reason for discrediting them. The newer criticism, however, cannot accept so simple an explanation. It rejects the history, and assumes that these places were really old Canaanite

sanctuaries, which the Israelites adopted on their entrance into Canaan, and afterwards glorified by weaving around them this web of patriarchal legend. . . . 2. Stade gives the matter a further development. There were graves at some of these places (Hebron, Machpelah, Shechem). What is clearer than that the real origin of the sacredness of these sanctuaries was ancestor-worship? . . . The rule is a simple one - wherever you find mention of burial-places, be sure you are on the track of worship of ancestors. . . . And these things, in all serious-mindedness, are regarded as 'scientific' treatment of history. . . . Abraham dwelt by the 'oaks' . . . of Mamre; he planted a tamarisk at Beersheba; Deborah, Rebekah's nurse was buried under 'the oak' at Bethel . . . But there is nothing to connect the patriarchs with these superstitions, or to indicate that they thought of a god as dwelling in these trees. The Canaanite Asherahs, or tree symbols of Astarte, on the other hand, - another of the proofs, - were no doubt idolatrous; but they were from the first, and all down the history, absolutely condemned.

4. The proofs offered of fetishism and of stone-worship in ancient Israel are equally numerous - and equally inconclusive. . . . It is pointed out that in the case of Jacob, not 'the place', but the stone itself, is called 'Bethel', in Gen. 28:22. . . . But there is not a vestige of evidence that there ever was a class of sacred stones in Israel called 'Bethels', and it is surely obvious from the context that the stone is called 'Bethel', merely as marking the site of the place." (1)

There is very much of value in Orr's criticism of the way in which some scholars have treated the Biblical text. However, in his great zeal to preserve a conservative position with respect to the origin and development of the Hebrew concept of God, he has gone to the opposite extreme and denied the possibility of human agency in the development of that concept in the world.

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1. James Orr, The Problem of the Old Testament, pp. 134ff.

The religion of the great mass of the settled population in Canaan has kept certain characteristics from earliest times even down to the present age. There still are local divinities in Syria and Palestine today; they are no longer called ba'als, but are called by the names of Christian saints, Hebrew prophets or Moslem welis.

It has been suggested that the variety and multiplicity of the indigenous ba'als of the land were localizations of one great Ba'al par excellence, the storm god, Hadad, interchangeable with the ba'al of the Tell el-Amarna letters.¹

Almost an identical process has taken place in modern times with reference to the worship of the Virgin in certain parts of Europe. Notre Dame de Lourdes, Notre Dame de la Salette, the Black Virgin of Chartres are separate individuals as far as their various characteristics are concerned. In each case ancient ritual once pertaining to pagan deities is preserved around the name of the Virgin mother of Christ, yet to the general body of believers it is accepted that only one individual is connoted by these various titles and attributes.

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1. A. J. Evans, Scripta Minoa, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1909, iv., pp. 320 ff.

But there are several objections to the theory that there was originally one ba'al par excellence, and that the local deities were all offshoots of this one original source. Chief of these objections is the fact that the ba'al of Harran, was always pictured as a moon-god and not a god of the storm or heaven (Ba'al Shamen). Then too, the Ba'al of Arvad was pictured as a sea-god with a fish's tail.¹ Foreign nations appropriated the name ba'al and applied it to their own indigenous deities. The Egyptians identified Ba'al with their Sutekh, the thunder-god. The Hittites made ba'al and Hadad interchangeable terms.

The original local character of the ba'alim is brought out by the fact that the word Bethel had a like origin and meaning, being at times interchangeable with the word ba'al. From originally meaning the dwelling place of the deity, it came to connote the personality of that deity himself. Judges 9:46 reads:

"And when all the men of the tower of Shechem heard thereof, they entered into the stronghold of Bethel-Berith"

Bethel-Berith here is the same as Ba'al-Berith. The American revisers avoided this difficulty by rendering it "they entered into the stronghold of the house of El-Berith," But the objection to the rendering "the

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1. Cf. Lods, Israel, p. 124

stronghold of the house of" is obvious.

The word Bethel was applied to Jehovah for in Gen. 31:13 we should read: "I am the God-Bethel" instead of "I am the God of Bethel" as in the American revision. In this connection Rene Dussaud has these words:

"Les papyrus judeo-arameens d'Elephantine ont fourni un nom divin Bethel dont l'identification avec Yahve est admise par une partie tout au moins de la colonie juive d'Elephantine, puisque tous deux recoivent la meme paredre. 'Anat'. (Anat-Yahou dans Pap. Sachau, 32 et Anat-Bethel dans Pap. Sachau, 18.) D'autre part, la revelation de ce nom divin Bethel, dans un milieu Israelite voue d'une maniere fervente au culte de Yahve, permet de demontrer que le Dieu particulierement adore dans le Royaume du Nord portait precisement ce nom de Bethel dans les anciens textes bibliques." ¹

Using these texts from Elephantine as a basis of revision Dussaud would also make the same change in the rendering of Genesis 46:3 and 31:13,53 where he would read: "Je suis le Dieu Bethel, le Dieu de ton pere,"² but does not substantiate his claim.

There is a possibility that at the time of the settlement of the Hebrews in Canaan there were a variety of words that were used to describe the presence of divine power in any locality. That power might be

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1. Rene Dussaud, Les Origines Cananeennes du Sacrifice Israelite, p. 232.
2. Ibid, p. 237.

called either ba'al, bethel, or el. Yet we must not fall into the error of supposing that at the time of the conquest the Canaanite religion was polydaemonism. Even though there were many local deities called by various and sundry names, each associated with a particular ritual and priesthood, by the time of the actual conquest a convenient syncretism had resulted and there was much in common among all the ba'alim of the land. Thus, practically, ba'alism may be treated as a whole and not as made up of many small parts, even though the origin of the system must be relegated to such an origin. This fact is brought out very clearly by the translation of the Ras Shamra texts. Commenting to this effect, Dussaud remarks in his article "La Mythologie Phenicienne d'apres les Tablettes de Ras Shamra":

"Les tablettes de Ras Shamra nous mettent en presence d'un systeme mythologique fortement concu qui, sauf les variantes de detail, partait commun au groupe phenicien et ne'a pas ete sans repercussion sur ses voisins immediats
. . . Il y a tout lieu d'admettre que ce n'est pas la un produit du syncretisme tardif, mais au contraire un caractere fundamental tres ancien."¹

However, we must bear in mind that the Ras Shamra

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1. Rene Dussaud, in *Revue de L'Histoire des Religions*, Vol. CIV, p. 358, 1931

texts give us a point of view in Canaanite religion which may have been that of an elite in the priesthood of Ugarit. When it came to actual contacts in the land of Canaan, the conflict was not commonly between a highly developed conception of religion such as we would find in priestly archives, but with the lower concept of the masses, which was less highly conscious of itself, but which was endowed with far more power of resistance than the philosophy of Babylonian scribes.

With this in mind let us now turn to a consideration of some of these local ba'alim and their modes of worship, etc.

3. A Consideration of the Local Ba'alim of Canaan.

In any consideration of the multitude of local Ba'alim that were scattered the length and breadth of the land of Canaan, it must be remembered that by the time of the conquest all these primitive cults had fallen more and more to one similar pattern. This is very reasonable when we remember that from first to last the cults of the various ba'als were expressions of an agricultural people seeking to assure to themselves and their posterity the fruits of their labors. So it came about that the ba'al

cult, no matter where you found it, came to possess a unified character.

" .. and its highest expressions were joyous celebrations which seemed to grow spontaneously out of the rejoicings naturally connected with the culture of the land and the culture of the vine. When the sickle was put into the corn (Deut 16:9) at the close of the corn harvest, and especially at the close of the grape gathering (Jud. 9:27) which marked the end of all harvest work for the year, the people came together for a joyous feast, in order to give to the god of the harvest the share and the thanks that were his due, and to insure his continuing help by a meal taken together in his presence."¹

Professor Olmstead has pointed out the multiplicity of ba'als receiving divine honors in the land even at so far removed a time as the writing of the texts of Ras Shamra which at the time of his writing, had only recently been discovered. Ba'al Zephon, the Ba'al of the North, seems to have been the chief deity of that particular place although at times he is called El Zephon, or simply Zephon. One of the tablets lists the Ba'alim that were to be found in the temple of El who headed the Phoenician pantheon. Ba'al Kanaph, the winged ba'al, the ba'al of the vine, the ba'al of the year and of the month. Others included Dagan, Reshuph, Shalem, Astart, Anat, and Asherat and Elat

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1. Bertholet, A History of Civilization in Palestine, p. 112.

of the tower. The Ba'alats or ladies of the Temple are mentioned. Alein, the Son of Ba'al finds a prominent place in these writings.¹ This list gives us a bit of an idea of the immensity of the task of separating one ba'al from another and of delineating their unique characteristics.

Our Biblical records give us further clue to the existence of other ba'alim. The ba'al was often named after a holy thing or place, or the locality over which that particular ba'al reigned supreme. Thus we find ba'al Hermon, (Jud. 3:3); Ba'al Tamar (Jud. 20:23), the spirit of the Palm tree; Ba'alath Beer (Jos. 19:8), the Lady of the Well; Ba'al Menon (Num. 32:38); Ba'al Peor (Deut. 4:3); Ba'al Hazor (II Sam. 15:23); Ba'al Hamon (Cant. 8:11); Ba'al Shalishah (II Kings 4:42); Ba'al Jehudah (Josh. 15:60). Sometimes the ba'al was named for a particular power attributed to him, or a rite peculiar to his cult. Thus we have Ba'al Berith sometimes called Bethel Berith whose duty it was to guard all covenants made under his protection, (Jud. 8:33). Ba'al Gad (Josh. 2:17) was considered the god of good fortune and Ba'al Zebub was the god of flies, consulted by those

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1. Olmstead, History of Palestine and Syria, p. 237

wishing cures from illness.¹

Melqarth, "the king of the city", Ba'al of Tyre, may be taken as a representative of the local Ba'alim. It was his particular cult that so influenced the whole life of Israel during the reign of Ahab and Jezebel. We remember also that it was to Hiram, king of Tyre, that Solomon turned for help in the building of the great temple in Jerusalem.

Melqarth is variously known as Melqarth, Molech, Molock. During later times he was latinized under the name Saturn.

Tyre itself was, during Canaanite times, located on an island just off the Syrian coast. This position rendered it practically impregnable. The great temple, the center of the worship of the city, was characterized by the great brazen image of Melqarth and the two great pillars which dominated the entrance. These pillars typified, as in most Canaanite temples the male and the female fertility principles.

The city of Carthage in northern Africa was colonized by Phoenicians about 1200 B.C., where the worship of the Tyrian Ba'al Melqarth was duly established. In the temple of Ba'al Melqarth at

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1. Cf. Lods, Israel, p. 121.

Carthage the two pillars are also prominent. And it is possible that Phoenician sailors first named the straits of Gibraltar after their Ba'al. These later became known, as it were, as the "Pillars of Hercules."

The student of Biblical literature is also interested in the fact that the Tyrian artisans who reared the temple of Solomon also raised there two pillars, named respectively Yakhim (Jachin) and Boaz.

"As suggested by S. A. Cook, W. E. Barnes, and H. Gressmann, it is likely that the latter name, which in Lucian's recension of the Septuagint appears as Baaz, is a corruption of Ba'al. Taken together the two pillars may mean 'Ba'al' establishes."¹

However, this interpretation is out of the question because on philological grounds the loss of such letters as an ayin or a lamedh is not possible without undue violence to the text. Quite possibly, however, the names of the pillars might have been "El-Jachin and El-Boaz", the first part having been dropped on account of Jerusalem hostility.

The temple of Melqarth itself is very ancient, dating from about 2750 B.C. As to the ritual and systemetized worship, the most characteristic element was the sacrificial system. Both the Ras Shamra

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1. Leslie, Old Testament Religion, p. 130

texts and the Tariff of Marseilles, originally from Carthage, and also the Tariff of Carthage, dating from 400 B.C., prove the existence of a well integrated sacrificial system in Canaanite times. Note also that the question of a tariff in the temple was basic because of the emphasis placed on "valuations" and "substitutions" made necessary by the type and condition of the animal sacrificed. There was also a correlation between these problems and the problem of irregularities and blemishes. There is revealed an essential continuity in the place of the sacrifice in Canaanite religion from early times, down to and succeeding Israelite times. Animals included in the tariff were bulls, castrated sheep, rams, calves a year old, and sucking kids. Although the bloody sacrifices were conceived as the more potent, yet even in these early times provision was made whereby the poor could substitute two birds in the place of a large and valuable animal. Human sacrifice was not a common practice, yet it was resorted to upon extremely serious occasions.

Bread was placed upon the altars, and wine and oil were poured out or rubbed upon the standing sacred stones. The bread, oil, and wine typified the

fruits of the field, and some concept of communion with the ba'al was present, at least to some. It must be said, however, that this element is not conspicuous in Hebrew worship. There the blood and the fat are offered to God. Wheat and flour are burned with incense. The showbread was also set with incense. Now incense is not eaten by any god, neither the bread. Indeed, this ritual of the showbread emphasizes not food, but continuity.

The underlying motive in the whole sacrificial system was the securing of fertility in all the processes of nature, especially the rainfall, productivity of the soil, and fruitfulness of the flocks and herds. The system as a whole was planned as a sort of coercive magic by which the cooperation of the ba'al could be secured. It was for this reason that all first fruits were sacred and "devoted" to the ba'al. This included grain, fruit, and oil. It was also extended to include the flocks and herds, sometimes even to the family relationships.

One of the most inexplicable aspects of Canaanite Ba'al worship, and particularly the worship of the Tyrian ba'al Milqarth, was the long established custom for sacred prostitution connected with the

temple worship. But this too was a very natural development of the fertility aspect of Ba'alism. The water that made all vegetation, and even life itself possible was thought to be the result of actual physical union of the gods. This union might be "coerced" by delegated human representatives who represented the deity in the divine act. Many times these ritualistic unions degenerated into unspeakable revel. Yet we are fairest when we judge the Canaanite religion at its best, and not at its worst. The rites of sacred prostitution were never conceived to be expressions of common trust, but at their highest and best they formed a truly mystical expression of a great religious ideal, for the woman who at the temple of her god, represented the Mother goddess, and the foreigner or the priest representing the great Ba'al himself, were personalizations of an ideal.

"They were official representatives
for diffusing through the community the
peculiar virtue or potency of the goddess,
the much coveted blessing of human fertility."¹

Such was Ba'alism as it was practiced at Tyre -
and much the same picture obtained at each local
shrine throughout the length and breadth of the land.

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1. Farnell, quoted by Leslie, op cit., p. 52.

4. Sacred Things and Persons.

Here it will not be necessary to go deeply into detail, yet some treatment should be given to those aspects of Canaanitish life that were set apart as sacred: - mountains, springs, caves, rivers, stones, etc.

Every place of abundance was sacred to the ba'al of that locality, for here there was evident fertility - and so the god of fertility - and so the god of fertility must be in and about that particular place.

After the god was worshipped on a "high place" where a grove was planted. The trees of the grove may or may not have been the forerunner of the pillar, which as we have seen represented the fertility aspect of the deities.

Then too, some particular trees were held sacred as being the actual abiding place of a god, such as the Divine tree of Shechan (Judges 9:37) and possibly the Palm of Deborah and the oak of Mamre. The Ashual so often mentioned in the Old Testament was a pole, or trunk of a tree, perhaps carved to represent the deity.

Sanctuaries, and the sum total of its grounds, were held sacred. The boundaries of temple property

are usually indicated by stone dolmens. The altar, usually in the center of the temple, was always open to the sky.

A very characteristic feature of all Canaanite temples was the sacred standing stones. These were often arranged to form a circle, called by the Hebrews a gilgal. The stones usually show evidence of cup marks, used for rubbing in fat or oil. Lods suggests that originally the stones were thought to be beth-el or the homes of gods.

5. The Goddesses.

The Ba'alath or "Lady" probably had a like origin with the ba'al or "Master". Examples of them include Ba'alath Beer, The Lady of the Well, Joshua 19:8, and Ba'alath Joshua 15:24. There was also in Canaan various female deities who tended to merge into a single great female deity, Astarte, whose variant names were Astarte, Ashera, Anat, Kadesh, etc. Astoreth is a mongrel form made up of the consonants of Astart and the vowels of Boshet, 'shame'. But the name is due to controversy and never was used by devotees, any more than was Boshet for Ba'al in such names as Mephibosheth. A city of Bashan was called Ashtaroth, a perfectly good form,

meaning the 'Astartes". (cf. Deut. 1:4; Josh. 9:10; 12:4; 13:12, 31.)

6. Symposium of Ritual Revealed by the Ras Shamra Epics.

The discovery, decipherment, translation and publication of the Ras Shamra texts have altered somewhat our conception of Canaanitish religion. Heretofore scholars were convinced that each ba'al was worshipped purely as a local deity and irrespective of the other gods and goddesses of the land. Now, however, we are forced to admit the strong possibility that a clearly defined syncretism had taken place and a well-organized pantheon of gods was widely recognized, with clearly - defined gradations of authority. Rene Dussaud points this out when he says:

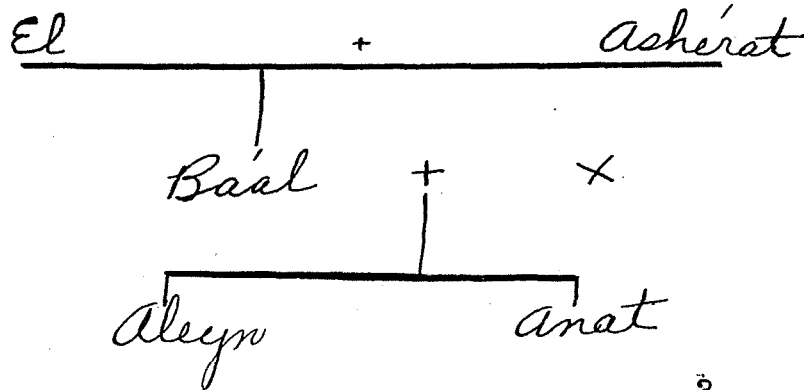
"La plupart des travaux sur la mythologie phenicienne, notamment ceux si remarquables de Baudissin, sont domines par la conviction qu'il n'avait jamais existe de pantheon phenicien; on voyait la une conception d'exegetes de tres basse epoque car, en realite, chaque ville venerait des deux quo lui etaient particuliers. . . . A denier l'existence d'un pantheon phenicien, on s'embarrassait de difficultes inexistantes, comme lorsque Baudissin declarait ne pouvoir expliquer que Carthage, fondee par les Tyriens, ait compte, parmi ses principaux dieux,

Eshmoun, dieu qu'on tenait pour special a Sidon." 1

And Dussaud adds on page 358:

"Les tablettes de Ras Shamra nous mettent en presence d'un systeme mythologique fortement concu qui, sauf les variantes de detail, partait commun au groupe phenicien et n'a pas ete sans repercussion sur ses voisins immediats. Au premier rang se place le dieu El. Cela ne surprendra pas les exegetes de l'Ancien Testament qui savent l'importance su dieu El dans les legendes patriarcales attachees a certains vieux sanctuaires palestiniens Il y a tout lieu d'admettre que ce n'est pas la un produit de syncretisme tardif, mais au contraire un caractere fundamental tres ancien."

Charles Virolleaud, the man who more than any other has been responsible for the new information coming to us as a result of his prompt publication of the Ras Shamra texts, himself gives us the line of primogeniture in the Canaanite pantheon:



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1. Dussaud, La Mythologie Phenicienne, p. 357.
2. Virolleaus, La Legende de Ba'al, p. vi.

The tablets from Ras Shamra have not as yet all been translated. Perhaps the most well known is the one dealing with the epic of Ba'al Aleyn and Mot which seems to follow the general pattern of a ritual describing the annual dying and resurrection of a fertility god. Ba'al Aleyn is himself the son of Ba'al and the grandson of El, the head of the pantheon. M. Virolleaud speaks to the point that the particular name of this Canaanitish Ba'al is still unknown but that his general characteristics are the same as the Ba'als of the land. He says, page vi:

"Les initiales connaissent sans doute le nom réel de Ba'al, le nom propre, mais le secret a été bien gardé, et nous en sommes réduits là-dessus aux conjectures. Il est d'ailleurs probable que Ba'al portait des noms différents suivant les villes où il était adoré; le Ba'al de Tyr, par exemple, devait s'appeler autrement que le Ba'al d'Arvad, et a fait que celui d'ugarit."

W. F. Albright in his article has given us a translation of the Epic of Al Eyan Ba'al and Mot, a part of which I here transcribe:

Col. I.

"Verily thou shalt set (thy) face toward El, who mixes the rivers in the midst of the fountains of the two deeps. Thou shalt explore the field of El, and shalt enter the palace of the king, the father of years. At the feet of El thou shalt fall down, and shalt hold thy

peace, thou shalt bow down and shalt pay him homage. Thou shalt raise (thy) voice and shalt speak, rejoicing them, Atirat and her sons, Elat and the band of her retainer, for Al'eyan Ba'al is dead, Zebul, lord of the earth has perished. El also will speak to the lady, Atirat of the sea, 'Hearken to me, o lady, Atirat of the sea, give me of thy sons, that I may make him king.' And the lady, Atirat of the sea, will answer, 'No, but we will make a pillar god corresponding to one king who knows how to rule. And L-t-p-n, El-Dp'ed will answer, 'Grind pigments, let them be prepared by Ba'al, let ointment be made by Kitmusum, son of Dagan. And the lady, Atirat of the sea, will answer, 'No, but let us make 'Attar the 'rP₂ king. Let 'Attar the 'rP₂ be king. Then let 'Attar the rP₂ go up into the interior of the north, let him set on the throne of Al'eyan Ba'al. Let his feet reach the footstool, let his hand reach its edge. And 'Attar the 'rP₂ will answer, 'Let me be king in the interior of the North.' 'Atar the 'rP₂ will go down, he will go down to the throne of 'Al'eyan Ba'al, and will reign over the land of El.

Col. II

"O maiden 'Anat, thou shalt attack him - as the desire of a wild cow for her calf, as the desire of a wild ewe for her lamb, so is the desire of 'Anat, shrine of Ba'al. Thou shalt seize Mot, with treading, shoe thou shalt bind (him) tight with a binding qs. Thou shalt raise (thy) voice and speak, 'Thou, Mot, give (me) my brother.' And Mot, son of the gods, will answer, 'What dost thou desire of me, O virgin 'Anat? I will go and will force every mountain into the interior of the earth, every hill into the interior of the plain. The breath of life has become wanting among men, the breath of life has ceased. The earth had come for my sake to be a land of wilderness, which destroys the field, (as) a lion which slays its prey. As for me, I have made 'Al'eyan Ba'al - even I - (as) a sheep in my mouth - - - and Sps, the luminary of the gods, is desolate, for is not heaven in the hands of Mot, son of the Gods?'

A day, days passed - after days, after months, the maiden 'Anat, attacked him, - as the desire of a wild cow for her calf, as the desire of a wild ewe for her lamb, so (was) the desire of 'Anat, shrine of Ba'al. She seized Mot, son of the gods with the sword, she split him in half, with winnowing seive she winnowed him, in the fire she burned him, in the mill she ground him, in the field she sowed his flesh, that the birds might eat, that his fate might be consummated.

Cols. III-IV.

"For Zebul, lord of the earth had perished. And behold Al'eyan Ba'al, lives, behold Zebul, Lord of the north exists heaven will rain down oil and the wadis will cause honey to flow. And I know that 'al'eyan Ba'al lives, that Zebul, lord of the earth exists . . ."1

Virolleaud points out that despite many differences between this story and the Adonis rituals that developed many centuries later in this same part of Asia Minor, yet here we have in all probability the source of the latter:

"Il y a, certes, de grandes differences entre cette idylle tragique d'Adonis et Astarte et le Poeme severe et compasse de Ras Shamra.

"Masi c'est aussi qu'il a plus de dix siecles d'intervalle entre l'epoque ou les tablettes de Ras Shamra ont ete composees et les plus anciens documents connus concernant Adonis, ces documents qui sont l'oeuvre d'auteurs ecrivant en grec et qui etaient visiblement preoccupes de rapprocher les mythes de la Phenicie de ceux de la Grece, pour expliquer

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1. W. F. Albright, The North Canaanite Epic of Al Eyan Ba'al and Mot, p. 185 ff.

les uns par les autres."¹

Dussaud likewise points out the same conclusion, namely that these ritualistic acts were the forerunners of the Adonis cult when he says,

"Nous concluons qu'il existait en Phenicie, des une haute epoque, un enseignement religieux qui, par le moyen des rites agraires, associait les individus aux phenomenes de la nature et au rythme des saisons. A une epoque indeterminee, mais anterieure au VII siecle avant notre ere, ces mysteres se concentrerent sur une personnalite unique cell d'Adonis (Eshmoun) dont le nom se repandit dans tout le bassin de la Meditteranee. A basse epoque, la Syrie adopte la formule dionysiaque qui ne disparaîtra que devant le christianisme." ²

And Dussaud goes on to comment concerning the syncretism that had taken place in the ranks of the fertility gods. He says, page 407:

"Le syncretisme qui a fini par absorber les deux esprits de la vegetation en une seule entite Eshmoun-Adonis, s'observe egalement pour les deesses Astarte, Asherat et Anat; aussi pour les dieux El et Hadaa. On s'explique, des lors, que la religion phenicienne soit apparue, quand on ne disposait que le document de basse epoque, avec un caractere plus pantheiste que polytheiste."

Of course it must be remembered that we have here a ritual to be used in a highly organized form of worship, and at times it is difficult to decide what parts of the ritualistic story were played by

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1. Virolleaud, op. cit., p. xx.

2. Dussaud, La Mythologie Phenicienne p. 406.

the priests and what parts were taken by the worshippers. The important thing for us is the fact that the coming and departure of the season of fruitfulness, the spring and summer, was allegorized under the figure of the life and death of the favorite god, who was revived with the ever returning cycle of the year.

Sacrifices formed an integral part of the ritual at Ras Shamra. These were of various kinds, the peace offering, the sin offering, the sacrifice intended to secure justice, the sacrifice of thanksgiving for rain, and the sacrifice of communion. The rite of the last sheaf, in which Mot had taken refuge, which we have described above, had a like parallel in the rite of the stallion ass, covered with branches and leaves in which the spirit of the vintage harvest had taken refuge. The ass was sacrificed on the altar of the High Place and requests addressed to El, the father of years. The deities connected with this rite were Qades and Amurru. Hebrew reaction against this worship of the ass was very strong. And therefore the first-born of the ass was the only animal not consecrated. Its neck had to be broken, or else it had to be redeemed by a lamb. Of course the dog was not considered a

domestic animal.

The multiplicity of gods receiving worship of this same nature in Canaanite times is brought out in still another epic coming to us from Ras Shamra. This tablet called the "Epic of the Graces", or the "Epic of the Swallows" was unearthed in 1933 at Ugarit and dates from the 15th-14th Century B.C. It was first edited by Virolleaud in Syria, XVII 1936 pp. 209-228. In this epic the goddesses K-r-s-t "The Graces, Daughters of the New Moon, the Swallows" are invoked as patronesses of wedlock and childbirth. This epic may have been a ritual used at Canaanitish weddings. T. H. Gaster gives the following analysis of this newly deciphered document:

a. Proemium, declaring that the composition is addressed to the deities NIKKAL and H-r-h-b "Who reigns o'er the summer crops", and that it is to be recited at a time when "the moon appears at the sinking of the sun." (Lines 1-4)

b. A threefold invocation to certain goddesses called "The Graces, the Daughters of the New Moon, the Swallows", beseeching them to bless the future offspring of an unnamed woman, and to bestow prosperity upon its father and kinfolk. (Lines 5-15)

c. A Mythological Interlude, perhaps sung as a compliment to the bridal pair, describing how the Moon-god Y-rh wooed and won the goddess NIKKAL. The regular procedure of an engagement is described. The suitor sent the god H-r-h-b to the girl's father with an offer of silver, gold, and precious stones, etc., as a bridal price. (Lines 16-39)

d. Closing lines, beseeching the Graces, by virtue of their proverbial kindness, to look with favour upon the marriage, the bride price having now been duly paid. (Lines 40-52)¹

Mention of these same graces is made in a similar epic coming from the same region known as the Legend of Danel (Myth of Achat). Gaster here remarks:

" . . after the hero Danel has duly celebrated the week of his wedding and has been assured that a son would indeed be born to him, he repairs to the sanctuary of certain goddesses called K-r-s-t (Graces), Daughters of the New Moon, the Swallows," and offers them food and drink for seven days it is apparent that the K-s-r-t are patronesses of wedlock and childbirth. It is therefore eminently natural that they should be invoked to bless a new union."²

It is altogether probable that NIKKAL is the Sumerian Nin-gal, consort of the Moon-god SIN, and that Y-R-H is the god of the Moon (cf. Hebrew ירח), similar also to another form from Ras Shamra, spelled T-r-h (probably pronounced Terah.)

The marriage ceremonies here described in these documents dating from the 15th century B.C. are very similar to those portrayed in Genesis 34:11f. The phrase occurring in line 7, "behold, a virgin bear-

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1. Gaster, Theodor Herzl, "The Graces in Semetic Folklore", p. 37ff.
2. Ibid., ad. loc.

eth a son!" is almost identical with Isaiah 7:14. And line 30, "rouse themselves up like a lion" reminds us of The prophecy uttered by the prophet Ba'alam. Perhaps the fact that these goddesses were invoked three times gives us an early insight into the origin of the three-fold Amen, so popular with the Hebrews.

F. Conclusion

The Israelites entered the Land of Canaan at a time when the religion of the native dwellers in the land had already reached a sphere of development whereby mystical and religious ideas were practiced by the people in the form of their physical symbols. When we stop to consider the whole round of sensuous nature-worship into which the Israelites found themselves suddenly plunged, we begin to understand the vehemence with which the prophets denounced, the Canaanite religion as a "whoring" an expression used not merely in a metaphorical sense, but deliberately bringing to mind the unclean orgies into which this worship often degenerated. The fact that the orgiastic nature of the worship was pre-[?]ceded by a sense of mystical coersiveness, destined to invoke

the life-giving water from the hands of the gods, does not mitigate the dangers implicit in the system of which the Hebrews sought to become a part.

It was the purpose of this chapter to review the geographical, sociological and religious influences that were brought to bear upon the Hebrews as they entered the land of Canaan. Before dealing with the prophetic protest itself it will be necessary to consider in some detail those passages in our Old Testament that show the traces of the influence of Ba'alism upon the Hebrew mind.

CHAPTER FOUR

A STUDY OF THE INTERPENETRATION OF THE TWO CONCEPTS OF GOD IN OUR RELIGIOUS SOURCES

- A. Introductory
- B. The Historical Books Presented
for the Interpenetration of the
Ba'al Concept
- C. Correlations Between the Ba'al
Passages of the Historical Books
with the Historical, Religious,
Sociological, and Political
Backgrounds of the Contexts
- D. Conclusion

CHAPTER FOUR

A STUDY OF THE INTERPENETRATION OF THE TWO CONCEPTS OF GOD IN OUR RELIGIOUS SOURCES

A. Introductory

This chapter will be presented in two sections. The first part will seek to present, largely by means of charts, the place that the Ba'al concept of religion played in the construction of the Historical Books of the Old Testament. Part two will seek to present a correlation between the Ba'al passages and the historical, religious, sociological, political, background of the contexts themselves.

The idea of interpenetration is an important one, yet one that is extremely difficult of analysis. The books of the Old Testament as they lie in their present form have been used, both by Jews and Christians, for their didactic values. Many men have sought to trace the succession of authors whose imprint upon the books they possessed. There is one fact that is still indisputable. In and through the books as they are today may still be found abundant proof that the struggle of Israel with Ba'alism is not only depicted; it is used by

the writers or the compilers as a basis to account for the failure or success of the nation in economic terms in the Greek sense of the word. It is sometimes difficult to distinguish where the actual presentation of fact is used as pure narration, and where that same fact is used to point a moral value. In fact one might even claim that every historical incident is used for its didactic values.

Then, too, there is to be seen in the record as we have it the facts of the struggle between diametrically opposed concepts of God and His relationship to mankind. This concept may be traced from a position where Jehovah and Ba'al are conceived as two terms for the same idea, as in the times of the judges and the early kings when even the title of ba'al "lord," was frequently applied to Jehovah,¹ to a position of finely drawn distinction and opposition by the prophets from the time of Elijah.

B. The Historical Books Presented for
the Interpenetration of the
Ba'al Concept.

1. The Book of Joshua.

The Book of Joshua as presented in the accompanying charted outline shows very clearly the effect of inter-

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1. Lods, Israel, p. 408.

v.17.- "Only Jehovah thy God be with thee. Be strong and of good courage."	1
v.1.- Rahab the harlot	2
v.24.- "The hand of Jehovah . . . it is mighty."	4
vv.30-33.- Altars on Mt. Ebal and Mt. Gerizim. The covenant reiterated.	8 Sacred mountains
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Preparation of Disaster</i></p>	
	23 4 Forward look
v.16.- "When ye go and serve other gods . . . then shall the anger of Jehovah be kindled against you."	
v.15.- "Choose ye this day whom ye will serve. (1) God of your fathers (2) gods of the Amorites "But as for me and my house we will serve Jehovah." v.23.- "Put away the foreign gods that are among you." v.26.- "a great stone under the oak. --Lest ye deny your God."	24 Gods of the Amorites Foreign gods

Joshua

penetration of two concepts of God. This idea is brought out mainly by a projection into the future, a premonition of religious disaster, as it were. The Book opens with a clarion call to strength and courage to undertake the gigantic task of subduing the new land that lay before the tribes of Israel. It closes with the erection of a large stone to bear mute testimony against them, "lest ye deny your God." Chapter 23 displays a great uneasiness on the part of the writer as to what will happen when the ideology of the Children of Israel comes into direct contact with the thought-processes of the conquered tribes. Verse 16 reads: "When ye go and serve other gods . . . then shall the anger of Jehovah be kindled against you." They are not even given the possibility of a doubt, for then we should have the word 'if', instead of the more positive 'when' of our text.

Several other facts stand out from a survey of this historical book. Monotheism, as such was unknown. Chapter 24 distinctly enumerates two classes of gods that might be worshipped beside the true God - Jehovah. These two groups were the "gods of your fathers, which they served beyond the River," that is, in Egypt, and the "gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell." and verse 23 adds: "Now, therefore, . . . put away the

foreign gods which are among you and incline your heart unto Jehovah, the God of Israel."

Jehovah was conceived as a God of might, one who inspired extreme courage. Mountains were peculiarly fitting places for all acts of worship. This fact was one of the points of similarity existing among practically all the religions of the ancient east, and formed one of the strong points of contact between the Israelites and the Canaanites. Moral values were rather vague.

For the present study the Book of Joshua is invaluable because it presents a perfect picture of Israel, loosely knit together into a sort of military organization, yet ready to fall into its component parts at a moment's notice; a picture of a homogeneous mass of people, not yet entirely loyal in their devotion to a single deity, but secretly harboring 'other gods', and in the mind of the writer, liable to the fascination of 'foreign gods' with whom they as yet are not acquainted.

We may say that the Book of Joshua ends with a great interrogation point: Will the conquerors become the conquered in matters of religion? Can the worship of Jehovah succeed in supplanting the 'gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell?'

In other words, the Book of Joshua prepares the way for the coming conflict between the national deity, Jehovah, and Ba'al.

2. The Book of Judges.

Mechanically, the Book of Judges is built as a series of cycles. Each one deals with the coming of a deliverer who later exercised authority as a judge, a kind of petty king. Sociologically, we have a picture of the tribes of Israel dwelling in the same land with the various strata of the Canaanites, and at times living together peaceably and at times at war with their neighbors.

These cycles may be described another way. The children of Israel fall into the worship of the gods of the land - the Ba'alim. This is seen in the eyes of the writer as a cause for punishment and as a result Jehovah sends trouble and oppression upon them. In each case, before deliverance is vouchsafed to them, they are told to 'put away the foreign gods'. The phrase 'they played the harlot' signifying disloyalty to Jehovah is used twice: 1:17, and 8:27, in this latter case, it was the ephod made by Gideon which took the place of the usual idol.

In the book of the Judges the word "Evil" is used almost synonymously with 'Ba'alism', typifying the complete withdrawal of the Israelites from the purity of the worship of Jehovah and entering into an admixture where the worship of Jehovah really became the worship

<p>v.11.- Children of Israel did <u>(Evil)</u> - forsook Jehovah, and served the Baalim. v.13.- They served Baal and Astoreth. v.17.- They played the harlot after 'other gods.'</p>	2
<p>v.3.- Inter-settlement with Sidonians and Canaanites. v.6.- Inter-marriage - served 'other gods.' v.7.- <u>(Evil)</u> - served Baalim and Astoreth.</p>	3
<p>v.4.- Deborah's Palm Tree.</p>	4 Deborah
<p>v.4.- Jehovah out of Edom, Seir v.8.- 'New gods.'</p>	5
<p>v.10.- "Ye shall not fear the gods of the Amorites. v.11.- The angel appears under an oak v.25.- Destruction of the altar of <u>Baal</u> and the <u>Ashtoreth</u>. v.37.- Gideon is named "Jerub-baal."</p>	6 Gideon Typical Key center
<p>v.27.- All Israel played the harlot after Gideon's Ephod. v.33.- The people worship <u>Baal-berith</u>.</p>	8
<p>v.6.- <u>(Evil)</u> Served Baalim and Ashtoroth, gods of Syria, Sidon, Moab, Philistia. The People cry to Jehovah. v.16.- They put away the 'foreign gods.'</p>	10 Abimelech
<p>v.1.- Jephtah - was the son of a harlot.</p>	11 Jephtah
<p>v.1.- <u>(Evil)</u>. v.16.- The angel and Manoah. - Sampson</p>	13 Sampson
<p>v.23.- The Philistine worship of Dagan.</p>	16
<p>v.5.- Micah had a 'house of gods', ephod, teraphim, a consecrated son as priest. v.10. A Levite made priest to the house of gods - a form of Jehovah-worship.</p>	17
<p>v.1.- Migration of Danites. Theft of the gods. v.24.- 'Ye have taken away my gods.'</p>	18
<p>v.19.- Wives procured for Benjamin at the Cult Dance.</p>	21

Subjects

of Ba'al. The word is interspersed throughout the book, and forms one of the bases of division of the book as a whole. It occurs in 2:11; 3:7; 6:25; 10:6; and 13:1.

Ba'al and Astoreth usually occur together, sometimes the variant spelling 'Astaroth' is used. Ashera always means a living tree.

The book opens with the cause of the trouble clearly delineated. Chapter 3:3-6 tells of the combination of inter-settlement and inter-marriage with the Canaanites that resulted in the 'serving of other gods'. The gods of the Philistines, the Sidonians, of Moab and Ammon are important enough to receive separate mention.

Special trees are still mentioned as places where divine oracles might be more easily received. Palms and oaks, or terebinths, are prominent in this connection.

The story of the Danites, and of Micah and his priest that occupies chapters 16, 17, and 18, is interesting in that it throws some little light upon the concept of God held by the Israelites at this time. Micah is said to have had a 'house of gods' that he worshipped as Jehovah. He also possessed an ephod and teraphim. When his images were stolen he said, "Ye have taken away my gods".¹ Here the monotheistic idea is far from its later perfectness.

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1. Judges 18:24

Chapter six with the story of Gideon and his conflict with apostasy to Ba'alism may be taken as a typical center of the book. The fact that he later was named Jerub-baal is in itself significant.

There seems to have been a direct connection between the cult dance in the vineyards, in which the Benjaminites were told to capture their wives,¹ and similar practices among the native Canaanites as a part of their fertility rites.

It must be admitted here that the infiltration of the foreign worship into the life and thought of the Israelites is used by the author of Judges as the basis of pointing a moral lesson. The book is admirably suited to didactic purposes. Chapter ten is typical. It opens with the sense of evil - the people are worshipping the Ba'alim and the Asherah. Not only that, but they have gone after the gods of Syria, Sidon, Moab, and the Philistines, all of which were variant manifestations of Ba'alism. The Sidonian Ba'al, as we have already noted, was especially voluptuous and sensual. These traits were characteristic of the rites practiced by his devotees. The people are then depicted as in trouble and they cry out to their old national deity - Jehovah - and are told to "put away the foreign gods." This same cycle of events

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1. Judges 21:19

could be traced in other portions of the book.

The book of Judges presents a picture of the settlement of nomadic tribes within an agricultural land, and the taking to themselves as a matter of course the deities that went with that land - the Ba'alim. At the same time they retained their national deity to whom they go in times of crisis. There is evidence that no great distinction existed in the minds of the people generally between the two ideas. There was therefore a constant urge to adopt forms of worship based on the local conception of Ba'al, and to create a kind of syncretism.

3. The Books of Samuel.

The two books of Samuel when considered together present two series or cycles each culminated by a public demonstration of the justice of Jehovah in a very graphic way. The first cycle was initiated by the attempted bringing up of the Ark of the Lord. The result was the reform of Samuel depicted in I Samuel 7:3;-

"And Samuel spake unto all the house of Israel, saying, If ye do return unto Jehovah with all your heart, then put away the foreign gods and the Ash-taroath from among you, and direct your hearts unto Jehovah, and serve him only . . . then the children of Israel did put away the Baalim and the Ashtaroth, and served Jehovah only."

Chapter 15 gives us the story of the culmination of Saul's failure to fulfill the expectations of the people and of the national deity. He refused to destroy the property of the conquered Agag. Samuel arrived and in

v.6.- "Down to sheol and up." Cf. the Ras Shamra ritual of the dying and rising god.	2	The Ark
v.22.- Sons of Eli sin at the door of the tent of meeting.	4	
v.8.- "Their mighty gods" (Philistine comment	5	
v.2.- Dagan	6	
v.5.- Images of mice, tumors. Sympathetic magic.	7	
v.3.- Samuel's reforms. Israel put away the Baalim, Asherah, etc: 'foreign gods'	7	Rejection of Saul
v.15.- Samuel's circuit: Bethel, Gilgal, Mizpah, Ramah.		
v.32.- Public expiation. Samuel hewed Agag in pieces before Jehovah.		
v.13.- Teraphim put in David's bed.		
v.18.- Feast of the New Moon.		
v.3.- Saul and the Witch of En-Dor.	15	Rejection of Saul
v.13.- "I see a god coming up out of the earth.	19	
The Death of Saul	20	
v.10.- They put his armor in the house of the Ashtaroth.	28	
	31	
v.8.- Ishbosheth (Eshbaal) Saul's son.	2	The New King
v.4.- Mephibosheth (Merib-baal) Saul's grandson.	4	
v.15.- Eliada - (Beel-iada)	5	
v.20.- Baal-perazim	6	
v.21.- David captures the images.	15	
v.2.- Baale-judah: place name where the ark was kept.	6	The New King
v.14.- David's cult dance before the ark.		
v.32.- "Top of the Ascent" - where God was worshipped."	15	
FAMINE	21	
Seven men of Saul delivered to be executed in expiation for the sins of the 'bloody house of Saul.'		
v.9.- "And they hanged them in the mountain before Jehovah. v.14.- "And after that God was entreated for the land." (The rain comes.)		

I + II Samuel

an act of terrible symbolism portrayed the forfeiture of the kingdom. His prophetic spirit became overwrought. He appeared in the driving, compelling madness of religious fervor and hewed Agag in pieces before Jehovah in Gilgal.¹

This episode in all its starkness stands in direct contrast to the rites of the fertility aspects of Ba'alism. Agag was not sacrificed - he deserved to die; yet his death was made the conveyancer of a pointed lesson that the children of Israel could not soon forget. Jehovah was a God who demanded explicit obedience, who would tolerate no others beside Himself.

The first cycle is in decline throughout the remainder of the first book of Samuel, and ends with the armour of the king suspended as a votive offering in the house of the Ashtaroth of the Philistines.

Just as the first cycle began with the coming of the Ark, so the coming of the true king, David, initiated the second. Here again the Ark is prominent. One of King David's first official acts was to bring up the Ark to Jerusalem.

Chapter six depicts the re-establishment of the covenant relation between the children of Israel and Jehovah. Chapter seven, verses 18-29 gives us David's prayer before the Lord, after he had been informed that he would not be

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1. I Samuel 15:33

vouchsafed the privilege of building a real temple in Jerusalem for Jehovah. It is one of the finest expressions of monotheistic religion that has come down to us.

This cycle, like the first, ends in a great public demonstration, the very starkness of whose detail would engrave itself indelibly upon the minds of all the people. Here too, the connection with the popular Ba'al cults of the land is rather by contradistinction than by similarity. We are told that a great famine was upon the land. No rain had fallen for three years. People were starving and about to perish. In the presence of such a condition it is certain that the rites of Ba'alism were in full sway, rites that were centered around the fertility of the soil and the securing of the needed rainfall. Yet none of these availed. David seeks the face of Jehovah and is told that the famine is a punishment from Jehovah upon the land because of the "bloody house of Saul." Saul had sinned against the covenant which he had made with the Gibeonites and had tried to exterminate them. David enters into negotiations with the remnant of the Gibeonites and is told that seven men of the household of Saul will be sufficient to atone for the evil. The seven men were given and they were "hanged in the mountain before Jehovah". Verse 14 adds: "and after that God was entreated for the land". At last the rainfall came; it was not Ba'al who could give the rain. It was Jehovah, the creator of heaven and earth.

Here we have several similar factors with the contest that was to come many years later between the prophets of Ba'al and Elijah over this same problem: Who gives the rain, Ba'al or Jehovah?

The element of interpenetration is very prominent throughout both books of Samuel. We notice in chapters 2 and 28 the similarity of phraseology with certain current phrases in the ritual of Ba'alism. "Down to sheol and up" reminds us of the Ras Shamra epic of the dying and rising vegetation god, as do the words of the witch of En-dor: "I see a god coming up out of the earth". It is interesting that the Philistines speak of Jehovah in the plural: "Their mighty gods".¹ I Samuel 6:5 gives us an interesting note as to the faith that was placed in sympathetic magic. The Philistines had been afflicted with plagues of mice and of tumors because of the presence of the Ark of Jehovah among them. To alleviate their troubles they made images of the mice and of the tumors of gold and sent them with the Ark of Jehovah back to the Hebrews. Sympathetic or coercive magic was at the very heart of the fertility cultus associated with Ba'alism. The basic philosophy was the theory that the gods could be coerced into a sympathetic interest in the affairs of mankind. Perhaps something of the same idea is to be associ-

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1. I Samuel 4:8

ated with the e~~ter~~aphim that are mentioned, as in I Samuel 19:13.

Chapter 20:18 is one of the earliest references to feasts held at the period of the new moon. This feast was being held in the house of Saul, and it was patent that David would be missed from his usual place. The important thing here is that at this time the Israelites were in the process of taking over the seasons observed religiously by their neighbors and putting their own theological content into the native festivals.

Second Samuel is important in that it gives us the prevalence of names compounded with some form of the word "Ba'al". Ishbosheth and Mephibosheth were originally "Eshbaal" and "Merib-baal" respectively. The consonants of "bosheth" meaning "shame" were combined with the vowels of the word "ba'al", and the corrupted word that resulted expressed the desire of later authors or redactors to eradicate the memory of Ba'alism from the land, even from the terminology and names of places and people. There may be some connection between the dance of King David before the Ark of Jehovah and the cult dances of the Canaanites. This must be classed in the same category with the dances mentioned in Judges 21:19.

Chapter 15 stresses again the importance attached to high places as centers of worship. Verse 32 reads: "the top of the ascent, where God was worshipped".

David says in evident good faith: "They have driven me forth from union with the heritage of Israel, saying: 'Go, serve other gods'".¹ In David's mind the exile is no longer under the protection of his own god, but ^{he} is obliged to seek the protection of the gods of the land where he is compelled to sojourn. There seems to be here no trace of the conception that Yahweh is the only God, nor that the gods of the nations are 'no gods'.

The presence of a rival concept of God is writ large over both the books of Samuel. Here and there we are given insights into the expression of this idea by the Canaanite worshippers, and at other times we are in the presence of the fact that this rival concept had been appropriated by the Hebrews and is in the process of becoming a part of their own forms of worship. Other instances give proof of protest against just such an appropriation. The only possible conclusion that the picture presents is one of flux - a picture that only later events can clarify.

4. The Books of Kings.

For a study of the interpenetration of the two conflicting concepts of God, no finer material could be desired than the two books of Kings as they lie in our English Bible. Certain words and phrases occur again and again, punctuating by their strategic recurrence the books as a

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1. I Samuel 26:19

Date line

1015	<p>v.3,4.- Solomon - <u>High Places</u>, Gibeon</p>	3
	<p>v.4.- Lattice in the Temple. Cf. Ras Shamra epics.</p>	6
	<p>v.32.- Motif of the Palm Trees</p>	7
	<p>v.21.- in the Temple. Jochin and Boaz.</p>	11
	<p>v.5,33.- Solomon and the <u>Ashtoreth</u>, and the Sidonian <u>Baal</u>.</p>	12
931	<p>v.28,33.- Jerobdam and the two calves at Dan and Bethel</p>	13
	<p>v.33.- <u>High Places</u> and their priests</p>	14
	<p>v.15,16.- "Because they have made <u>Asherim</u> --</p>	15
	<p>v.23.- <u>High Places</u></p>	16
908	<p>v.12.- Asa removes the <u>High Places</u></p>	The C
	<p>v.26.- Nadad walks in the sin of his fathers wherein he made Israel to <u>SIN</u>.</p>	"Jehovah"
	<p>v.3.- " " " <u>SIN</u></p>	
	<p>v.2,13.- Sin wherewith he made Israel to <u>SIN</u></p>	
	<p>v.19.- The sin of Jeroboam which he did to make Israel <u>SIN</u></p>	
	<p>v.26.- Omri walked in all the ways of Jeroboam in which he made Israel to <u>SIN</u></p>	
	<p>v.31.- Ahab marries Jezebel, daughter of Ethbaal, king of the Sidonians. He builds and <u>Asherah</u> and a temple to <u>Baal</u></p>	
	<p>v.34.- Hiel builds the walls of Jericho with the loss of his eldest and youngest sons. (Human sacrifice?)</p>	

challenge
-or- Baal

18 19 20 22 1 2 3 4 8 9 10 11 16

Attempted
Reform
by
the
Baal-
Puro

THE GREAT CONTEST ON MOUNT CARMEL BETWEEN ELIJAH AND THE PROPHETS OF BAAL.

Mt. Horeb. 7000 not bowed to Baal.	
v.23.- Yahweh a god of the hills. (Syrian comment)	
v.13.- Micahiah's prophecy.	
v.51.- Ahaziah walked in the way of Jeroboam wherein he made Israel to <u>SIN</u> He worships Baal.	
v.2.- Ahaziah inquires of Baal-zebub instead of Jehovah.	
v.10.- Fire sent by Elijah to destroy two groups of fifty.	
v.24.- Elijah curses the mocking lads - they are killed by bears.	
v.2.- Jehoram puts away the Pillar of Baal but cleaves of Jeroboam wherewith he made Israel to <u>SIN</u>	
v.27.- The king of Moab sacrifices his eldest son which brings down wrath upon Israel; the sacrifice was effective. (Human sacrifice.)	
v.42.- Baal-shalishah, a place name.	
v.18.- Jehoram walks in the ways of Ahab; did EVIL in the sight of Jehovah. His mother was Athaliah, the daughter of Omri.	
v.22.- The revolution of Jehu. Jehu's war-cry -- "The Whoredoms of Jezebel"	
v.18.- Jehu massacres the worshippers of Baal.	
v.28.- Jehonadab, the son of Rechab.	
v.29.- Jehu departed not from the sins of Jeroboam wherewith he made Israel to <u>SIN</u> to wit: the golden calves at Bethel and in Dan.	
v.7.- Revolt in Judah. Jehoash destroys the temple of Baal and Matten the Priest of Baal is executed.	
v.3.- Jehoash's reformation is incomplete. The High places were not taken away.	

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842

11	v.7.- Revolt in Judah. Jehoash destroys the temple of Baal and Matten the Priest of Baal is executed.	12	v.3.- Jehoash's reformation is incomplete. The High Places are not taken away.	13	v.2.- Jehoahaz (Samarita) followed the sins of Jeroboam (SIN). The Asherah remained in Samaria.	14	v.4.- Ahaziah (Judah) did RIGHT in the eyes of Jehovah, yet the High Places are not taken away. Incense and sacrifice.	15	v.4.- (High Places) Zechariah (Samarita) departed not from the sins of Jeroboam wherewith he made Israel to (SIN) a Good King, yet he leaves the High Places. Sacrifice and Incense.	16	v.3.- Ahaz (Judah) walked in the ways of the kings of Israel. (SIN) He sacrificed at the High Places. He made his son to pass through the fire. Human sacrifice.	17	v.10.- Ahaz goes to Damascus to meet Tiglath-pileser. Sends back a copy of the pagan altar to Jerusalem.	18	vv.7-12, 16-18.- GREAT MORAL LESSON OF THE BOOK. BAALISM IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE FALL OF SAMARIA. LET JUDAH TAKE WARNING.	19	v.4.- Hezekiah a good king, he removes the high places, cuts down the brazen serpent. "For he clave to Jehovah."	20	SENNACHERIB'S DEFIANCE AND DEFEAT.	21	vv.1-7, 16, 20.- Manasseh re-establishes Baalism and the worship at the High Places. the Asherah, etc.		v.19.- Amon walked in the ways of his father. (SIN)		v.4.- Josiah does RIGHT. He brings forth out of the temple of Jehovah all the vessels that were made for
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the Blood-Purge

Fall of Samaria

Final

Hosea
Amos

Isaiah

743

721

701

698

Samaritan

Final Judgment

I and II Kings

18 19 21 23 24 25

Fall of Jerusalem

<p>v.4.- NEZEKIAH A GOOD KING, HE REMOVES THE high places, cuts down the brazen serpent. "For he clave to Jehovah."</p>	<p>SENNACHERIB'S DEFIANCE AND DEFEAT.</p>	<p>vv. 1-7, 16, 20.- Manasseh re-establishes Baalism and the worship at the High Places the Asherah, etc. v.19.- Amon walked in the ways of his father. (SIN)</p>	<p>v.4.- Josiah does RIGHT. He brings forth out of the Temple of Jehovah all the vessels that were made for Baal. Bethel is destroyed. v.21.- The re-institution of the Passover. Josiah is killed at Megiddo. His (EVIL) son, Jehoiachim.</p>	<p>v.8.- the (EVIL) king, Jehoiachin. v.11.- the (EVIL) king, Zedekiah.</p>	<p>THE FALL OF JERUSALEM; THE TEMPLE STRIPPED, BURNED; THE PEOPLE GO INTO CAPTIVITY.</p>
701	698			597	586 B.C.

- Actual References to Baalism
- The Bull-cult at Bethel and Dan.
- Old Canaanite elements - the High Places.

Note the correlation of the three ideas in identical passages.

whole. Taken together the two books present a vivid picture of the conflict that was waged between Ba'alism and the worship of Jehovah. The story begins with Solomon building the high places and sacrificing to foreign deities; the story ends in final judgment in the form of the captivity of Israel followed by the fall and captivity of Judah.

The details of this interpenetration of ideas is shown in the accompanying chart. It is to be noted that the occurrences of ideas relating to the interpenetration of the fertility cultus into the Israelitish worship is almost exactly coincident with the historical chronology of the reigning kings of the two kingdoms. As each monarch leaves the stage of history and is followed by another the historian sums up his life contribution in terms of his Baalistic tendencies. The phrase "he walked in the ways of Jeroboam wherewith he made Israel to sin" is used to stigmatize the work of the so-called "evil" kings.¹ The words "high places" referring to the old Canaanite sanctuaries likewise is found in almost every chapter indicating the repugnance with which the very idea was associated in the minds of the religious leaders of the Jehovah-worship.²

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1. I Kings 15:26; 15:30; 16:2,13,26; 22:51, and in
II Kings 3:2; 10:29; 13:2; 15:8; 16:3.
2. I Kings 3:3,4; 13:32; 14:23; 15:12, and in
II Kings 12:3; 14:4; 15:4,35; 16:4; 18:4; 21:1-7,16,20.

Actual references to Ba'alism and cult rites are also found interspersed throughout the two books. These include frequent mention of Ba'al, Asherah, Pillars, sodomites, etc. The most complete catalogue of rites associated with Ba'alism as those rites were practiced by Israelite leaders is given in reference to King Ahaz in II Kings 16: 1-10. It is stated that he walked in the ways of the kings of Israel indicating that in the north the Canaanite influence was more prevalent or had penetrated more completely into the worship of Jehovah. This expression has already been noted to refer particularly to the worship of the two bulls at Dan and Bethel, a worship originated by Jeroboam as a rival to the Jerusalem center.

It was in this worship that Ahaz is said to have walked. The chapter goes on to say how this worship was carried on. He made his son to pass through the fire. He sacrificed at the high places. He took an active part in all the fertility rites that were associated with these old Canaanite sanctuaries. Ahaz culminated his religious career by substituting a model of a pagan altar which he had obtained in Damascus for the altar in Jerusalem. This new altar had been obtained from his enemy, and the enemy of his people, Tiglath-pileser.

One of the most revolting elements of the Canaanite religion was that of human sacrifice, and this element was slowly gaining headway in Israel. And yet it was to

Jehovah and not to Ba'al that the people erroneously thought they were sacrificing their children. This is only one example of how an element associated with the worship of the Ba'alim was taken and appropriated to Jehovah, often to the harm of the latter worship. Concerning human sacrifice and its interpenetration into the worship of Jehovah, George Buchanan Gray has this very remarkable observation:

"The costliest form of burnt-offering was that of a child; and the costliest instance of this type consisted of a first-born or only child. Curiously enough, as it may seem superficially, not all offerings of this kind were propitiatory. But a clear example of a propitiatory offering of this kind is recorded in II Kings 3:27: When Israel had driven the king of Moab to his last fastness . . . then the king took his eldest son that should have reigned in his stead, and offered him for a burnt-offering on the wall. And there came great wrath upon Israel: and they departed from him and returned to their own land. The sacrifice in this case is a Moabite sacrifice, but the interpreter is a Hebrew interpreter. We need not necessarily infer that a Hebrew interpreter would have approved of a similar sacrifice to Yahweh under any circumstances, but as to the purpose and effect of approved sacrifices to Yahweh he speaks if indirectly, yet clearly enough. The general principle of sacrifice follows clearly upon the theory of this particular sacrifice which is no way obscure, and is this: Chemosh, the god of Moab, was angry with Moab, and in his anger had allowed her people to be reduced to the last extremities; at this point the king of Moab propitiates the anger of Chemosh by offering up to him his eldest son; the anger of Chemosh is by this sacrifice deflected from Moab and poured out on Israel, who in consequence retire in all haste from the sphere of Chemosh's influence." (1)

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1. Gray, Sacrifice in the Old Testament, p. 86.

There are obviously several elements here that are analogous to the story of the propitiation of the anger of Jehovah because of the sins of the house of Saul as related above in reference to the execution of the seven sons of Saul by David in order to remove the anger of Jehovah.

Professor Gray goes on to say that the matter-of-factness and insouciance of this story would by itself indicate that the Hebrew narrator did not look upon the incident as in any sense unique, because of his familiarity with human sacrifice. He points out that often the importance of these rites for Israel lay not in their incorporation within the Hebrew cult, but in Israel's reaction against the practices of her neighbors. But it is true that this all-important reaction often did not occur until the principle of sacrifice in general had been incorporated into the worship of Israel's God, and not until some inspired soul was raised up by Jehovah to lead the reaction against that incorporation. Professor Gray remarks that "it is important enough when we find slight traces of similar custom or thought in Israel".¹ He has this note concerning actual human sacrifice within Israel:

"Of propitiatory human sacrifice in Israel we read mainly in the records of the seventh century. It was then that among the Jews the custom became frequent of offering children as burnt-offerings in the fires lighted in the valley of Gehinnom; it is commonly

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1. Gray, op. cit., p. 87

commonly said that the victims were offered or passed over to Moloch, i.e. to the divine king, though Jeremiah (19:5) speaks of the people as 'burning their sons in the fire as burnt-offerings unto Baal'. Yet it is probable that the king or Baal who received these ghastly offerings was in the thought and intention of those who made them Yahweh; so much seems to follow from Jeremiah's repudiation: 'They have built the high places of Tophet, which is in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire; which I (i.e. Yahweh) commanded not, neither came it unto my mind'. For Yahweh to say that he did not command the people to sacrifice their children to a rival god would have been superfluous; on the other hand, if the people thought that by sacrificing their children they were doing their best to placate Yahweh, it was very much to the point for the prophet to insist that such rites had no place in the worship of Yahweh." (1)

The coming of human sacrifice into the ritualistic practices of Israel's worship of Jehovah and the daring prophetic protest against it gives us a very clear example of the influence of the Canaanite religion upon the eventual evolution of a clear-cut ethical monotheism by the Hebrew prophets. For example, we hear Micah crying out in the seventh century, "Shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?"²

The two books of Kings as they lie before us in the English Bible are to all intents and purposes a literary unit. Considered as presenting the death-struggle between the true worship of Jehovah and Ba'alism they reveal a

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1. Gray, op. cit., p. 87.
2. Micah 6:7

dramatic concept of the philosophy of religion and of the philosophy of history. The books reveal three great climactic incidents: 1) chapters 16, 18, 19 of I Kings; 2) chapters 9, 10, 11, 12 of II Kings; and 3) the final chapters of II Kings, 17-25. The first series presents the turning point of all Hebrew history. This is conceived to be the dynasty of Omri, with particular reference to Ahab's institution of the worship of Ba'al upon a legal basis side by side with that of Jehovah. The second series is concerned with the attempted reforms of Jehu, instigated and directed by the 'sons of the prophets' under Elijah and Elisha. The third series portrays the final judgment of God upon a people who have refused to follow Him in purity. This latter section opens with the fall of Samaria and the captivity of the northern kingdom. II Kings 17 is the key center, didactically, of the whole literature. Ba'alism is responsible for the destruction of the northern kingdom. Judah is warned that unless her religion is purified she likewise will be destroyed.

And just such a reformation in Judah is attempted by Hezekiah, and his fidelity is rewarded by the salvation of Jerusalem out of the hands of Sennacherib through a great miracle. But Hezekiah is followed by a king of great wickedness, Manasseh, who brings back all the repudiated Canaanitish elements - the worship on the high places, the Asherah, etc. Again under Josiah we have the record of

another attempted, though abortive, reform. Verse 4 of chapter 23 gives us an unmistakable insight into the degree of interpenetration of the two concepts of God that had actually taken place . We read that Josiah brought forth out of the temple of Jehovah in Jerusalem the vessels that had been made for Ba'al.

Josiah is followed by the three evil kings, Jehoiachim, Jehoiachin, and Zedekiah. The book ends with the final judgment upon a fickle and perverse people - the awful judgment of the destruction of the holy city and the captivity of the chosen people. Such was the historical framework for the work of the prophets, a framework that was largely dominated by Canaanite, and thus Baalistic, elements.

Other interesting observations accrue from our study of the two books of Kings. The presence of two pillars in Solomon's temple and the later use in the temple of vessels actually manufactured for Ba'al worship show the tendency of one system of worship to borrow from another, appropriating unto itself that which fitted its particular needs. The neighboring nations conceive of Jehovah as a local god. In chapter 20 the Syrians speak of Him as a god of the hills. The fertility aspect of the Canaanite religion is emphasized by the terminology used. Jehu speaks of the "whoredoms of Jezebel", a early example of the word being used of spiritual unfaithfulness. The

eneration of the brazen serpent was not curtailed until the time of Hezekiah, speaking of the extreme conservatism of all religious tendencies and of the tenacity with which they cling to a system of worship long after the need for their observance has passed away. Hezekiah was the first king to succeed in tearing down the high places. These represented the last vestiges of organized Canaanite ritual, perpetuating as they did the fertility rites that belonged to Ba'alism under the guise of Jehovah-worship. The worship at the high places was always orgiastic and tended to every extreme, partly because of the utter impossibility of any central control over either form or ritual.

In summarizing the place that the worship of Ba'al holds in the mechanical aspects of the books of I and II Kings it must be maintained that the Ba'al concept is central to the composition of the whole literature, permeating the whole either objectively or subjectively. It is made the basis upon which judgment of the rulers is passed. The story of the conflict between Ba'alism and the worship of Jehovah is the story of a losing battle. The true religion goes down to defeat after defeat. There seems to be only one remedy, and that remedy is the terrible judgment of God, a judgment that took the form of captivity and punishment.

High points in the telling of this story of con-

flict and interpenetration are: 1) the conflict between Elijah and the prophets of Ba'al; 2) the attempted blood purge by Jehu; and 3) the final judgment, with chapter 17 of II Kings giving the key note of the way in which Ba'alism was regarded by the Israelite leaders.

C. Correlations Between the Ba'al Passages of the Historical Books with the Historical, Religious, Sociological, and Political Background of the Contexts.

1. Treatment of the Significance of the High Places.

The one element in the Canaanite religion that seemed to exert the most profound influence upon the development of a purified monotheism by the Hebrews was the place that the so-called "high places" held in their attraction for the people. They represented a survival of Canaanite elements in religion that defied all attempts toward eradication. Professor James Orr has a very worthwhile note on the effect of these high places upon the life and thought of the people. However, Orr conceives the high places to have been degenerated centers of Yahweh worship and not Canaanite survivals. He says:

"When all is said, it is plain from the statement in the book of Kings that, in the beginning of Solomon's reign, there was a widespread resort of the people to high places for worship, and that even the establishment of Solomon's temple, with its powerful centralizing influence, was not effectual to check this tendency. The compiler of Kings looks on worship at 'high places' before the temple was founded as irregular, but excusable (I Kings 3:2,3); after that it

is condemned. The history of these 'high places' has yet to be written in a fairer spirit than is generally manifest in notices of them. In Judges the word does not occur, and the defections described are mostly of the nature of worship at Canaanitish shrines of Baal and Astoreth (cf. Lev. 26:30; Num. 21:28; 22:41; 33:52). The few allusions in Samuel are connected with Samuel's own city of Ramah, and with the residence of the band of prophets at Gibeah (I Samuel 9, 10). Elsewhere in Samuel they are unnoticed. It may be inferred from the toleration accorded to it that the greater part of what worship there was at 'high places' prior to the founding of the temple was directed to Jehovah; afterwards, partly through Solomon's own evil example (I Kings 9: 7,8) idolatry found entrance and easily spread." (1)

However significant Orr's main thesis may be in regard to the tenacity of worship at the "high places" they clearly represent Canaanite survivals. These high places had a continuous existence as places of worship. With the coming of the Hebrews the worship of Yahweh was substituted for that of Ba'al, but the same ritualistic rites were retained, and it was this tenacious retention of impure rites that so irritated the prophets. These high places may even be said to be in some measure responsible for the whole prophetic protest of the eighth century. But even after the prophets of the eighth century had done their work, there still remained a tenacity about the old Canaanite worship that withstood all reforms, including the reform of King Josiah in 621 B.C. This story is told in II Kings 23. Here the public cult of Judah is hardly distinguishable from the Canaanite worship. The

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1. James Orr, *The Problem of the Old Testament*, p. 179

reform started in Jerusalem where the cultic vessels of Ba'al were carried out of Jehovah's temple and buried in the fields of the Kidron (verse 4). The fact that the Asherah was to be found in the house of Jehovah proves the extent to which the Canaanizing of the Israelite religion had progressed. Verse 6 reads:

"And he brought out the Asherah from the house of Jehovah without Jerusalem, unto the brook Kidron, and burned it at the brook Kidron, and beat it to dust, and cast the dust thereof upon the graves of the common people."

The rest of the chapter is a catalogue of the Canaanite practices that Josiah sought to eradicate from the worship of Jehovah: worship at the high places,; veneration of the sun, moon, and planets;¹ horses sacred to the sun-god at the entrance of the temple;² child sacrifice,³ idolatrous altars;⁴ high places established by Solomon to Astart, Chemosh, and Moloch;⁵ wizards, teraphim idols, etc.⁶

For the first time in history the whole nation was summoned to observe the Feast of the Passover to celebrate this short-lived victory over Ba'alism.⁷

The effect of the worship at the high places can hardly be overestimated. Without them the prophets

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1. verse 5
2. verse 11
3. verse 10
4. verse 12
5. verse 15
6. verse 24
7. II Kings 23:21ff; Deut. 16:1ff.

would have lacked their major motivation in evolving their purified concept of the One God who was all-powerful and who wanted not physical sacrifice, but the sacrifice of a perfect and a contrite heart.

2. The Bull-worship at Dan and Bethel.

The division of the kingdom under Jeroboam had far-reaching religious as well as political results. Chief among these was the establishment of rival sanctuaries at Dan and at Bethel. Part of the responsibility for the separation of the kingdom must be laid at the door of the prophets. They were disappointed at Solomon's refusal to maintain the absolute purity of the Yahweh tradition. His espousal of the deities of his harem brought Canaanite elements into the Israelite worship and aroused the protest of the prophets. The instigation to revolt was the result. This protest was voiced by Ahijah of Shiloh where the Ark of Jehovah had formerly rested before its removal to Jerusalem. Ahijah tore his own robe into twelve pieces and handed ten of them to Jeroboam, signifying the desire of Jehovah that the kingdom be rent asunder.¹ Thus at the will of the prophet, Jeroboam led the revolt upon the death of Solomon.

The prophetic party hoped for a return to ethical

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1. I Kings 11:29ff

monotheism in the establishment of the northern kingdom, but they were soon disillusioned. Jeroboam was nominally an adherent of the Jehovah worship. He named his son Abijah meaning "Jehovah is Father". Yet religion to Jeroboam was merely a political tool to weld his people into one homogeneous whole. He foresaw that if the people were compelled to go to Jerusalem they soon would become acclimated to the southern regime and his kingdom would fall to pieces. To prevent this, he chose two old Canaanite sanctuaries and there instituted a nominal form of Jehovah-worship which in actuality was largely Canaanite. Dan and Bethel were already famous sanctuaries with long centuries of religious tradition behind them. At each of these Jeroboam set up the image of a golden bull, supposedly replicas of the golden calf of the Exodus.¹

The worship of the bull would in itself constitute a separate study. It seems never to have been connected directly with Ba'alism, per se. The bull is the symbol of strength, while Ba'al is the god of the sun, the sky-god. It is possible that the worship of the bull, both in the desert under the leadership of Aaron and in Israel under the patronage of Jeroboam, represented a return to an older form of Hebrew worship and ritual. At any rate, it is

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1. I Kings 12:28-29

not Canaanite. Yet the prophets classed the worship of the bull and the worship at the high places in the same category, and references to both occur side by side throughout the two books of Kings. The worship of the bulls at Dan and Bethel became the criterion by which the later kings of Israel were judged, and we find the phrase "The sin wherewith Jeroboam made Israel to sin" recurring again and again throughout the historical-prophetic literature of the Old Testament.

A. R. S. Kennedy has summed up the influence of the Bull cults. He states that institutions of Jeroboam constituted a dangerous approach to the worship of the heathen deities of Canaan, and then adds:

"This worship of Jehovah by images had helped on a gradual assimilation of the religion of Jehovah to that of Baal, which now threatened to prove fatal to the former. Bull-symbolism was rapidly becoming bull worship." (1)

II Kings 23:15 gives us the true perspective in which to view the bull cults when the writer makes it clear that it is not the fact that Jehovah is represented in the form of a bull that is so much to be feared, as is the fact that that representation was accompanied by the Asherah, etc., taken from the Canaanite forms of worship. The verse reads:

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1. A. R. S. Kennedy, Art. "Calf", HBD, Vol. I, p. 343

"Moreover the altar that was at Bethel, (1) and the high place which Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin, had made, even that altar and the high place he brake down; and he burned the high place (2) and beat it to dust, and burned the Asherah."

3. The Place and Influence of the Dynasty of Omri.

Politically, Omri was only a former army chieftain, yet he founded a dynasty in the northern kingdom that has had wide-spread influence. He established a new capital at Samaria and established the military power of his nation. He was instrumental in giving temporary leadership to Israel over the secondary Syrian states. Yet religiously his most important act was the securing of his kingdom in the hands of his son and successor, Ahab, who ruled in Samaria from 876 - 854 B. C.

"Ahab's reign is the turning point in Hebrew religion. Thus far, the religion professed by the Hebrews differed in no essential respect from that professed by their fellow Semites in neighboring lands. They worshipped as their national god Yahweh, but even in this they were not entirely unique. Yahweh was no longer the austere desert deity, but he had been given the attributes of the nature gods he had but partially supplanted. He was worshipped under the form of an image, at times of a bull. Nor was he the sole god of his people; Jeremiah asserts that to his own day "as the number of your cities, so your gods." (Jer. 11:13). Rude figures of the mother goddess are most common objects found in the strata of this period; as late as the fifth century, Yahweh had a consort among the Jews of Egypt, and we can scarcely deny that these figurines witness a similar usage at home." (3)

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1. The American Revised Version has "and the high place" which is incorrect according to Dr. Maynard.
2. It must mean the cult paraphernalia, probably the pillar which was dead wood. The Asherah being a living tree was harder to burn.
3. Olmstead, History of Palestine and Syria, p. 379.

This statement can scarcely be maintained as such now. Probably one of the deities is the pillar and the other the tree. At any rate the evidence would point to a survival of high place symbols in Elephantine. How far this represents a combination of Bethel religion or a throw-back is uncertain.

Ahab was the greatest king the northern kingdom ever had, when he is considered from an economic and a political point of view. He brought Israel back into the stream of world thought. In alliances with other nations he secured again for the people the benefits of trade and the arts. Yet it was right here that the prophets took exception to his work, for in admitting other nations to his friendship he was forced to make alliances with the gods worshipped by those nations. Ahab was a true successor to Solomon in many ways.

As a result of his alliance with Tyre, he married the brilliant and competent Jezebel, who was the daughter of Ethbaal the King of Tyre and Priest of Astarte. Up to the coming of Jezebel it is true that the worship of Jehovah had been largely Canaanized. But Jezebel went even further. She demanded a temple to Ba'al Melqarth, "The Lord, King of the Tyrian City." Ba'alism at its worst was established; Jezebel became an advocate intent upon using her royal prerogatives to foist upon her people the rites of her native deity. Now for the first time Israel

experienced the more dissolute elements of Canaanite religion. These included sacred prostitution with the magical practices associated with it, the ecstatic dance, and human sacrifice.

Not content with introducing a new religion into the land, Jezebel was determined that the old should be exterminated, and she set out upon a policy of extreme persecution, a persecution later referred to as a reign of terror.

The writer of I Kings conceives of the introduction of the Tyrian Ba'al not only as a Phoenician cult but as a return of indigenous Canaanite ritual. I Kings 21:26 reads:

"And he did very abominably in following idols, according to all that the Amorites did, whom Jehovah cast out before the children of Israel."

The Canaanite-Phoenician tendencies fostered by Ahab and Jezebel had a wide vogue in Israel and tended to dominate the entire religious picture. The dynasty of Omri extended its influence over the southern kingdom through the daughter of Ahab and Jezebel, Athaliah, who as queen to Jehoram of Judah introduced the cult of the Tyrian Ba'al in Jerusalem. Athaliah lived to see Jehu wipe out every male descendant of her father's house. In retaliation she attempted to exterminate every claimant to the Judean throne. She reigned for six years in her own right and was a living reincarnation of the mind of her wicked

mother. Ba'alism was in; the question now was, would the worship of Jehovah be forced out?

Ahab's brilliant military career won for Israel a period of peace in which the prophets and the "sons of the prophets" wrought out their great concept of God. This contribution is usually overlooked by historians who see no good whatsoever in the reign of the king who forced the issue "Yahweh-or-Ba'al?" upon his people. Olmstead has these significant words concerning Ahab:

"He (Ahab) had saved his people in their greatest crisis, but patriotism and religion had clashed and Ahab had the misfortune to oppose the party which ultimately triumphed. The future was indeed with the prophets, who alone make Hebrew history more significant than that of the other secondary Syrian states. Bitterly as the prophets hated Ahab, unkind as they were to his memory, we must nevertheless remember that it was his foresightedness alone which won for them the breathing spell needed for full development of religious beliefs of such portent for the future." (1)

The first great clash between the two opposing theogonies is recorded in I Kings 16-19. Here we have the conflict of two great personalities, Elijah and Jezebel. It was Elijah more than any other one man who clearly had comprehended the Ba'al-or-Jehovah issue that confronted the nation. He perceived that it must be a case of "either-or", that it could never be Jehovah worshipped as Ba'al, nor could it be Ba'al and Jehovah worshipped side by side.

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1. Olmstead, History of Palestine and Syria, p. 386.

It was the mind of Elijah that evolved the plan to place Hazael upon the throne of Benhadad II of Damascus, who had been the friend and ally of the hated Ahab. Hazael could be depended upon to decimate the power of the Omri dynasty in Israel. It was Elijah who fathered the plan to displace Ahab with the terrible Jehu, even though that displacement could only be brought about through the bloodiest of massacres. It was Elijah who sponsored the organization of the prophetic element in the "sons of the prophets" with headquarters at Gibeah. It was Elijah who met the great challenge of Ba'al-or-Jehovah on Mount Carmel.

Once and for all it had to be decided who really gave the rain. Rain was the source of all fertility - if Ba'al gave the rain in every reality, then he should be served, but if Jehovah, then Jehovah was not only God, He was the only God, the Creator-God, and the real giver of rain. The story is a familiar one to every Bible reader.

Elijah in utter calmness succeeded where the prophets of Ba'al had failed. He was assured that rain would come, and so were the people. The rain would come and it was Yahweh who would send it. He called upon Ahab to offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving and to hurry to Jezreel before the storm should come upon them. The great rain fell, not from the hands of Ba'al, but from Jehovah.

The further history of Israel and Judah was one of continual conflict between the two opposing elements:

the prophets who held the ideal of a purified religion and the sensuous followers of the older cultus. Many times it was the latter who showed themselves more humane in their daily contact with their fellows. There is no one who will defend on moral grounds the activities of the bloody Jehu, who in the name of the national deity sought to exterminate every member of the house of Omri. The picture of his deception of the Ba'al worshippers and their ruthless slaughter after they had been given assurances that the assassin-king himself was to offer sacrifices to Ba'al-Melquarth, is a dark one. Jehu was a peasant-reformer little fitted to carry on Ahab's foreign policy. There could be but one result: the cessation of trade, especially with Tyre, and general reversion to a lower scale of living and of civilization.

The prophetic philosophy of history as presented by Kings is one of continuous reversals to the old Canaanite practices, followed in turn by judgment and attempted reform. This process continues until Samaria falls and Israel goes into captivity in 721 B.C. For a time Judah takes warning, and Hezekiah seeks to make his reforms permanent. These are sufficiently thorough to warrant the miraculous salvation of Jerusalem from Sennacherib's army. But Hezekiah is succeeded by the wicked Manasseh who brings back into Hebrew religion all the Canaanite elements that Hezekiah had removed. As a result Jerusalem

falls in 586 B. C.

D. Conclusion

By the middle of the eighth century the public worship of Jehovah had received certain elements from the Canaanite fertility cults connected with the worship of Ba'al. The worship conducted at the high places represented the tenacious quality of indigenous religion, and is a classic example of the difficulty a conquering people always experience in substituting their own religion for the one native to the land. The extremism of Ahab and his successors was arousing a great protest on the part of the advocates of the purity of the old religion, a protest that was destined to lead them into a great new experience of God. This new experience of God became the heart of Judaism and of all ethical monotheism. What that concept of God was, can only be revealed by a study of the eighth century prophets and their contribution to the development of Israelite religion.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE PLACE OF THE EIGHTH CENTURY PROPHETS IN THE
DEVELOPMENT OF THE HEBREW CONCEPT OF GOD

- A. The Historical Framework
- B. The Place of the Prophets
- C. The Message of Amos
- D. The Message of Isaiah
- E. The Message of Hosea
- F. Conclusion

CHAPTER FIVE

THE PLACE OF THE EIGHTH CENTURY PROPHETS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE HEBREW CONCEPT OF GOD

A. The Historical Framework

In order to give adequate recognition to the work of the prophets of the eighth century they must be conceived in relation to the historical events of their times. We have seen from our study of the books of Kings that the eighth century was one of conflict between the two rival concepts of God that were in the process of interpenetration. It was a century that opened very auspiciously for Israel with national prosperity and expansion during the long reign of Jeroboam the second (785-745 B. C.) This very expansion carried with it the continued practice of Canaanite elements of religious observance. Jehu's dynasty was a reaction against these very elements. It was initiated with great bloodshed and violence and was accompanied by a reversal to the older and simpler forms of life. The entire dynasty of Jehu was characterized by murder and intrigue. The story culminates in the fall of Samaria and the captivity of Israel. It is into this picture that Hosea and Amos come with their dynamic invectives against the current practices of the land.

In the south there is also a period of prosperity and expansion under Azariah (780-740 B. C.) Jotham and Ahaz follow in their footsteps of Ahaziah, continuing to give support to the Canaanite elements that had crept into the Hebrew ritual and worship. But Ahaz was a weakling, and sought Assyrian aid in time of crisis. Ahaz was followed by his son Hezekiah in 720 B. C. and reigned in Jerusalem until 692 B.C. He instigated a thorough going reform in an attempt to root out the Canaanite elements from the Judean Worship. (II Kings 18:4). For this reformation the prophet Isaiah was largely responsible. The soundness of Hezekiah's reforms was apparently rewarded with the miraculous salvation of Jerusalem during the attack by Sennacherib's army. The word of the prophets had been vindicated.

B. The Place of the Prophets.

History may be regarded either as an evolution, with well defined lines of communication with all that is past; or it may be regarded as at times cataclysmic and even apocalyptic in nature. The Neo-Calvinist German theologians more especially Barth and Brunner are at the present time demanding that we give room in our concept of God for the invasion of the 'there' upon the 'here.' In other words there are times when only

the direct act of the supernatural in imposing its leadership upon the natural is sufficient to explain all that takes place in the development of religion in the world of men. Such an impingement of the divine upon the human realms of activity occurred in the eighth century. It must be recognized that continuity in history is the rule; yet room must also be left for the catastrophic event, the break in continuity which turns the tide of history into new channels. It was the process of continuity that led to the Canaanizing of the Hebrew form of worship. It was the sudden prophetic clarification and insight into the real nature of Jehovah that gave to the world the great contribution of the Hebrew race - ethical monotheism in a pure form. This prophetic insight was not evolutionary; it was potentially apocalyptic. The experiences of the prophets are comparable to the great new concepts of God that came to Abraham and to Moses and played so large a part in the development of Hebrew religion. The element of ecstasy at first absent among the writing prophets comes back in full only with Ezekiel, but it was no doubt a latent factor in the lives of the other prophets as well.

The prophets more than any other men realized what was happening to the worship of Jehovah in the introduction of the objectionable Canaanite elements.

In the face of the ever-increasing perversion and debasement of the people of the land in the common concept of God under the influence of Ba'alism, the prophets were forced to engage in some of the most difficult thinking that the world has ever known. What was Jehovah really like? Did He, after all, care what happened to His children? It was in trying to answer such questions as these that the eighth century prophets entered into a great new experience of God, an experience that was destined to transform the world.

It will be the purpose of this chapter to present the message of three of the eighth century prophets in its relation to Ba'alism. We shall attempt to show that the great motivation for the prophetic protest came in the penetration of the very genius of Ba'alism into the heart of the Hebrew religion, and that it was in protest to these Canaanite elements that the prophets received their great new concept of God.

Unhappily we lack direct evidence at the crucial moment in the times of Elijah and Elisha. We must remember here that the kind of people who allowed themselves to be influenced by a weakening invasion of a foreign religion were not the strong type. Quite probably Ba'alism in its pure form may have had apocalyptic possibilities, but the kind of syncretized Ba'alism

of Israel was a religion for the weak.

D. The Message of Amos

Amos represents the nomadic, wilderness spirit in the life of Israel. His was a religion closely allied with the traditional aspects of Jehovah as He had been worshipped in the days of the desert experience of the Hebrews. There is something elemental in the man. He speaks of the "Roaring" of Jehovah in the storm,¹ the earthquake,² fire,³ George Adam Smith has well said of the man that he "haunted heights, and lived in the face of very wide horizons."

We can follow in imagination the herdsman and pruner of sycamore figs⁴ as he leaves his humble life in Tekoa and goes to Bethel in the northern kingdom under the compulsion of a great inner urge which he recognized as of Jehovah.⁵ There, at the center of the bull worship under the patronage of Jeroboam, he comes face to face with a systemetized form of worship, nominally that of Jehovah, which caused his very soul to revolt. He could not but speak out in protest.

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1. Amos 1:2.
2. Amos 1:1.
3. Amos 1:4.
4. Amos 7:14.
5. Amos 7:14-15;

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v.2.- " .. Jehovah will roar from Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the pastures of the shepherds shall mourn, and the top of Carmel shall wither."
v.4.- "but I will send a fire into the house of Hazael, and it shall devour the palaces of Ben-hadad."

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v.4.- " ..because they have rejected the law of Jehovah and have not kept his statutes, and their lies have caused them to err, after which their fathers did walk."
v.7.- " ..and a man and his father go unto the same maiden to profane my holy name: and they lay themselves down beside every altar upon clothes taken in pledge; and in the house of their God they drink the wine of such as have been fined.
v.8.- "Yet I destroyed the AMORITE before them."

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v.14.-" .. I shall visit the transgressions of Israel upon him, I will also visit the altars of Beth-el; and the horns of the altar shall be cut off, and fall to the ground.
v.15.- "And I will smite the winter-house and the summer-house; and the houses of ivory shall perish, and the great houses shall have an end, saith Jehovah."

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vv.4,5.- "Come to Beth-el, and transgress; to Gilgal and multiply transgression; and bring your sacrifices every morning, and your tithes every three days; and offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving of that which is leavened, and proclaim free-will offerings and publish them: for this pleaseth you, O ye children of Israel, saith the Lord Jehovah."
v.13.- "For, lo, he that formeth the mountains, and createth the wind, and declareth unto man what is his thought: that maketh the morning darkness, and treadeth upon the high places of the earth; Jehovah the God of Hosts, is his name."

that maketh the morning darkness, and treadeth upon the high places of the earth; Jehovah the God of Hosts, is his name."

- vv.4-6.-" Seek ye me and ye shall live; but seek not Bethel, nor enter into Gilgal, and pass not to Beer-sheba; for Gilgal shall surely go into captivity, and Bethel shall come to nought. . . Seek ye Jehovah and ye shall live.
- v.8.- "Seek him that maketh the Pleiades and Orion, and turneth the shadow of death into the morning, and maketh the day dark with night; that calleth for the waters of the sea and poureth them out upon the face of the earth (Jehovah is his name);
- v.21ff.- "I hate, I despise your feasts, and I will take no delight in your solemn assemblies. Yea, though ye offer me your burnt-offerings and meal-offerings I will not accept them; neither will I regard the peace-offerings of your fat beasts. Take away from me the noise of thy songs; for I will not bear the melody of thy viols.
- v.24.- "But let justice roll down as waters and righteousness as a mighty stream."
- v.26.- "Yea, ye have borne the tabernacle of your king and the shrine of your images, the star of your god which ye made to yourselves."
- v.27.- "Therefore will I cause you to go into captivity . . . saith Jehovah whose name is the God of Hosts."

- v.9.- "and the high places of Isaac shall be desolate and the sanctuaries of Israel shall be laid waste; and I will rise against the house of Jeroboam with the sword."
- v.10.- "Then Amaziah, the priest of Bethel, sent to Jeroboam king of Israel, saying, Amos hath conspired against thee in the midst of the house of Israel."
- v.13.- "but prophesy not again any more at Bethel; for it is the king's sanctuary and a royal house."

v.14.- "They that swear by the sins of Samaria, and say As thy god, O Dan, liveth; and As the way of Beer-sheba liveth."

vv.1-6.- A vision of the Lord beside the altar. (Cf.

v.26.- "Yea, ye have borne the tabernacle of your king and the shrine of your images, the star of your god which ye made to yourselves."
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vv.1-6.- A vision of the Lord beside the altar. (Cf. Ps. 139:2-8). The omnipresence of Jehovah--impossible to flee His presence. "He that calleth for the waters of the sea and poureth them out upon the face of the earth; Jehovah is his name."
vv.7-9.- Judgment because of sin.
vv.11-14.- Prophetic note of hope in terms of grain, wine, gardens, fruit, ending with verse 15:
"And I will plant them upon their own land, and they shall no more be plucked up out of their land which I have given them, saith Jehovah thy God."

Amos

The two tables of the law had become one in the hands of the scribes.

The book of Amos as we have it is composed of nine chapters, a total of 146 verses. Of these 34, or a little over one fourth, give us glimpses of the actual ritualistic practices characteristic of the northern Canaanized worship of Jehovah. These verses have been brought together in the accompanying chart. Every chapter except chapter 6 is represented. The prophet's invective against Canaanite elements colors the entire book.

The prophet initiates his message by delineating the sins of the neighboring nations and calling down judgment upon their heads much to the approval of his listeners. Then like an eagle poised over its prey Amos swoops down upon first Judah and then at last Israel in prophetic denunciation. He sums up the sins of the southern kingdom thus:

" . . because they have rejected the law of Jehovah and have not kept his statutes, and their lies have caused them to err, after which their fathers did walk."1

The sin of Judah was that of disobedience to the known will of Jehovah. But of Israel the prophet

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1. Amos 2:4.

speaks first of social injustice, "selling the righteous for silver, and the needy for a pair of shoes"¹ and then adds that this is done in actual connection with religious practices supposedly connected with the worship of Jehovah:

"and they lay themselves down beside every altar upon clothes taken in pledge; and in the house of their God they drink the wine of such as have been fined." (2)

To the mind of Amos these elements of ritual now associated with Jehovah were originally Canaanite for verse 9 reads:

"Yet destroyed I the Amorite before them."

There are three sanctuaries that are specifically named as being centers of the religion that was so repulsive to Amos: Bethel, Gilgal, and Beersheba. These were perhaps the three most famous sanctuaries of Israelite antiquity, all of them at one time associated with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. But now they were centers of a cult which Amos declares Jehovah will not recognize as his own.³

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1. Amos 2:6
2. Amos 2:7,8.
3. Amos 3:14; 4:4,5; 7:10,13; 8:14.

Amos is very clear in his stand against the basic Canaanite conception that the fertility of the land depends upon Ba'al and that it is Ba'al who sends the life-giving rainfall. Amos pictures Jehovah as the God who is truly responsible for the giving or the withholding of the rain.

"And I also have withholden the rain from you, when there were yet three months to the harvest: and I caused it to rain upon one city, and caused it not to rain upon another city: One piece was rained upon, and the piece whereupon it rained not withered."¹

But Amos' concept of Jehovah is wider than merely a rain-god. Jehovah is the Creator of the whole universe, and is thus Lord of all the nations, not only a local deity of a few scattered tribes. This concept of Jehovah's universality is one of the great contributions of the eighth century.

"Seek him that maketh the Pleiades and Orion, and turneth the shadow of death into the morning, and maketh the day dark with night; that calleth for the waters of the sea, and poureth them out upon the face of the earth; (Jehovah is his name;)"²

These passages, thrown out by modern commentators, are necessary to understand the psychology of Amos. It sets off the conflict with Ba'alism on a background

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1. Amos 4:7.
2. Amos 5:8, Cf. Also 4:12.

where nature is a mystery and a tremendous power. The God of Amos is not a Ba'al who can be coerced into usefulness, or coaxéd into providing rain for the satisfaction of mere man, He is unbounded and infinite, beyond measure and understanding, so intensely free that magic or symbolic rites cannot even be thought of. It is for this reason that Amos strikes directly at the root of priestcraft.

It is interesting to note how scientific Amos' concept of Jehovah's process of the control of nature are. Far from being a ba'al who is inveigled into sending rain through coercive magic, Jehovah is the creator of the great bodies of water the seas, and at His pleasure calleth for them and poureth them out upon the earth. The processes of evaporation and condensation of moisture could not be put more beautifully. The same ideas are elucidated in 9:5,6:

"For the Lord, Jehovah of Hosts, is he that toucheth the land and it melteth It is he that buildeth his chambers in the heavens, and hath founded his vault upon the earth; he that calleth for the waters of the sea, and poureth them our upon the face of the earth."

His out-of-doors life had been a revelation to him. He had read the book of nature in the skies. Note the contrast with Ba'alistic conceptions. His God is not a God of chambers, but of the whole universe.

Associated in the same context is the idea that Jehovah may not be limited to one locality. Ba'al was purely a local deity, but Jehovah is omnipresent. Verses 2 and 3 of chapter 9 have much in common with the 139th Psalm:

"Though they dig into sheol, thence shall my hand take them; and though they climb up to heaven, thence shall my hand take them down. And though they hide themselves in the top of Carmel, I will search and take them out thence; and though they be hid from my sight at the bottom of the sea, thence shall I command the serpent and it shall bite them."

Jehovah has care also for the Ethiopians, the Philistines, and the Syrians. He reigns supreme over all the nations. Not only so, but He also judges the nations on moral, not magical, grounds.¹ Here Amos in passages which all the critics admit as being genuine, goes much beyond the covenant-idea. The critics should see that he is far more revolutionary in these passages which they admit than in those which they reject. Perhaps we have here the most outstanding protest against natural religion in the Old Testament.

Amos substitutes morality of life and character in the place of the sacrificial system. In fact he rejects the whole ideology back of all sacrifice as foreign to the concept of Jehovah.²

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1. Cf. Amos 1:3,6,9,11,13; 2:1,4.

2. Amos 4:4.

"I hate, I despise your feasts and I will take no delight in your solemn assemblies. Yea, though ye offer me burnt-offerings, and meal-offerings, I will not accept them; neither will I regard the peace offerings of your fat beasts. Take away from me the noise of thy songs; for I will not hear the melody of thy viols."¹

This non-ecclesiastical attitude of the prophets which became classical is based on the somewhat subconscious rejection of the covenant-idea. Amos is to a great extent, therefore, a herald of Paul. And then the prophet adds the thing that will be accepted in the sight of Jehovah:

"But let justice roll down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream."²

The book of Amos ends on a high prophetic note of hope. And this picture of future blessings for Israel is couched in language strangely reminiscent of the fertility ideas implicit in Ba'alism. The hope for the future is uttered in terms of grain, wine, gardens, fruit, and ends with verse 15 of chapter 9:

"And I will plant them upon their own land, and they shall no more be plucked up out of their land which I have given them, saith Jehovah thy God."

Amos stands, therefore, on the great divide, the watershed of the history of the Hebrew religion. In his great protest against the incorporation of ba'alistic

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1. Amos 5:21-23.
2. Amos 5:24. Cf. also Amos 2:6. Amos 5:10-14.

elements into the worship of Jehovah, he abrogated the whole ideas of unreal sacrifice as foreign to the real nature of Jehovah. Sacrifice involved a magical conception of deity and Amos portrays a God of moral, rational, intelligent conduct. There could be no magical coercing of benefits from the hand of the deity; but it was possible to know and to do the will of God and this for Amos was righteousness and justice among men.¹ But this justice is in very reality a 'dynamite' that will cause the overthrow of false concepts of religion.

D. The Message of Isaiah

1. The Personal Life of the Prophet.

Just as the life and work of Amos was tied up inextricably with the life and thought of the northern kingdom, Isaiah's main concern was the well-being of the kingdom of Judah. Isaiah lived and prophesied during the great eighth century that was so freighted with import both for Israel and the world. It was during this century that Assyria rose to the height of her power and made a bid for the domination of the

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1. Amos 3:7; 5:14; 5:24;

- v.3.- The people do not know their real owner.
- v.4.- "A sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evil-doers, children that deal corruptly; they have forsaken Jehovah, and have despised the Holy One of Israel . . ."
- v.8.- "And the daughter of Zion is left as a booth in a vineyard, as a lodge in a garden of cucumbers, . . ."
- vv.10-17.- Similarity to the Baal tariffs.
 multitude of sacrifices calling of assemblies
 vain oblations new moons
 incense
 appointed feasts
- v.18.- Only Jehovah forgives sin.
- v.29.- "For they shall be ashamed for the oaks which ye have desired, and ye shall be confounded for the gardens that ye have chosen."
- v.30.- "For ye shall be as an oak whose leaf fadeth and as a garden that hath no water."

vv.8,18,20.- Idols

vv.16ff- Detailed account of the dress of the haughty women. Cf. with the 'Qedeshoth'.

THE VISION OF ISAIAH:* The Lord, high and lifted up. Cf. with the coming and departure of the glory of Yahweh.

v.19.- Wizards, familiar spirits.

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v.19.- Wizards, familiar spirits.

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v.10.- "As my hand hath found the kingdoms of the idols, whose graven images did excel them of Jerusalem and Samaria; shall I not, as I have done unto Samaria, so do to Jerusalem and her idols?"

17
v.8.- (Damascus) "And they shall not look to the altars, the work of their hands; neither shall they have respect to that which their fingers have made, either the Asherim, or the sun-images.

19
v.18.- "In that day there shall be five cities in the land of Egypt that speak the language of Canaan.

21
v.9.- ".. Fallen, fallen is Babylon; and all the graven images of her gods are broken unto the ground."

23
v.17.- ".. Jehovah shall visit Tyre, and she shall return to her hire, and she shall play the harlot with all the kingdoms of the world upon the face of the earth.

24
v.1.- "Behold, Jehovah maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down."
v.5.- "The earth also is polluted under the inhabitants thereof: because they have transgressed the laws, violated the statutes, broken the everlasting covenant."
v.20.- "The earth shall stagger like a drunken man."

27
v.9.- "Therefore by this shall the iniquity of Jacob be forgiven, and this is the fruit of taking away his sin: that he maketh all the stones of the altar as chalk-stones that are beaten in sunder, so that the Asherim and the sun-images shall rise no more."

28
vv.6-8.- "And even as these reel with wine, and stagger with strong drink; the priest and the prophet reel with strong drink, they are swallowed up in wine, they stagger with strong drink: they err in vision, they stumble in judgment. For all tables are full of vomit and filthiness, so that there is no place clean."

17 that he maketh all the stones of the altar as chalk-stones that are beaten in sunder, so that the Asherim and the sun-images shall rise no more."

28 vv.6-8.- "And even as these reel with wine, and stagger with strong drink; the priest and the prophet reel with strong drink, they are swallowed up in wine, they stagger with strong drink: they err in vision, they stumble in judgment. For all tables are full of vomit and filthiness, so that there is no place clean."

30 v.21.- "... and thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it; when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left."

v.22.- "And ye shall defile the overlaying of thy graven images of silver, and the plating of gold; thou shalt cast them away as an unclean thing; thou shalt say unto it, Get thee hence."

v.23.- "And he will give the rain .. large pastures,

v.25. Streams of water.

35 v.6.- Streams in the desert.

37 v.18.- "Of a truth, Jehovah, the kings of Assyria have laid waste all the countries, and their land,

v.19.- "and have cast their gods into the fire: for they were no gods, but the work of men's hands, wood and stone."

v.19.- "The image, a workman hath cast it, and the goldsmith overlayeth it with gold, and casteth for it chains.." v.20.- "He that is too impoverished for such an oblation chooseth a tree that will not rot; he seeketh unto him a skillful workman to set up a graven image, that shall not be moved."

v.22.- "It is he that sitteth above the circle (gilgal) of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers; that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in;"

v.28.- "... The everlasting God, Jehovah, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary; there is no searching of his understanding.

v.17.- "The poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue falleth for thirst; I, Jehovah, will

of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grass-hoppers; that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in;"

v.28.- "... The everlasting God, Jehovah, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary; there is no searching of his understanding.

v.17.- "The poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst; I, Jehovah, will answer them, I, the God of Israel, will not forsake them."

v.18.- "I will open rivers on the bare heights, and fountains in the midst of the valleys; I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water."

v.20.- "That they may see, and know, and consider, and understand together, that the hand of Jehovah hath done this, and the Holy One of Israel hath created it."

v.1.- "But now thus saith Jehovah that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel: Fear not, for I have redeemed thee; I have called thee by thy name, thou art mine. (cf. the 'possession of Baal - the master, belongingness, etc.)"

v.4.- "I have loved thee, therefore will I give men in thy stead, and peoples instead of thy life."

v.12.- "... that there was no strange gods."

v.19ff.- Rivers in the desert. "I give water in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert to give drink to my people, my chosen."

v.3.- "For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and streams upon a dry ground."

v.6.- "... Jehovah of Hosts; I am the first, and I am the last and besides me there is no God."

vv.9-20.- Vanity of Idols: Same wood for idol, a fire for warmth and cookery.

v.5.- "I am Jehovah and there is none else; besides me there is no God: Cf also vv.16,20.

v.1.- Bel and Nebo, idols of Babylon.

v.9.- "... for I am God, and there is none else; I am God and there is none like me;"

v.5.- Appropriation of God's acts to idols.

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45 v.5.- "I am Jehovah and there is none else; besides me there is no God: Cf also vv.16,20.

46 v.1.- Bel and Nebo, idols of Babylon.

v.9.- "... for I am God, and there is none else; I am God and there is none like me;"

48 v.5.- Appropriation of God's acts to idols.

49 vv.1-5.- Jehovah the giver of true fertility.

57 vv.3-10.- "But draw near hither, ye sons of the sorceress, the seed of the adulterer and the harlot. Against whom do ye sport yourselves? against whom make ye a wide mouth, and put out the tongue? are ye not children of transgression, a seed of falsehood, ye that inflame yourselves among the oaks, under every green tree; that slay the children in the valleys, under the clefts of the rocks? Among the smooth stones of the valley is thy portion; they, they are thy lot; even to them hast thou poured a drink-offering, thou hast offered an oblation. Shall I be appeased for these things? Upon a high and lofty mountain hast thou set up thy bed; thither also wentest thou up to offer sacrifice. And behind the doors and the posts hast thou set up thy memorial: for thou hast uncovered thyself to another than me, and art gone up; thou hast enlarged thy bed, and made thee a covenant with them."

58 v.11- "... and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not." Cf. with the 'rushing stream' of 59:15.

65 v.3.f - "a people that provoke me to my face continually sacrificing in gardens and burning incense upon bricks; that sit among the graves, and lodge in the secret places; that eat swine's flesh, and broth of abominable things in their vessels; . . . that have burned incense upon the mountains, and blasphemed me upon the hills: therefore will I first measure their work into their bosom."

v.3.f - "He that killeth an ox is as he that slayeth a man; he that sacrificeth a lamb. as he that breaketh a

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Among the smooth stones of the valley is thy portion; they, they are thy lot; even to them hast thou poured a drink-offering, thou hast offered an oblation. Shall I be appeased for these things? Upon a high and lofty mountain hast thou set up thy bed; thither also wentest thou up to offer sacrifice. And behind the doors and the posts hast thou set up thy memorial: for thou hast uncovered thyself to another than me, and art gone up; thou hast enlarged thy bed, and made thee a covenant with them:

58
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66
v.3.f - "He that killeth an ox is as he that slayeth a man; he that sacrificeth a lamb, as he that breaketh a dog's neck; he that offereth an oblation as he that offereth swine's blood; he that burneth frankincense as he that blesseth an idol."

v.17.- "They that sanctify themselves and purify themselves to go unto the gardens, behind one (tree) in the midst, eating swine's flesh, and the abomination, and the mouse, they shall come to an end together."

Isaiah

entire world. Four times did Assyria invade Palestine, and it is these four invasions that form the historical background which called forth the prophecies from the mouth of Isaiah. These have been summarized by George Adam Smith:

" . . the first, in 734-732 B.C., by Tiglath-pileser III, while Ahaz was on the throne; the second by Shalmaneser IV and Sargon in 725-720, during which Samaria fell in 721; the third by Sargon, 712-710; the fourth by Sennacherib in 701, which last three occurred while Hezekiah was king of Judah. But outside the Assyrian invasions there were three other cardinal dates in Isaiah's life: 740, his call to be a prophet; 727, the probably but not certain date of the death of Ahaz, his enemy, and of the accession of his pupil, Hezekiah; and 705, the death of Sargon, for Sargon's death led to the rebellion of the Syrian states, and it was this rebellion which brought on Sennacherib's invasion".¹

Isaiah's personal life was long and varied. We first catch sight of him near the close of the reign of Uzziah. He lived to see Jotham come to the throne, to be followed after sixteen years by the wicked Ahaz who repudiated the regular, external conformity to the law and instituted open idolatry of a very abominable and licentious nature, an idolatry closely allied to Ba'alism. In 715 Hezekiah came to the Judean throne and Isaiah must have experienced a great resurgence of hope as Hezekiah undertook to reform the religion of

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1. George Adam Smith: The Book of Isaiah, Vol. I, p. xiii.

Judah and to exterminate the Canaanite elements brought in by Ahaz. But Hezekiah's reforms were not sufficiently strong to carry over into the reign of his son and successor, Manasseh. For Manasseh brought back the Canaanized religion in all of its degradation. Isaiah must have perceived the decay of his life work under this evilking, yet he stood adamant even in the face of a persecution that took his life nine years later. His ministry covers sixty-three years. Delitzsch has said of his life:

"But outward splendor . . . carried within it the seeds of ruin and decay; for prosperity degenerated into luxury, and the worship of Jehovah stiffened into idolatry. It was during this last and longest session of prosperity in Judah that Isaiah appeared, called to the sad task of vainly preaching repentance, and therefore also of announcing the judgment of hardening and devastation, of the ban and punishment."¹

2. Distribution of Ba'alistic Ideas in the Book as a Whole

During at least two periods in the life of Isaiah, the prophet was faced with a resurgence of the Old Canaanite, Ba'alistic forms and ritual, during the reigns of Ahaz, and of Manasseh. Little wonder that the book of Isaiah as a whole is colored by references

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1. Franz Delitzsch: Isaiah, Vol. I., p. 27.

in this form of religion, usually in denunciation. These references occur in 28 chapters out of the 66. There does not seem to be any one center of predominating influence, but the references to Ba'alism seem to permeate the whole book. It is to be noted however, that both sections¹ of the Book open with direct references to this idea. It occurs in each of the first six chapters, and in each of the chapters 40-49, with the single exception of chapter 42. In some ways chapter 57 may be considered a climax of the whole idea. The distribution of these Ba'alistic ideas in the Book of Isaiah as a whole is shown in the accompanying chart.

3. The Message of Isaiah in Reference to Ba'alism.

Chapter six gives us the classic picture of Jehovah

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1. We use this term section deliberately. We realize that the unity of the Book of Isaiah is doubted by a majority of scholars. We are however unconvinced that the existence of the two Isaiahs has been proved. Indeed as soon as we begin to dissect Isaiah we have to find four authors. We shall therefore bear this possibility in mind in our discussion, but whatever may be the verdict of scholarship on the question which after all is still open, it is certain that there is in the whole book an underlying unity of teaching. Our own theory is that the person who is sometimes called the second Isaiah, is the same prophet, aged, and more spiritualized, having learned that God reigns through the spirit with untrammelled power. While in the realm of politics and war, where at first, God's will is somewhat hindered. This is what we mean when we speak of two periods, one in Ahaz's time corresponding roughly to what is commonly called the first Isaiah,

as he appeared to the prophet, a theophany far more sublime than any possible conception of Ba'al. He was "High and lifted up, and his train filled the temple."² His main characteristic was holiness³, and His appearance filled the prophet with a sense of moral guilt and inadequacy.⁴

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and one in Manassah's time, the period of the second who soon was to find martyrdom. A Midraschic story of the death of Isaiah told by Dr. Maynard illustrates the point from the point of view of Unitarian authorship. At the risk of being classified with those who support extreme conservatism we express here the theory that if the author of Is. 55-66, for instance had lived as late as the Trito-Isaiah theory makes him to be, his work instead of being added to that of Isaiah, son of Amos, would have been added to that of a later prophet.

2. Isaiah 6:1.
3. Isaiah 6:3.
4. Isaiah 6:5.

There are evidences of the apocalyptic in Isaiah, especially in chapters 27 and 28. Chapter 8:16 finds him saying:

"Bind thou up the testimony, seal the law¹ among my disciples. And I will wait for Jehovah, that hideth his face from the house of Jacob, and I will look for him. Behold, I and the children whom Jehovah hath given me are for signs and for wonders in Israel from Jehovah of Hosts, who dwelleth in Mount Zion."

This same apocalyptic element is evident in the names Isaiah gave to his two sons, Shear-jashub meaning "a remnant shall return",² and Maher-shalal-hash-baz meaning "the spoil speedeth, the prey hasteth."³

Isaiah shares Amos' conception that the ethical element in religion must be made to supplant the elements of folk cult worship. Chapter 1, verses 11-15, gives us the substance of the criticism and denunciation he was want to hurl at the leaders of the Canaanized sacrificial cult. Here we get, also, a vivid picture of the Judean worship of his day:

"What unto me is the multitude of your sacrifices?

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1. The margin here reads "teaching" which is better, the revised rendering here being rather illogical. The translation "law" for "Torah" is a late rendering.
2. Isaiah 7:3. This is the beginning of the "remnant" idea, which later becomes "leaven", and is of vital value in the expectation of the Kingdom of God.
3. Isaiah 8:1. The idea here is that time itself is being stirred.

saith Jehovah: I have had enough of the burnt-offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he-goats. When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand that ye trample my courts? Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; new moon and sabbath, the calling of assemblies -- I cannot away with iniquity and the solemn meeting. Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth . . . your hands are full of blood."

Isaiah classified all the practices common to Ba'alism under the one term idolatry, not without cause. The prophetic concept that the fall of Samaria was permitted by Jehovah in judgment upon her idolatrous ways is emphasized. Chapter 10:10,11 is typical:

"As my hand hath found the kingdoms of the idols, whose graven images did excel them of Jerusalem and of Samaria; shall I not, as I have done unto Samaria and her idols, do so to Jerusalem and her idols?"¹

The fact that Isaiah conceives of Ba'alism in terms of idolatry is brought out very clearly in 17:8:

"And they shall not look to the altars, the work of their hands; neither shall they have respect to that which their fingers have made, either in Asherim, or the sun-images."²

Isaiah sets a sharp contrast the false fertility sought by the devotees of the Ba'al cults with the true fertility that can only come from Jehovah: ✓

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1. Cf. Also 2:8; 18:20; 17:8; 27:9; 30:22; 40:19; 43:14; 44:9,10,17; 45:5; 48:5.
2. Cf. Also 27:9; 57:3-10.

"But draw near hither, ye sons of the sorceress, the seed of adulterers and harlots. Against whom do ye sport yourselves? against whom do ye make a wide mouth, and put out the tongue? are ye not the children of transgression, a seed of falsehood, ye that inflame yourselves under the oaks, under every green tree; that slay the children in the valleys, under the clefts of the rocks? Among the smooth stones of the valley is thy portion; they, are thy lot; even to them hast thou poured out a drink-offering, thou hast offered an oblation. Shall I be appeased for these things? Upon a high and lofty mountain hast thou set thy bed; thither also wentest thou up to offer sacrifice. And behind the doors and the posts hast thou set up thy memorial; for thou hast uncovered thyself to another than me, and art gone up; thou hast enlarged thy bed, and made thee a covenant with them. ."¹

In high contrast to this is the picture of the true fertility that comes from the hand of Jehovah not from the hand of Ba'al:

"The poor and the needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst: I Jehovah, will answer them, I the God of Israel, will not forsake them. I will open rivers on the bare heights, and fountains in the midst of the valleys; I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water . . . that they may see, and know, and consider, and understand together, that the hand of Jehovah hath done this, and the Holy One of Israel created it." ²

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1. Isaiah 57:3-10; Cf. also Isaiah 28:6-8; 1:29.
2. Isaiah 41:17-20. The water-idea is the key to Ba'alism. We may here express the idea that the captivity to Babylon where irrigation and not rain is the source of agriculture gave a death blow to Ba'alism in Israel. This was true also in the case of the Hebrews who fled to Egypt. Ba'alism is a rain religion, and its transformation in the religions of Babylonia and Egypt proves it absolutely. From one point of view the prophet lives in Palestine, but his reasoning is based on an enlarged scripture knowledge which now has become part and parcel of popular Science. The

". . and thou shalt be like a watered garden and like a spring of water whose waters fail not." 3

In contrast to the false Ba'al who promises rain but cannot fulfill that promise, Jehovah is pictured as in absolute control of the earth, either fructifying or

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The Scientific basis of Ba'alism is now exploded. The prophet replaces it with an intense belief in the wonderful, a realm in which prophecy moves and has its being. Something of the kind appears in Ezekiel 48 and now enters the whole River of Life scheme in apocalyptic ideology. While on the face of it the argument would not favor one point of view of one Isaiah, we must remark that a prophet born as he was and living as he did close to the king could and we might say must have gone far beyond the common science of the average person. Isaiah belonged to the elite of Israel, and was certainly the greatest thinker of the age.

3. Isaiah 58:11. Cf. also Isaiah 59:19; 44:3; 35:6; 43:19. We believe here that the contrast is with the practice of making "gardens of Adonis," which the women of Syria used to make. The question of date is immaterial here, the worship of Ba'al by the natives of Syria was flourishing at any period where you may place Isaiah.

making desolate at His own good pleasure. Chapter

24:1 is typical:

"Behold, Jehovah maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down, and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof."

Chapter 40:22 carries this same idea a step further:

"It is he that sitteth above the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers; that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadest them out as a tent to dwell in."

and verse 28 adds:

"Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard? The everlasting God Jehovah, the creator of the ends of the earth fainteth not, neither is weary; there is no searching of his understanding." 1

Jehovah was conceived as a God who abhorred sin.

Sin was a separating agent that divided God from His people. "But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid His face from you .."2

It was the sense of sin that so weighed down the prophet's soul at the time when he received his call to become a public servant to Jehovah.3

4. Summary.

The soul of the prophet Isaiah reacted with all its pent-up energies against the Canaanizing of the Hebrew

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1. Cf. also Isaiah 45:18; 51:13; 65:17; 66:22. We want to underline here the fact that Isaiah was not only a prophet, a poet, a politician, but also a philosopher. We express here the philosophy of a believer which transcribes the blubbery science of the day, only in the case of Isaiah the is not of the order of space but in the order of substance, not by the magnitude of what is without, as much as the infinity of what is within.
2. Isaiah 59:2.
3. Isaiah 6.

cult that swept over Judah during the reigns of Ahaz and Manasseh. Thus motivated, the prophet entered into a great personal experience of God, which is portrayed for us in chapter six. He came to see that all the rites and ceremonies connected with the Canaanized cult were not acceptable to Jehovah who was not concerned with sacrifice, feasts, new-moons, or great annual harvest festivals. Over against this Isaiah postulated a vital dependence in faith upon the Creator of the universe who could give or withhold the fertility of field and flock. His worshippers must seek love and justice; they must attain to moral goodness. Isaiah maintained that the faith due Jehovah was greater than any security coming from magic, human fortifications and military power. ¹

E. The Message of Hosea.

1. The Personal History of the Prophet.

Hosea is a contemporary of Amos and Isaiah. His approximate dates are 784-722 B.C.,² beginning with the last year of the reign of Jeroboam and ending with the first years of the reign of Hezekiah. This period has been characterized as the darkest in the history of Israel. Ba'al worship was at its height and the excesses of idolatry were everywhere apparent. There were domestic

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1. Isaiah 2:6,8; 5:21; 29:14.

2. International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia, Vol III, p. 1425

v.2.- "For the land doth commit great whoredom, departing from Jehovah.
v.4.- "I will avenge the blood of Jezreel upon the house of Jehu."
v.10.- "It shall be said - Ye are the sons of the living God."

vv.2-21.- Not Baal but Jehovah the true husband, giving the true fertility of grain, wine, and oil.
v.5.- "I will go after my lovers that give me my bread and my water, my wool and my flax, mine oil and my drink."
v.8.- "For she did not know that I gave the grain and the new wine and the oil, and multiplied unto her silver and gold, which they used for Baal. Therefore I will take back my grain, etc."
v.13.- "and will visit upon her the days of the Baalim, unto whom she burned incense, etc."
v.17.- "For I will take away the names of the Baalim out of her mouth."
v.21.- "I will answer, saith Jehovah, I will answer the heavens, and they shall answer the earth;"
v.22.- "and the earth shall answer the grain, and the new wine, and the oil; and they shall answer Jezreel."

v.1.- "... even as Jehovah loveth the children of Israel; though they turn unto other gods, and love cakes of raisins."

v.9.- "And it shall be, like people, like priest . . .
v.11.- "Whoredom and wine and new wine take away the

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- v.9.- "And it shall be, like people, like priest . . ."
- v.11.- "Whoredom and wine and new wine take away the understanding."
- v.12.- "My people ask counsel at their stock, and their staff declareth unto them, for the spirit of whoredom hath caused them to err, and they have played the harlot, departing from under their God."
- v.13.- "They sacrifice upon the tops of the mountains and burn incense under oaks and poplars and terebinths . . . therefore your daughters and terebinths and your brides commit adultery."
- v.14.- "I will not punish your daughters and your brides . . . for the men themselves go apart with harlots and they sacrifice with the prostitutes; . . ."
- v.15.- A Warning to Judah to take a lesson from Israel.

5

- v.14.- "For I will be unto Ephraim as a lion, and as a young lion to the house of Judah: I, even I, will tear and go away; I will carry off and there shall be none to deliver."
- v.15.- "I will go and return to my place . . . till they seek my face."

6

- v.1.- "Come, and let us return to Jehovah; for he hath torn and he will heal."
- v.6.- "For I desire goodness, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt-offerings."
- v.9.- "Priests murder in the way to Shechem;" Lewdness.
- v.10.- Israel defiled. (Whoredom)

7

- v.14.- "They assemble themselves for grain and new wine; they rebel against me."

8

- v.4.- ". . . of their silver and their gold have they made them idols."
- v.5.- "He hath cast off thy calf, O Samaria."
- v.6.- ". . . The workmen made it, and it is no god; yea, the calf of Samaria shall be broken in pieces."
- v.11.- "Because Ephraim hath multiplied altars for sinning, altars have been unto him for sinning."
- v.1.- ". . . For thou hast played the harlot, departing from thy God; thou hast loved hire upon every grain floor."
- v.2.- "The threshing floor and the wine-press shall not feed them, and the new wine shall fall her."

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- v.4.- "... of their silver and their gold have they made them idols."
 v.5.- "He hath cast off thy calf, O Samaria."
 v.6.- "... The workmen made it, and it is no god; yea, the calf of Samaria shall be broken in pieces."
 v.11.- "Because Ephraim hath multiplied altars for sinning, altars have been unto him for sinning."

- 9
- v.1.- "... For thou hast played the harlot, departing from thy God; thou hast loved hire upon every grain floor."
 v.2.- "The threshing floor and the wine-press shall not feed them, and the new wine shall fall her."
 v.4.- "They shall not pour out wine-offerings unto Jehovah, neither shall they be pleasing unto him."
 v.10.- "... They came to Baal-peop, and consecrated themselves unto the shameful thing, and became abominable like that which they loved."
 vv.11-17 PROPHEPIC IRONY OF THE FALSE FERTILITY RITES.-
 v.11- No births
 v.14- A miscarrying womb and dry breasts
 v.16- No fruit, "though they bring forth, yet will I slay."

- 10
- v.1.- "... according to the abundance of his fruits he hath multiplied his altars; according to the goodness of their land they have made goodly pillars."
 v.5.- "The inhabitants of Samaria will be in terror for the calves of Beth-aven;"
 v.8.- "The high places also of Aven, the sin of Israel shall be destroyed: the thorn and the thistle shall come up on their altars;"

- 11
- v.2.- "The more the prophets called them, the more they went from them: they sacrificed unto the Baalim, and burned incense unto graven images."
 v.4.- "... I was to them as they that lift up the yoke from the jaws; and I laid food before them."

- 12
- v.11.- "... in Gilgal they sacrifice bullocks; yea, their altars are as heaps in the furrows of the field."

- v.1.- "He (Ephraim) exalted himself in Israel; but when he offended in Baal, he died."

12
v.11.- "... in Gilgal they sacrifice bullocks; yea, their altars are as heaps in the furrows of the field."

v.1.- "He (Ephraim) exalted himself in Israel; but when he offended in Baal, he died."

v.2.- "And now they sin more and more, and have made them molten images of their silver, even idols according to their own understanding, all of them the work of craftsmen: they say of them, Let the men that sacrifice kiss the calves."

v.4.- "Yet I am Jehovah thy God from the land of Egypt; and thou shalt know no god but me, and besides me there is no saviour."

v.5.- "... in the land of great drought, (6) according to their pasture, so were they filled."

v.15.- "Though he be fruitful among his brethren, an east wind will come up, the breath (wind) of Jehovah coming up from the wilderness; and his spring shall become dry, and his fountain shall be dried up."

13
PROPHETIC NOTE OF HOPE

v.1.- "Return unto Jehovah thy God."

v.3.- "... neither will we say any more to the work of our hands, Ye are our gods; for in thee the fatherless findeth mercy."

v.4.- True fertility of olive and vine.

v.8.- "Ephraim shall say, What have I to do more with idols?

v.9.- "Who is wise that he may understand these things? prudent that he may know them? for the ways of Jehovah are right, and the just shall walk in them; but transgressors shall fall therein."

14
Hose

broils within the land and foreign invasions from without. Moral looseness was rampant.

Little is known concerning the actual life history of Hosea. He was no doubt a native of the northern kingdom. The personal history of Hosea has long been a subject of debate. However, the story is one which will never lose its forcefulness and dynamic power. Hosea stands in the relationship of God, and Gomer¹ his wife may well represent the people, sunk deep in sin and shame. G. Campbell Morgan has summarized his story thus:

"Hosea married a woman named Gomer. As the result of the marriage three children were born to them - Jezreel, Lo-ruhamah, and Lo-ammi . . . Then Gomer played him false, and he cast her out judicially, as she had left him in infidelity. After a while, when she had descended to the uttermost depths of degradation, having become merely a slave, the property of some one else, Hosea sought her out in her degradation, bought her at the price of a slave, and restored her to his side as his bride . . . With the first part we are familiar; it is a tragic, heart-breaking, but not unknown event. But the story of a man seeking a woman when she has passed through all the period of passion, and has lost her value on a material level, and is merely a slave; and of such a man going after her, buying her for thirty shekels and bringing her back, and restoring her to his side as his bride, it is something very uncommon. That is the domestic story that lies behind this prophecy." (2)

2. The Distribution of the Ba'alistic Ideas in the Book.

The entire book of Hosea is an example of the inter-

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1. The name Gomer was given to a son of Japhet. This instance in Hosea is the only case in which it is applied to a woman. Perhaps she was a foreigner from Cappadocia, or had foreign ancestors from there.
2. G. Campbell Morgan, Hosea, p.9.

penetration of Ba'alistic ideas into the prophetic concept. The whole story as it is told is a case in point. Every chapter without a single exception shows the results of this interpenetration. The most outstanding references are presented in the accompanying chart.

It has been suggested that Gomer may have been at one time a votary at the temple of Astarte.¹ Whether or not this was the case is immaterial; the main facts remain the same. Through his great love for a sinful wife, Hosea entered into a new understanding of what Jehovah must be feeling for His people who were in reality "betrothed" to Him. For even as Gomer forgot her husband and departed to seek other lovers, so Israel "went after" the Ba'alim and had forgotten Jehovah.²

The conception of Jehovah became greater than it had ever been before under the direct contact with Canaanite Ba'alism. All that was claimed to be dependent upon the Ba'alim as gods of fertility and productivity, all that the worshippers of Ba'al sought to secure by cultic acts and magical coercion, all this Hosea claimed for Jehovah:

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1. For this rather absurd idea cf. Herbert G. May's article, The Fertility Cult in Hosea, American Journal of Semitic Languages, Vol. XLVIII (1932), p. 93ff. Cf. also L. Waterman, The Marriage of Hosea, Journal of Biblical Literature, Vol. XXXVII, p. 111ff. The idea that chapters 1-3 is a parable and not an historical event is favored by some exegetes. But the theory that Gomer was a devotee can not be maintained.
2. Hosea 2:13.

"For she did not know that I gave her the grain, and the new wine, and the old, and multiplied unto her silver and gold, which they used for Baal. Therefore I will take back my grain in the time thereof, and my new wine in the season thereof, and will pluck away my wool and my flax which should have covered her nakedness. . . I will also cause her mirth to cease, her feasts, her new moons, and her sabbaths, and all her solemn assemblies. And I will lay waste her vines and her fig trees, whereof she hath said, These are my hire that my lovers have given me; and I will make them a forest and the beasts of the field shall eat them. And I will visit upon her the days of the Ba'alim unto which she burned incense, when she decked herself with her earrings and her jewels, and went after her lovers, and forgot me, saith Jehovah." (1)

Chapter nine gives us the extreme outcome of Jehovah's wrath expressed against this false conception of the source of fertility. The people think that Ba'al gives them this blessing, but in order to prove that it comes from God, Jehovah will remove all fertility from them. Verses 11-16 predict no births, a miscarrying womb, and the actual destruction of the living by Jehovah. Yet, on the other hand, the book ends with a high note of prophetic hope. Here again, that hope is couched in terms of real fertility, fertility that comes not from Ba'al, but from Jehovah:

"I will be as the dew upon Israel; he shall blossom as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon. His branches shall spread and his beauty shall be as the olive tree, and his smell as Lebanon. They that dwell under his shadow shall return; they shall revive as the grain, and blossom as the vine: the scent thereof shall be as the wine of Lebanon." (2)

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1. Hosea 3:8-13. Cf. also 4:13, 14; 9:1; 9:10.
2. Hosea 14:4-7.

It is to be noted that all the Canaanite elements of grain, wine, and oil are represented in this catalogue, but that they have all been spiritualized and attributed to Jehovah.

Hosea has the great courage to take the idea of love, so perverted by the false worshippers all around him, and to apply it in all its purity to the relation that should exist between Jehovah and His people. It is a relationship that can be expressed only by the idea of a spiritual marriage, demanding duty, love, fidelity and utter faithfulness. Along with this faithfulness to Jehovah there must go also a commensurate morality of life characterized by righteousness and justice.

3. Summary.

In Hosea the revulsion against the Baalistic rites that were finding a place in the Israelite worship of Jehovah reaches its climax, no doubt because Ba'alism had a firmer stronghold in the north. Hosea is led to see that Jehovah possesses all the prerogatives of Ba'al but none of his perversions. Above all, God is a God of absolute love and fidelity, yet a God of stern justice mellowed by the utmost kindness and grace.

F. Conclusion.

In the trying days of the eighth century, when there seemed to be a recrudescence of old Canaanite tendencies penetrating the Israelite worship of Jehovah, and at a time

when there were both foreign invasions and internal disturbances, the great prophets were forced by the very incursion of Ba'alism upon them, and the probability, nay, even the certainty that the worship of Jehovah in its purity would be lost before the onslaught of Ba'alism, to meditate and ponder the real nature of their national deity - Jehovah. This meditation led them into a new concept of God, a concept that was all the greater because of their conflict with Ba'alism.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

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SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

In order to trace adequately the influence of the worship of Ba'al upon Israelitish prophetism it was found to be necessary to treat in detail the history of the Hebrew concept of God. It was also necessary to give in some detail the development of the native fertility cults and their development into a syncretised regime in the land of Canaan under the system that came to be associated with the worship of the Ba'alim.

Chapter two sought to survey the influences brought to bear upon the lives of the leaders of the Hebrew race that resulted in the formation of a religion devoted to ethical monotheism. This survey was treated under its historical outlines: The Prelude in Canaan, the Interlude in Egypt, the second Prelude that took place in the desert. Special attention was given to the contributions made by Abraham and Moses, contributions that were seen to be mutations, rather than evolutionary. In the case of both there came into the world something that had never been there before.

Chapter three sought to present the background of Canaan with special reference to Ba'alism. Geographical,

sociological, religious, and political implications were considered in turn. The attraction that the nature worship exerted upon the Israelites was traced. The fact that the orgiastic nature of this worship was pre-empted by a sense of mystical coerciveness, destined to invoke the life-giving water from the hands of the gods, did not mitigate the dangers implicit in the system of which the Hebrews sought to become a part.

Chapter four presented the interpenetration and interassimilation of religious ideas representing two totally different concepts of God. It was found that by the middle of the eighth century B.C., worship among the Hebrews had received certain accretions from the Canaanite fertility cults connected with the worship of Ba'al. The worship conducted at the high places was found to be deeply influenced by the tenacious quality of the indigenous religion. The Hebrews experienced great difficulty in supplanting the native practices and instituting their own. The influence of Ahab's foreign policy, resulting in placing the Tyrian Ba'al upon a legal equality with Jehovah was found to be the turning point in the whole history of Hebrew religion. The extremism of Ahab motivated the prophets into a protest which, in turn, led them into a great new experience of the real nature and spirit of Jehovah. This new experience of God became the heart

of Judaism and of all ethical monotheism.

Chapter five presented the place of the eighth century prophets in the religious history of Israel. Special attention was given to Hosea, Amos, and Isaiah: the first because he was in the very center of the conflict, the second because his message is as unyielding as can be expected from a man whose surroundings have no Ba'al influences, the third because he represents the extreme crisis in Israel. These three prophets, therefore, present the conflict from three different angles: the danger of popular Ba'alism in the north, the uncompromising Yahwism of the extreme south, and fashionable Ba'alism among the upper classes in Jerusalem. In all three the fear that Ba'alism will supplant the worship of Jehovah is common ground. The ideal is to be found in the simple nomadic life where Ba'alism does not exist. The prophets depict calamity as inevitable because it will bring about an enforced simplicity as a part of the future.

The personal experience of Hosea was a factor that colored his concept of God. In Hosea the revulsion against the Baalistic rites reached a climax. Hosea maintained that Jehovah possessed all the prerogatives of the Ba'alim but none of their perversions. Above all, God is a God of utter love and fidelity, a God of justice, kindness and grace.

Amos was depicted as standing on the watershed of the

history of the Hebrew religion. In his great protest against the incorporation of Baalistic tendencies into the worship of Jehovah, he abrogated the whole ideal of unreal sacrifice as foreign to the nature of Jehovah. Sacrifice involved a magical conception of God and Amos portrayed the national deity in moral, rational, and intelligent terms. There could be no coercing of benefits from the hand of Jehovah; but it was possible to know and to do the will of God. Amos' conception and portrayal of righteousness was really the dynamite that became the powerhouse for many future reform movements.

Isaiah's personal experience of God was one of his major contributions. This experience helped him to see the dangers implicit in the fertility cults commonly practiced by his people. Over against the magical conception of religion Isaiah postulated a vital, dependent faith in the Creator of the universe.

The trying days of the eighth century saw a confluence of circumstances made up of foreign invasions and internal disturbances plus a recrudescence of old Canaanite elements penetrating the Israelite worship of Jehovah. This situation brought about a revival of religion somewhat paralleled today by the crisis-theology of Barth and Brunner. The verdict of this theology against the easy-going rationalistic theology of the last generation reminds us of the stern judgment of the prophets against

the easy ways of Ba'alism.

Forced by necessity to meditation, and then to invective, the prophets of the eighth century were led into a great new experience of God and into a conception of His nature that was all the greater because of their conflict with Ba'alism.

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