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kingdom, would be understood to veil from all but the initiated the intimacies of a familiar rite. But even so veiled a reference must touch, though allusively, upon food as well as upon drink: and the duplication of the Marcan utterance serves to clothe the allusion in a perfectly appropriate form.

I do not infer, as some recent German scholarship is inclined to do, that the story of the Last Supper was not, in St Luke's mind, linked closely with liturgical usage, that it was not *kultisch gedacht*. Contrariwise, I am tempted to think that we have here such a genuine trace of a *disciplina arcani* as reappears in the Fourth Gospel. One can quite readily conceive that St Luke's narrative was published under circumstances which made it inadvisable to disclose the inner meaning of Christian worship. Dr Blakiston, in the paper alluded to above, called attention to some of the contacts between the Third Gospel and the Fourth at this point. A recent study by von Harnack, dealing with Marcionite readings and their influence upon Catholic texts, has suggested others. Here, perhaps, we have one more; and the significance of these contacts offers a problem for which no one yet, so far as I know, has provided an adequate solution.<sup>1</sup>

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## THE THEOPHANIES OF GIDEON AND MANOAH.

IN the course of the criticism of the Old Testament it is often necessary to conclude that a particular narrative or element of a narrative is unhistorical, on the ground that it is contradicted by other evidence which appears to be more trustworthy. But the task still remains of considering the details, for in the effort to understand them we may often throw light upon beliefs and ideas of great value for the study of history in its widest sense. For example, if the opening chapters of Genesis are not regarded as an authentic account of the beginning of the world, we find in its stead a quantity of evidence which illumines the ideas and beliefs of the Hebrews, and what we seem to lose in 'objective' history we gain in a deeper knowledge of Hebrew life and thought. In the long run we acquire material which

<sup>1</sup> This note was written, and had left my hands, before the publication of Professor Burkitt's note on the same passage in the January number of this JOURNAL (pp. 178 ff.). Professor Burkitt holds that the 'shorter text' preserves the true Lucan reading, while the 'longer text' dates from the formation of the Church's official Canon of Four Gospels. I should prefer to say that the 'shorter' and the 'longer' texts both date from successive stages in that process, and that the earlier of these stages cannot be placed later than the first decades of the second century.

really is immensely more valuable for modern problems of the development of thought than if we were content with the view that the chapters in question must be *either* accepted *or* rejected as a whole.

The theophanies in Judges vi and xiii offer a rather more intricate illustration of the preceding contention. There are doubtless some to whom the chapters, as they stand, bring no difficulty; but there are many who, unable to accept all the details, would prefer to admit that the narratives are 'substantially' or 'essentially' authentic and trustworthy. But, as every serious student of history is aware, it is absolutely unmethodical to suppose that by eliminating the untrustworthy elements of any record the residue is to be accepted as genuinely historical.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, to suppose that criticism is influenced by bias against the supernatural or the marvellous is to obscure the issue, for many a story of some thoroughly historical personage has been embellished with mythical and entirely incredible elements, and many a story of imaginary and fictitious characters is full of incidents in every way natural and rational. None the less, the theophanies in Judges vi and xiii deserve more attention than is given them by modern commentaries; and, unless we agree that they are trustworthy accounts of certain incidents which actually occurred in the days of the judges of Ancient Israel, there is room for some discussion, however hypothetical it must necessarily be.

The accounts (*a*) of the origin of the altar Yahweh-Shālōm at Ophrah (Judges vi 11-24) and (*b*) of the events at the altar near Zorah leading to the birth of Samson (ch. xiii) contain details of much interest for the history of Hebrew religion. The former (*a*) describes the visit of a divine messenger to Gideon who prepares a meal for him. The meal becomes a sacrificial burnt-offering; the messenger touches the food with his staff, fire issues from the rock and consumes it. He disappears from sight, and Gideon, terrified at the knowledge that he had seen an angel of Yahweh, is comforted by Yahweh: 'peace (*shālōm*) be unto thee, fear not, thou shalt not die'. Hence the altar receives the name Yahweh-Shālōm; and it survived to the narrator's day, in Ophrah of the Abiezrites. In the second narrative (*b*) the childless wife of Manoah is visited by a divine messenger as she sits in the field outside Zorah. On his second visit she summons Manoah to hear his message. Manoah prepares a burnt-offering upon the rock, and it is mysteriously consumed by fire, in the flame of which the angel himself ascends into heaven. Realizing that he had seen God (Elohim)

<sup>1</sup> Cf. W. E. Collins *Study of Ecclesiastical History* p. 135: 'least of all may we neglect the fantastic or marvellous elements as untrue and accept the rest; for the evidence for one part of the story is at any rate no worse and no better than that for the other'; similarly Freeman *Historical Essays* p. 3.

Manoah is in fear of death, but his wife argues that had Yahweh desired to kill them He would not have accepted the offerings or have acted as He did. That there is a certain resemblance between these two theophanies has often been noticed, especially by Kittel who, in a monograph on 'the primitive rock-altar and its deity', drew attention both to the general nature of rock-altars (basing his remarks upon observation and excavation) and to the significance of the narratives for the history of the introduction of burnt-offerings into early Israel.<sup>1</sup> Though I have to acknowledge my indebtedness to Kittel's informing and stimulating study, I believe it can be shewn that the narratives have a deeper significance for Hebrew religion than even he has recognized in his interesting monograph.

The story of Gideon culminates in the erection of the altar Yahweh-Shālôm which is explicitly associated with his father's clan, the Abiezrites of Ophrah. There follows another story of different origin (vi 25-32), where Gideon is not a founder, but a reformer. Here his father, Joash, has an altar of Baal with an Asherah. At the command of Yahweh Gideon destroys it and builds an altar unto Yahweh, and with the wood of the Asherah offers a burnt-offering. The sequel describes how Gideon received the name Jerubbaal on that day. But the traditional interpretation is hardly adequate, and it is more probable that the name, whatever its original form—on which see Burney, p. 201—is earlier than the particular explanation. This does not involve the view that the whole story is purely aetiological; nor does it follow that it was invented in order to explain the name: no doubt it has independent elements. Nor is it likely that the incident is a later and freer amplification of the story of the altar of Yahweh-Shālôm; v. 26 implies that there was no altar to Yahweh, in contrast to v. 24, the erection of the altar Yahweh-Shālôm.

Although the two incidents have points of contact, they differ in tone and significance. If we compare carefully (*a*) vi 11-24, Gideon and Yahweh-Shālôm, with (*β*) *vv.* 25-32, the altar destroyed by Gideon-Jerubbaal, it seems that both refer to what was in the narrator's day some old-established shrine. But while the latter records an entirely new stage in the history of a sacred site, the former deals with the foundation of a new one which 'unto this day is still in Ophrah of the Abiezrites'. In *β* the ancestral altar to Baal is replaced by one which the son erects to Yahweh, and there is more than a suggestion that Baal is no real deity; whereas in *a* the altar of the Abiezrites owes itself to Gideon in consequence of the theophany. Now, while in *a* the angel of Yahweh appears unto Gideon and sits beneath the

<sup>1</sup> *Studien aus hebr. Archäologie und Religions-geschichte* (1908) pp. 97-158; see *J.T.S.* July 1908 p. 633.

sacred tree (*zāh*) which belonged to his father, in  $\beta$  the altar of Joash had by it the customary Asherah; and while in  $\alpha$  there is a rock which becomes the altar, in  $\beta$  the altar is said to be on the top of a 'stronghold' (*mā'ōz*, *v.* 26). Therefore, although it is not necessary to argue that the same spot is intended, there is nothing against their identification. If the sites are identical the narratives can be used to supplement each other: in any case, while  $\alpha$  emphasizes an entirely new development—gliding over the sacred tree which belonged to Joash—in  $\beta$ , on the other hand, the inauguration of a decisive change is emphasized, and the weight is laid upon the reformer who destroyed his father's altar to Baal and cut down the Asherah.

It should be noticed that the introductory passage, vi 1-10, is incomplete; in particular, the reproof of the prophet (*zv.* 8-10) is fragmentary. But the reproof, as Moore points out in his commentary, forms the prelude to some reform; and the Midianite raids, the misery of the people and their appeal to Yahweh are very naturally followed (in accordance with the writer's philosophy of history) by a religious development (cf. Judges ii 14 sqq.). Elsewhere (viii 27) Gideon becomes notorious for the 'Ephod' which he set up in Ophrah, quite innocently as it would seem. Accordingly we not only recognize the prominence of Gideon-Jerubbaal as the head of some religious movement or movements in the history of Ophrah, but we see something of popular religion outside the Deuteronomic ideals. Indeed, not only have we an important development in the religion of Ophrah in ch. vi, but it is by no means clear that the Yahwism of Gideon would correspond to the ideals of Deuteronomic orthodoxy. When Gideon set up an 'Ephod' to which all Israel went a whoring (viii 27), Ophrah becomes renowned for an object which was as much opposed to orthodox Yahwism as the Asherah by the side of his father's altar of Baal and as his father's tree which stood on the site of the altar of Yahweh-Shālōm. These are plain hints of a more popular cult of Yahweh which, after all, is not unexpected when one takes a long view of religion in Palestine.

Some characteristic features of the stories of Gideon recur in Judges xiii. This narrative is ostensibly a prelude to the account of the deeds of the Danite hero Samson which is followed later by the Danite migration (xvii sq.). Of special importance is the statement that Manoah's wife was barren; it implies the belief that the birth of Samson was in some way due to supernatural intervention.<sup>1</sup> It is necessary to emphasize this, for, although our narrative is silent on the

<sup>1</sup> See e. g. Gen. xxv 21, xxix 31 sq., 1 Sam. i 5, and cf. Ex. xxiii 26. The Deity can restrain birth (Gen. xvi 2, xx 18) or grant it (Gen. iv 25, xiii 16, xv 3, xvi 10, xxix 31, Ruth iv 12, 1 Sam. ii 20). This explains Gen. iv 1.

point, it is not uncommon for tradition to provide marvellous or supernatural elements in connexion with the birth of great heroes. Further, whereas the childless Hannah pours out her soul before Yahweh in Shiloh, the mother of Samson goes into the open country outside Zorah; and the course of the narrative strongly suggests that she sat by the rock-altar, the holy-place, the scene of the theophany (v. 19 sq.).<sup>1</sup> Now between Zorah and Eshtaol—they are only  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles apart—was the tomb of Manoah, where too Samson was buried (xvi 31), and it is a very tempting conjecture that this was the place whither the woman resorted, and where Yahweh's angel appeared unto her and her husband. It would be in harmony with primitive ideas that a childless wife should visit an ancestral tomb; and the psychological interest of the narrative would be immensely enhanced if the scene of the incidents was the family tomb of Manoah between Zorah and Eshtaol. If so, while the story takes the wife of Manoah to the ancestral tomb, in modern Palestine the *weli* or local saint, who is virtually the local godling, is sometimes regarded as an ancestor, his shrine is a tomb, and such shrines are often visited by childless women.

Between Zorah and Eshtaol lay Mahaneh-Dan, 'the camp of Dan'. It is directly associated with Samson, for here Yahweh's spirit first began to stir him (xiii 25). Precisely what this means is disputed. Moore remarks that 'the verse cannot be the introduction to ch. xiv; we should rather have to regard it as originally the introduction to a lost story of Samson's first exploit'. At all events Mahaneh-Dan holds the *general* position ascribed to the tomb of Manoah—the ancestral tomb which, if the above conjecture be accepted, was also associated with the incidents before the birth of Samson. On this view, then, Samson was stirred by Yahweh's spirit at the place famous for the foretelling of his birth.

A new difficulty is caused by xviii 12 which locates Mahaneh-Dan a few miles away, to the west of Kirjath-jearim. In the account of the Danite migration we are told that the men of Zorah and Eshtaol encamped in Kirjath-jearim in Judah, wherefore the place received this distinctive name. Is this explanation trustworthy? It may reasonably be urged that it is improbable that six hundred warriors starting forth for North Palestine halted after a few miles' march at the place which was thenceforth named after this incident. The name is probably older than the particular interpretation, and the explanation really seems to be due to the fact that a place containing the name Dan lay in Judah.<sup>2</sup> Whether this be so or not, at all events Kirjath-jearim lies

<sup>1</sup> Cooke (*Camb. Bible, Judges* p. 134) asks, was it at the sanctuary where the rock-altar stood?

<sup>2</sup> See *Camb. Anc. Hist.* ii 314 and n. 1.

close to the old Danite territory and both Zorah and Eshtaol are varyingly described as Danite or Judæan (Joshua xv 33, xix 41).

But the explanation of the twofold Mahaneh-Dan has yet to be sought, and another view is suggested by a study of the genealogical lists in 1 Chron. ii 50 sqq. Among the families of Calebite and allied origin who were incorporated in the tribe of Judah is the family of the Manahathites. The family falls into two divisions, the one connected with Shobal the father of Kirjath-jearim, and the other with Bethlehem, Zorites, and others. Not only are these Zorites presumably men of Zorah, but the families of Kirjath-jearim include, among others, the men of Eshtaol and the Zareathites who, in turn, are also presumably of Zorah. The lists admittedly contain corruptions and obscurities, they reflect different groupings of families and villages; but they allow the natural inference that the Manahathites were an important and extensive family associated both with Kirjath-jearim and with Eshtaol and Zorah. On these grounds I would maintain my old conjecture that Mahaneh-Dan was originally Manahath-Dan.<sup>1</sup>

What are we to understand by Manahath-Dan? Long ago Wellhausen drew attention, in what proved to be an epoch-making little study, to the relation between the Manahathites and Manoah; they are the family of Manoah, or rather Manoah is the eponymous ancestor of the family.<sup>2</sup> Manoah's tomb lay between Zorah and Eshtaol (Judges xvi 31), and this site would correspond to that of Mahaneh-Dan, or rather Manahath-Dan; and since we know from 1 Chron. ii 52, 54 that the family was associated, partly with Zorah and partly with Kirjath-jearim, it is quite intelligible that there should have been different traditions of the site, each branch of the family claiming the name and site for itself. Rival traditions of this nature are familiar, and it would seem that thanks to the lists in Chronicles the difficulty of the twofold site can be removed. In Judges xiii it is the site between Zorah and Eshtaol with which we are concerned, and, following Wellhausen, we may regard Manoah as the eponymous ancestor of a family which, later at all events, is varyingly associated with Kirjath-jearim and with Bethlehem, and is incorporated in the tribe of Judah.

The stories of the Danite hero Samson have, as their prelude, an

<sup>1</sup> See *Encyc. Bib. s. v.*; the conjecture is accepted by G. A. Cooke *Judges (Camb. Bible)* p. 138, but not by Burney, p. 353. Note that the form Manahath-Dan could be vocalized to read 'resting-place[s] of Dan' (*mēnūhath* [or *-ōth*]; cf. Jer. li 59, Num. x 33). In 1 Chron. ii 52 the name is actually *Mēnūhōth*, which the A.V. identifies with the form in *v.* 54. The difference involved in the conjecture is therefore very insignificant.

<sup>2</sup> Wellhausen *De Gentibus* (1870); cf. *Comp. Hex.* p. 231; Moore *Judges* p. 316; E. Meyer *Die Israeliten u. ihre Nachbarstämme* pp. 340, 402, 527.

account of his birth which hangs around the family of Manoah, i. e. Manahath. The general character of the stories of the lusty giant combines with other features to suggest that he was not originally connected with Manoah, though it need not be doubted that his Danite or Manahathite parentage was an accepted fact in the narrator's time.<sup>1</sup> There is a tendency for the stories of the birth of all heroes to arise after their deeds have made them famous, and therefore we are justified in regarding ch. xiii as relatively later than the chapters that follow.<sup>2</sup> This may account for the manner in which the narratives of the theophany and of the birth of the hero are combined, with the result that each is now more or less imperfect.

In its present form ch. xiii leads up to the birth of Samson; but the scene at the rock-altar is no less a centre of interest, and the circumstances of the theophany suggest that the altar was much more famous than the narrative actually relates. If, as I have conjectured, the scene is the Manahathite tomb—the burial-place of the eponym Manoah—the narrative recalls the story of the family sanctuary at Ophrah. The evidence does not enable us to determine whether the writer regarded the rock (xiii 19), which is an altar (*v.* 20), as an old shrine, or whether the rock became an altar on the occasion of the burnt-offering. In the story of the inauguration of the altar of Yahweh-Shālōm the explicit reference to the tree (vi 11) suggests that the place had already been sacred—hence a likely place for a theophany; and it is possible that here, too, there lies behind the original story the inauguration of a holy place, of obvious importance to the Manahathites.<sup>3</sup> On the analogy of Judges vi it might be surmised that the theophany was followed by a naming of the altar, corresponding to the Yahweh-Shālōm in the story of Gideon.<sup>4</sup>

The light the narratives throw—as they stand—upon Hebrew religion is especially welcome. We note, in the first place, that Gideon prepares an ordinary meal for his visitor: the visitation finds

<sup>1</sup> That is to say, Samson was not primarily an exclusively Danite figure. Similarly Esau-Usos was not primarily an exclusively Edomite or Phoenician hero or deity. To the prominence given to this Manahathite and more or less Calebite figure corresponds that of Othniel the Kenizzite in Judges iii.

<sup>2</sup> For the secondary character of ch. xiii see Moore, p. 314 sq., Meyer, p. 527, Cooke, p. 128, Burney, p. 337 sq. The account of Samuel's birth and consecration is similarly of secondary origin; see Driver *Lit. of Old Test.* 174.

<sup>3</sup> For Kittel's argument that the story marks a development in the ideas of sacrifice see Cooke, p. 136.

<sup>4</sup> The enquiry after the name of the messenger, the reply that it is 'wonderful', and the reference to the 'wondrous' deed in *v.* 19 (LXX A. and Vulg. read 'unto Yahweh who doeth wondrously') suggest that the altar received some such name as 'Yahweh doeth wondrously'. Cf. the name Pelaiah (פֶּלְאִיָּהּ פֶּלְאִיָּהּ).



a parallel in the appearance of Yahweh to Abraham at the oaks of Mamre (Gen. xviii 4-8). But Manoah's proposal to prepare a kid is rejected; and while Gideon's meal becomes a burnt-offering, consumed by fire, Manoah is told that a burnt-offering must be made to Yahweh. There is no feast; the very suggestion of a meal is repelled, and there seems to be an evident advance in the religious theory. Again, in both chh. vi and xiii we meet with the widely-distributed belief that it is death to see a divine being. But there is a very noteworthy difference; for while Gideon's fears are allayed by Yahweh (vi 23), the terror of Manoah is stilled by the calm reasoning of his wife. In the former we have the popular religious idea with all its *naïveté*, whereas in the latter we move on another and more rational plane. A relatively 'primitive' phase in the stories of Gideon is the demand for a sign. How could Gideon trust Yahweh? how could he be assured that Yahweh would save Israel by his hand? The signs that followed are a guarantee (vi 17, 36 sqq.).<sup>1</sup> The insistence is characteristic of the more popular religion and stands in contrast to the distinctively Deuteronomic standpoint which forbids man to 'tempt' his God. In common with the ephod and other features it emphasizes the popular and non-Deuteronomic spirit of the narrative.

Difficult questions are raised by the references to the divine messengers. In the story of Gideon the angel (*mal'āk*) of Yahweh is not recognized until the meal has been consumed by fire—even to see this visitor face to face was death (vi 22). In the story of Manoah the visitor is an inspired man, like a messenger or angel of Elohim or—with most critics—he is a veritable *Elohim*, i. e. a supernatural being (xiii 6). He is sent by Yahweh (v. 8), but he is not recognized as a veritable angel of Yahweh (v. 16); only after he had mysteriously disappeared in the altar-fire does Manoah realize that he had seen God or a god (v. 22, cf. vi 22). Thus the Deity may have a human representative, or an inspired or holy man may be regarded as no other than the Deity; there are, in fact, degrees of divinity. We move in a realm of ideas familiar to students of comparative religion, and it remains to emphasize the fact that these stories of Gideon and Manoah definitely associate the inauguration of the holy places with human beings who prove to be deities.

We have seen that the story of Gideon and the altar of Yahweh-Shālōm purports to describe the inauguration of a sacred place in connexion with a burnt-offering. In the story of Manoah we have found reason to suppose that there are two main elements: the one that

<sup>1</sup> In v. 16 LXX reads 'And he said, the Lord will be with thee'. In v. 17 the demand for a sign, though a mark of 'popular' religion, is hardly original (similarly Burney) because it conflicts with v. 21 (the unexpected sign) and v. 22 (see above).

predominates is concerned with the childless wife of Manoah, her visit to a place which we have identified with an ancestral tomb, and the birth of the Danite hero Samson. The other refers to the burnt-offering to Yahweh, and seems to culminate in the theophany. Now accounts of theophanies serve to explain why such and such a place became sacred—so notably in the patriarchal narratives; and since the story of Gideon explicitly describes the origin of the altar of Yahweh-Shālôm, it is a plausible conjecture that the mutilated reference to the altar of Manoah belonged to some tradition which in turn explained its inauguration. There are, then, these two features to observe: (1) the association of the ancestral shrines of Ophrah of the Abiezrites and of the family of Manoah (Manahath) with a theophany and with burnt-sacrifices, and (2) the visit of the childless wife of Manoah, i. e. the wife of the eponym of the family.

Now it is noteworthy that on the occasion of the burnt-offering Gideon's visitor touches it with a staff, fire came out of the rock, consumed the meal, and the angel mysteriously departed out of his sight (vi 21). In the case of Manoah the offering is apparently kindled in a natural manner, but the angel went up in the flame of the altar (xiii 20). This remarkable statement may, like the ascent of Elijah (2 Kings ii), lie outside rational discussion. On the other hand, a suggestion may be hazarded which is in harmony with respectable evidence. The ascent of the angel in the flame recalls Judges xx 40, where the men of Gibeah saw the whole city going up heavenwards—the holocaust of their city (כליל העיר). From a primitive point of view, if, where was once a city, we see burning ruins and a pillar of smoke, might it not be said that the city was going up in the flame? If so, does the ascent of the angel mean that he was burned on the altar, and as a sacrificial offering? If the episode has any meaning in accordance with primitive religion, we may hazard the conjecture that Palestinian altars were scenes of human sacrifice, especially on the occasion of a renovation or inauguration of an altar.

It must be remembered, in the first place, that we are dealing with accounts—or traditions—of past events, and consequently we have to reckon with the characteristics of popular literature.<sup>1</sup> We have not merely to consider the apparently obvious meaning of our data, we have also to enquire what they represent or reflect. Second, we are dealing with local shrines, and must bear in mind that efforts were made to reform them, to render them orthodox and legitimate. They were not so harmless as they usually appear in our narratives; and the testimony of prophets and other reformers who denounce the local

<sup>1</sup> Gunkel's studies of the patriarchal stories afford good examples of what can be done in the analysis of such literature.

shrines cannot in any case be set on one side. Third, there are interesting indications in other narratives of the development of ideas. Thus the stone at Bethel was the seat of a supernatural presence; the editor has preserved in Gen. xxviii 18 sqq. traces of the older cruder ideas, although he doubtless did not share them. Again, the account of the visit of Yahweh to Abraham at Mamre retains traces of a tradition quite opposed to a strict monotheism—three visitors are mentioned, of whom Yahweh is one (Gen. xviii 1 sq., 16). In Gen. xxxi 53 the state of the text suggests that an attempt has been made to identify the God of Abraham and the God of Nahor who were originally distinct. The story of the trans-Jordanic altar *Ed* in Joshua xxii has been reshaped to render harmless what was opposed to the ideal of a single sanctuary. Further, the papyri of Elephantine are proof that Jews of the fifth century B.C. in Upper Egypt, though in touch with their native land, recognized a holy triad at the head of which stood Yahu (Yahweh). In fact, not to delay further, there are indications in the Old Testament, as also in the results of excavation, which prove that, apart from the characteristically spiritual religion of Israel, there were ideas and practices which closely associate Hebrew religion with that of the neighbouring lands, and amply justify the denunciations of the prophets.

Although we do not know the details of the local cults, the utterances of prophets and the account of the Deuteronomic reforming movements combine with portions of the 'Mosaic' law to present a frankly unpleasing picture, one however which only throws into stronger relief the value of these ideals and the supreme part played by the faithful in Israel.<sup>1</sup> The task of reconstructing this older popular religion is a necessary one, though naturally it is beset with difficulties.

Now, at Mizpah in Gilead, the home of Jephthah, the tradition of a human sacrifice prevailed. Yet the cult was that of Yahweh. When Jephthah makes his vow 'before Yahweh' (xi 11) we may naturally infer (cf. Moore and Cooke) that there was a stela, altar or pillar, the abode or the symbol of the God. His solemn vow to make a burnt-offering (v. 31) has only one meaning in the narrative. The story draws a veil over the last tragedy; but the whole body of opinion—apart from some apologetic and somewhat rationalizing writers (on whom see Moore, p. 304 sq.)—has tended to recognize that the father offered up his daughter in the flames. The grim act was by no means unique. The cry of the prophet Micah (vi 7) can only mean that Yahweh does not require the firstborn; and the significance of the

<sup>1</sup> One is coming to realize the truth of Robertson Smith's remarks (in 1877) on the passion, horror, sensuality, and hideousness of old Semitic heathenism; see his *Lectures and Essays* p. 425 (ed. by J. S. Black and Chrystal).

offering of Isaac lies in the difference between Abraham's readiness to make the burnt-offering ('now I know that thou art one that fears God') and the sequel which rejects the human victim (Gen. xxii). Mizpah thus becomes the scene of an annual mourning for Jephthah's daughter, and the narrator is informing his readers that the sacred place was famous for a ceremonial lamentation which originated long before, when Jephthah offered up his daughter as a burnt-offering to fulfil a vow.

It will be noticed that while Mizpah is associated with the hero Jephthah, Ophrah is Abiezrite, and the altar of Manoah (Manahath-Dan) likewise belongs to a family. Another example of family cult is furnished by the man Micah (Judges xvii sq.), and in 1 Sam. xx 6, 29 we have a reference to the clan-sacrifice of David's father. These family cults are of very considerable interest, and the story of Gideon, taken with that of Abimelech and the b'ne Hamor of Shechem, throws light upon prominent ruling families, their rivalries and efforts to extend their power. Instead of tribal divisions an aristocratic régime is presented to us; and it is only to be expected that the religious organization fluctuated *pari passu* with the political. The accounts of Eli, Samuel, and their sons shew how secular and ecclesiastical rights could be combined; and from other evidence we can understand that just as the old oriental kings were wont to be the nominal or real heads of the national religion, so in the cities and local areas secular and religious duties were interrelated. When there was some coherent central government the secular and religious organizations throughout were coordinated; failing this, the local rulers enjoyed greater powers. The period represented in the book of Judges would essentially be one when government and religion would tend to be local.

Even at the present day the local *weli* or saint is more prominent in the religion of the peasant than the Allah of the government. Consequently these local rulers in Judges, and these family or district shrines, would have a profounder significance for the people than appears on the surface of the narratives. Jephthah and Mizpah, Gideon and Ophrah, the shrine of Manoah—these come before us as the relics of memories of past history and religion. There is an air of objectivity and remoteness in the records, we contrast the restrained allusions to Gideon's ephod and Jephthah's sacrifice with the noisy vintage festival of the men of Shechem (ix 26 sq.). We have to read Robertson Smith's *Religion of the Semites* or Sir James Frazer's *Golden Bough* in order to give some reality to our conceptions of the local shrines and the denunciations of the prophets. The Hebrews were an agricultural people, and readers of those works will know to what lengths nature-worship can go where life depends upon the gifts of the soil.

To this we must add that the great local heroes, whether historical or legendary—Gideon, Jephthah, and the eponymous Manoah—hold a position in popular tradition not unlike that assumed by the patriarchs on the one hand, and by the modern *welis* or saints on the other. They were the heroes, leaders, and saints of the past.

While in Judges there are local figures, associated with the traditions of districts and ruling families, and prominent in traditions of religious importance, we have in the modern *welis* revered and sacred beings who in not a few cases are reputed heroes of stirring religious and military successes in the past. In popular religion a Gideon would easily become the local semi-divine hero and defender of the faith; and conversely, the local supernatural being is readily 'euhemerized', and becomes the centre of secular tradition. So, whereas in an earlier paragraph the emphasis was laid upon the relation between local government and local cult, here we have to raise the question whether the old local leaders and families may not find parallels in the modern local *welis*.

Agricultural life, local heroes, leading families, and the general characteristics of local religion and of religion in agricultural societies afford suggestive hints. The story of the death of Jephthah's daughter is now associated with a father's fulfilment of a vow. But the connexion between Jephthah's victory and the yearly ceremonial mourning is hardly an original feature (see e.g. Burney, p. 332). Modern writers do not doubt that 'Jephthah's sacrifice was an actual incident in history'; on the other hand, the yearly festival commemorating the fate of the daughter has another and remoter origin, 'it is not unlikely that the incident was associated in the course of time with a primitive myth; for there are traces elsewhere of human sacrifices being connected with an annual mourning for the death of a god' (Cooke, p. 124 sq.). In any case we may recognize a ceremonial mourning for a sacrificed virgin. The fundamental fact is the annual ceremony as apart from the incident which is assumed to have been the origin of the sacrifice.

The name Jephthah is significant. It means '[he] opens', and is an abbreviated form of Iphtah-el (so R.V. יִפְתָּח־אֵל) a place in north Palestine (Joshua xix 14, 27). The meaning is obviously 'El opens the womb' (see Nöldeke, *Encyc. Bib.* art. 'Names', § 61), and the fuller name finds a parallel in others which describe the attribute of a particular El as *numen* (e.g. Irpeel, El heals). A *numen* with such a name as Iphtah-el would very naturally be visited by barren women; but to obtain children women did not necessarily resort to supernatural beings with such specialized functions. That is to say, although the name Iphtah-el indicates a *numen* who granted child-birth, such

powers were often attributed to others. Consequently, the story of Manoah's wife does not necessarily presuppose the existence of a specific child-granting *numen* or one with the distinctive name Iphtah-el; although, on the other hand, the name Iphtah-el is a valuable example of the recognition of a being with a specific function. So too, if at Eshtaol and Eshtemoa the *numen* lets himself be 'asked', or 'heard', as the late Prof. Burney argued, we naturally understand that other gods could be approached, whatever attribute their name involved.

It is curious that a Jephthah should be the father of a sacrificed virgin, that the hero of Mizpah should have a name suggestive of a child-granting *numen*. If there was a local Iphtah-el with rites of human sacrifice, and if he became euhemerized as the traditional deliverer of Gilead from the Ammonites, a possible explanation lies at hand.

We are brought to some of the more gruesome and intricate enquiries in the comparative study of religions. Did space permit it would be proper at this point to notice some common and deep-rooted ideas of birth and of the supernatural among rudimentary and early peoples. It must suffice to refer, all too briefly, to some of the leading ideas. There is a common belief in birth by 'supernatural' means, and in ancestors of supernatural origin. There is a common belief in re-incarnation; the dead ancestors can be born again in the living. The belief in 'sacred' or 'holy' men is widespread; they stand in some especially close relationship to the supernatural world, and have exceptional powers. In the East shrines—to which such men would also resort—are frequently visited by barren women in order to obtain offspring. Dead children have been buried in convenient spots so that they might readily be born again; men have been killed in order that their 'soul' or 'spirit' might re-enter a woman and be reborn,<sup>1</sup> or they have been slain merely to convey messages to the supernatural realm.<sup>2</sup> They have been put to death in order that they might become protective spirits, or that they might, as it were, strengthen the realm of the supernatural. The supernatural beings will be provided with wives or with husbands; and victims will be sacrificed in the belief that the supernatural power or powers will be appropriately assisted, increased, or enriched.

According to primitive ideas human sacrifice could establish or strengthen the supernatural powers associated with a shrine. The sacrifice of Jephthah's virgin daughter at Mizpah, and the yearly

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Sir James Frazer *Adonis* 3rd ed. i 93 sq.

<sup>2</sup> Frazer *Spirits of the Corn and of the Wild* i 237 sq. (cf. ii 188); for the belief that the dying can convey gifts to those already dead see Estlin Carpenter *Comparative Religion* p. 228.

festival, may then reflect a grisly sacrifice associated with the El that 'opens'—a tradition which has later become what purports to be an historical episode in the life of a great Gileadite leader. The shrine visited by Manoah's wife was not necessarily of the same type; but the stories of the shrines of Manoah and Gideon none the less point to some inaugural sacrifice. Now inaugural sacrifices of some sort are usual. In fact popular opinion in Palestine still requires that (animal) blood shall be shed at the inauguration of every important building, at the breaking-up of unoccupied land, or at the opening of a new well. The inveterate sentiment is summed up in the words of a modern native: 'every house must have its death, either man, woman, child, or animal'. The sacrifice, usually understood to be a propitiation to the *numen* of the place, serves also, in appropriate cases, to establish an intimate link between the people and the *numen*, and not least of all is supposed to influence the supernatural power on behalf of the people.

The recognition that we have *subjective* and not *objective* history in the book of Judges is indispensable for any critical study. Dealing with traditions we are obliged to take notice of the way in which the past is viewed and reproduced. The nature of 'survivals' must be clearly recognized. Popular tradition in parts of Palestine still asserts that it is unlucky to let one's shadow fall across a foundation-stone. Why? For an explanation we must go back to the days when foundation sacrifices were not unknown, and when, as the excavations have revealed, human victims were sometimes employed. When a sacrifice was needed some passing stranger might be seized—for the primitive mind is ready to believe that the chance wayfarer who comes on the spot at the crucial moment is no chance passer-by: like the ram, seen by Abraham at the moment of sacrifice, the victim is divinely provided. Even in Europe the peasantry tell—or used to tell—strange tales of the danger of passing *this* well or *that* tree; traditions of mysterious disappearances, of grim sacrifices, are handed down and become vague fears, the origin of which is forgotten, until comparative study interprets folk-lore in the light of sporadic custom and savage rite. Hence when tradition told that at Manoah's altar a sacred being ascended to heaven in the flame, it may be legitimate to 'rationalize' the incident by resort to comparative religion and the vicissitudes of tradition, and conjecture that a human sacrifice underlies the disappearance of the angel on the occasion of the burnt-offerings in Judges vi and xiii.

Comparative religion freely suggests ingenious explanations and interpretations, but does not of itself prove that any particular application must necessarily be correct. The effort has been made in these pages to outline a series of interpretations which seem to the present writer

highly probable, though of course they cannot be proved. At least they are in harmony with the general run of ancient thought, and they afford a psychologically rational explanation—if one is to be attempted. It may be objected that the suggestions presuppose an excessive complexity in the tradition. But it must be pointed out that the fusion and development of motives within a single narrative is what we must expect to find in popular tradition and in material which has been edited and re-edited. An example is furnished by the story of Jacob at Penuel in Gen. xxxi 24–32. Here we have, in a few verses, a *popular* story. It has not been seriously reshaped like some of the stories in Judges, yet a discussion of it could easily be extended into a work scarcely less encyclopaedic than *The Golden Bough* itself. One has only to consider its constituent elements: (1) the wrestling with a supernatural being; (2) the vulnerable spot; (3) the conflict in the dark; (4) Jacob's victory over the supernatural being (cf. Hosea xii 4); (5) the demand for a blessing; (6) the name and its mystery; (7) the significance of the change of name; (8) the danger of seeing a Deity; and (9) the refusal to eat a certain part of the body—here, not to speak of the problems of aetiological tradition, we have an illuminating example of a simple narrative which becomes excessively complex as we analyse each element, but which again becomes simple when, fortified with some knowledge of primitive thought, we turn to it and view it from a newer standpoint.

In conclusion, it will be useful to summarize the interpretations, inferences, and conjectures which arise in the attempt to go behind Judges vi and xiii. (1) The two stories of Gideon-Jerubbaal refer to religious vicissitudes in the family cult at Ophrah of the Abiezrites. There are clear indications of Baalism and of popular Yahwism opposed to Deuteronomic ideals. (2) Manoah's childless wife was visited by a supernatural being outside Zorah, at an altar, at the tomb of Manoah. The scene is Mahaneh-Dan, or rather Manahath-Dan, *a*, if not *the*, Manahathite sacred place, Manoah being the eponymous ancestor of the family. (3) The account of the birth of Samson, which is now a natural prelude to the stories of the Danite hero, has incorporated a tradition, formerly distinct, of the theophany at the Manahathite altar; this tradition may be compared with the story of the altar of Yahweh-Shālôm at Ophrah, and it is possible that the former once recounted, like the latter, the inauguration of the sacred place. (4) Traditions of theophanies legitimize holy places, and in each of these stories a messenger proves to be a supernatural being—if not the god himself. (5) On several grounds it is seen that the stories are not in their original form, and the problem of determining what facts they reflect involves resort to comparative religion and to the



vicissitudes of popular tradition. (6) Not only would a supernatural visitation legitimize a site, but a deliberate sacrifice, in particular a human sacrifice, would serve to give it a special sanctity. (7) The yearly festival commemorating the sacrifice of Jephthah's daughter is to be severed from the story of the father's vow, which now explains it; and the name Jephthah ('he opens'), and the fuller North Palestinian form Iphtah-el point to a deity that granted child-birth. (8) The visit of childless women to holy places is a well-known custom in the East. Sometimes 'sacred' men rank as the representatives of the supernatural being or beings; again, at a shrine like that discovered at Gezer, the numerous new-born children buried underneath the floor would, in primitive thought, make it an appropriate place of pilgrimage; and, finally, the story of Jephthah at Mizpah suggests the sacrifice of human life in order to endow a shrine with a specific function. (9) Admittedly the narratives under discussion have undergone much reshaping; they reflect early traditions, and different elements have been fused together—the story of Jacob's wrestling being a good illustration of the complexity that has resulted elsewhere under similar circumstances. The stories of family and ancestral shrines—not like those in Genesis of national significance—preserve remains of early religion, and fair parallels could be furnished by the stories of modern wells, saints and other local ancestral figures.

STANLEY A. COOK.

### ST AUGUSTINE AS A FORERUNNER OF MEDIÆVAL HYMNOLOGY.

WE are apt to think of a riming, accentual Latin hymn as something typically mediæval, and no doubt it was in the Middle Ages that the technique of such elaborate masterpieces as the *Stabat Mater* and the *Dies Irae* was perfected. That such a composition could be and was produced in or about the year A.D. 393 is of course a fact known to historians of Latin literature (cf. for instance Schantz *Gesch. der röm. Literatur* iv par. 1183), but not, I think, sufficiently regarded by those who are interested in the style of the hymns sung by Christian congregations in the past. It is my purpose, therefore, briefly to discuss, from the formal point of view, the one venture of St Augustine as a hymn-writer, the *Psalmus contra partem Donati*. I concern myself only with the externals of this curious work, because its contents are not specially interesting, being simply a presentation, in popular form, of the main arguments of the Catholic party against the Donatists, which are sufficiently