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# The Journal of Theological Studies

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## A THEORY OF THE DEVELOPEMENT OF ISRAELITE RELIGION IN EARLY TIMES.

THE theory which forms the subject of this article is, perhaps, of a somewhat ambitious character, involving as it does a reconstruction of the commonly accepted critical view as to the developement of Israelite Religion during the period which it has become customary to designate as 'the pre-prophetic age', i.e. the period extending from Moses down to the writing prophets of the eighth century B. C. It is a theory which involves many issues, and for which the evidence is many-sided. It has grown up in my mind bit by bit during a long period; though it is only recently that I have seemed to see the bearing one upon another of the different lines of evidence, and their relationship to the main question.

I have long felt that the commonly received critical theory of the development of the early religion of Israel (i. e. prior to the middle of the eighth century B. C.) stands upon a very different basis from the documentary hypothesis of the Pentateuch, and the theory which is bound up with this of the priority (broadly speaking) of the prophetic to the legalistic period of development. This latter hypothesis, with the reconstruction which it involves of our view of the developement of Israel's religion *after* B. C. 750, may now be regarded as proved up to the hilt for any thinking and unprejudiced man who is capable of estimating the character and value of the evidence. The former is, I believe, very largely a matter of subjective assumption. It is based, to some extent, upon a certain amount of objective evidence which seems to reveal a condition of belief and cultus apparently inconsistent with any high standard of ethical religion. This has been read

and interpreted in the light of the valuable results which have been achieved by students of the common basis of early Semitic religion, specially notable among whom stand Robertson Smith and Wellhausen; and such terms as animism, fetishism, and totemism usually figure largely in modern treatises which deal with the religion of Israel in the so-called 'pre-prophetic' period.

With this there has been too great a tendency to overlook evidence which would seem to make for a high standard of religion, or to explain it away as the invention of a later period of prophetic monotheism. To-day, I take it, the *onus probandi* would be felt to lie with the man who was bold enough to assert that the pictures of lapse from a high standard of religion and of repentance drawn by the editors of Judges and Samuel are, in a general way, historically true, rather than with the man who adopted the assumption that high ethical monotheism took its rise not earlier than the writing prophets of the eighth century.

There has all along, however, been in evidence a counter-tendency among scholars of the critical school. Many scholars, and not the least able, have laid greater or lesser emphasis upon the importance of Moses as the founder of a relatively high form of ethical religion. And the last few years have witnessed the growth of a school of thought which, if I am not mistaken, is destined shortly to revolutionize our view of Israel's early religion. Starting largely out of the 'Babel und Bibel' controversy, though having its sources much further back in the achievements of students of the cuneiform literature, there has grown up on the Continent a very weighty body of opinion which recognizes and emphasizes the fact that the religion of Israel owes much to the religion and civilization of Babylonia, and can only rightly be studied in the light of a systematic comparative survey of the two religions. Babylonian civilization is now known to have extended so far back that, in view of it, the period covered by the early career of the people of Israel appears comparatively modern; and the influence of this civilization upon Israel and over regions beyond them appears to have been so comprehensive that in future any treatise which professes to deal with the religion of Israel and ignores or overlooks the debt which is due to Babylon may safely be neglected by the serious student. The

careful and laborious work which has been accomplished by students of the common basis of primitive Semitic heathenism can never lose its value; but that value will, I think, be found in the future to be more important for the archaeologist than for the student of the religion of Israel during Israel's national career; since the period of common Semitic savagery must now, as regards Israel's ancestors, be pushed so very far back as to retain, for the student of Old Testament Theology, only a very minor importance.

So much by way of preface. My own attempted contribution to the study of Israel's early religion is based rather upon the material afforded by the Biblical sources themselves than upon a survey of the influence of Babylonian belief and cultus, my first-hand acquaintance with cuneiform literature being of short standing. It is only in tracing the course of my final line of evidence that I shall bring forward facts derived from Babylonian sources; and these facts I owe to my friend the Rev. C. J. Ball, than whom, I believe, no Assyriologist is entitled to speak with greater authority.

The general outcome of my arguments may be stated at the commencement in a summary form as follows.

I hope to vindicate for Moses the establishment of a high form of ethical religion. I believe that the religion of Moses was, in substance, the religion which forms the background of the moral Decalogue of Exod. xx. And I am prepared to go still further, and to suggest evidence that this Decalogue itself was, in its original short form, promulgated by Moses as the Biblical narrative states. Evidence derived from the narratives of Judges and the succeeding books, which might seem at first sight to make for a contrary opinion, I believe that I can explain; and I am ready to maintain that the title 'pre-prophetic' with its implications, as applied to the earlier religion of the nation of Israel, is largely a misnomer, and that no sharp line of demarcation can be drawn between the religion of Amos and that of the founder of the national life.

Let me then, in the first place, bring forward certain considerations which appear to make for the view that the God Yahwe, as introduced to Israel by Moses, was believed to be a Being endowed with very definitely marked ethical characteristics—the

kind of characteristics, in fact, which distinguish the Decalogue of Exod. xx.

If we consider what we may term the primitive or non-moral characteristics of Yahwe, as they may be gathered from Israel's early history, i. e. the characteristics of Deity which are the outcome of reflexion upon the phenomena of nature regarded as due to supernatural agency, I think that it will be found that the normal developement of these characteristics appears to have suffered arrest at a certain stage. If this be the case, then the question must needs arise:—To what cause can this arrest be ascribed?

At different stages in the developement of a people, natural phenomena appear to present themselves to that people under varying aspects. At one stage they may appear, on the whole, to be hostile; at another to be, on the whole, beneficent. The point at which the transition from one aspect to the other appears to take place is the point at which transition takes place from the nomadic to the settled agricultural stage.

To the nomad, and more especially to the nomad of the barren Arabian steppe, life is to a great extent a struggle against the antagonistic forces of nature. He is exposed to the rigours of climatic change. By day the sun strikes upon him and scorches him, while at night he is a victim to the frost. The thunder-storm inspires him with well-founded terror, since without a harbour he may perish by the lightning. He pitches his tent, and the sand-storm lays it low, or a sudden torrent from the mountain sweeps it away.

On the other hand, the agriculturist, dwelling in a kinder land, views nature rather as a beneficent power. He inhabits a fixed abode, of solid material, and so is not exposed in the same way to the extremes of heat and cold; and, in addition, he is protected from the sun by the shade which trees afford in a fertile land. Thus the sun to him is not a scourge; but, on the contrary, he realizes that he profits through its heat in the speedy ripening of his crops. The thunder-storms which he experiences in his rolling plains or among his low hills are not the storms which rage round Sinai, cleaving the rocks and reverberating from crag to crag. Protected by the shelter of his homestead, he views them rather as bringers of the rain which fertilizes his fields, and not as the dreadful visitation of a hostile power.

It is inevitable that this difference in the aspect under which nature presents itself to the man should be reflected in the attributes which he ascribes to his deity, since to primitive man natural phenomena present themselves as the work of supernatural agencies.

Thus, while the deity of the nomad is largely invested with destructive attributes, the deity of the agriculturist is pictured mainly as a beneficent agent, more especially as the author of the fertilizing and reproductive forces of nature. In fact, this latter characteristic appears to come into prominence whenever primitive man passes out of the nomadic stage and settles down to agricultural pursuits; and it is perhaps partly for this reason that we so often find a female deity associated with the male deity, and worshipped with immoral rites as a tribute to the forces of which the deity is supposed to be the author.

Now if we take note of the natural phenomena which were associated by early Israel with the activity of Yahwe, we shall find that they are those destructive agencies of nature the effects of which would naturally impress a nomadic people. Especially do we observe that Yahwe is connected with fire, regarded as a consuming and destructive element, and with the thunder-storm and earthquake.

Thus the earliest Theophany to Moses is depicted as taking the form of a flame of fire in the midst of a bush (Exod. iii 2 J E). There is frequent allusion also to the fire of Yahwe smiting and destroying. So at Taberah the murmurers are consumed (Num. xi 1-3 J); Korah and his adherents, when presuming to arrogate to themselves the functions of the Levites, perish in the same manner (Num. xvi 35 P); and so do Nadab and Abihu the sons of Aaron, when they offer strange fire in their censers before Yahwe (Lev. x 1 ff P). Elsewhere we find the fire of Yahwe falling and consuming the sacrifice of Elijah (1 Kings xviii 24, 38), destroying the emissaries of Ahaziah king of Israel when sent to arrest Elijah (2 Kings i 10, 12, 14), and falling from heaven and smiting the flocks and shepherds of Job (Job i 16). In most, if not all, of these instances it is probable that allusion is to the destructive natural phenomenon of the lightning.

It is in accordance with this conception that the appearance of the glory of Yahwe, as exhibited to Moses at Sinai, is said to

have been 'like devouring fire' (Exod. xxiv 17 E); and in Deut. iv 24, ix 3 the same expression is used as a description of Yahwe's nature.

A further instance of the connexion of fire with the manifestation of Yahwe is afforded by 'the pillar of fire' (cf. Exod. xiii 21, 22, xiv 24), though the origin of this particular conception is obscure.

But not only was Yahwe associated with the lightning, but with all the phenomena of the thunder-storm. Thus, the theophany at Sinai is connected with the thunder-storm and earthquake (Exod. xix 1 f J E, Deut. iv 11 ff); and in the same way Ps. xviii, perhaps the earliest of the Psalms, gives a description of Yahwe's descending from heaven in a storm, while the earth quakes and the foundations of the mountains are moved because He is wroth. Here Yahwe is pictured as riding upon a cherub, the original conception of which was probably the black storm-cloud. We may recall the cherubim stationed by Yahwe to keep the gate of Eden, and brandishing the flaming sword which turned every way—representing most likely the zigzag lightning-flashes appearing and reappearing out of the cloud.

Yahwe's theophany in the thunder-storm also finds description in Ps. xxix, Ps. lxxvii 17-19, Jer. x 13 = li 16. In Ps. xxix 'the voice of Yahwe' is manifestly the thunder, and this appears to be the case also in Amos i 2; Isa. xxx 30, 31; Joel ii 11, iii 16 (Heb. iv 16); Ps. xlvi 7; Job xxxvii 4. In fact, an ordinary term for thunder is 'voices' (קלות):—Exod. ix 23, 28, 29, 33, 34, xix 16, xx 18; 1 Sam. xii 17, 18; Job xxviii 26, xxxviii 25.

In 1 Sam. vii 10 Yahwe is depicted as leading Israel to battle against the Philistines, upon whom He thunders with a great thunder, so that they are discomfited and smitten before Israel.

Now in this connexion of Yahwe with fire, storm, and earthquake we have the impression made upon a race of nomads by the phenomena of the desert life. Examination of the passages cited shews that the conception was general, and passed with Israel from the desert life into the settled life of Canaan. When Yahwe comes to the assistance of His people in warfare, He comes on the storm-cloud with thunder and lightning, as He was remembered to have first displayed Himself at Mount Sinai. He

seems, in fact, even after the settlement in Canaan, to have been thought of chiefly as the desert-God, the God of Sinai or Horeb. So Elijah, when he flees from the wrath of Jezebel, makes his way to Horeb, the Mount of God, and stands in the mouth of a cave while Yahwe passes by (1 Kings xix). First comes a great and mighty wind rending the rocks, then an earthquake, and after that a fire. In none of these does Yahwe communicate with the prophet, but in 'the sound of a gentle whisper' which follows. The narrative thus seems to offer a prophetic advance beyond the old popular conception as to Yahwe's method of communicating with His servants.

But while in the nature-attributes of Yahwe we trace a connexion with the period of the desert wanderings, we seem, on the other hand, to find no traces of the settled agricultural life of Palestine in the way of enduing Him with new characteristics. The old desert-characteristics survive; they are neither added to nor transformed under the new influences.

We are at no loss to understand what were the main characteristics of the Canaanite Baal. He might and did vary in details in different localities, appearing as Baalzebub, Baal hamman, Baal peor, &c., but everywhere his principal endowments were the same. He was Baal or lord of a locality in virtue of being the source of its fertility, the generative and fructifying agency in nature. Thus it is that we find associated with him a consort Ashtoreth, or, more correctly, Ashtart; and thus it is that we find his worship bound up with the practice of immoral rites, and the existence of *Ḳedēshīm* and *Ḳedēshōth* or consecrated prostitutes of both sexes at his sanctuaries.

Now it is surely a very noteworthy fact that, when the Israelites entered Palestine and settled down side by side with those Canaanites whom they were unable to exterminate, the desert form of the Yahwe-religion nevertheless survived and escaped assimilation to the corrupt nature-worship of Canaan. It seems probable, as the old document in Judges ch. i suggests, that the conquest of Canaan was far less thorough than the Book of Joshua in its present form might lead us to suppose. Everywhere throughout the land Israel settled down side by side with the Canaanites, probably a mere handful in comparison with the original inhabitants, and separated in many cases tribe from tribe



by the circumstances of a merely partial conquest and by the natural features of the country. Yet the desert-conception of Yahwe survived; He was never transformed into the deity of natural reproductiveness, and—most noticeable feature of all—we never find the slightest suggestion of an imagined female consort side by side with Him.

It is true that many of the outward surroundings of His worship were the same as those of the gods of Canaan. His sanctuaries were placed in the same way on hill-tops, under trees, and by fountains of springing water, and were furnished similarly with altar and pillar as accessories to His worship. He also appears to have been spoken of as Baal or *owner* of the land, though never, it seems, of any particular locality within the land, just as He was spoken of in the same way as Melekh or *king* of His people. And that He was regarded as giver of the produce of the land is proved by the fact that these gifts were acknowledged in a yearly cycle of festivals. These are facts which have a bearing upon what I have to say later, and I hope to revert to them. But taking them now as they stand, it must be admitted that they render it all the more remarkable that the religion of Yahwe escaped assimilation to the religion of Canaan when so many circumstances must have favoured such an assimilation.

We know indeed that there were periods during which many of the Israelites lapsed into the worship of Canaan and adopted the lewd rites of the Canaanite deities. But that the practices of these periods were, as represented by later narrators, really *lapses* from the true religion, and did not exemplify the normal expression of that religion, is proved by the fact that on each occasion there came an arrest, when the true character of Yahwe was recognized, and the Canaanite practices abandoned. And the occasion of such arrest was in every case the summons to arms, when Israel's leader was found, not in the soft and luxurious Baal of Canaan, but in Yahwe Šeba'oth, the God of armies, the warrior-God of Sinai. Such summonses seem to have been effective in uniting the scattered tribes in single-minded action, and in providing that, though apparently separated and disorganized for a lengthy period, they still could be and were, when the time arrived, united under a king into one nation.

Now the inference from the facts which we have noticed

appears to be this. Yahwe's character, as represented to Israel by Moses during the desert wanderings, must have possessed certain sharply defined features of such a kind as were capable of withstanding the outside seductions of Canaanite worship, and of keeping His religion alive and vigorous in a form to which the chief characteristics of the Canaanite Baal were felt to be antagonistic. It was not enough that Yahwe had made choice of Israel, and sealed His claim to their allegiance by the great deliverance from Egypt. This by itself could not have prevented the development of the conception of Yahwe into a form identical in all respects with that of the Baal of the Canaanites. It must have been the case that Yahwe was introduced by Moses to Israel as a Being endowed with certain definite *moral* characteristics, and requiring the same kind of characteristics on the part of His people.

We may notice, in this connexion, a passage in Montefiore's Hibbert Lectures on *The Origin and Foundation of the Hebrew Religion* pp. 46 f. His words are:—' That successful resistance to Canaanite polytheism, on which we laid so much stress when ascribing the origin of monolatry to the Mosaic age, would surely not have been possible unless the Yahwe whom Moses taught differed from the Canaanite deities, not only in his numerical uniqueness, but in his higher and more consistent ethical character. The violent elements in Yahwe's character he shared with Moloch and Baal, and many another divinity of the neighbouring Semitic tribes ; but in no single case did this corresponding violence produce a corresponding monolatry. We are therefore entitled to doubt whether the exclusive worship of the national God would ever have been ordained had there not lain in the original conception of Yahwe the " promise and potency " of the monotheism of Amos and Isaiah. To quote the earlier words of Professor Kuenen, " The great merit of Moses lies in the fact of his connexion of the religious idea with the moral life." The exclusive worship of Yahwe on the one hand, God's moral character and the moral duty of man upon the other hand, must have acted reciprocally in the production of the Mosaic teaching as a whole. The first element, to which Stade would confine the creative originality of the Founder, would hardly have arisen without the second, and could scarcely

have produced those historic results of which we seek the cause. One of the most sober and trustworthy of Old Testament critics, Professor Kamphausen, maintains the same argument. "I recognize," he says, "in the fact that the small number of the Israelites was not absorbed by the Canaanites, who were by far their superiors in all matters of external culture, a convincing proof of the ethical power of the Yahvistic religion. But this superiority consisted in the nature of that Yahveh whom Moses proclaimed, not in a dogmatic assertion of Semitic exclusiveness."

There is another piece of evidence for the view which I have been maintaining which must not be overlooked. It is found in the information afforded us by Jer. xxxv with regard to the clan of the Rechabites. According to 1 Chron. ii 55 the Rechabites were a branch of the Kenites, i. e. of the desert tribe into which Moses married, and which accompanied the Israelites in their migration and settled in the Negeb (Judges i 16). Jer. xxxv relates how the prophet summoned certain of the Rechabites who had taken refuge in Jerusalem during the invasion of Nebuchadrezzar, and having invited them into one of the chambers of the Temple, set wine before them and bade them drink. The Rechabites replied, 'We will drink no wine: for Jonadab the son of Rechab our father commanded us, saying, Ye shall drink no wine, neither ye, nor your sons, for ever: neither shall ye build house, nor sow seed, nor plant vineyard, nor have any: but all your days ye shall dwell in tents, that ye may dwell many days in the land wherein ye sojourn. And we have obeyed the voice of Jonadab the son of Rechab our father in all that he charged us, to drink no wine all our days, we, our wives, our sons, and our daughters; nor to build houses for us to dwell in: neither have we vineyard, nor field, nor seed: but we have dwelt in tents, and have obeyed, and done according to all that Jonadab our father commanded us' (Jer. xxxv 6-10).

Here we have a tribe who made it part of their creed to maintain the desert-mode of life even while living in Palestine, abstaining from the cultivation of the ground, and living in tents and not in fixed dwellings. The inference is that, as Yahwe-worshippers, they regarded the nomad life as proper to the worship of Yahwe, doubtless because the settled life of agricul-

tourists appeared to them to be bound up too closely with the worship of the Canaanite Bealim.

The inference that the Rechabites were enthusiasts for the pure worship of Yahwe is borne out by the allusion in 2 Kings x 15 ff to Jonadab the son of Rechab, the ancestor of the Rechabites of Jeremiah's time, who appears as a sympathizer with the stern measures adopted by Jehu for the vindication of the Yahwe-religion, and as assisting in the ruse of which the purpose was to secure the massacre of all the worshippers of the Phœnician Baal.

I believe, then, that, so far as I have gone, I am justified in making the claim that the God Yahwe, as introduced to Israel by Moses, was a Being endowed with very definite moral characteristics. If we go further, and ask the question—What kind of characteristics? I would reply:—The characteristics which are distinctive of the moral Decalogue of Exod. xx. But, if we attempt to ascribe this Decalogue as a whole to Moses, we are at once met by the fact that a number of objections more or less serious have been brought forward with the object of shewing that such a code of precepts could not date back to Moses, or indeed to a period much earlier than the eighth century B.C.

The objection which is based upon the subjective consideration that the Decalogue breathes the spirit of a later age, that namely of the eighth-century prophets, is not, I think, of any great importance, and requires no special refutation.

The very fact of the importance of the figure of Moses in later ages, the fact that all Hebrew legislation, and the religious sanction with which it was bound up, is traced back to him as its initiator, is enough to prove that, like the founders of other great religious movements, he was far in advance of his age. It cannot therefore be argued that, because the standard of religion in later times appears to fall short of the ideal of the Decalogue, therefore that ideal was unknown, and had not yet come into existence. The eighth-century prophets, Amos and Hosea, Isaiah and Micah, when they attack the religious and social abuses of their time, appear in fact to attack them *as abuses*, i. e. they seem to regard themselves not as the founders of a new type of Yahwe-religion, but as interpreting and insisting upon religious essentials which ought to have been patent to Israel at large. The whole

tenor of their teaching may be said to *presuppose* the Decalogue. It is difficult to understand the severity of their language, if it was aimed, not against a moral declension, but against a stage of morals which as yet knew of no higher ideal.

There is, again, the objection which is based upon the supposed existence of a second Decalogue, of a ceremonial character, embodied in the narrative of J, which relates the second giving of the law in Exod. xxxiv.

I hope that it will not be thought that I wish to minimize the difficulty of the problem presented by this chapter if I pass it by with a mere reference. I do not myself believe that it was the writer's intention to imply that the ceremonial laws embodied in *vv.* 11-27 were 'the words of the covenant, the ten words' inscribed upon the two tables. No attempt to resolve the code into ten words can be claimed as giving satisfaction; and the variations in the form in which the code is presented to us as a code of ten commandments are nearly as numerous as the critics who attempt to cope with the problem and to find its solution. Granted a division into ten commandments to which critics could agree with some amount of unanimity, it could scarcely be argued that the title 'the ten words' is appropriate to such a code, as it is appropriate to the moral Decalogue of Exod. xx in its short form, with omission of the Deuteronomic expansions to the second, fourth, fifth, and tenth 'words'. Much more probably Exod. xxxiv 10-28 represents a fragmentary account from J of that which we have in detail in Exod. xx-xxiii from the hand of E, viz. the moral Decalogue *and* the Book of the Covenant, though why all that remains in J's account is a mere fragment of the Book of the Covenant is more than we can determine.

There remains the very real objection that, from the information supplied to us by the old historical narratives of Judges, Samuel, and Kings, we gather that there existed in Israel during the greater part of the period of the settlement of Canaan a kind of Yahwe-worship which found expression in the representation of Yahwe under the form of an image, and which was bound up with the practice of rites, whether of divination or of another character, in which the use of images played a prominent part. All this, of course, stands in direct contravention to the second commandment of the moral Decalogue.

While I admit that this is a real objection, I am far from admitting that evidence goes to prove that such a cultus received the sanction of the highest spiritual authorities of the age in which it was rife. It would not be difficult, I think, to shew that the prophetic interpreters of history whose writings we possess in J and E in the Pentateuch and in the old narratives of the succeeding historical books were opposed in principle to the bull-worship of the northern kingdom and to the cult of Teraphim, and that here we discern a phase of religious thought which goes back at least as far as the early middle period of the monarchy. Still the fact remains that the popular mind, i. e. the great bulk of Israel, seems to have found in the use of images nothing inconsistent with their conception of the requirements of the God Yahwe; and the question therefore arises whether the existence of such a state of affairs is not inconsistent with the ascription of the Decalogue to the authorship of Moses.

It is this difficulty which I am now going to set myself to meet. For its solution we must turn our attention to another subject which may, at first sight, appear to be somewhat remote from the point at issue.

Examination of the sources for Israel's early history has led me to infer with ever increasing conviction that, though the narrative of the sojourn of Israelite tribes in Egypt and their Exodus under the leadership of Moses is substantially true, yet these tribes were not the whole of the tribes which afterwards went to make up the people of Israel. Some Israelite tribes had already entered Canaan and made the country their home at a date considerably earlier than the Exodus.

We have first of all the evidence which is afforded by the mention of Israel on the stele of the Egyptian king Merenptah. In the inscription in question Merenptah narrates his successful repulse of an invasion of Lower Egypt by the Libyans; and then, at the close of the inscription, he refers to a campaign in Syria in which he has succeeded in quelling all opposition.

Here we find an allusion to a people called Israel in the midst of a number of place- or tribal names, mostly belonging to North Palestine. The words are:—'The people of Israel is spoiled; it hath no seed.'

Only one explanation is really satisfactory.

Evidence is good for the commonly received view that Ramses II, Merenptah's predecessor, was the Pharaoh of the oppression, and either Merenptah himself or his successor the Pharaoh of the Exodus. The supposition, in face of this, that the Exodus and the entry into Canaan had already taken place some generations previous to the date of the stele-inscription has nothing to commend it; nor, on the other hand, is it likely that Merenptah's allusion represents his own version of the Exodus or describes his oppression of Israel in Egypt prior to the Exodus.

There remains the hypothesis that, already before the entry into Canaan of the Israelite tribes who came out of Egypt with Moses, there were tribes settled in Canaan who bore the name of Israel.

I may at this point refer to the much vexed question of the repeated allusion in the Tell el Amarna letters to the Ḥabiri people, who appear circ. B.C. 1400, i.e. some 150 years or more before Israel's entry into Canaan under Joshua, to be pressing into the country and threatening the continued stability of the Egyptian suzerainty and the power of the petty vassal-kings of the country.

Of these Ḥabiri we know nothing beyond what may be gathered from the letters of Abd-ḥiba of Jerusalem and his Canaanite contemporaries. The name may be equivalent to עִבְרִים 'Hebrews', or it may correspond to אֲבִירִים 'allies'<sup>1</sup>: it is impossible to dogmatize on the subject. But in any case the allusions afford evidence for the existence in 1400 B.C. of a wave of immigration into Canaan from the East of tribes which, whatever their name may denote, were in all probability closely allied to Israel.

This leads us to notice that Sety I, whose reign appears to fall towards the end of the fourteenth century B.C., mentions a state in West Galilee called Asaru or Aseru. The same name is cited by Sety's son and successor, Ramses II. It corresponds in form with the name of the Israelite tribe Asher. We

<sup>1</sup> The fact that *ebra* exists in Babylonian as the proper equivalent of עִבְרִי tells, however, against this latter view. If Ḥabiri means 'allies', the word must be regarded as a Canaanism.

may remark also that the name Gad, which means 'fortune' or 'good fortune', is probably connected with or derived from the name of the deity Gad, the patron of fortune, who is mentioned in Isa. lxxv 11, and whose name frequently occurs in Phoenician and Aramaic inscriptions. The name is also seen in the place-name Baal-Gad in the far north of Palestine (Joshua xi 17, xii 7, xiii 5), doubtless a locality where Baal was worshipped as the god of fortune, and in Migdal-Gad, i. e. 'the tower of Gad', a stronghold of Judah (Joshua xv 38).

Now Asher and Gad are the two tribes whose descent is traced, not from a wife of Jacob, but from a concubine, Leah's handmaid Zilpah. May we, therefore, infer that the meaning of this tradition is that these two tribes, to which we should probably add the two tribes which are traced to the other handmaid, Bilhah, viz. Dan and Naphtali, were regarded as not belonging to Israel by full-blooded descent, but as occupying in some way or other an inferior position among the tribes? This view is held by many. Thus e. g. Paton (*Syria and Palestine* pp. 126, 151) and Hogg (*Encyc. Bibl.* s. v. Asher, &c.) regard these handmaid-tribes as Canaanite clans which had occupied Palestine before the invasion of Israel, and which were later on incorporated by the invaders. The case for regarding them as Canaanites scarcely seems to be made out; for there seems to be no reason why they should not be regarded as members of the great Aramaean migration, possibly Habiri, who pressed into Canaan and settled there perhaps some centuries before the Israelitish invasion under Joshua. As belonging to the Hebrew stock they would claim relationship to Israel, and this may be the explanation of the story of their descent.

Turning to the Song of Deborah, we notice that Asher, Gilead (i. e. Gad), and Dan are all blamed for failure to respond to the summons to take common action in battle with the Canaanite; Asher and Dan because they had interests upon the sea-board, either in fishery or commerce, and were apparently not concerned in the struggle for existence which occupied the patriotic tribes. It is true that Naphtali, the remaining handmaid-tribe, receives high commendation for its prowess; but it is easy to conceive that this one tribe may have early identified its interests with those of the tribes of Israel properly so called,



while the other handmaid-tribes may not so soon have been drawn into the bond.

In further support of this theory of the continuous existence of Israelitish tribes in Canaan from patriarchal times, I would cite the patriarchal traditions with regard to the origin of sacred sites and the like. It is, to my mind, easier to believe that these traditions really go back, as Genesis represents them as doing, to the early settlement of Israel's ancestors in Canaan, than that the sites were taken over from the conquered Canaanites after the settlement under Joshua, and the stories subsequently invented to account for their sanctity.

But if the former view, i. e. the traditional view, is correct, then the stream of tradition must have been continuous and unbroken. Once lost sight of for a period of many generations, the sites could not easily have been rediscovered; but, allowing some of the Israelitish tribes to have occupied Canaan without a break of any length from the time of their first immigration from the east, then the existence of a continuous stream of tradition with regard to such sites is at once explained.

The same hypothesis gains, I think, some support from the early narratives of Genesis which appear to deal with the movements of tribes under the figure of individuals. It is, to my mind, difficult or impossible to suppose that these stories go back no farther than to events which happened only after the occupation of the country under Joshua. Take e. g. the story of the affray of Simeon and Levi with the men of Shechem (Gen. xxxiv), and set it alongside of the story of Judges which narrates the dealings of Abimelech with these same Shechemites (Judges ix). In the one case we have a story which is couched in the language of symbol and bears upon its face the stamp of primitive antiquity, in the other a plain straightforward history which is so true to life that it might have happened yesterday. It is hard to believe that both narratives deal with events which fell within the period of 200 years or a little more, which is the longest that can be allowed between Joshua and David. But supposing the former to be, as it professes to be, a tradition preserved from patriarchal times, the contrast in form between the two narratives can easily be understood. It is true that some of these ancient stories deal with tribes which certainly

took part in the sojourn in Egypt and the Exodus; but this, according to my theory, is as we should expect, supposing the earlier connexion between the Canaan-tribes and the Egypt-tribes to have been an historical fact, and to have been preserved among the primitive traditions of the Canaan-tribes.

Such is the evidence which leads me to believe that there were tribes bearing the name of Israel already in Canaan when the tribes which came out of Egypt made their entry under the leadership of Joshua. The fact that no tradition to this effect is preserved in the Biblical records may simply mean that the materials upon which these records are based were preserved by that part of Israel which *did* come out of Egypt at the Exodus, the southern and central tribes, especially the Joseph tribes, Ephraim, Manasseh, and Benjamin. And here we may notice the way in which these Joseph tribes connect themselves with the deliverance from Egypt in Ps. lxxx, which begins:—

‘ Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel,  
 ‘ Thou that leadest Joseph like a flock ;  
 ‘ Thou that sittest upon the cherubim, shine forth.  
 ‘ Before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh,  
 ‘ Stir up Thy might,  
 ‘ And come to save us.’

There is a further point to be noticed with regard to the tribes which occupied Kadesh-Barnea and the surrounding desert subsequently to the Exodus. It concerns the tribe of Judah.

We know that this tribe consisted, to a large extent, of North Arabian elements. The genealogy of 1 Chron. ii regards Jerahmeelites, Kenizzites, and Kenites as forming an integral part of the tribe of Judah. Jerahmeel figures as descendant of Judah and brother of Caleb the Kenizzite, and the genealogy of his descendants finishes with the statement (*v.* 55), ‘ These are the Kenites that came of Hammath, the father of the house of Rechab.’ In David’s time the Jerahmeelites and Kenites were regarded as belonging to Judah. We read in 1 Sam. xxvii 7 ff, which relates David’s stay as an outlaw with Achish, king of Gath, that David made pretence to Achish that his occasional raids were directed ‘ against the Negeb of Judah, and against the Negeb of the Jerahmeelites, and against the Negeb of the

Kenites', and Achish remarks to himself with satisfaction, 'He hath made his people Israel utterly to abhor him, therefore he shall be my servant for ever.' Again, in 1 Sam. xxx 26-31, David sends presents 'of the spoil of the enemies of Yahwe' to the Judahites of the Negeb, including the Jerahmeelites and the Kenites.

It seems to have been the case that the tribe of Judah, and probably the tribe of Simeon also, though occupying Kadesh for a length of time together with the other Israelitish tribes which acknowledged the leadership of Moses, yet did not, with them, take part in the settlement in Canaan from the east under Joshua, but entered the country by advancing northwards from Kadesh-Barnea, and making conquests in the Negeb.

This conclusion is based on the fact that there are two accounts of the conquest of Arad in the Negeb, which must almost certainly be duplicates. The first account, which is found in Num. xxi 1-3 (J E), states that, at some time during the wilderness-sojourn, the king of Arad advanced against Israel, apparently because they were encroaching upon his territory, fought against them, and took some of them prisoners. Israel thereupon vowed a vow that, if Yahwe would deliver up the Canaanites into their hand, they would place their cities under a ban (*ḥērem*), and utterly destroy every inhabitant. Success attended their arms, the vow was carried out, and the name of the district was thenceforth known as *Ḥormah*.

This narrative, which implies a northward advance into the Negeb, is at variance with the preceding narrative which apparently pictures the whole of the Israelites as turning southwards from Kadesh-Barnea, in order to compass and avoid the land of Edom. It is also difficult to understand why an immediate settlement in the conquered territory was not effected by at least a portion of the Israelites, when the whole of the Canaanites inhabiting it had been put to the sword.

The question is further complicated by the occurrence in Judges i 16, 17 of a second account of the conquest of Arad in the Negeb by the tribes of Judah and Simeon, together with the Kenites. This narrative states that 'the children of [Hobab] the Kenite, Moses' father in law, went up out of the city of palm trees (i. e. Jericho) with the children of Judah into the

wilderness of Judah, which is in the Negeb of Arad; and they went and dwelt with the Amalekites.<sup>1</sup> And Judah went with Simeon his brother, and they smote the Canaanites that inhabited Zephath, and utterly destroyed it. And the name of the city was called Hormah.'

These two accounts are obviously parallel, and cannot, as they stand, be reconciled. It is easy to supply a reason for the occurrence of the account in Judges as a duplicate of that in Numbers; namely, the view that the conquest and settlement of Canaan under Joshua was the first settlement in the land of any tribes of Israel; but, if the narrative of Judges be taken to be correct in its present position, it is not easy to divine why the narrative of Numbers should have come in at that particular place. The inference then is that the tribes of Judah and Simeon, together with the Kenites, who, as we have noticed, are pictured as united to Judah by the tie of kinship, broke off from the rest of the Israelites during, or at the close of, the stay at Kadesh-Barnea, conquered the territory of Arad, and settled down in it, afterwards advancing their conquests and settlements still further north, into the country which is known to us later on as the hill-country of Judah.

If this inference be true, it will help to explain to us a very striking fact in the later history, viz. the isolation of Judah and Simeon from the rest of the tribes.

From the Song of Deborah it is clear that an organized attempt was made on the occasion with which the poem deals to unite the tribes of Israel against the Canaanites. Ten tribes, including the tribes from the east side of Jordan, are mentioned, either for praise as having taken part in the contest, or for blame as having held aloof. Judah and Simeon alone remain unnoticed. The inference is that at that period they were so far isolated from the rest of the tribes that they were not even expected to take part in the common interests of Israel, and therefore received no call to arms. This single instance is in itself so striking that I need do no more than allude briefly in passing to the fierce rivalry which is pictured as existing between the men of Israel and the men of Judah in the days of David

<sup>1</sup> Adopting the necessary emendation ~~וְהָיָה שִׁמְעוֹן~~ ~~וְהָיָה שִׁמְעוֹן~~ in place of M. T.

(2 Sam. xix 41-43), and to the fact that the superficial union between Judah and the rest of the tribes, which was effected under Saul, David, and Solomon, was again dissolved upon easy provocation at the commencement of Rehoboam's reign.

In summary, then, we seem to discern, in the tribes which came eventually to form the nation of Israel, two divisions: (1) the tribes which entered Canaan from the east as part of the Aramaean immigration, and made the country their home without a break of any importance; and (2) the tribes which passed from Canaan into Egypt, and, after a prolonged stay there—latterly as bondmen to the Pharaohs—were led out by Moses, and occupied the oasis of Kadesh and the surrounding desert for a generation or more in close connexion with the Kenites and other North Arabian tribes. This second division of Israelites again falls into two divisions: (1) the tribe of Judah and the unimportant tribe of Simeon, which, after large amalgamation with their North Arabian associates, moved northwards from Kadesh and made conquests and settlements in the Negeb, and later on in the country which came subsequently to be known as the hill-country of Judah; and (2) the tribes which entered Canaan from the east under the leadership of Joshua, and made their conquests and settlements for the most part in Central Palestine.

I now pass on to the last question which I wish to consider before bringing together my different lines of evidence and drawing my conclusions. This concerns the origin and antiquity of the Divine Name, or, as I should prefer to say, the Divine *Title*, Yahu or Yahwe.

Evidence now shews beyond the possibility of a doubt that the title Yahu or Yahwe, so far from being peculiar to Israel, or derived by Israel from the Kenites, is of remote antiquity, and was well known to the Babylonians.

It has long been a matter of common knowledge that the king of Hamath, who was conquered by Sargon of Assyria, bears the name I-lu-bi-'di (Annals 23), and also (*ilu*) I-a-u-bi-'di (Stele i. 53; Triumphal Inscr. 33; Nimrûd Inscr. 8, without D.P. (*ilu*)). Here we seem to get an interchange between Ilu and Ya-u, just as in Hebrew the name Elnathan might inter-

change with Jehonathan. It has also been observed that the names of Philistine princes of Hezekiah's time, Zidkâ of Ashkelon and Padî of Ekron, look like abbreviated forms corresponding to Zidkiyah, Pedayah. Such cases as these, however, though they seemed to point to a use of the name Yahwe outside of the limits of Israel, stood in isolation, and no conclusions could with justice be drawn from them. More recently fresh evidence has been coming to light, and still further evidence may with confidence be expected.

The first, and to my mind the most important, piece of evidence to which I wish to call attention occurs in a Babylonian syllabary, C. T. Brit. Mus. xii, Plate 4. This syllabary gives a large number of the Babylonian equivalents to the star-ideogram  $\star\text{Y}$ , which is the ordinary sign for Divinity, and commonly denotes *ilu* 'God'. The very first equivalent given is Ya'-u. Later on we notice I-lum, i. e.  $\text{𒌷}$  'God', Bê-lum, i. e.  $\text{𒂗}$  'Lord'. There is a point in connexion with this occurrence of Ya'u which ought not to be overlooked. Among the equivalents of the ideogram we find the names of two Babylonian Deities (*ilu*) A-nu-um '(the god) Anu', and (*ilu*) EN. LIL '(the god) Bel'. Both these names, as is regularly the case in Babylonian with the proper names of deities, occur with the determinative prefix *ilu*. This, however, is not the case with Ya'-u. The inference which I draw is that Ya'-u is originally not the proper name of a particular god, but a title of Deity, just as is the case with *ilum*, *bêlum*.

We next pass to a passage of remarkable interest in the Epic of Gilgameš, where the happy insight of Mr. Ball has elucidated a great difficulty, and made an important addition to the evidence for the use of Ya'u as a divine title by the Babylonians. In the course of the narrative we read how that Gilgameš, smitten with grief at the death of his friend Eabani, and desirous of discovering whether there exists a means whereby the common fatality of humanity can be escaped, hears of a man, Nu<sup>h</sup>-Napištim by name, who has been elevated by the gods to a position among the immortals, and made to dwell afar off, as it were in the island of the blest. Desirous of learning the secret of Nu<sup>h</sup>-Napištim's good fortune, Gilgameš sets out on a voyage of discovery, and after great difficulties succeeds in reaching the land where Nu<sup>h</sup>-

Napištim dwells 'afar off at the confluence of the streams'. As Gilgameš is making stupendous efforts to bring his ship to land, Nu<sup>h</sup>-Napištim views him in the distance, and says to himself :—

Ša il-la-kam-ma ul ia-u amélu : u im-na zi-[ka-ri ul i-ši].

'He who comes (yonder) is he not a Ya-u man? and has he not the right hand of a hero?'<sup>1</sup>

Here the significance of Ya-u has hitherto baffled scholars. Jensen, in his note upon the passage, is at a loss to understand it, and hazards the rendering 'woeful man' for 'ia-u amélu'. But why the spectacle of Gilgameš's heroic efforts to manipulate his ship, which are described at length in the preceding lines, should suggest at the distance to Nu<sup>h</sup>-Napištim that he is full of woe is not evident. Can we doubt, as we view the passage in the light of the occurrence of Ya'u in the syllabary, that Mr. Ball is right in finding here the Divine name or title, and that Nu<sup>h</sup>-Napištim is styling Gilgameš a *god-man*, laying emphasis upon the fact of his superhuman character? This conclusion is borne out if we turn back to one of Gilgameš's earlier adventures, when he encounters a scorpion-man and his wife. On the approach of Gilgameš, the scorpion-man cries out to his wife,

ša il-li-kan-na-ši šir ilâni zu-mur-šu,

'He who approaches us, flesh of gods is his body,'  
and his wife answers,

šit-ta-šu ilu-ma šul-lul-ta-šu a-mê-lu-tu,

'Two-thirds of him are god, and his third part is human.'<sup>2</sup>

The earliest known occurrence of Ya-u as part of a proper name dates back as far as *cir.* B.C. 2700. This is Lipuš-Ī-a-um, the name of the daughter of Naram-Sin and granddaughter of Sargon I, a priestess of Sin.<sup>3</sup> The name would bear some such meaning as 'May Ya-u make', and may be compared with the Hebrew מַיִן 'Asayah' (2 Kings xxii 12, 14 *al.*), מַיִן 'Ya'asi'el' (1 Chron. xi 47, xxvii 21).

We next have the three proper names belonging to the period of the first Babylonian dynasty, and cited by Delitzsch in his

<sup>1</sup> Tab. x Col. iv 17. The restoration in brackets is that of Jensen in *K. B.* vi 1 p. 222.

<sup>2</sup> Tab. ix Col. ii 13-16.

<sup>3</sup> Thureau-Dangin *Comptes Rendus*, 1899, p. 348 pl. 1.

*Babel und Bibel* i p. 47. These are Ya-'a-we-ilu, Ya-we-ilu, Ya-u-um-ilu. As to Ya-u-um-ilu there can be no doubt. It is the equivalent of the Hebrew יְוֵאֵל 'Yo'el'. The sign which stands third in the first form and second in the second form might be read as *pi* or *me*, but is far more frequently used with the value *we* or *wa* in documents of Hammurabi's age; and thus there is nothing to weigh against our finding here a form of the Divine name Ya'awe or Ya'awa.

I am informed by Mr. Ball that the name Ya-ma-erah occurs in texts of the first dynasty. Its meaning must be 'Yawa is the moon'. Cf. A-bi-e-ra-ah, 'My (divine) father is the moon.' There can be no doubt that we are justified in reading Ya-ma as Ya-wa. In fact, on late tablets of the Persian period the Jewish name Gemariah is transcribed Gamar-ya-ma, and Nethaniah transcribed Natanu-ya-ma.

If, then, I am not mistaken, evidence is conclusive for the fact that the Divine name or title Ya'u or Ya'awe, Ya'awa was in use among the Babylonians from very early times.

I may now proceed to draw my conclusions from the different lines of evidence which I have brought together.

My inference is that the name Yahwe came westward into Canaan and the surrounding country in connexion with the influence of the first Babylonian dynasty, which we know to have been all-powerful in the west at the time, e. g., of Hammurabi. It is significant that Gen. xiv makes Abraham, the reputed ancestor of the Hebrews, a contemporary of Hammurabi. Biblical records represent the migration of Abraham as a movement under the influence of a higher form of religion than that which was current at the time in Babylonia. Abraham's immediate ancestors are represented as polytheists—the worshippers of gods other than Yahwe.

All this is quite likely. The fact is not without importance that Abraham is represented as moving from Ur, the southern seat of the worship of Sin the moon-god, to Harran the northern seat of the worship of the same deity. Possibly the Yahwe of Abraham was originally connected with the deity Sin, regarded as the סין or chief god. Mount Sinai, where Moses received his inspiration, must have obtained its name from the god Sin, and



was doubtless an ancient seat of the worship of that deity, being known from old times as 'the Mount of God'. Sin, in fact, gives his name to the whole district in which the mountain is situated. Here we may recall the fact that Lipuš-Ī-a-um was a priestess of the moon-god Sin, and also the occurrence of the name Ya-wa-erah, 'Yawa is the moon.' There is a very great number, perhaps a preponderance, of SIN-names in the first Dynasty Tablets. Apil-Sin was the grandfather of Hammurabi, Sinmuballiṭ his father.

I do not wish to argue from these facts that Moses thought of Yahwe as the moon-god. In the course of many centuries the characteristics of the supreme deity as conceived by His worshippers may have undergone change, and the name Sin may have dropped out of use in favour of the name Yahwe. As a matter of fact, we have noticed that, so far as the Yahwe of Moses is marked by naturalistic characteristics, they are those of a weather-God rather than an astral God.

We may observe at this point that the document J, which represents the use of the name Yahwe and His worship as *primaeval*, is usually assigned to the kingdom of Judah; and, as we have seen, the tribe of Judah was largely made up of North Arabian elements—Kenites and the like—who had preserved the cult of Yahwe uninterruptedly from the earliest times, and who may well have preserved a tradition to that effect. The document E, on the other hand, represents the name Yahwe as unknown to Israel prior to the revelation made to Moses; and, as this document appears to emanate from the Joseph-tribes, and these tribes underwent a prolonged sojourn in Egypt, involving a definite break with the past, here we may find the origin of this tradition. Yahwe was the God of their fathers indeed, but He now revealed Himself under what was, for them, a new name.

And now as to the Israelite tribes which, as we have seen reason to infer, occupied Canaan uninterruptedly from the date of their first immigration, and which had therefore long been settled in the land at the time of the entry of the desert-tribes under Joshua. It is reasonable to enquire the name of the deity whom they worshipped. The natural answer, based on the evidence which we have just been reviewing, is that their God

was the God Yahwe. It is certain, however, that for them Yahwe would not be endowed with the high ethical characteristics of the Yahwe of Moses. Having never come under the influence of the founder of Israel's ethical religion, but having lived the settled life of agriculturists in Canaan perhaps for some centuries before the entry of the worshippers of the Mosaic Yahwe, it is obvious to suppose that their religious cultus followed the natural course of development of the religion of a race of agricultural Semites. For them Yahwe would be pictured as an agricultural deity, lord of the soil and of its products, the giver of fertility to crops and cattle—in fact, as a Baal, to be worshipped with a yearly round of agricultural festivals, and with such other rites as were felt to be appropriate to a deity endowed with the characteristics of Baal or lord of the soil.

We have to picture, then, the desert-tribes of Israel as entering Canaan and meeting there with other Israelite tribes whom they recognized as kinsmen, and whom they found to be worshipping the God to whom they themselves owned allegiance—the God Yahwe. Their natural tendency would be to assimilate the form of their worship to the form of worship which they found going on around them. Here were sacred places consecrated by old traditions which attributed their sanctity to Theophanies vouchsafed by Yahwe to their common ancestors. Here was this God Yahwe blessing the soil and its produce and demanding due recognition of His favours. He was worshipped by their kinsmen under the outward symbol of an image appropriate to His special characteristics—the young bull as the type of exuberant strength and fecundity. Possibly at times He was represented in human form. Thus with the bulk of the Israelites the natural tendency would be for the Canaanite Yahwism to overshadow and supersede the Mosaic Yahwism. Yet, as we know, the Mosaic Yahwism survived and ultimately won the battle. The cause of this we have already traced to its high ethical characteristics. Let us enquire more closely into the means which were instrumental towards its triumph.

As the traveller journeys southwards from Jerusalem, he enters a region which approximates more and more closely to the desert as the hill-country of Judah slopes down towards the

arid Negeb, and the Negeb merges into the wilderness of Kadesh. Here is a country little suited in the main for agriculture, but well adapted for pastoral pursuits. The clans which occupied and settled down in it, and which afterwards went to form the kingdom of Judah, contained, as we have seen, a large infusion of North Arabian blood, in which the nomadic mode of life and the desert-conception of Yahwe were deeply inherent. The tribe of Judah was separated for the most part from its fellow tribes of Israel by the fact that for a long while there intervened between it and them a belt of hostile Amorite strongholds which the Joseph-tribes proved unable to conquer. Natural circumstances, therefore, favoured the preservation of a purer form of Yahwism in Judah from the earliest times. As a matter of fact, there is no evidence to shew that the worship of Yahwe at the sanctuary at Jerusalem was conducted otherwise than without the aid of image or other idolatrous symbol, except for occasional lapses such as occurred under Rehoboam, and, more markedly, in the great apostasy of Manasseh. Those who will may think that they find, in the Nehushtan which was destroyed in Hezekiah's reign, evidence sufficient to prove that some form of serpent-worship existed from early times in the Temple; but of these I am not one. On the other hand, I take it that such short notices from the state-annals as those which speak of King Asa as removing the images which his father had made, and deposing the queen-mother from her position 'because she had made a horrible thing for an Ashera' (1 Kings xv 12, 13), are good evidence in indication of the general level of religious cultus during the period of the Judæan monarchy.

But besides the natural characteristics of the land of Judah which favoured the preservation of the purer form of Yahwe-religion, there were, throughout the period of the Judges and the Monarchy, other influences at work which were faithful to the Mosaic Yahwism, and made for its preservation and propagation. We have noticed, in the case of the Rechabites, a whole tribe which seems to have conceived that the preservation of their nomadic form of life was bound up with their religion, and which remained, so far as evidence allows us to infer, zealous adherents of the purer form of Yahwism. There were also individuals and communities who adopted a similar form of life in connexion

with religious vows and a stricter devotion to Yahwe's service. We do not know much about the Nazirites. Samson and Samuel are perhaps the only instances which we find in Israel's history. But from the law of the Nazirite, which clearly goes back to early times, and from the casual allusion to Nazirites in Amos ii 11, 12, we may infer that they were well known as a class throughout Israel's history, and that they were devoted to the observance of a purer form of Yahwism than commonly prevailed.

Very similar in mode of life must have been the prophets, who are coupled with the Nazirites in the passage in Amos which I have just cited. For the most part, and in the earliest times, they seem to have adopted the characteristics of the nomad, living without fixed abode and clad in the hairy garment of the desert. Doubtless their manner of life favoured the tendency to ecstatic utterance which was inherent in the natural bent of their character, and the common Israelite regarded them as madmen and treated them generally with the reverence which was felt to be due to any manifestation of the supernatural. The prophets who stood as representatives of the purer form of Yahwism must always have been a numerous class, and their influence was at all times to be reckoned with. In the time of Israel's settlement in Canaan, when the tribes were constantly falling under the domination of foreign powers, it was usually some such religious enthusiast who succeeded in arousing them to common action, summoning them to battle in the name of Yahwe Şeba'oth, the God of armies, and leading them under His guidance to victory against the foe.

The conception of Yahwe as the God of battle seems to have been specially characteristic of the Mosaic Yahwe in contrast to the Canaanite conception of Yahwe. We get it in the Song of Deborah and in Ps. lxxviii, where He is pictured as starting forth from His ancient seat on Mount Sinai when leading His hosts to battle; or, again, in the ancient battle-cry which is recorded as having greeted the first movement of the sacred ark during the stages of Israel's wanderings in the desert:—

'Rise up, Yahwe, and let Thine enemies be scattered;  
And let them that hate Thee flee before Thee'

(Num. x 35 J E).

The 'hosts' to which the title refers were doubtless in historical times the hosts of Israel; though it is possible that in the earliest times there may have been reference to the God under His aspect as an astral Deity.

Such summons to the tribes to take common action in the name of Yahwe Şeba'oth would, when crowned with success, naturally result in a revival of the purer form of Yahwism, much as the Book of Judges relates.

The institution of the monarchy was, as represented in the older narrative of 1 Samuel, a movement initiated by Samuel as representative of the prophetic order, with a view to the consolidation of the tribes into a nation under the leadership of Yahwe Şeba'oth, the Yahwe of the revelation at Sinai.

I now wish to hint, as briefly as may be, at certain points in the North Palestinian stories of the Books of Kings which seem to make for my view that during the times of the dynasty of Omri there were two forms of Yahwism in evidence in the Northern kingdom—that represented by the cult of the bulls, and that of which prophets like Elijah, Elisha, and Micaiah were the exponents.

It is very generally supposed that there is a lack of consistency one with another in these narratives. For instance, 1 Kings xviii, xix represents the prophets of Yahwe as persecuted and slain by Jezebel, and as hiding for their lives; while 1 Kings xxii pictures some 400 prophets as speaking in the name of Yahwe without let or hindrance in the presence of Ahab and at his invitation. In 1 Kings xix Elijah speaks as though the apostasy from Yahwe was all but universal; but in 2 Kings x we find Jehu gathering all the adherents of the Tyrian Baal into one building, and putting them to the sword.

According to my theory, these narratives, though doubtless from different sources, yet give a self-consistent historical account of the religious circumstances of the times. The Yahwe-prophets of 1 Kings xxii clearly belong to a different class from Micaiah the son of Imlah. They cannot be thought to have belonged to the class which Jezebel used vigorous methods to extirpate (1 Kings xviii 4, xix 10-14; 2 Kings ix 7), but must have been representatives of a form of Yahwe-religion which for some

reason escaped attack during her persecution; and the reason for this escape may be assumed to have been that this form of Yahwism could tolerate the existence side by side with it of an extraneous cult, many of the characteristics of which were doubtless near akin to its own. On the other hand, the reason for Jezebel's vindictiveness against a certain section of Yahwe-worshippers must have been that these, by emphasis of Yahwe's *exclusive claim* (Exod. xx 3 E), came into sharp collision with the form of religion which she desired to naturalize. Such were those mentioned in 1 Kings xix 18, not merely an isolated prophet here and there, but a considerable body of the people, whose number is reckoned as seven thousand.

It would be a mistake, however, to picture the bulk of the people as worshippers of the Tyrian Baal by conviction. They are aptly described by Elijah as 'limping upon the two opinions', the attempt to combine two religions so incompatible as Yahwe-worship and Baal-worship being compared to the laboured gait of a man walking on two legs of unequal length: but doubtless they saw little to choose between Yahwe and Baal-Melkart, and were ready to be swayed by a signal exhibition of power such as Elijah's triumph on Mount Carmel. It was not against such occasional worshippers of Baal that Jehu's measures were directed, but against the special *clientèle* of Jezebel, doubtless priests and others engaged in the special service of the deity; and it was probably a simple matter to gather these together into one building, and thus to secure their massacre.

There is one other point to which brief allusion must be made, and that is the designation of Yahwe by the title Baal. That this was a common appellation of Yahwe in the times of Saul and David is proved by the existence of a number of proper names compounded with Baal even in the family of a professedly zealous Yahwe-worshipper such as Saul. It is easy to understand, in view of the facts which we have noticed, that such a title may well have been commonly employed even by those who laid themselves under the influence of the purer form of Yahwism. But the probability is that the prophets as a class never took kindly to the title. Such an inference we may draw from Hos. ii 16, 17:—'And it shall be in that day, saith Yahwe, that thou shalt call me *'Ishi* "my husband"; and shalt call me

no more *Baali* "my lord". For I will take away the names of the Bealim out of her mouth, and they shall no more be mentioned by their name.'

Here I must bring this over-long paper to a close. There is, however, one claim which has as yet been left unfulfilled. I trust that I have produced evidence that is not without weight in favour of the view that the religion of Moses agreed substantially with the religious standard of the moral Decalogue of Exod. xx; but I have so far failed to produce the evidence which was to argue that this Decalogue itself in its original form is to be traced back to Moses in agreement with the statement of tradition.

When once it has been shewn that it is unnecessary to bring the moral Decalogue down to the period of the eighth-century prophets, it becomes—at least to my thinking—easier to regard it as the production of a great outstanding mind like that of Moses, than to suppose that it sprang up and gained its position no one knows how or when, as the production of an entirely unknown person.

But there is positive evidence, both from Egyptian and Babylonian sources, which illustrates the influences which may have weighed on Moses' mind in the production of such a code of morals for the guidance of his people.

If he was brought up, as tradition relates, in the court of the Pharaoh, and was 'learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians', he must have possessed a good knowledge of the Egyptian Book of the Dead. In this book we get a series of forty-two statements, known as the Negative Confession, to be made by the soul of the deceased person in the underworld. Among these there are certain which bear striking resemblance to commandments in the Israelitish Decalogue.<sup>1</sup> Thus with the third commandment we may compare—

No. 38. I have not cursed the god.

No. 42. I have not thought scorn of the god who is in my city.  
With the sixth commandment compare—

No. 5. I have not slain man or woman.

No. 12. I have attacked no man.

<sup>1</sup> The translation is that of Budge in the 2nd vol. of his edition of the Book of the Dead in the series of *Books on Egypt and Chaldaea* vol. vii pp. 365 ff.

With the seventh commandment compare—

No. 19. I have not defiled the wife of a man.

No. 20. I have not committed any sin against purity.

No. 27. I have not committed acts of impurity, neither have I lain with men.

With the eighth commandment compare—

No. 2. I have not robbed with violence.

No. 4. I have not committed theft.

With the ninth commandment compare—

No. 14. I have not acted deceitfully.

No. 16. I have not pried into matters [to make mischief].

No. 17. I have not set my mouth in motion [against any man].

No. 9. I have not uttered falsehood.

No. 31. I have not judged hastily.

With the tenth commandment compare—

No. 41. I have not increased my wealth except with such things as are [justly] mine own possessions.

But there is a strong probability that Moses may have come under Babylonian influence as well as Egyptian. We have seen that Sinai was probably an old seat of the worship of the moon-god Sin, and Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, is described as the priest of Midian, i. e. doubtless the supreme interpreter of the religion of his tribe. What more likely than that Babylonian influence may have left, not merely the name of the Deity, but also some traces of cultus and morals?

Now there exists an ancient ritual formula<sup>1</sup> devised to be used by a priest when he essays to cure a man who has fallen sick. One of his duties is to find out, if possible, whether the patient has committed any sin which may account for his illness. With this purpose he asks four questions, which take the following form:—

a-na bīt tap-pi-e-šu i-te-ru-ub

‘Into the house of his brother has he entered?’

a-na aššat tap-pi-e-šu iṭ-ṭe-ḥi

‘To the wife of his brother has he approached?’

<sup>1</sup> 4R<sup>3</sup> 51 [58].



dâmê tap-pî-e-šu it-ta-bak

'The blood of his brother has he shed?'

šu-bat tap-pî-e-šu it-ta-bal

'The raiment of his brother has he purloined?'

Thus these four questions are in substance identical with the sixth, seventh, and eighth commandments of the Decalogue.

Upon these grounds I find reason to believe that tradition is correct in assigning the promulgation of the moral Decalogue to Moses. Those who would argue for a contrary opinion must first disprove the possibility of the influence of Egyptian and Babylonian thought upon the mind of Moses—a task which is not likely to prove easier as the records of these countries are studied with increasing attention by the student of the religion of Israel.

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