

5-1-1966

An Inquiry into the Religious Experience of the Godly Hebrew in the Old Testament

Dean C. Gonnerman

Recommended Citation

Gonnerman, Dean C., "An Inquiry into the Religious Experience of the Godly Hebrew in the Old Testament" (1966). *Western Evangelical Seminary Theses*. 251.
https://digitalcommons.georgefox.edu/wes_theses/251

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Western Evangelical Seminary at Digital Commons @ George Fox University. It has been accepted for inclusion in Western Evangelical Seminary Theses by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ George Fox University. For more information, please contact arolfe@georgefox.edu.

APPROVED BY

Major Professor: Bern M. Warren

Co-operative Reader: Nobel V. Sack

35973

AN INQUIRY INTO THE RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE OF THE
GODLY HEBREW IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

A Thesis
Presented to
the Faculty of
Western Evangelical Seminary

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Bachelor of Divinity

by
Dean C. Gonnerman

May 1966

PORTLAND CENTER LIBRARY
GEORGE FOX UNIVERSITY
PORTLAND, OR. 97223

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The writer of this thesis is deeply indebted to a number of people for their assistance and encouragement. Their contributions to this study were greatly appreciated. First, Mr. Robert D. Bennett gave counsel and guidance in the area of psychology. The writer's knowledge in this field was limited and the advice received was very needful. Second, Dr. Bern M. Warren, head of the Department of Biblical Studies at Western Evangelical Seminary, offered valuable counsel concerning the direction of this study. His scholarly assistance was invaluable. Third, Mrs. Eunice Gonnerman, the writer's wife, was a constant encouragement. Her grasp of the English language and ability as a typist greatly enhanced the quality of this study.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. INTRODUCTION	1
Statement of the Problem	1
Justification of the Problem	1
Limitations of the Problem	3
Definitions of Terms	3
"Godly Hebrew worshipper"	3
English Bible	4
Method of Procedure	4
II. PSYCHOLOGY OF RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE	6
Introduction	6
The Human Aspect of Religious Experience	7
The Divine Aspect of Religious Experience	9
Summarized Formula	11
III. THE MOSAIC WRITINGS AS A BASIS OF HEBREW WORSHIP . . .	12
Introduction	12
The Mosaic Covenant	13
The Covenant Established	13
The Idea of Corporate Personality	14
Individual Faith	16

CHAPTER	PAGE
Hebrew Worship	20
The Origin of the Sacrificial System	20
Symbolic and Typical Meanings of Sacrifices	21
The Types of Sacrifices and Offerings	23
The burnt offering	24
The meal or meat offering	25
The peace offering	25
The sin offering	26
The trespass offering	27
The Fundamental Purpose of the Sacrificial System	28
Devotion	28
Substitution	29
Fellowship	30
Appeasement	31
Sacred Observances and Places	32
Holy Places	32
Day of Atonement	33
The Weekly Sabbath	33
The Passover	33
The Feast of Pentecost	34
The Feast of Trumpets	35

CHAPTER	PAGE
The Feast of Tabernacles	35
Circumcision	36
Its Origin	36
Its Purpose	37
The Priesthood	38
The Priests and Levites	39
The Function of the Priesthood	39
The Holiness of the Priesthood	41
The Individual's Confrontation with God	43
The Law	45
Definition of the Law	46
The Purpose of the Law	46
The Law and Individual Responsibility	50
The Law and Grace	51
Paul's View of the Law	53
Modes of Revelation	55
Theophanies	55
A Divinely-Appointed Man	56
The Divine Spirit	57
The Law	58
Expressions of Spiritual Relationship	58
Faith	58

CHAPTER	PAGE
Prayers	60
Vows	61
Summary	61
IV. SUBJECTIVISM IN THE POETIC AND WISDOM BOOKS	66
Introduction	66
The Religious Experience of Job	66
The problem of the book of Job	66
The moral life of Job	67
The individual nature of blessing and suffering	69
The nature of Job's religious experience	70
God's communion with Job	71
The Psalms	72
Introduction	72
The concept of a changed heart	74
Expressions of exultation and joy	76
Trust	77
Temple worship	79
Love of God's law	80
Communion with God	81
Prayer	81
Vows	82

CHAPTER	PAGE
Praise	83
Forgiveness of sins	83
Other Wisdom Literature	84
Personal morality in Proverbs	85
Ecclesiastes	86
Summary	87
V. THE HISTORIC AND PROPHETIC LITERATURE	90
Introduction	90
The Prophetic Consciousness	90
God's unfolding revelation	90
The nature of the prophetic experience	91
The New Individualism	96
The emergence of the individual	96
Reasons for the elevation of the individual	97
The degree of individual experience	99
Personal Experiences	100
David	101
Isaiah	103
Ezekiel	104
Jeremiah	106
Daniel	107

CHAPTER	PAGE
The Concept of a Changed Heart	109
A moral change	109
Sanctification	111
The nature of heart-change	112
Evidences of heart-change	113
The Law	115
Moral quality of the law	115
Prophetic criticism of the law	116
Modes of Revelation	117
The law	117
Prayers	118
Visions	118
Theophanies	119
The Divine Spirit	120
Summary	121
VI. SYNTHESIS OF RESEARCH	124
Introduction	124
The Mosaic Writings	124
The covenant relationship	124
Symbolic and typical meanings of worship	125
The mediatorial role of the priests	125

CHAPTER	PAGE
The moral purpose of the law	125
The channels of God's revelation	126
Correlation of principles	126
The Poetic and Wisdom Writings	127
Individual experience divorced from external circumstances	127
Personal morality	127
Subjective religious experience	128
Wholehearted devotion to God	128
Correlation of principles	128
The Historic and Prophetic Writings	129
The prominence of the individual	129
Consciousness of God's immediate presence	129
Increased activity of the Spirit	129
Internal religion	130
Correlation of principles	130
VII. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS	132
Summary	132
Conclusions	134
Suggestions for Further Study	136
BIBLIOGRAPHY	137

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

I. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The problem under consideration was an inquiry into the nature of the religious experience of the Godly Hebrew in the Old Testament. The pious Hebrew worshipped God according to the dictates of his heart and in keeping with the forms of worship set forth under the Levitical system. It was the nature of this worship experience which was under consideration. The fundamental psychological elements of religious experience were examined as criteria for recognizing and analyzing the essentials of a valid spiritual consciousness as it appeared in the Old Testament. The Biblical study of the problem centered in three general areas: (1) to study the forms of worship set forth in the Mosaic writings in order to determine the response indicated in the life of the Godly Hebrew; (2) to analyze the subjective nature of the religious experiences recorded in the poetic and wisdom writings and (3) to investigate the progressive depth of religious experience as found in the historic and prophetic writings.

II. JUSTIFICATION OF THE PROBLEM

The interpretation of the Hebrew worshipper's experience in the

Old Testament has been cloaked in vagueness. Because of the obscurity surrounding this experience, very little has been written concerning it in religious literature. A survey of religious literature revealed that many writers made only brief and vague references to this experience. A wide range of interpretation was offered. On one end of the gamut, the following interpretation was proposed: God dealt with a nation and the individual had little or no personal relationship with Him. On the other end, the individual tenaciously strived to observe the demands of the law, and God angrily dealt with him as a disobedient slave. Between these two extremes, other inadequate interpretations were put forth. Generally, there was offered very little clarity and unity of interpretation.

The Old Testament Scriptures are foundational to the New Testament. A Christian's usage and evaluation of the Old Testament will depend upon his concept of God as revealed therein. The concept of God held by some Christians is that He is revealed in the Old Testament as wrathful and impersonal, while in the New Testament He is revealed as loving and personal. If God is unchanging, as the Scriptures declare, His saving acts to men would reveal unity throughout history. Therefore, it was felt that a full and accurate presentation of the experiential relationship between God and man in the Old Testament was necessary.

III. LIMITATIONS OF THE PROBLEM

A limited historical period was covered in this study. The investigation was concerned with the relationship of the Godly Hebrew to God as he worshipped Him in accordance with the Levitical system. Therefore, the books of Exodus through Malachi formed the basis of this study. During this entire period, the Levitical system was the basis of man's worship experience.

Another recognized limitation was with reference to the religious experiences recorded in the above-cited Scriptures. These Old Testament books were written by divinely-appointed holy men. These men were endued by God for the performance of a particular mission. Therefore, most of the personal encounters with God recorded in the Scriptures studied were the experiences of God's select men. In most cases, these sacred writers were chosen of God for some divinely-appointed office or duty. Their experiences may not have been representative of those of a typical worshipper of God. This limitation was recognized, and the weight of argument was not based upon these recorded experiences.

IV. DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

"Godly Hebrew worshipper." This term was used to denote the diligent worshipper of God living under the Old Covenant. The word "Hebrew" referred to an individual from the group of people who were the descendants

of Abraham and with whom God entered into a covenant. He was referred to as "Godly" because he was a worshipper of Jehovah.

English Bible. The English Bible used in this study was the American Standard Version, published in New York in 1901.

V. METHOD OF PROCEDURE

The English Bible was the primary source used in this study. The Septuagint was used for clarification of certain texts. The commentary of scholars was used to amplify or clarify the primary findings.

Chapter II was devoted to laying a brief psychological basis for recognizing and evaluating the essential elements of religious experience. The basic ingredients which constitute a valid religious experience were defined as criteria for discovering personal religious experiences recorded in the Scriptures.

Chapter III contained an investigation of the Mosaic writings which laid the foundation of Hebrew worship. The Levitical system was studied primarily to determine the purpose of the ceremonial acts of worship. An attempt was made to discover the spiritual response which resulted in the life of the Godly Hebrew when he diligently performed these acts of worship. Special attention was directed to the symbolic meanings of the divinely-appointed forms of worship. The importance of this chapter was recognized since the system of worship set forth in the Mosaic writings was the prescribed

means of bringing God and man together for the entire historic period of this study.

In Chapter IV, the poetic and wisdom books were examined particularly in the area of subjective, religious experience. The many expressions of a personal consciousness of God were developed as evidences of subjective, religious experience. These subjective responses were correlated with the forms of worship explored in Chapter III.

Chapter V contained a further development of individual religious experience as found in the historic and prophetic writings. It was recognized that the latter writings of this period conveyed a fuller revelation of God's unfolding plan of salvation. Therefore, Chapter V traced the simultaneous progression in the dimensions of religious experience. An analysis was made of the change which resulted in the area of religious experience because of the disruption of the nation of Israel. Special attention was directed to the prophets in order to determine the contribution which they made to personal morality.

Chapter VI analyzed the leading principles from the findings of Chapters III, IV and V. These principles were compared and synthesized. The findings of these three chapters were correlated into a unified stream of thought.

Chapter VII contained a brief summary, the conclusions derived from the entire investigation and certain suggestions for further study.

CHAPTER II

PSYCHOLOGY OF RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE

I. INTRODUCTION

The problem under consideration was to make an inquiry into the nature of the religious experience of the Godly Hebrew. In order to recognize and analyze religious experience, it was necessary to have a basic understanding of psychology. A brief review was made of the historical thought in the area of religious experience. From this, an analysis was made of the divine and human aspects of religious experience. A section was devoted to a concise formula which assisted in recognizing the basic elements of religious experience as they appeared in the Old Testament. The introduction of this chapter was enlarged to include a definition of psychology and to survey the evidences of experience.

Psychology is the science of behavior--its causes, projections and consequences. It deals with the mental processes that produce behavior.¹

The evidences of experience are both subjective and objective.

¹Horace B. English and Ava Champney English, A Comprehensive Dictionary of Psychological and Psychoanalytical Terms (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1959), p. 419.

Subjective experience refers to that which is private to the individual--it is confined to the experiencer's mental or psychic senses.² Objective experience refers to that which is the object of perception or thought--it is open to observation by any competent observer.³ These two kinds of evidence do not exist in a rigid dichotomy but unite and contribute to that which may be known and seen. Thus, the religious experiences explored in the Old Testament at times gave evidence to a more subjective type of experience; while at other times, it was a more objective type.

II. THE HUMAN ASPECT OF RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE

An analysis of the human side of religious experience revealed certain basic elements. Individual religious experience involves man's emotion, will and mind. A combination of all three of these elements is essential to a valid religious experience. Historically, theologians emphasized these three elements. E. D. Schleiermacher emphasized the element of emotion or feeling; Emmanuel Kant emphasized the will; and Hegel emphasized the mind.

Redemption demands the response of the whole person. This involves the emotional, volitional and rational powers which unite in the spiritual reconstruction of the personality. Each of these elements do not

²Ibid., p. 532.

³Ibid., p. 352.

exist entirely separate from the other, but are closely intertwined to make a unified response.

On the human level, a valid religious experience involves the use of the mind. W. Curry Mavis said:

The mind comprehends the inner spiritual disorder. It recognizes the state of estrangement from God. It perceives the human lust for sensate and sinful things. It knows of the stubbornness of the human heart.⁴

The use of the mind in grasping self-knowledge is of utmost importance. Psychotherapy recognizes that there must be a knowledge of oneself if one is to be helped. "To know himself as he really is--this is the precondition of all cure, and growth and maturation."⁵

The second essential ingredient for a valid religious experience is emotion. Without the element of feeling, religion would soon become meaningless. In a repentant stage a worshipper might experience sorrow and regret. In a worshipful state he might experience reverence and rest. Paul E. Johnson pointed out the essential nature of emotions in a vital religious experience:

In my view, religious interests permeate every aspect of experience. No experience is vital or dynamic without

⁴W. Curry Mavis, The Psychology of Christian Experience (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1963), p. 21.

⁵Albert C. Outler, Psychotherapy and the Christian Message (New York: Harper and Bros., 1954), p. 170.

emotional support, and since religion is concerned with the deepest needs and highest worths of life it will naturally be charged with emotional urgency.⁶

The third essential element for a valid religious experience is the will. Man's volitional power is that which gives direction to his life.

The importance of the will was stated by Mavis:

The volitional powers determine that a turn in life direction shall be made. If this is not done, then the rational comprehension of the sinner's situation was only academic and his emotions were a futile exercise in regret and remorse. The action of the will is crucial and decisive The combined forces of unregenerated personality make up a heavy spiritual drag. They offer strong resistance to the person seeking a change of life direction. Only decisive volitional action by the grace of God, backed up by the rational and emotional powers, can assure a change of direction.⁷

The will is essential in breaking the habits, sentiments and mental dispositions which continue into the redeemed life. Only the strong determination of the redeemed man enables God's grace to break into all areas of his old life.

III. THE DIVINE ASPECT OF RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE

Just as religious experience involves the response of the whole being of man, so there is a divine counterpart to this experience. Religious

⁶Paul E. Johnson, Psychology of Religion (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1945), p. 52.

⁷Mavis, op. cit., pp. 21-22.

experience would be short-lived if it rested only upon man's projection of God. Thus, there must be the divine activity of God breaking into the life of a seeker to support and enlarge his human response. Francis L. Strickland said:

. . . religious experience does not long maintain itself on the basis of projections of any sort. It rests upon a God whom we believe we do not make in our thoughts and project, but whom we find, as he reveals himself to us.⁸

In a valid religious experience, God objectively reveals Himself. Johnson said: "What we insist is that religious experience is response to objective reality."⁹ God's revelation may come through various modes; but whatever the mode, it must unveil the reality of God. The word "revelation" is of Latin derivation and means "unveiling."¹⁰ Thus, revelation is the unveiling of spiritual reality.

Religious experience has a mystical element to it. Mysticism is "the doctrine that there is a kind of knowledge in addition to that received through the senses or by thinking."¹¹ The mystical side of religious experience lays hold of a knowledge which is from outside of man's physical

⁸Francis L. Strickland, Psychology of Religious Experience (New York: The Abingdon Press, 1924), pp. 55-56.

⁹Johnson, op. cit., p. 46.

¹⁰Merrill C. Tenney, "Revelation," The Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1963), p. 720.

¹¹English, op. cit., p. 335.

and psychical processes. Thus, William James said that in a conversion experience, the convert "seems to himself a passive spectator or undergoer of an astonishing process performed upon him from above. There is too much evidence of this for any doubt of it to be possible."¹² On the divine side, then, valid religious experience involves the activity of God in unveiling Himself to the consciousness of man.

IV. SUMMARIZED FORMULA

The purpose of this chapter was to set forth a psychological criterion which would enable the writer to recognize and analyze the fundamental elements of a valid religious experience as they appear in the Old Testament. These basic elements were deducible to a succinct formula:

First, the human side of religious experience involves:

(1) mind--man's rational processes; (2) emotion--man's affective state of feeling and (3) will--man's volitional power.

Second, the divine side of religious experience involves the apprehension of spiritual reality--commonly called divine revelation. This formula was used as a guide for recognizing religious experience as it was recorded in Scripture.

¹²William James, Varieties of Religious Experience (New York: Modern Library, 1902), p. 222.

CHAPTER III

THE MOSAIC WRITINGS AS A BASIS OF HEBREW WORSHIP

I. INTRODUCTION

This chapter was foundational to the entire study. A survey was made of the Mosaic writings of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy. It was in these books that the Lord made His covenant with the Hebrew people and established the system of worship whereby they might approach Him. A study was made of this covenant, which was made at Mount Sinai, to determine the relationships of the individual and the nation to their God. The ceremonial forms of worship were studied to determine the response indicated in the heart of the Godly Hebrew. It was necessary to determine the place that these writings gave to the priesthood as it performed its duties of representing the people before God. It was also necessary to determine the purpose of the law in the life of the individual worshipper. Since this study was concerned with the relationship between the Godly Hebrew and his God, the modes of God's revelation were surveyed. Finally, a general survey was made of some of the terms which expressed spiritual relationship between God and man.

II. THE MOSAIC COVENANT

The Covenant Established

The Mosaic covenant is sometimes referred to as the Sinai covenant. It was the covenant which God made with His people as they encamped at the base of Mount Sinai. Many years before, God had made a covenant with Abraham in which He promised to give him a son. His descendants would be multiplied and the land of Canaan would be their everlasting possession.¹ At Mount Sinai God entered into a covenant with the people of Israel who were the descendants of Abraham. Concerning this covenant, Hermann Schultz said: "In the view of a pious Israelite, the real covenant on which Israel's relationship to salvation depends, the great covenant which created something absolutely new, is the Covenant of Sinai."²

God covenanted with the people of Israel in Exodus 19:3-6:

And Moses went up unto God, and Jehovah called unto him out of the mountain, saying, Thus shalt thou say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel: Ye have 'seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself. Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be mine own possession from among all peoples:

¹Genesis 17:1-8.

²Hermann Schultz, Old Testament Theology (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1892), II, 5.

for all the earth is mine: and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel.

Moses came down from the mountain and called all the people before him and told them what God had said. The people answered: ". . . All that Jehovah hath spoken we will do" (Exodus 19:8). As a seal of this covenant, God came to Moses in a thick cloud and spoke to him so that all of the people could hear and might believe.³ Moses reaffirmed the covenant to the people in Deuteronomy 5:2-3.

In Deuteronomy, chapter 7, it was recorded that this covenant revealed God's love (7:7,9,12,13), redemption (7:8), favor (7:6-7), faithfulness (7:9), blessing (7:13-14), healing (7:15) and deliverance (7:16). The keeping of this covenant rested in the power of God rather than in the might of man.⁴

The Idea of Corporate Personality

H. Wheeler Robinson championed the idea that God dealt with all of the people of Israel as if they were one individual--a corporate personality. He said:

. . . the covenant is with the nation, not with the individual Israelites except as members or representatives of the nation. Throughout the whole period of the Old Testament, this covenant with the "corporate personality" of Israel (as we may call it) remains the all-inclusive fact and

³Exodus 19:9.

⁴Deuteronomy 8:17-20.

factor, whatever the increase in the consciousness of individuality.⁵

Robinson felt that the covenant was basically a moral act of God in choosing Israel. Israel's relationship to Him was one of moral obligation termed hesed in Hebrew, which is translated as "loving-kindness."⁶

Wellhausen similarly proposed the primacy of the group when he said: "The wheel of history passed over the individual; nothing was left to him but hopeless submission. He had to find his reward in the well-being of his people."⁷

Edmond Jacob believed the religion of Israel under the covenant gave primary importance to the group. He said:

Numerous works applying the results of sociology to the study of the religion of Israel have made plain the primary importance of society and the group. Amongst all peoples the group had primacy over the individual, but in Israel purely natural solidarity based on blood, cohabitation and a common history receive a singular stress by the fact of divine election.⁸

In support of this contention, Jacob cited such scriptural references as: Joshua 7:24--because of the sin of Achan, his whole family and his possessions were consumed by fire; and Exodus 20:5--the punishment of the

⁵ H. Wheeler Robinson, Corporate Personality in Ancient Israel (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1964), pp. 26-27.

⁶ Ibid., p. 26.

⁷ Edmond Jacob, Theology of the Old Testament (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1958), p. 154.

⁸ Ibid., p. 153.

fathers extended to succeeding generations of children. Jacob further stated:

Yahweh's benefits are always conferred upon the people as a whole and it seems at first sight that the quality of the members forming it is of no consequence. That shows that the distinction between the individual and the group cannot be made according to modern criteria.⁹

The above-cited scholars are exemplary of those who believed that God's relationship to Israel under the covenant was one of impersonal, social dealings. The individual was swallowed up in the society and God dealt with him the same as He did with all members of the society.

Individual Faith

What was the relationship of the individual to God under the Mosaic covenant? Did the individual have a role within the social order of Israel? The attitude of the covenant was stated in Deuteronomy 7:9-10:

Know therefore that Jehovah thy God, he is God, the faithful God, who keepeth covenant and lovingkindness with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations, and repayeth them that hate him to their face, to destroy them: he will not be slack to him that hateth him, he will repay him to his face.

Jehovah's attitude in the covenant was characterized by loving-kindness and faithfulness to "them" that keep His commandments. The word "them" is plural but has an individual sense in this context. All of the

⁹ Ibid., p.154 .

individuals within the society of Israel who kept His commandments experienced His lovingkindness and faithfulness. The opposite is also true. "Them" that hate Him will be repaid to their face. Only those within the society of Israel who hated Jehovah would be repaid to "their face." Thus, there was an individual responsibility under the covenant. Jehovah repaid lovingkindness or retribution according to individual response. A response of obedience and faith brought Jehovah's blessings.

The general conception of the attitude expected of the people was one of acceptance and faith. In Exodus 19:8 the people said they would do all that Jehovah had spoken to them. They accepted the covenant offered by Jehovah and looked to Him in faith to carry it out. An attitude of receptivity and acceptance of God was what was expected of the people. In speaking of the attitude of faith throughout Israel's history, A. B. Davidson said:

He might unveil His face more fully, impart knowledge in greater abundance, communicate His Spirit in greater power. All this, however, does not alter the general and the essential in His attitude towards the people, or its loving grace. It is equally true that men's feeling of His love might be deeper, their thankfulness profounder, their dependence more absolute, their trust more perfect and implicit, as time advanced. But all this does not touch the essence of the attitude at all times, which was faith [*italics in the original*].¹⁰

Thus, the essence of being right with God was the response of

¹⁰ A. B. Davidson, The Theology of the Old Testament (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1910), p. 278.

faith in accepting the covenant. This response was to be a continuous state of mind in the individual's life and conduct. The individual's acts of righteousness were the expressions of his attitude toward God and His covenant. What was the relationship of the individual to the whole body of Israel under the covenant? The covenant was made with the whole nation of Israel; yet the nation was made up of individuals. The individual had to make the response necessary to maintain an acceptable covenant relationship with God. Davidson further stated:

The covenant was made with the people as a whole, and its blessings became the possession of individuals as members of the general body. This is the Old Testament conception, and for a long time this conception remains in tact.

But, of course, though this be the general conception, in point of fact the individual must exhibit for himself the condition of mind demanded of the whole; and as the people as a whole were endowed with God's Spirit, this was also the possession of the individual as a member of the whole.¹¹

Thus, the individual cannot be completely isolated from the whole body. To a degree, the individual suffered and was blessed with the whole body. However, the individual's response was most important in determining God's blessing or retribution upon the group. It was necessary to look at the nature of the blessings promised under the covenant as they were experienced by the individual and the group. Were the promised blessings spiritual blessings bestowed upon faithful individuals or were they material blessings

¹¹ Ibid., p. 279.

bestowed upon the group?

The great emphasis of the covenant seemed to be the promise of material blessings. The most emphasized blessing was the possession of the land of Canaan wherein Israel would become a mighty nation among all nations of the earth. This blessing was most vividly set forth in Deuteronomy 8:7-10:

For Jehovah thy God bringeth thee into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and springs, flowing forth in valleys and hills; a land of wheat and barley, and vines and fig-trees and pomegranates; a land of olive-trees and honey; a land wherein thou shalt eat bread without scarceness, thou shalt not lack anything in it; a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills thou mayest dig copper. And thou shalt eat and be full, and thou shalt bless Jehovah thy God for the good land which he hath given thee.

This truth was expressed in many Old Testament Scriptures.¹²

These Scriptures emphasized God's blessing of the people of Israel with all of the prosperity and goodness that a land could possess. This central blessing was to be experienced by the nation as a whole if it were true to Jehovah. Davidson summarized this idea:

. . . the fundamental idea, so to speak, of the Old Covenant was that the people's relation to the Lord was reflected in their external circumstances. The external blessings were the seal to them of God's favour; calamity was the token to them of His anger. It was the same in the case of the individual. Perhaps for long they could hardly realise God's favour out of connection with the external tokens of it. The fundamental conception of the Wisdom was, that it was well

¹²Cf., Deuteronomy 1:21; 4:1-10; 5:38; 6:1,3,10,11; 7:1-26; 8:1-13; 9:28; 15:4; 19:8; 27:3; 30:5-10; 26:9.

with the righteous and ill with the wicked. This general principle no doubt true as a general principle, was taken up as without exception.¹³

The above-stated principle did not rule out the fact of individual blessing under the covenant. It merely pointed out the primary emphasis of the blessings received. There were indications that individual spiritual blessings were received. For instance, in Deuteronomy 7:13, God promised His love to the people if they kept His commandments. His love could be experienced only as a spiritual blessing within the human heart.

III. HEBREW WORSHIP

The Origin of the Sacrificial System

Sacrifices, or offerings to God, existed as a form of worship long before the time of Moses. The first reference to this practice in the Bible was found in Genesis 4:3-4 when Cain and Abel made sacrifices to God. Some men believed that the practice of sacrificing to God originated with man. For instance, Schultz believed man originated the sacrifice as something to appease God. The Hebrews may have borrowed from other religions in this practice.¹⁴ This thought was refuted by Howard A. Hanke:

It has been postulated by some that the sacrificial system was borrowed from the idolatrous heathen world,

¹³Davidson, op. cit., pp. 287-288.

¹⁴Schultz, op. cit., I, 189-190.

but nothing could be farther from the facts in the case. The archenemy of God has never originated anything Religion by sacrifice was instituted by God "from the foundation of the world," and whenever similarities appear in the idolatrous systems of the heathen world, we can always be sure that they are prostitutions and counterfeits of pure worship.¹⁵

Symbolic and Typical Meanings of Sacrifices

The form of the Old Testament sacrifices was that of ritual.

This meant that there was a set pattern or ceremony to be followed in the sacrificial system. A symbolic representation was necessary to originate or promote an idea. Words can describe an idea, but a picture makes a more vivid impression. Therefore, pictures are used to represent ideas to children because they do not understand words. In like manner, the rituals of the sacrificial system symbolized or pictured definite ideas to the Godly Hebrew worshipper. Hanke illustrated how the idea of God's holiness was symbolized in the sacrificial system:

The difficulty was that there was not an object in the material world around them that could be used to represent it. It must, therefore, be worked up by a rising series or scale by which one thought may be built upon another. In this time, as well as in earlier periods, the animals known to them were divided into two classes, clean and unclean (Gen. 7:2). The one class was purer, better, and more excellent than the other; and only the former were to be offered in sacrifice The animals for sacrifice were not only of the clean class but were

¹⁵Howard A. Hanke, From Eden to Eternity (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1960), p. 34.

a selection of the best without spot or blemish The animal was then to be offered, not by the common people, but by a select class of persons, who were set apart for that special purpose. These persons were to be washed and specially attired, in most cases, and be thus peculiarly fitted for an approach to the Almighty. Thus the process of one comparison after another very naturally gave them the motion of the highest earthly purity; and the reasons for it were transferred to the idea of the immaculate character of God.¹⁶

This type of symbolism was carried forward through all of the machinery of the Levitical service. This principle was stated in Deuteronomy 14:23 where the Lord commanded them to tithe of their corn, wine, oil and the firstlings of their herd and flock. The symbolic purpose was ". . . that thou mayest learn to fear Jehovah thy God always." An understanding and revelation of the symbolism embodied in the system made it possible for the Godly Hebrew to experience communion with God.

Gustav F. Oehler said of the ceremonial service:

. . . the ceremonial law itself everywhere shows the inner side of the demands of the law shining through the veil of outward ordinances;--though this was so, yet the outward acts of worship, as such, still remain, on the standpoint of law [italics in the original] , the necessary vehicle for the actual realization of communion between God and man For the stage of infancy, the ritual ordinance has the educational value of a process working from the outside to the inside, and so awakening a God-fearing disposition, a consciousness of inward communion with God¹⁷

¹⁶Ibid., pp. 30-31.

¹⁷Gustav Freidrich Oehler, Theology of the Old Testament (New York: Funk & Wagnalls Company, 1883), pp. 246-247.

The sacrifices were also typical. They carried a certain amount of anticipation of a future blessing. Thus, the sacrificial system revealed a type of Jesus as the lamb who ". . . suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once at the end of the ages hath he been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself" (Hebrews 9:25). Alfred Edersheim concluded that the Old Testament sacrifices ". . . already conveyed to the believing Israelite the blessing that was to flow from the future reality to which they pointed."¹⁸ In this sense, the sacrifices were typical.

The Types of Sacrifices and Offerings

It was somewhat difficult to make a precise breakdown of the various offerings and sacrifices. All scholars do not agree on exact categories. The first five chapters of Leviticus set forth the basis for the system. The sacrifices and offerings came under the general categories of burnt offerings, meal or meat offerings, peace offerings, sin offerings and trespass offerings. The Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary defined "sacrifice" as: ". . . a religious act belonging to worship in which offering is made to God of some material object belonging to the offerer"¹⁹

¹⁸ Alfred Edersheim, The Temple (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1954), p. 106.

¹⁹ Merrill C. Tenney, "Sacrifice," The Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1963), p. 737.

The meal or meat offering. This offering was established in Leviticus, chapter 2. It was not an animal offering, as the name suggests, but was an offering of fine flour, unleavened bread, cakes, wafers or ears of roasted grain. It was presented to God by the sons of Aaron. Only a portion was consumed by fire on the altar; the rest was kept by the priests who ate it in a holy place. The meal offering provided the grace of thanksgiving as an accompaniment to the other offerings.²² On all important occasions, this offering accompanied the other offerings except the sin offering.²³ It was a voluntary offering.

The peace offering. This act of worship was set forth in Leviticus, chapter 3. For a peace offering, a male or female ox, sheep or goat was offered. The animals were without blemish. The blood of the victim was wholly poured upon the altar by the priest. Only the fat was burned. The wave-breast and heave-leg were kept by the priests, and the remainder of the meat was eaten at the sanctuary by the offerer and his friends.²⁴ Except at the time of the passover, according to Leviticus, chapter 23, the peace offering was a voluntary offering. The eating of the meat by the offerer and his friends was a type of fellowship meal. It

²²Ibid.

²³Cf., Leviticus 7; Numbers 7:11-83.

²⁴Deuteronomy 12:17-19.

symbolized peace and fellowship which existed between the offerer and God.

The significance of the peace offering was stated by Jamieson, Fausset and

Brown:

. . . "peace" being used in Scripture to denote prosperity and happiness generally, a peace offering was a voluntary tribute of gratitude for health or other benefits. In this view it was eucharistic, being a token of thanksgiving for benefits already received, or it was sometimes votive, presented in prayer for benefits wished for in future.²⁵

The sin offering. The sin offering was set forth in Leviticus, chapter 4. If the congregation were making the offering, a bullock was used; if a ruler, a ram or he-goat was used; if one person, a female kid was used. The poor could offer two pigeons; and even where these were too much, a small portion of fine flour was substituted. The hands of the offerer were placed on the offering, signifying that it was his substitute. The offering was then slain and the blood was sprinkled around the altar by the priest. Davidson emphasized the importance of the sin offering to a proper covenant relationship:

The great primary fact to start from is that of the state of covenant relation between God and the worshipping people. Though in covenant, the people were not thought of as sinless. They might fall into errors, and they were compassed with infirmities. For these sins of infirmity, or ignorance as they were called, an atonement was provided in the sacrificial system It is an

²⁵ Commentary on the Whole Bible (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, [n.d.]), p. 75.

institution provided of God for sins committed within [italics in the original] the covenant. For some sins there was no atonement; sins done with a high hand cut a man off from the covenant people. But for all sins of error, which included not only sins done ignorantly, but sins of infirmity though committed consciously, the sacrificial system provided an expiation. The effect of them was to restore those who offered them to their place in the covenant which they had forfeited.²⁶

If the offering were carried out in an acceptable manner, it carried the promise from God: ". . . it shall be forgiven him" (Leviticus 4:20, 26, 31, 35). The sin offering was the primary means of receiving Jehovah's atoning grace. If this offering was made with the proper heart attitude, the individual was justified in the eyes of God. His sins were removed and he was reconciled to God. The other offerings which emphasized consecration, fellowship, thanksgiving and peace took on additional meaning when the worshipper had received the atoning grace of God. The individual could then enjoy the blessings of the covenant.

The trespass offering. The requirements of the trespass offering were set forth in Leviticus 5:14-6:7. This was a special kind of sin offering and was offered for transgressions where restitution or other legal satisfaction was made. When the rights of God or man were violated, the wrong had to be made right and the broken law honored. The required satisfaction had to be effected before the trespass offering could be made.

²⁶Davidson, op. cit., pp. 310-311.

The ritual was much the same as in the sin offering. A lamb was used as the offering. The offering was slain by the priest and the blood was poured over the surface of the altar. Tenney enumerated some of the specific instances requiring a trespass offering:

Its main purpose was to make expiation for dues withheld from God, like neglect to pay at the proper time what was due to the sanctuary; and from man, like robbery, failure to return a deposit, swearing falsely regarding anything lost, and seduction of a betrothed bond-maid. The sin-offering of a lamb made atonement to God. Restitution, with an additional one-fifth, made reparation to man.²⁷

The Fundamental Purpose of the Sacrificial System

Each of the foregoing sacrifices had a specific purpose for the participating individual or congregation. They obviously had real meaning to God who instituted them. Scholars have varying ideas as to what really was the underlying purpose. The purpose of this section was to investigate the basic intent of the sacrificial system as a whole as it brought man and God together.

Devotion. Oehler felt that the ". . . essential nature of an offering in general is the devotion of man to God, expressed in an outward act."²⁸ Man felt impelled within himself to express to God his dependence upon Him. He is dependent upon God for his well-being, his possessions, his active and

²⁷Tenney, op. cit., p. 739.

²⁸Oehler, op. cit., p. 261.

passive life. This desire within man found expression in devotional words of praise and thanksgiving to God. Oehler said:

. . . this impulse is not fully satisfied till this word is, as it were, embodied [italics in the original] in a corresponding action, in which man deprives and denies himself of something [italics in the original]²⁹

Thus, man's deeds testify to the earnestness of his devotion to God.

Substitution. The idea of substitution seems to have been set forth in Leviticus 17:11:

For the life of the flesh is in the blood; and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh atonement by reason of the life.

The life of the sacrifice was substituted for the life of the offerer. The victim sustained the punishment of the offerer. Edersheim said:

This idea of substitution, as introduced, adopted, and sanctioned by God Himself, is expressed by the sacrificial term rendered in our version "atonement", but which really means covering the substitute in the acceptance of God taking the place of, and so covering, as it were the person of the offerer.³⁰

To fully understand the idea of substitution, it was necessary to follow the Godly Hebrew as he offered his sacrifice. In most cases, his offering was a lamb which was the best selected from his flock. As he made his approach to God, he solemnly laid his hands upon the head of the

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Edersheim, op. cit., p. 107.

lamb, thus showing the transfer of sin from himself to the innocent victim. He leaned upon it, symbolizing reliance and trust. The lamb was slain and suffered death. In the eyes of the Godly Hebrew, the lamb died in his place. The lamb was symbolically loaded with his sins. He, thus, acknowledged before God his sinfulness which was worthy of death. He trusted God to accept the substitution of the victim instead of his own sacrifice which would have been just.

Hanke stated that this same idea of substitution has carried forward into the Christian era:

The principles in the system of Israelitish sacrifices are used now by Christians everywhere. Where actions and symbols were formerly used, language is now used with greater facility.³¹

Fellowship. Davidson stated that the sacrifices were offered ". . . to prevent the communion existing between Him and His people being disturbed or broken by the still inevitable imperfections of His people, whether as individuals or as a whole."³² Communion and fellowship with God were, thus, the desired end of the sacrificial system. By faithfully performing the sacrifices in a true spirit of worship, the people enjoyed fellowship with God. Intercourse with God was the desired end. Thus, the priests were called "them that come nigh me" in Leviticus 10:3. The place

³¹Hanke, op. cit., p. 32.

³²Davidson, op. cit., p. 317.

of worship was called the "tent of meeting."³³ This was the place where God would come together with His people. The cover of the ark of the covenant was the most holy vessel of the whole center of worship. Exodus 25:22 records: "And there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy-seat, from between the two cherubim which are upon the ark of the testimony"

Appeasement. Schultz presented the philosophy which was probably representative of evolutionary theology. Schultz felt that the sacrifices were devised by man to appease his offended deity. He said:

People were naïve enough to think that the splendour and value of the sacrifices helped to please God Sacrifices are, in fact, nothing more than "the embodied prayers of men who think like children," and are in very truth as old as men themselves and their religion . . . and these Israel adopted as matters of course, and practised without reflection, just as the kindred peoples did.³⁴

The sacrifice, according to this view, was a simple gift offered to God to win back His favor. With such emphasis upon the efforts of man in this philosophy, it follows that there was very little, if any, communion with God. The sinner could only hope that God had been appeased but had no real assurance from God that satisfaction had been made.

³³Cf., Exodus 33:7; 40:34.

³⁴Schultz, loc. cit.

IV. SACRED OBSERVANCES AND PLACES

Holy places and observances became quite prominent in the life of the Hebrew people. They held real significance for the Godly Hebrew as he approached God.

Holy Places

In Exodus 20:24, Jehovah said to Moses:

An altar of earth thou shalt make unto me, and shalt sacrifice thereon thy burnt-offerings, and thy peace-offerings, thy sheep, and thine oxen: in every place where I record my name I will come unto thee and I will bless thee.

Here Jehovah sanctioned special places where He would record His name and come and bless His people. Wherever God met with an individual or His people as a group, it was set aside as a holy place. Robinson stated the significance of holy places to the Israelites:

Because Yahweh is conceived to be in some sense there, they became points of possible contact between God and man. They are constituted holy by the divine initiative. Here Yahweh has chosen to reveal Himself; here, therefore, His presence may still be sought, and is likely to be again found. In the earliest conception, and even to the latest phase in the case of Zion, they are His dwelling places.³⁵

Mount Horeb was called the mount of God because Moses was commissioned here (Exodus 3:5); it was here that Moses struck the rock which

³⁵H. Wheeler Robinson, The Religious Ideas of the Old Testament (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1915), pp. 133-134.

brought forth water (Exodus 17:6); and it was here that God spoke to Elijah (I Kings 19:8). This was but one example of a place where it was believed God might manifest His presence to His people.

Day of Atonement

The feast of the Day of Atonement was observed on the tenth day of the seventh month (Leviticus 16). It was observed as a national fast day. The high priest dressed in simple attire and entered alone into the incense-filled holy of holies. There he made sacrificial atonement for the sins of the people after he first had made an offering for his own sins. Robinson said:

The Day of Atonement is an attempt to regain the holiness lost in the year that has gone. Its ritual enables the people, through their representative, to approach the holy God.³⁶

The Weekly Sabbath

In Leviticus 23:3 the Sabbath was set apart as a day of "solemn rest" and "holy convocation." Families and other small groups assembled under the guidance of Levites or elders and engaged in some common acts of devotion. No work was permitted on this day.

The Passover

The Passover was sometimes referred to as the feast of

³⁶Ibid., p. 140.

Unleavened Bread. It was observed on the fourteenth day of the first month of the sacred year. It lasted one week. It was celebrated in memory of God's mighty acts of deliverance of the Hebrew people from Egypt. Special memory was given to the passing over of the angel of death (Exodus 12:27). The meal was observed as a symbolic act of worship. The sacrificial animal was served whole and every portion had to be carefully kept from becoming spoiled or profaned (Exodus 12:10 ff.). Schultz summarized the significance of this meal:

Those who ate it, the members of the family as well as of the nation, could regard themselves as a holy community created by God's acts of deliverance, and sharing in the highest "consecration." None but the circumcised could partake of the sacred meal; but all circumcised persons could do so, even though they were not descendants of Israel according to the flesh.³⁷

The Feast of Pentecost

The feast of Pentecost was sometimes called the feast of Weeks, the day of the First-fruits or the feast of Harvests. It was observed seven weeks after the offering of the wave sheaf after the Passover. The name "Pentecost," meaning "50th," originated from the fact that there was an interval of fifty days between the two feasts.³⁸ This was a harvest festival

³⁷ Schultz, op. cit., I, 196-197.

³⁸ Merrill C. Tenney, "Feasts," The Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1963), p. 280.

and was celebrated by much rejoicing and thanksgiving to God (Deuteronomy 16:11). Freewill offerings were made to God who was recognized as the bountiful landowner. It was a time of great national thanksgiving when the people remembered that God had brought them out of bondage into this bountiful land. The poor and stranger were cared for by grain left in fields.

The Feast of Trumpets

This feast was held on the first day of the seventh month. It marked the beginning of the civil year for the Hebrews. It was proclaimed by the blowing of trumpets and abstinence from work (Leviticus 23:24). An offering by fire was made to God at a holy convocation (Leviticus 23:25).

The Feast of Tabernacles

This feast was sometimes referred to as the feast of Booths or Ingathering. It started on the fifteenth day of the seventh month which was five days after the Day of Atonement (Leviticus 23:34; Deuteronomy 16:13). It marked the end of the harvest and lasted eight days. The Lord instituted this feast to call to remembrance the days when the Israelites wandered in the wilderness and that it was the Lord their God who had delivered them. During this festival, the people lived in tents in Jerusalem as a reminder of the wilderness wanderings. Numerous sacrifices were offered during holy convocations. It was a joyous occasion and a time of worshipping Jehovah, their deliverer (Leviticus 23:43).

V. CIRCUMCISION

Circumcision as a rite became the seal of God's covenant people.

It was an outward ceremony but, when properly understood, conveyed deep spiritual meaning to the Godly Hebrew.

Its Origin

Circumcision was the act of cutting off the foreskin of the male organ. According to Steven Barabas, the rite is not restricted to the Hebrews but is practiced in Asia, Africa, America and Australia. Various theories have been held regarding its origin, but there can be no doubt that it was first a religious act.³⁹ Schultz placed it very early in history:

. . . the practice of circumcision in Israel reaches back beyond Moses into patriarchal times, and it would in itself be quite conceivable that the influence of Egypt, a country with which the Hebrew people were very early brought into contact, gave the external impulse to it, although when once this practice became the sacred mark of the covenant people, succeeding generations were perfectly right in regarding it as the expression of God's will⁴⁰

The first scriptural reference to circumcision is in Genesis 17:1-14. It is made the seal of God's covenant with Abraham. This practice was carried forward by the Hebrew people with new emphasis

³⁹Steven Barabas, "Circumcision," The Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1963), p. 172.

⁴⁰Schultz, op. cit., I, 193-194.

given to it when God delivered His people from Egypt under Moses. The rite was performed on the eighth day to every male child born (Genesis 17:12; Leviticus 12:3). Under the Mosaic legislation it was also considered a healthy act of removing uncleanness (Leviticus 12:2,3).

Its Purpose

Many of the religious acts practiced by the people of Israel were symbolical of a deeper spiritual application. This was explored in the foregoing section on sacrifices.⁴¹ The act of circumcision also had symbolic significance to the Godly Hebrew people.

Schultz viewed circumcision in much the same way as he would a sacrifice. Its meaning was the consecration of the newborn life to God. He said:

It is more correctly a "bloody sacrifice" . . . or, still more accurately, a consecration of the life to God by a painful bloody purifying of the source of life which is regarded as holy Circumcision is in Israel the consecration of a man on being admitted as one of Jehovah's holy people. On the organ upon which depends the perpetuation of life, and to which religious reverence was paid, this bloody purification was performed as a sign that the perpetuation of the whole people is sacred to God.⁴²

J. Barton Payne believed ". . . the Biblical description of

⁴¹Cf., ante, pp. 21-23.

⁴²Schultz, op. cit., I, 195-196.

regeneration, in an acted form, begins with the institution of circumcision" ⁴³ The symbolic meaning was the reorientation of the heart. Thus, in Deuteronomy 10:16, the Lord commanded the people: "Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart, and be no more stiffnecked." The clear implication was that there should be a change of heart. The idea of a changed heart is stated much more clearly in Deuteronomy 30:6:

And Jehovah thy God will circumcise thy heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love Jehovah thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live.

The promised workings of God within the hearts of His people were evident in this passage. This heart change bore the fruits which God desired--loving Him with the whole heart and soul. Here also was promised real living. This was very close to the Christian idea of regeneration.

VI. THE PRIESTHOOD

The priesthood held a peculiar place of importance in the worship of the Hebrew people. The priests were the designated group of people instrumental in performing worship ceremonies for the people of Israel. It was necessary to note their function as they directed the worship of the people.

⁴³J. Barton Payne, The Theology of the Older Testament (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1962), p. 241.

The Priests and Levites

In performance of temple worship in the Old Testament, reference was made to the priests and the Levites. A distinction must be made between these two groups. The Levites were the descendants of Levi, one of Jacob's sons. Moses and Aaron were descendants of Levi (Exodus 2:1-10). The priests were those who belonged to Aaron's family (Exodus 28, Leviticus 8). Therefore, priests were Levites, but all Levites were not priests. The Levites were considered a gift to Aaron and his sons to assist in congregational worship (Numbers 3:5-15; 8:19; 18:1-7). The fundamental difference between the two groups was that the priests had the right to minister at the altar and to enter into the holy of holies while the Levites did not (Numbers 3:38; 4:15; 18:1-7). This distinction seems to have diminished in time as pointed out by Schultz: "In later times this priesthood is represented as identical with the 'tribe' of Levi, as well as with the hierarchically organised personnel italics in the original of the temple, as we find it in the law."⁴⁴

The Function of the Priesthood

The primary function of the priesthood was that of mediation.

Webster's New International Dictionary defines a "mediator" as ". . . one

⁴⁴Schultz, op. cit., I, 197.

who interposes between parties at variance to reconcile them; an intercessor." In speaking of the priests of the tribe of Levi, Moses said: "For Jehovah thy God hath chosen him out of all thy tribes, to stand to minister in the name of Jehovah, him and his sons for ever" (Deuteronomy 18:5).

Oehler said:

. . . the design of the priestly vocation [*italics in the original*] is in the first place essentially to represent the nation as a holy congregation before Jehovah, with full divine authority [*italics in the original*], and to open up for it access to its God.⁴⁵

The ministry of the altar was discharged only through the priests. They had to be specifically appointed, dressed and consecrated in order to perform their ministry (Exodus 28-29). The holy priesthood was, thus, set apart as representing the people.

The priestly representation found fullest expression in the person of the high priest. He bore the names of the twelve tribes of Israel on his shoulders for a memorial (Exodus 28:12). This symbolically represented the people as he stood before God. The high priest went into the holy place for a memorial before Jehovah continually (Exodus 28:29). Speaking of the high priest, William G. Moorehead said:

To him alone it pertained to represent the congregation before the Lord as mediator, and to receive the Divine communications. He was to be ceremonially pure and

⁴⁵Oehler, op. cit., p. 209.

holy. He must be physically perfect For he was the representative of life [*italics in the original*]. Death did not exist for him, in so far as he was a priest. God is the Ever-Living, the Life-Giving; and His priest, who had "the crown of the anointing oil of his God upon him," had to do with life alone.⁴⁶

The mediatorial role of the priesthood is most clearly seen in

Numbers 6:23-27:

On this wise ye shall bless the children of Israel: ye shall say unto them, Jehovah bless thee, and keep thee: Jehovah make his face to shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: Jehovah lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace. So shall they put my name upon the children of Israel; and I will bless them.

The priesthood was to communicate the message of blessing to the children of Israel--then Jehovah would bless them.

Beside his mediatorial role, the priest also had the office of teacher and interpreter of the law (Leviticus 10:11). He was to teach the people all of the statutes which Jehovah had spoken to Moses.

The Holiness of the Priesthood

The priesthood was set before the people as an example of God's holiness. They were consecrated for this holy office. Their garments symbolized holiness (Exodus 23:2,4). They were not permitted to eat certain

⁴⁶William G. Moorehead, "Priest," The International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1943), IV, 2440-2441.

foods because of their holiness (Exodus 29:33-34). The priests were anointed with holy oil (Exodus 30:30-31). The need for a holy priesthood was stated by Davidson:

The selection of the priestly class to minister before the Lord was necessary from the nature of the circumstances in which the people were placed; but, besides being necessary, it was very suitable for the purpose of impressing upon men's minds what the true requirements of serving the Lord were. Those who draw near in service to Him must be like Him in character and mind. This necessity, if it could be actually realised, could at least be symbolised in so graphic a way as to teach it. The imperfect holiness of the holy nation made the priesthood necessary.⁴⁷

That the priesthood was a group of utmost holiness is seen in the incident of Korah. He and his company objected to the exclusive priesthood of Aaron saying: "Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and Jehovah is among them: wherefore then lift ye up yourselves above the assembly of Jehovah" (Numbers 16:3)? Moses proceeded to prove the exclusive holy position of the priesthood. Korah and his followers were destroyed.

Oehler pointed out that because God had established this holy order of priests, it was its responsibility to make atonement for an unholy congregation:

Standing as a holy order between Jehovah and the congregation in its approach to Him, the priests are to cover the latter by

⁴⁷Davidson, op. cit., pp. 308-309.

the holiness of their office, which official holiness (Numbers xviii. 1) covers also the guilt which adheres to the person of the priest himself; and in the functions of his office the priest is the medium of the intercourse which takes place in worship between Jehovah and the congregation, and which, on account of the sinfulness of the congregation, becomes a service of atonement.⁴⁸

The Individual's Confrontation with God

The foregoing section stated that it was the responsibility and privilege of the priest to represent the congregation before God. The priest entered into the holy presence of God, made atonement for himself and the congregation and conveyed God's blessing to the people. Was the individual worshipper in the congregation a passive spectator to God's workings? Was only the priest privileged to confront God in a direct manner? What was the experience of the Godly worshipper?

As was stated earlier,⁴⁹ the primary function of the priesthood was mediation--to interpose between two parties to reconcile them. Because of the priest's divine appointment, consecration and training, he was qualified to carry out the acts of mediation between God and man. Because of the faithful fulfillment of his office, God and man were reconciled and united in very real fellowship. The very presence of God's blessing was mediated to the individual worshipper. God and the congregation were

⁴⁸ Oehler, loc. cit. ⁴⁹ Supra, p. 39.

united. The priesthood was merely an instrument of God's grace, not the lone recipient. Davidson very succinctly distinguished between the individual and priestly role before God:

The privilege of individuals . . . did not interfere with a public and national worship, anymore than this later superseded it. The covenant was made with the people, which was a unity. And the worship of this unity was carried on in a central sanctuary. Further, it is evident that it had to be carried on by a representative body called priests, for the whole nation could not at all times assemble within the central sanctuary. It had to be carried on by a smaller body for other reasons also, chiefly in order to indicate what the conditions of such service were, and in what state of sanctity those must be who approached to worship Jehovah But it is manifest that the general body must, so to speak, resolve or condense itself into a smaller body of persons who become in a manner its representatives The priestly body were the representatives of the people. But the existence of the priestly class as representatives of the people did not supersede or absorb the priestly privileges of the individual, any more than the ministry of the Church supersedes the ministry in prayer and exhortation of the father and the individual.⁵⁰

As Davidson pointed out, the priesthood did not eliminate the responsibility of the individual worshipper to pray and meditate. The individual was responsible to God in performing acts of worship. The results of carrying out acts of worship acceptable to God were reconciliation and fellowship. The result of carrying out worship, as prescribed by God, was seen in His promise:

⁵⁰Davidson, op. cit., p. 308.

It shall be a continual burnt-offering throughout your generations at the door of the tent of meeting before Jehovah, where I will meet with you, to speak there unto thee. And there I will meet with the children of Israel; and the Tent shall be sanctified by my glory And I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will be their God. And they shall know that I am Jehovah their God (Exodus 29:42,43,45, 46).

A further example was recorded in Leviticus 9:22-24:

And Aaron lifted up his hands toward the people, and blessed them; and he came down from offering the sin-offering, and the burnt-offering, and the peace-offerings. And Moses and Aaron went into the tent of meeting, and came out, and blessed the people: and the glory of Jehovah appeared unto all the people. And there came forth fire from before Jehovah, and consumed upon the altar the burnt-offering and the fat: and when all the people saw it, they shouted, and fell on their faces.⁵¹

The two examples above show that the congregation definitely experienced the presence of God in worship. The congregation, comprised of many individuals, came to "know" their God and were blessed when the "glory of Jehovah" appeared unto them.

VII. THE LAW

The law was the primary revelation given by God to guide His people. God directed the affairs of Israel by His very presence and through appointed leaders, such as Moses, but the law was His recorded revelation

⁵¹Cf., Numbers 6:22-27.

to guide the lives of His chosen people. It was necessary to study the law as it applied to the life of the Godly Hebrew worshipper.

Definition of the Law

The expression, "law of Moses," is frequently used in Scripture and sometimes means the Decalogue, sometimes the book of Deuteronomy, sometimes the entire Pentateuch and sometimes certain blessings and curses pronounced by God through Moses. In its general usage, the "law of Moses" usually refers to the entire system of religion as it is written in the Old Testament. However, its usage in a given context will usually determine the specific portion of the law to which it is referring.

Many times the law is divided into two parts--the moral and the ceremonial. Some have made such a sharp distinction that there appears to be two laws--one containing ceremonial directives for Jewish worship, and the other containing moral obligations which are binding on all men. Erich Sauer warned against this sharp cleavage: "The Law is an organism and therefore an indivisible unity."⁵²

The Purpose of the Law

That there was supreme importance placed upon the law cannot be denied. With a great and awesome display of His presence and glory at

⁵² Erich Sauer, The Dawn of World Redemption (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1963), p. 126.

Mount Sinai, God gave Moses the law. God had entered into a covenant with Israel. They were His chosen people--His possession. God's desire was that they might be like unto Him. The fundamental principle in the law was summed up in the words: "For I am Jehovah your God: sanctify yourselves therefore, and be ye holy; for I am holy . . ." (Leviticus 11:44).

This principle was stated again and again in the Mosaic writings.⁵³ In Leviticus 19:2, God commands Moses to speak to all the congregation of the children of Israel: "Ye shall be holy; for I Jehovah your God am holy."

George Allen Turner commented on this command:

. . . the command "be ye holy" is followed by what modern readers would classify as both ceremonial and moral injunctions indicating that, while separation and loyalty are prominent--a religious concept, righteousness is also meant. Jehovah's character is the basis for His moral demands.⁵⁴

Thus, the ceremonial and moral law were to produce a state of holiness which was like unto the holiness of Jehovah. This holiness was to have an ethical quality.

From the foregoing discussion, it appeared that the primary purpose of the law was to bring about an inner consecration of life. The

⁵³ E.g., Exodus 19:6; Leviticus 11:45; 19:2; 20:7, 26; 21:6, 7, 8; Numbers 15:40; 16:3, 5, 7; Deuteronomy 7:6; 14:2; 23:14; 26:19; 28:9.

⁵⁴ George Allen Turner, The More Excellent Way (Winona Lake, Indiana: Light and Life Press, 1956), p. 25.

impression of consecration to a holy God was stamped on the lives of the Israelites through ordinances extending to all important, human relationships. Every affair of life was to accomplish something that God demanded. The law was to be realized by the individual Israelite as the voice of God commanding him to be holy. Thus, the Israelites were commanded to wear fringes or tassels on the skirts of their garments as a reminder of the law.⁵⁵

Commenting on this, Oehler said:

. . . he wears tassels on the skirts of his garments, to remind him every moment to think on all Jehovah's commands, and not to be guided by the imaginations of his heart and the lust of his eyes. Here there is no primary distinction between the inner and the outer life [italics in the original] ; the holy calling of the people must be realized in both.⁵⁶

Some have felt that the law demanded only external conformity to the law. The law demanded legal performance rather than moral adherence. This seems to be a false assumption. The law demanded an inner disposition of heart. Oehler pointed out that the law acted as a conscience for man:

The revealed law, it is true, here undertakes the functions of conscience italics in the original ; and it is characteristic of the law of Moses, that for the present there is no reference made to the νόμος γραπτός ἐν καρδίᾳς By bringing man to a consciousness of the essential nature of a higher divine righteousness, the law roused the

⁵⁵Cf., Numbers 15:38; Deuteronomy 22:12.

⁵⁶Oehler, op. cit., p. 182.

conscience from its slumber, taught men to recognize wickedness as sin, and so made the need of reconciliation with God to be felt.⁵⁷

The law demanded an inner disposition of devotion to God when it said: "Thou shalt not covet" (Exodus 20:17); "Thou shalt love Jehovah thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might" (Deuteronomy 6:5); and "Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart, and be no more stiffnecked" (Deuteronomy 10:16). From the few cited examples, it can be seen that the Godly Hebrew must have had a sensitive heart and one filled with devotion to God. The external requirements had internal significance. The heart which was obedient to God did not slavishly follow rigid rules of life, but was guided by the truth which the commandments presented as God's leading in life.

Was the law given as a means of justification? Was strict adherence to the law that which justified man? No, the law was not an instrument of justification. As was pointed out earlier in the discussion of the sacrificial system,⁵⁸ atonement was made by means of offering an acceptable sacrifice to God. The law was given as a guide to the man who was justified and was in a covenant relationship to God. Davidson discussed this distinction:

. . . it was a guide to the man who was already right in God's

⁵⁷Ibid., p. 183.

⁵⁸Supra, pp. 26-28.

esteem in virtue of his general attitude towards the covenant. The law is not to Israel a law of morals on the bare ground of human duty, apart from God's exhibition of His grace. It is a line marked out along which the life of the people or the person in covenant with God, and already right with God on that ground, is to unfold itself. No assumption of sinlessness is made, nor, indeed, is such a thing demanded. The institutions of atonement provided for the taking away of sins done through infirmity, and the law was a direction to the believer how to bear himself practically within the covenant relation.⁵⁹

Thus, the law acted as a guide to the Godly Hebrew who was in proper covenant relationship with Jehovah.

The Law and Individual Responsibility

The only real way the law could have any bearing on Israel as a collective people was as it became the responsibility of each individual. Without individual responsibility, law did very little to govern the behavior and worship of a nation. The law had to appeal to the individual, making him rely on himself as a responsible person.

The ten commandments were addressed to a nation as a whole (Exodus 20:1-21). Yet, the "thou shalt" of these commandments could be executed only by individuals. The same responsibility rested with the individual in keeping the ceremonial law. "If any one sin unwittingly, in any of the things which Jehovah hath commanded . . . let him offer for his sin,

⁵⁹Davidson, op. cit., pp. 280-281.

which he hath sinned, a young bullock . . . (Leviticus 4:2-3).⁶⁰ The responsibility for making an offering rested with the individual. The responsibility for keeping the law also rested upon each individual, even though it had national consequences if not observed.

Walther Eichrodt made a study of individual responsibility in the Old Testament. In commenting on the Book of the Covenant, Exodus, chapters 20-23, he said:

It is a very illuminating fact that collective retribution as a principle of punishment has ceased to play any part in this code. It is true that in the carrying out of legal retribution the idea of solidarity of guilt is still effective, in that the individual's transgression is also avenged on his immediate family circle or kindred But in the code the individual wrongdoer is consistently made responsible in his own person, while his family is not touched. As the "Thou shalt" of the categorical command is directed at the individual Israelite, whether male or female, full citizen or sojourner in Israel, so the punishment of the Law is executed only on the guilty person, his kin not even being incriminated Guilt, from being an objective fate which drags the doer with it, irrespective of his inner relation to his deed, becomes a matter of personal and conscious responsibility.⁶¹

The Law and Grace

The Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary defined "grace" as ". . . Good will, loving-kindness, mercy" ⁶² A. W. Tozer defined

⁶⁰ Cf., Leviticus 4:22-24, 27-28; 5:1-5; 6:1-6.

⁶¹ Walther Eichrodt, Man in the Old Testament (Chicago: Alec R. Allenson Inc., 1956), pp. 10-11.

⁶² "Grace," The Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1963), p. 322.

"grace" as when ". . . God imputes merit where none previously existed and declares no debt to be where one had been before."⁶³ What then was the relation of law to grace under the Hebrew system of worship? Was the law a rigid rule of life which the pious worshipper had no possibility of fulfilling? The answer seems to have been found in Deuteronomy 30:10-14:

. . . if thou shalt obey the voice of Jehovah thy God, to keep his commandments and his statutes which are written in this book of the law; if thou turn unto Jehovah thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul. For this commandment which I command thee this day, it is not too hard for thee, neither is it far off. It is not in heaven, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, and make us to hear it, that we may do it? Neither is it beyond the sea, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us, and make us to hear it, that we may do it? But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it.

This passage conveyed the possibility of living within the law. It was possible for an individual who "obeyed the voice of Jehovah" and "turned to Jehovah with all his heart and soul." Such a person was in right standing with God and was enabled by the grace of God to fulfill the demands of the law. This passage implies the gracious ability and help of God to the Godly Hebrew in keeping the law. Concerning the mingling of grace and law in Old Testament times, Tozer wrote:

Had the Old Testament times been times of stern, unbending law alone the whole complexion of the early world would have

⁶³A. W. Tozer, The Knowledge of the Holy (New York: Harper & Brothers, Publishers, 1961), p. 100.

been vastly less cheerful than we find it to be in the ancient writings. There could have been no Abraham, friend of God; no David, man after God's own heart; no Samuel, no Isaiah, no Daniel. The eleventh chapter of Hebrews, that Westminster Abbey of the spiritually great of the Old Testament, would stand dark and tenantless. Grace made sainthood possible in Old Testament days just as it does today.⁶⁴

That God expected Israel to be able to keep His commandments and to walk in His statutes (Leviticus 26:3), is evident from the many blessings He promised: (1) ". . . I will walk among you, and will be your God, and ye shall be my people" (Leviticus 26:12); (2) "And it shall be righteousness unto us . . ." (Deuteronomy 6:25); (3) ". . . and he will love thee, and bless thee, and multiply thee Thou shalt be blessed above all peoples . . ." (Deuteronomy 7:13-14); (4) "For Jehovah thy God bringeth thee into a good land And thou shalt eat and be full . . ." (Deuteronomy 8:7,10); and (5) ". . . to keep the commandments of Jehovah, and his statutes, which I command thee this day for thy good" (Deuteronomy 10:13).

Paul's View of the Law

The apostle Paul dealt quite extensively with the usage and purpose of the law in the New Testament. Usually, when Paul referred to "the law," he had reference to the whole Mosaic code. George Barker Stevens said: "Whatever, therefore, he teaches in regard to 'the law' at

⁶⁴Ibid., p. 102.

all, applies to the whole system, not to an element or phase of the system arbitrarily selected."⁶⁵

In Romans, chapter 4, Paul establishes his first major premise: that justification was accomplished by faith and not by legal obedience. Abraham was justified by faith (Romans 4:13; Galatians 3:21,22).

Paul's second premise was that if righteousness were attainable by the deeds of the law, the atoning death of Christ on the cross was unnecessary (Galatians 2:21).

The third premise of Paul, according to Stevens, was a psychological one: ". . . the law quickens the consciousness of sin, makes transgressions abound (Rom. iii. 20; v. 20; vii. 7-11), shuts men up in ward [sic] , and cuts off every other way but that of faith (Gal. iii. 23 sq.)."⁶⁶ Paul asserts that the law was divine in its origin (Romans 7:12) and is not morally defective (Romans 7:7). According to Stevens, Paul saw the following purpose in the law:

The law is intermediate between the ancient covenant and the completed gospel, --between the promise and the fulfilment. It was a divinely appointed means of revealing human need and of hastening its satisfaction. We thus see how completely is the law auxiliary to the gospel of grace and faith in the historic development of the Kingdom of God.⁶⁷

⁶⁵George Barker Stevens, The Theology of the New Testament (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1905), p. 364.

⁶⁶Ibid., p. 363.

⁶⁷Ibid., p. 366.

Thus, Paul develops the historical purpose of the law. He builds upon the Old Testament concept of law which, according to Stevens, was as follows:

The Mosaic law aimed to check sin, promote morality, and secure righteousness. It did this by presenting motive to obedience: "Ye have seen how I bare you on eagles' wings and brought you unto myself" (Ex. xix. 4). The Decalogue is thus prefaced: "I am the Lord thy God who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage" (Ex. xx. 2). The excellence and fitness of the law are commended to the people (Deut. iv. 6-8). The motives to obedience are both positive, being drawn from appeals backward to God's care and guidance, and forward to the promises; and negative, being founded upon threats and penalties. The law has a restraining, regulative power.⁶⁸

Thus, the law in the Old Testament required more than an outward obedience; it required a right disposition of heart. The law made man vividly aware of his need for God's grace in fulfilling the obedience to the law.

VIII. MODES OF REVELATION

If there is to be true religion, the worshipper must experience some objective reality. God must, in some way, reveal Himself to the one who seeks Him. This section was concerned with the modes of revelation found in the Mosaic writings.

Theophanies

A theophany was described by Wick Broomall as ". . . a visible

⁶⁸Ibid.

manifestation of God."⁶⁹ Theophanies were common in Old Testament times. These manifestations took several different forms.

A direct message of God through some natural phenomenon was quite common in Old Testament times. In Exodus 19:7-25, God spoke to the whole congregation of Israel at Mount Sinai through a thick cloud mingled with lightening and thunder. A similar account is recorded in Exodus 24. The Scripture recorded that Jehovah knew Moses "face to face" (Deuteronomy 34:10) and spoke with him "mouth to mouth" (Numbers 12:7-8). Other examples of Jehovah's appearance through natural phenomena can be cited.⁷⁰

In other instances, God appeared unto men in the form of an angel. A classic example of this type of theophany was the calling of Moses when an angel of the Lord appeared in a burning bush (Exodus 3:2-4:17). The Lord also appeared in the form of an angel to Balaam, a non-Hebrew (Numbers 22:32-35).

A Divinely-Appointed Man

Another means of God's revelation was divinely-appointed men. Certain men in the Old Testament were providentially chosen of God to bear His message to the masses. Such a man was Moses. In calling Moses to be the leader and deliverer of the children of Israel, the Lord said to Moses: "Now therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt speak" (Exodus 4:12). Moses complained because he was not eloquent

⁶⁹Wick Broomall, "Theophany," Baker's Dictionary of Theology (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1960), p. 520.

⁷⁰E.g., Exodus 13:21,22; Numbers 22:9-12,28-30; 23:15,16; Deuteronomy 4:12,33,36; 5:4,22,24.

in speech. The Lord then appointed Aaron as spokesman of Moses (Exodus 4:14-16). Probably some of the most direct cases of God speaking to His people came through Moses.⁷¹

The Divine Spirit

God revealed Himself to men by His Spirit. The Old Testament word for Spirit is ruach which is usually translated pneuma in the Septuagint. The activity, rather than the nature, of the Spirit is emphasized in the Old Testament. Thus, when God's Spirit is referred to in the Old Testament, it is usually with reference to His active dealings with men. Jacob said: ". . . the spirit is yet primarily in the Old Testament the prerogative κατ' ἐξοχήν of God and his instrument of revelation and action par excellence [*italics in the original*] ."⁷² In some cases, the Spirit was the instrument of wisdom, knowledge and understanding. Thus, the Spirit was active in Bezalel when Jehovah said: ". . . I have filled him with the Spirit of God, in wisdom, and in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship . . ." (Exodus 31:3). Joshua was full of the spirit of wisdom (Deuteronomy 34:9; Numbers 27:18). The Spirit rested upon seventy men of the elders of Israel so that they prophesied (Numbers 11:16-25). That the Spirit did not become the experience of all the people

⁷¹E.g., Exodus 20:18-26; Deuteronomy 1:3.

⁷²Jacob, op. cit., p. 123.

of Israel is evident from Numbers 11:29 where Moses said: ". . . would that all Jehovah's people were prophets, that Jehovah would put his Spirit upon them!"

The Law

Probably the most objective form of revelation in all of Israel was God's written revelation. The written revelation was referred to by Moses as ". . . the commandments of Jehovah your God, and his testimonies, and his statutes . . ." (Deuteronomy 6:17). The apostle Paul referred to the Old Testament writings as the "oracles of God" (Romans 3:2). Through the ceremonial and moral law, the nature of God was revealed. Also, the way of reconciliation, whereby man could come into fellowship with God, was revealed.

IX. EXPRESSIONS OF SPIRITUAL RELATIONSHIP

There were expressions of spiritual relationship between God and man which have not been explored in previous discussions in this chapter. This section dealt with the spiritual relationships.

Faith

The word "faith" is found only twice in the King James Version of the Old Testament (Deuteronomy 30:20; Habakkuk 2:4). The Hebrew noun 'emûnâ, rendered πίστις in the Septuagint, usually denoted trustworthiness.

The word ʾemûnâ normally refers to the faithfulness of God.⁷³ In the Mosaic writings, there is found not so much a doctrine of faith, but rather examples of faith. This is verified in Hebrews, chapter 11. The nature of Old Testament faith was described by Barabas:

The foundation of Israel's faith was the revelation that God had made to the fathers and to Moses, the covenant He had made with them at Sinai, and the conviction that the covenant promises would some day be fulfilled. The observance of the Law and a life of faith were not for them incompatible. Faith lay behind the keeping of the Law as its presupposition. The Law was a mode of life incumbent upon those whose trust was in Jehovah. OT faith is never mere assent to a set of doctrines or outward acceptance of the Law, but utter confidence in the faithfulness of God and a consequent loving obedience to His will.⁷⁴

In the Mosaic writings, faith is linked closely to obedience. Deuteronomy 13:3-4 very clearly declared that the real proof of love and trust in Jehovah was keeping His commandments and obeying His voice. Real faith demanded works of obedience. Personal faith was demonstrated by personal obedience (Exodus 15:25; Deuteronomy 8:2).

On the negative side, unbelief was censured in Israel (Deuteronomy 1:32; 9:23).

There were also instances when remembrance of Jehovah's

⁷³James I. Packer, "Faith," Baker's Dictionary of Theology (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1960), p. 208.

⁷⁴Steven Barabas, "Faith," The Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1963), p. 274.

mighty acts and His revelation to His people awakened faith in them

(Deuteronomy 7:17 ff.; 8:3; 13:2 ff.; 32:11, 39).

Prayers

Prayers were a means of fellowship between Israel and God. That

God heard and answered the prayers of His people was clearly recorded in

Exodus 2:23-25:

And it came to pass in the course of those many days, that the king of Egypt died: and the children of Israel sighed by reason of the bondage, and they cried, and their cry came up unto God by reason of the bondage. And God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. And God saw the children of Israel, and God took knowledge of them.

God heard the pleas for help from His people and mightily delivered them from Egypt. Chapter 3 of Exodus contained the call of Moses as God immediately prepared to answer the prayers of His people for help (Exodus 3:7-8). When the Israelites were rebellious and out of fellowship with God, He did not hearken unto their prayers (Deuteronomy 1:45).

Many times Moses interceded on behalf of the children of Israel and God heard his prayers (Deuteronomy 9:25-29; Exodus 32:11-14). Again, when Moses was out of fellowship with God because of personal disobedience, his request to enter the promised land was denied (Deuteronomy 3:25-26). Fellowship with God carried with it the promise of answered prayer.

Vows

Vows were quite common among God's chosen people. A vow was a voluntary promise or obligation made to God. Schultz believed a vow was a form of prayer:

A stronger form of prayer is the vow, whether it be one to do or not to do a particular thing. Its purpose is to give the entreaty greater force, to express the earnest desire, as well as the sincere piety of the suppliant.⁷⁵

A vow might concern a number of different kinds of self-imposed restrictions (Numbers 30:13). Probably the most common vow in the Old Testament was the Nazarite vow. The Hebrew word nāzīr means "separated." The Nazarite vow involved a separation to a priestly sort of life. The requirements of the Nazarite vow were set forth in Numbers 6:1-21. It meant the avoiding of wine and ceremonial defilement. The hair was to grow long as a symbol of strength. Both men and women could be Nazarites (Numbers 6:2). This vow was to result in a life dedicated to the service of God and was to be characterized by deep piety.

X. SUMMARY

The summary of the information found in the Mosaic writings was as follows:

1. The covenant at Mount Sinai was the establishment of the initial

⁷⁵Schultz, op. cit., I, 371.

relationship between God and Israel. God chose the Israelites as His own people and they readily accepted.

Some theologians have offered the idea of corporate personality whereby God viewed the whole body of Israel as one personality. Individual identity and piety of soul were swallowed up in the group. Individuals received blessing or cursing from God's hand in accordance with the group's relationship to God.

Individual faith on the part of each of the children of Israel was the foundation of acceptable covenant relationship. Individual faith was rewarded by the loving-kindness of God. If proper covenant faith was maintained, the result was promised material blessings to all of Israel and spiritual blessings to the faithful individuals.

2. Hebrew worship was embodied in the sacrificial system. This ceremonial system was ordained of God.

The sacrifices were symbolic in that they demonstrated the internal spiritual experience between the participant and God. They were typical in that they anticipated future blessing.

The burnt offering symbolized the consecration of an individual to God. It was the normal offering for one in proper covenant relationship.

The meal offering was a voluntary offering which expressed thanksgiving to God.

Another voluntary offering was the peace offering which was a

individual in covenant relationship to God. It pointed out personal sinfulness and directed attention to the holy standard of God.

The law was stated so as to place responsibility upon the individual rather than the nation as a whole.

The sternness of the law was accompanied by God's gracious ability to the individual worshipper in keeping it.

The apostle Paul taught that justification was by faith and not through the works of the law. Christ's death would have been unnecessary if righteousness were attainable through works. The law revealed man's spiritual need because of his sinfulness.

7. God revealed Himself to his people in various ways.

A theophany was a visible manifestation of God and took the form of some natural phenomenon or an angel.

God revealed Himself through divinely-appointed men and through His Spirit.

The law was His objective revelation.

8. Some of the expressions of spiritual relationship in Old Testament times were faith, prayers and vows.

CHAPTER IV

SUBJECTIVISM IN THE POETIC AND WISDOM BOOKS

I. INTRODUCTION

The poetic and wisdom literature of the Old Testament was explored in the areas of human-divine relationships. This literature contained much data concerning man's subjective, religious experience. Individual experiences with God, such as the case of Job, were examined. Subjective expressions of worship were investigated in the Psalms. The moral nature of religious experience was studied in the wisdom literature.

II. THE RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE OF JOB

The problem of the book of Job. Dating the book of Job in the sequence of Old Testament events has been a problem for scholars. It is possible that the experience of Job did not fall in the historic period following the time of Moses and, thus, would not be governed by the religious system discussed in Chapter III.

John H. Raven summarized the three general views of dating this book: (1) The book was written during the patriarchal period--at the time of Moses or earlier. This view was based on the fact that there were no references to the Hebrew law or Jewish institutions of worship. (2) The

book was written during the Solomonic times. This was a time of intellectual activity and intercourse with foreign nations. It is similar to much of the wisdom literature written during this time. (3) The book was written shortly before, during, or after the Babylonian Exile--possibly during the time of Jeremiah or as late as Ezra. This view is based on the preoccupation of the book with questions of providence, doubt and misfortune.¹ The authorship of the book is related to the time of dating. Some of those offered as possible authors have been Job, Moses and Solomon.

The problems of dating and authorship were mentioned only because of the time sequence into which this study falls. The book of Job may not fall into the time period of the other poetic and wisdom books. However, Job could possibly have been a Hebrew and his experience bore analysis in this study.

The moral life of Job. The character of Job's moral life was described in the opening verse of the book: "There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job; and that man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and turned away from evil" (Job 1:1).

Not only was Job concerned about his own relationship to God, but he was also concerned that his children be in right relationship to Him. He

¹John H. Raven, Old Testament Introduction (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1910), pp. 275-278.

offered burnt offerings for each of them in case they had "sinned and renounced God in their hearts" (Job 1:5).

In dialogue with Satan, Jehovah referred to His servant Job, saying: ". . . for there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and upright man, one that feareth God, and turneth away from evil" (Job 1:8). When Job heard that his loved ones and possessions were taken away, the Scripture recorded:

. . . and he said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: Jehovah gave, and Jehovah hath taken away; blessed be the name of Jehovah. In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly (Job 1:21-22).

After Job's loved ones and possessions had been taken, Satan and Jehovah again were in dialogue and Jehovah said of Job: ". . . he still holdeth fast his integrity . . ." (Job 2:3). After Satan afflicted Job with boils, it is recorded in Job 2:10: "In all this did not Job sin with his lips."

Thus, Job's religious experience was characterized by righteousness and complete devotion to God. The word "perfect" (Job 1:1,8; 2:3) refers, on the whole, to "integrity, sincerity, and consistency" in all relationships of life.² Job turned from evil because of his devotion to God.

In Job, chapter 31, the very heart of Job was laid open, and the righteous character of this great life was seen. H. Wheeler Robinson wrote:

² Commentary on the Whole Bible (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, [n.d.]), p. 310.

No one who reads this great chapter thoughtfully can fail to realise the fine conception of human life which lies behind it. But there is much more here than a moral conception of life. The very point of the chapter is that it describes a relation of man to God, conceived almost throughout in purely moral terms.³

The individual nature of blessing and suffering. The book of Job was written with the individual in mind. Some have said that Job is a type of the people and that many are personified under his name.⁴ Such thinking does not detract from the fact that the individual sufferer was brought into focus in this book. The problem of dating was significant in this discussion because Job was spoken of as an individual; he was detached from a covenant people or religious congregation. The circumstances which confronted Job were not in any way related to the religious group of friends with which he was associated. He was not suffering because of the sins of his forefathers or because of the wicked deeds of a larger congregation. Job's experiences of suffering and blessing were those of an individual before God. A. B. Davidson pointed out what he believed was the central truth of this book:

The truth is set forth in the form that God's external treatment

³H. Wheeler Robinson, The Religious Ideas of the Old Testament (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1915), p. 156.

⁴A. B. Davidson, The Theology of the Old Testament (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1910), p. 286.

of the individual, or the people, is not the index of God's true relation to either. In other words, religion is divorced from any connection with what is external, and is driven into the heart, and made to be a relation of the spirit to the Lord, which no proofs in the shape of external blessings may attend. The calamities of Job were no proof that God's heart was not towards him⁵

Thus, Job's relationship to God was one of inner disposition of heart. His religious experience was not proven by personal or national circumstances. Job stood before God as an individual. His external happenings were not the criteria for judging the piety and purity of his own heart. Jehovah vindicated the righteous stand of Job and reproved his accusing friends (Job 42:1-9).

The nature of Job's religious experience. The psychological experience of Job was very unique. Most of the book dealt with an intellectual quest for the reasons behind his suffering. Job's emotional feelings seemed to be secondary to the intellectual argumentation which was carried on in his mind and spirit. The traditional answers offered by Job's counselors were questioned and objected to by Job. His defense involved the reasoning power of his mind. His intellectual struggle brought him to the place where he sought the vindication of God. His intellectual quest finally gave way to faith as he realized that God's knowledge and understanding

⁵ Ibid., p. 287.

were beyond his own comprehension. Jehovah answered Job: ". . . Shall he that cavilleth contend with the Almighty? He that argueth with God, let him answer it" (Job 40:2). Job's conclusion was: ". . . Therefore have I uttered that which I understood not, Things too wonderful for me, which I knew not" (Job 42:3).

God's communion with Job. That Job's experience was one of a close walk with God was evidenced by the communication of God to his heart. It is true that under the accusations of his friends, Job cried out to God in despair:

Oh that I knew where I might find him! That I might come even to his seat! I would set my cause in order before him, And fill my mouth with arguments. I would know the words which he would answer me, And understand what he would say unto me (Job 23:3-5).

In His own time, Jehovah did speak to the heart of Job. Job was able to maintain a spirit that was unaccusing of God. God rewarded his faithfulness with spiritual insight and revelation of truth.

Such an example of spiritual enlightenment was found in Job 19:25-27:

But as for me I know that my Redeemer liveth, And at last he will stand up upon the earth: And after my skin, even this body, is destroyed, Then without my flesh shall I see God; Whom I, even I, shall see, on my side, And mine eyes shall behold, and not as a stranger.

Job had knowledge that in the last day, he would stand before his Redeemer and Vindicator. Beyond the corruption of the body in the grave,

he would live to see his God. Truly, this was a comforting revelation to Job when he was in deep distress.

At another time, Jehovah spoke to Job out of a whirlwind (Job 38:1). He revealed to him the marvels of His creation--His majesty and power working in nature. After experiencing this awesome revelation, Job said: "I had heard of thee by the hearing of the ear; But now mine eye seeth thee" (Job 42:5).

Jehovah honored the prayers of Job. He sent Job's counselors to him to offer sacrifice and said: ". . . and my servant Job shall pray for you; for him will I accept . . ." (Job 42:8). When Job prayed for his friends, Jehovah turned the captivity of Job into blessing. Jehovah blessed the latter days of Job more than his beginning (Job 42:10-17).

Thus, Job experienced the presence of God by spiritual insight, theophany, and prayer.

III. THE PSALMS

Introduction. The Psalms contain a wealth of material concerning subjective, religious experiences. The Psalms abound with emotional outbursts of inner feelings. It was recognized that this was a type of writing stimulated by deep, emotional feeling. The Psalms were characterized by outbursts of exultation, joy and, at times, exaggeration. Concerning the inner nature of the religious experiences found in the Psalms, W. Stewart

McCullough said:

God is also spoken to obliquely, as in the psalms of trust or in the more didactic poems. But in either case the psalmists' thoughts and feelings are turned Godward, and their words furnish us with the supreme example in the Old Testament of man's search for and experience of the living God. The Psalms thus give us glimpses into the inner religion of some of Israel's select souls. At times, as we survey the religion of the Old Testament, we are impressed with the importance that appears to be attached to the due performance of various external acts: procedures to obtain ceremonial cleanliness; the animal sacrifices; the ritual of the great festivals. Over against such a type of religious interest, and indeed sometimes alongside it, there also flourished an awareness of the deeper values of the Hebrew faith, and it is to this more spiritual side of Old Testament religion that the Psalms bear eloquent witness.⁶

There has been a certain problem of interpretation related to authorship of the Psalms. Should each Psalm be associated with an individual author, or, is the religious community to be named as its author? Some have felt that the "I" found so prominently in the Psalms is the embodiment of the experience of the community of Israel. Robinson said:

The writer of a psalm is indeed always an individual and not a syndicate, and there is a sense in which it may be said that every psalm does represent an individual experience and outlook. It is also unnatural for a psalmist consciously to imagine himself as a community. But if the collective sense is so much a part of himself and of his outlook as it was with the Israelite, then he

⁶W. Stewart McCullough, "Psalms," The Interpreter's Bible (New York: Abingdon Press, 1955), IV, 3-4.

can never wholly detach himself from the social horizon.⁷

Thus, the authors of the Psalms always wrote as individuals. At times, they gave expression to their own inner feelings; and at other times, they gave expression to the feelings of their fellow Israelites.

The concept of a changed heart. The book of Psalms abounds with references to and expressions of the heart of man. It was necessary to properly understand the meaning of the word, "heart," as it was used in the Psalms. Owen R. Brandon gave the general meaning of the word as derived from the Hebrew language:

In the English versions several Hebrew expressions are translated "heart," the main words being *leb* [italics in the original] and *lebab*. In a general sense, heart means in the midst, the innermost or hidden part of anything

.....
But, like other anthropological terms in the OT, heart is also used very frequently in a psychological sense, as the center or focus of man's inner personal life. The heart is the source, or spring, of motives; the seat of the passions; the center of the thought processes; the spring of conscience.⁸

Thus, "heart," as used in the Psalms, generally refers to the focus of man's thoughts, passions, motives and conscience. There was

⁷H. Wheeler Robinson, Corporate Personality in Ancient Israel (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1964), p. 14.

⁸Owen R. Brandon, "Heart," Baker's Dictionary of Theology (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1960), p. 262.

indication from the Psalms that the heart of man can undergo change when submitted to God. The Psalmist expressed his desire for a changed heart when he prayed: "Create in me a clean heart, O God; And renew a right spirit within me" (Psalms 51:10). The significance of the Hebrew verb bārā (create) in this context was pointed out by J. Barton Payne:

The verb bārā [italics in the original] . . . does not necessarily imply creation ex nihilo [italics in the original] ; and therefore full force must be granted to the verb "renew" in the second line. That is, God's Holy Spirit (v. 11) must, long before, have granted to David his original "right spirit" and thus caused (from his earliest life?) David's fundamental regeneration.⁹

King David admonished his people in song to experience heart cleansing and spiritual birth: "Who shall ascend into the hill of Jehovah? And who shall stand in his holy place? He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart . . ." (Psalms 24:3-4).

To give emphasis to the idea of complete devotion and surrender of life, the Psalms abound with the expression, "whole heart."¹⁰ The expression, "whole heart," indicated the volitional side of man's psychological, religious experience. Thus, the Psalmist said: "Blessed are they that keep his testimonies. That seek him with the whole heart" (Psalms 119:2).

⁹J. Barton Payne, The Theology of the Older Testament (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1962), pp. 242-243.

¹⁰E.g., Psalms 9:1; 84:5; 111:1; 119:2,10,34,58,69,145; 138:1.

Expressions of exultation and joy. The expressions of joy and exultation found in the Psalms strongly indicate that the religious experience of the Godly Hebrew was not characterized by ceremonial drudgery. The Psalms abound with outbursts of happiness, thanksgiving and praise. Here was revealed the emotional side of man's religious experience. Regarding this tone of the Psalms, Walther Eichrodt said:

When human life is thus surrounded and upheld by God's blessed will, man's basic mood in relation to his task and his destiny is one of joy. As God's pleasure in his works is recounted in psalms which but repeat the praise and jubilation of the morning stars and all the sons of God on the morning of creation, which in fact see the world as a joyous game of God's wisdom, so joy is seen as man's portion from God And God is besought to confirm this gift in days of tribulation, as a sign of his new-given mercy.¹¹

God's salvation in Old Testament times found its warmest expression in the Psalms. The Psalmist viewed inner joy as man's portion from a merciful God. The Psalms do give expression to sorrow, but this is usually in connection with sin.¹² Certain of the imprecatory Psalms reflect a melancholy mood because evildoers seem to prosper.¹³ The dominating tone of the Psalms, however, is that of radiance as the result of God's salvation.

¹¹Walther Eichrodt, Man in the Old Testament (Chicago: Alec R. Allenson Inc., 1956), p. 34.

¹²E.g., Psalms 6; 32; 38; 51; 64:10; 130.

¹³E.g., Psalms 35; 52; 58; 59; 69; 79; 109.

Many of the Psalms reflected an inner happiness that no fate or earthly happiness could replace.¹⁴ A Psalm which is exemplary of this inner happiness is Psalm 23: ". . . My cup runneth over. Surely goodness and lovingkindness shall follow me all the days of my life; And I shall dwell in the house of Jehovah for ever" (Psalms 23:5-6).

The Psalms depicted the poor as well pleasing to God. They were consoled by His divine favor and blessing.¹⁵ Thus, the Psalmist wrote: "Ye put to shame the counsel of the poor, Because Jehovah is his refuge" (Psalms 14:6).

In the face of tribulation at the hands of evildoers, Jehovah gave a promise of mercy and joy.¹⁶ As the Psalmist prayed for deliverance from his enemies, the assurance came to his soul: "And my soul shall be joyful in Jehovah: It shall rejoice in his salvation" (Psalms 35:9).

Trust. The Psalms expressed the attitude of heart which was required under the sacrificial system of worship. This was the attitude of faith in God which was discussed in Chapter III.¹⁷ The Psalms presented

¹⁴ E.g., Psalms 4:8; 16:5 ff.; 17:14 ff.; 23; 36:10; 42:5; 51:14; 63:4; 73:23 ff.; 84:11.

¹⁵ E.g., Psalms 9:13; 10:2,9; 14:6; 25:16; 35:10; 74:21; 86:1; 88:16; 109:22.

¹⁶ E.g., Psalms 5:12; 14:7; 35:9; 40:17; 51; 105.

¹⁷ Cf. ante, pp. 58-60.

faith as complete reliance upon Jehovah. This reliance upon Jehovah was expressed in various ways, but was usually referred to as "trust."¹⁸

Probably the best example of this was found in Psalms 37:3-5:

Trust in Jehovah, and do good; Dwell in the land, and feed on his faithfulness. Delight thyself also in Jehovah; And he will give thee the desires of thy heart. Commit thy way unto Jehovah; Trust also in him, and he will bring it to pass.

In some places, this heart attitude was referred to as "trust in God."¹⁹ In other places, it was referred to as "trust in his word."²⁰ The idea of trust was found in references to God as a "refuge."²¹ Other expressions of trust were "peace of mind,"²² "hoping in God,"²³ and "waiting for his salvation."²⁴ The Psalmist realized that divine life was communicated by grace, but trust was the subjective condition of this communication.

¹⁸Cf., Psalms 9:10; 13:5; 22:4; 25:2; 28:7; 33:21; 40:3; 52:8; 55:23; 56:3,4,11; 62:8,10; 78:22; 84:12; 86:2; 91:2; 143:8.

¹⁹E.g., Psalms 21:7; 31:6,14; 32:10; 37:3,5; 112:7; 115:9,10; 125:1.

²⁰E.g., Psalms 119.

²¹Psalms 46:1; 62:7,8; 71:7; 91:2,9; 94:22; 142:5.

²²E.g., Psalms 4:8; 29:11; 37:11,37; 55:18; 72:7; 119:165.

²³E.g., Psalms 31:24; 33:22; 39:7; 71:5,14; 78:7; 119:49; 130:7; 131:3.

²⁴E.g., Psalms 25:21; 27:14; 37:9,34; 40:1; 62:1,5; 69:3; 130:5.

Temple worship. The Psalms were very closely related to temple worship. Many of the expressions of deep spiritual feeling were experienced in the atmosphere of temple worship. Many of the Psalms were used as musical arrangements in temple worship.²⁵ Numerous musical instruments used in expressing praises to God were mentioned in the Psalms. The Psalmist loved worshipping in God's house so much that he said: "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go unto the house of Jehovah" (Psalms 122:1). Probably no other Psalm so vividly expressed the heart desire of the Psalmist to enter the temple and experience Jehovah's presence than did the 84th Psalm:

How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Jehovah of hosts!
My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of
Jehovah; My heart and my flesh cry out unto the living
God Blessed are they that dwell in thy house: They
will be still praising thee For a day in thy courts
is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper
in the house of my God, Than to dwell in the tents of
wickedness (Psalms 84:1,2,4,10).

How the heart of the devout Hebrew was drawn out to the glorious sanctuary of worship was evident from the many beautiful passages in the Psalms which have become channels of blessing for many ages in the Christian church.²⁶ Robinson commented concerning the worshipful spirit expressed in the Psalms:

²⁵ E.g., Psalms 113-118.

²⁶ E.g., Psalms 27:4-6; 42:1,2,4; 84; 122:1.

In general, and in spite of the great variety of religious moods represented, there is a common acceptance of the temple-worship as the necessary and sufficient means of approach to Yahweh. The passion that has found such noble expression of all time in the 84th Psalm has surely risen through the particular to the universal. The worshipper who could so realise the joy of standing on the threshold of the earthly house of his God has surely learnt to worship God in spirit and in truth.²⁷

Love of God's law. To the Godly Hebrew, the law was a life-giving source. The Psalms revealed a love for the law.²⁸ The Psalmist prayed: "Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold Wondrous things out of thy law" (Psalms 119:18). In such a spirit of prayer, the law of God became a wondrous inner revelation and means of grace. The Psalmist could say of the commandments: "More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold; Sweeter also than honey and the droppings of the honeycomb" (Psalms 19:10). Erich Sauer commented concerning the twofold nature of the law:

Therefore even in the Old Testament the prophets and psalmists exulted (Psa. 32:11; 33:1; 68:4) over the blessings and life-giving effects of the Law. For them the Law was not only exposure of guilt and a leading on to despair (comp. Rom. 7), but "joy of heart" (Psa. 19:8), "delight" (Psa. 119:47; 36:9), "bliss" (Psa. 32:1).²⁹

²⁷ Robinson, The Religious Ideas of the Old Testament, op. cit., p. 151.

²⁸ E.g., Psalms 19:7-13; 36:9; 40:8; 78:1; 93:5; 119.

²⁹ Erich Sauer, The Dawn of World Redemption (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1963), p. 133.

Thus, the law not only served as a conscience pointing out man's sin, but also served as an inner revelation of God's grace. The Psalmist's conclusion to his love for God's law was: "Great peace have they that love thy law" (Psalms 119:165).

Communion with God. The Psalmist experienced a certain degree of communion with God. The Psalmist stated:

Nevertheless I am continually with thee: Thou hast holden my right hand. Thou wilt guide me with thy counsel, And afterward receive me to glory. Whom have I in heaven but thee? And there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee But it is good for me to draw near unto God: I have made the Lord Jehovah my refuge . . . (Psalms 73:23-25,28).

The Psalmist experienced a nearness of God's presence. The presence of God brought comfort, guidance and joy to the human heart. Probably the most vivid expression of God's nearness and presence was found in the 23rd Psalm.

Prayer. An expression of personal communion with God found in the Psalms was prayer. Several prayers are found in the Psalms.³⁰ Concerning the nature of prayer, as found in the Psalms, Edmond Jacob said: ". . . Israelite prayer aims at uniting the will of man with God's will so that the individual, abandoning himself entirely to God, also finds

³⁰E.g., Psalms 51; 90; 130.

himself fully in God."³¹

Some of the prayers found in the Psalms were petitions for forgiveness, help and deliverance. Other prayers were exclamations of praise and thanksgiving. With regard to prayer as communication with God, Robinson wrote:

The spiritual outlook of prayer and praise in the Psalter is very wide. In the first place, there is the consciousness of an adequate self-revelation of God through His providence on the one hand, and His written law on the other

Through the natural world and the written law, then, the worshipper feels that he has access to God; in these, God has come forth to meet him, and to hold communion with him.³²

Vows. As discussed in Chapter III,³³ a vow was a voluntary promise or obligation made to God. Its purpose was to express earnest desire and sincere piety to Jehovah. A vow was a decision made by a devout worshipper and was earnestly pursued by the will. The force of a vow was expressed by the Psalmist: ". . . I will pay thee my vows, Which my lips uttered . . ." (Psalms 66:13-14). Psalms 116 expressed the wholehearted devotion of the worshipper as he paid his vows to Jehovah.

³¹Edmond Jacob, Theology of the Old Testament (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1958), p. 176.

³²Robinson, The Religious Ideas of the Old Testament, op. cit., pp. 152-153.

³³Supra, p. 61.

Praise. One of the most significant words found in the Psalms expressing spiritual thanksgiving is the word, "praise." Gerald B. Stanton defined "praise" as ". . . homage rendered to God by his creatures in worship of his person and in thanksgiving for his favors and blessings."³⁴ Praise expressed the emotional overflow of a grateful heart. With great strength, the angels bless and praise Jehovah (Psalms 103:20). Praise of Jehovah was becoming of ". . . everything that hath breath . . ." (Psalms 150:6). Psalms 113-118 have been called the "Hallel Psalms" and were rendered to God by all of Israel.

Praises were expressed in different ways. They were put to music and played on musical instruments (Psalms 104:33; 150:3-5). Praises were made in public as well as in private (Psalms 96:3). They expressed inward emotion (Psalms 4:7), as well as outward utterance (Psalms 51:15). The word "praise" was most expressive of the subjective experience of the Godly Hebrew. It appears in the Psalms over one hundred times in the American Standard Version of the Bible.

Forgiveness of sins. The Godly Hebrew in Old Testament times had an inward knowledge of sins forgiven. Thus, the Psalmist could exclaim: ". . . there is forgiveness with thee, That thou mayest be

³⁴Gerald B. Stanton, "Praise," Baker's Dictionary of Theology (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1960), p. 412.

feared" (Psalms 130:4). The Psalmist's own testimony of forgiveness is found in Psalms 32:5: "I acknowledged my sin unto thee, And mine iniquity did I not hide: I said, I will confess my transgressions unto Jehovah; And thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin." Other expressions of forgiveness are found in the Psalms.³⁵

The Hebrew word nasa which is found in the Psalms and is translated "forgiveness" means "to lift up or away."³⁶ This conveyed the idea of removal of sins. Concerning the Old Testament experience of forgiveness, Gustav F. Oehler said:

Forgiveness of sins is an act which God performs for His name's sake, as it is expressed [in Psalms] lxxix. 9. Hence the Old Testament speaks not only of the restlessness of him who conceals his sins, or forgives himself, but also of the peace of him who is absolved from sin by the verdict of God. To this subject belongs the whole of Ps. xxxii. and Prov. xxviii. 13, with which must be connected the passages in which the mercy of God toward contrite and humble hearts is spoken of, Ps. li., xxxiv., xix., etc.³⁷

IV. OTHER WISDOM LITERATURE

The wisdom literature of Proverbs and Ecclesiastes was studied

³⁵ E.g., Psalms 25:18; 85:2; 99:8.

³⁶ Robert Young, Analytical Concordance to the Bible (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1956), p. 367.

³⁷ Gustav Friedrich Oehler, Theology of the Old Testament (New York: Funk & Wagnalls Company, 1883), p. 462.

in areas pertaining to personal, religious experience.

Personal morality in Proverbs. The book of Proverbs depicted the Godly Hebrew as having a high quality of personal morality. Proverbs 14:27 reads: "The fear of Jehovah is a fountain of life" From the fear of Jehovah emanated the virtues characteristic of genuine morality. The fear of Jehovah was the taproot of all personal morality according to the book of Proverbs.³⁸

Some of the virtues of a moral life set forth in this book were: humility,³⁹ gentleness,⁴⁰ pity,⁴¹ longsuffering,⁴² filial affection,⁴³ truthfulness,⁴⁴ and mercy.⁴⁵ It was wrong to be unjust,⁴⁶ deceitful,⁴⁷ drunken,⁴⁸ unchaste,⁴⁹ proud⁵⁰ and revengeful.⁵¹ These were some of

³⁸E.g., Proverbs 14:2,26; 15:16; 19:23.

³⁹E.g., Proverbs 18:12; 22:4.

⁴⁰E.g., Proverbs 11:25; 14:31; 17:5; 19:17; 21:13; 22:9.

⁴¹E.g., Proverbs 14:21. ⁴²E.g., Proverbs 14:29; 19:11.

⁴³E.g., Proverbs 19:26; 20:20.

⁴⁴E.g., Proverbs 10:18; 12:17,19.

⁴⁵E.g., Proverbs 14:22; 16:6.

⁴⁶E.g., Proverbs 18:5. ⁴⁷E.g., Proverbs 11:1; 20:10,23.

⁴⁸E.g., Proverbs 20:1. ⁴⁹E.g., Proverbs 22:14.

⁵⁰E.g., Proverbs 11:2; 13:10; 16:5,18; 21:4.

⁵¹E.g., Proverbs 20:22.

the characteristics of a high moral life as found in Proverbs.

The book of Proverbs also spoke of an inner happiness or quality of life which no earthly happiness could replace. It was recorded in Proverbs 8:35: ". . . For whoso findeth me findeth life, And shall obtain favor of Jehovah." This quality of life was sometimes referred to as a "fountain of life."⁵²

Ecclesiastes. The book of Ecclesiastes is one of the most perplexing books in the Old Testament. In general, the book dealt with the question: "What is the meaning of life?" At times, the author seemed pessimistic and agnostic.

With regard to this study, the author of Ecclesiastes--therein referred to as the "preacher"--seemed to give great emphasis to his personal experience. In his quest for reality and meaning to life, he pursued wisdom, pleasure, good works, wealth and God. His pessimistic conclusion was that all was vanity. However, he did seem to arrive at a certain conclusion when he summed up his writing by saying: ". . . Fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man" (Ecclesiastes 12:13).

There were certain things that needed to be clarified in attempting to understand the "preacher's" relationship to God. The book used the name "Elohim," rather than "Jehovah," as the divine name. Thus, the author

⁵²E.g., Proverbs 13:14; 14:27.

was dealing with his relationship to God as Creator rather than as Redeemer. His search for God was apart from the sacrificial means of forgiveness and atonement as set forth in Leviticus. Rather, his search seemed to be on the basis of God as Creator through natural revelation. The recurring phrase, "under the sun," seemed to indicate that the author was speaking from the standpoint of general rather than special revelation. The book seemed to reveal man's best search for God apart from special revelation.⁵³

Thus, the book of Ecclesiastes did not reveal a personal relationship between God and man, but did reveal man's search apart from Jehovah's supernatural plan.

V. SUMMARY

The summary of the information found in the poetic and wisdom literature was as follows:

1. The usage of the book of Job in this study was a problem because of the questions of dating and authorship.

Job possessed a very high standard of morality. His manner of life demonstrated integrity, sincerity and consistency.

In the areas of suffering and blessing, Job was dealt with as an individual--set apart from any large congregation of Israel.

⁵³Wick Broomall, "Ecclesiastes," The Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1963), p. 232.

Job experienced personal communion with God through spiritual insight, theophany and prayer.

Job's psychological experience revealed intellectual inquiry into the reasoning for his suffering.

2. The book of Psalms was very expressive of subjective, religious experience. At times, the Psalms gave vent to exaggerated, emotional outbursts. The authors of the Psalms usually wrote as individuals but sometimes embodied the feelings of the Israelitish community in their writings.

The concept of a changed heart was found in the Psalms. The word "heart" generally referred to the focus of man's thoughts, passions, motives and conscience. Total devotion of the heart to Jehovah was many times referred to as the "whole heart."

The Psalms abound with expressions of radiance and joy. These expressions were clues to man's experiential relationship to God.

The idea of faith in God as a basis for salvation was strongly evident in the Psalms. It was usually expressed as trust.

The temple was a place where true worship was experienced. Many Psalms were used as musical arrangements. The temple was a place of blessing for the devout worshipper.

The Psalmist expressed a love for and a devotion to the law of God.

The Psalms conveyed a sense of God's nearness.

Prayer was a means of communication with God in the Psalms. Some of the prayers were petitions, while others were exclamations of praise and thanksgiving.

The Psalmist referred to vows as strong expressions of will.

The Psalms teem with exclamations of praise.

A knowledge of forgiven sins was indicated in the Psalms. The Hebrew word nasa used for forgiveness meant to "lift up or away."

3. Personal morality and religious quest were studied in the wisdom literature.

The book of Proverbs called attention to a high standard of personal morality indicative of a religious life.

The book of Ecclesiastes recorded the experience of a man searching for meaning to life. It revealed a man's search for God with the light of general revelation. It does not reveal a personal relationship with God through supernatural revelation as was found in other parts of the Old Testament.

CHAPTER V

THE HISTORIC AND PROPHETIC LITERATURE

I. INTRODUCTION

This chapter built further upon the foundation laid in Chapter III. The historic and prophetic literature was surveyed for a fuller revelation of God's redemptive plan for man. A study was made of the prophetic consciousness of God and the increasing emphasis upon individual piety. A brief summary was made of the religious experiences of David and some of the prophets. The concept of a moral change of heart was examined. The development and usage of the law was traced. Finally, the modes of God's revelation to man were examined.

II. THE PROPHETIC CONSCIOUSNESS

God's unfolding revelation. God has revealed Himself in the course of human events. The Bible is a record of God's saving acts to man. From the first dark day of man's sin, God has sought to save man. Eric C. Rust said:

In the movement of salvation history the hidden purpose of God is disclosed as it is actualized. It can be grasped only as it becomes operative in a man's own personality,

as demonstrated by the power of the Spirit.¹

As time progressed, more and more has the Spirit of God revealed God's infinite wisdom in salvation to His children. This has been done gradually in the course of history. Concerning this, Erich Sauer wrote:

But this His final goal--to bring together all things under one Head (Eph. 1:10)--God did not reveal at once and to its full extent Only by a gradual [italics in the original] leading on has God made known His plans in the history of salvation

Nor did this leading on take the form of a uniform progressive advance--comparable to an ascending straight line; but in the form of sections of time with fixed boundaries, like steps of a staircase leading upward.²

The prophetic ministry was a step in God's unfolding revelation. It was a channel of divine revelation to a fuller understanding of the mystery of God in salvation. The prophets were great lights, but they pointed to a still greater light--the coming of the Messiah.

The nature of the prophetic experience. The experiences of the prophets in receiving and speaking divine revelation have been referred to as the "prophetic consciousness" or the "prophetic witness." The consciousness of the immediate inspiration of Jehovah gradually brought a new meaning

¹Eric C. Rust, *Salvation History* (Richmond, Virginia: John Knox Press, 1962), p. 23.

²Erich Sauer, *The Dawn of World Redemption* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1963), p. 192.

into religion. The prophetic pronouncements carried vitality and authority.

The prophetic consciousness emerged with the oral prophets of the early kingdom period. Samuel experienced the call of Jehovah in a vision when he was a boy (I Samuel 3:10-14). Throughout his ministry, Samuel was conscious of the immediate presence of Jehovah.³ Nathan, the prophet to David and Solomon, received direct visions and communications from Jehovah.⁴ Elijah's consciousness of Jehovah was revealed in the recurring statement: "And the word of Jehovah came unto him."⁵ Elisha, who was referred to as "the man of God," saw the mighty acts of God in answer to his prayers.⁶ The prophetic consciousness seemed to reach its pinnacle with the writing prophets as many of them prefaced their pronouncements with "Thus saith the Lord."

What was the nature of the prophetic experience in receiving this immediate revelation? Scholars have offered various explanations. J. B. Pratt offered a psychological explanation:

. . . many of the convictions of the prophets are not to be accounted for by conscious reasoning, but seem to be rather matters of religious feeling or intuition. Still oftener does this seem to be the case with their particular pronouncements. If we may trust their statements at all, we must admit that a great many of their declarations were not

³E.g., I Samuel 3:21; 7:9; 8:6-7.

⁴E.g., II Samuel 7:4, 17; 12:1.

⁵E.g., I Kings 17:2, 8; 18:1.

⁶E.g., II Kings 6:17-19.

consciously reasoned to, but came full-formed into their minds, and bear with them that sense of externality which Professor James has shown to be so often characteristic of the productions of the subconscious. The prophets did not so much reason as hear and see; they felt themselves to be merely the channels through which a greater Consciousness with which they made connections expressed itself. Personally they considered themselves but passive instruments unable to resist this greater will--"The Lord Yahweh hath spoken, who can but prophesy?"⁷

Thus, Pratt would say that the prophets were passive channels as the Divine will broke into their consciousness. The revelations they received were external to the reasonings of their own minds. The Old Testament Scriptures recorded conditions with which the prophetic vision was received. In some cases, the prophet seemed to fall into a sleep which made him outwardly insensible (Daniel 8:18; 10:19). The seer's external eyes were closed while his internal eyes were opened (Numbers 24:4,15). At times, this state was enhanced by great rapture (Ezekiel 8:1-3; 11:1). However, Gustav F. Oehler felt that such prophetic trances were exceptional cases. He likened the prophetic consciousness to prayer:

But in far the greater number of cases [italics in the original] we must evidently conceive of the state in which the prophet receives a revelation as merely one of profound self-introversion and collectedness of mind in a state of perfect wakefulness [italics in the original]. This prophetic state is most nearly related to communion with God in prayer [italics in the original]. It should be carefully noted that

⁷ James Bissett Pratt, The Psychology of Religious Belief (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1907), p. 141.

the same expression which is generally used in the Old Testament for the hearing of prayer, viz. that God answers [italics in the original] is also frequently applied to prophetic revelation (e.g. [italics in the original] in Mic. iii. 7, Hab. ii. 1 sq., Jer. xxiii. 35, and other passages). When suddenly, at once and with full certainty, the conviction of the Divine audience enters the soul of the petitioner as an inwardly perceived answer, such a conviction is entirely analogous to the manner in which the word of God came to the prophets; and hence we find that many supplicatory psalms conclude in a strain quite prophetic. And as the Divine answer presupposes a request on the part of the petitioner, so also do we find the prophets in certain cases bringing before God in prayer the matters concerning which they desire Divine revelation (Jer. xxxii. 16, xlii. 4, Hab. i., Dan. ix. 4 sqq.)⁸

Oehler believed that the psychical form of prophecy was that of inward intuition. He believed it to be an intuition whereby revelation was directly given, and not that produced by the prophet's own reasoning power.⁹

Many times high-pitched emotion accompanied the prophet's experience. However, this did not mean that the prophetic utterances were the result of irrational and uncontrolled emotion. Emotion was a secondary factor in the prophetic experience as stated by Oehler:

They were stirred by fear and hope, filled with sorrow and joy, and this as intensely as if the matter they predicted were the subject of their own experience. But that in such cases the frame of mind was of secondary importance [italics in the original] , that it was produced by the objective influence of the Divine Spirit, is evident

⁸ Gustav Friedrich Oehler, Theology of the Old Testament (New York: Funk & Wagnalls Company, 1883), p. 479.

⁹ Ibid., p. 475.

especially from the circumstance that the feeling natural to the prophet was frequently exchanged [*italics in the original*] for just its opposite. Thus the emotion natural to a prophet when announcing judgments against the enemies of his country is evidently that of joy. Nevertheless passages are found in which the prophet is so carried away by his own vivid realization of the woes which he announces, as to be full of sorrow and lamentation.¹⁰

The prophets had a real consciousness of the presence of God.

Their pronouncements were the result of the inspiration of the Divine Spirit.

God was not conceived as distant and removed from them. The very presence of God was seen by the inner eyes of the prophets. To express this nearness of God, the prophets had to resort to symbols. A. B.

Davidson said:

It is difficult to realise what idea the Old Testament prophets had of this--how they conceived Jehovah present. They are obliged to adopt figures. His glory is seen, and physical images are employed to body out the spiritual ideas. The most brilliant pictures are in the second half of Isaiah.¹¹

The prophetic consciousness seemed to be a real manifestation of the Spirit of God in the lives of chosen vessels. The prophets were used to give a fuller revelation of God's plan of salvation.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ A. B. Davidson, The Theology of the Old Testament (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1910), p. 262.

III. THE NEW INDIVIDUALISM

The emergence of the individual. Through the ministry of the prophets, the individual took on new meaning and significance. The emphasis which previously had been given to national religion was now shifted to the individual worshipper. In probably no place was this individualizing tendency so pronounced as in Ezekiel, chapters 18 and 33. The transition was vividly seen in Ezekiel 18:1-4:

The word of Jehovah came unto me again saying, What mean ye, that ye use this proverb concerning the land of Israel, saying, The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge? As I live, saith the Lord Jehovah, ye shall not have occasion any more to use this proverb in Israel. Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, it shall die.

Ezekiel disentangled the individual from the people as a mass. The individual would no longer suffer because of his father's sins, but rather because of his own sins. He became personally liable to God. The individual had moral freedom, as described by Davidson:

. . . the prophet goes much further than this, and asserts for the individual a moral freedom, in virtue of which he can break with his own past and deliver himself from its consequences. He is not under the ban [italics in the original] of the past. There is an ego [italics in the original], an I [italics in the original] in man, possessed of moral freedom, which can rise above even that which may be called nature in him, and not only break with it, but take the rule of it, and shake off its moral shackles,

and, in the favour of God, redeem himself from its consequences.¹²

Thus, the individual became the unit before God rather than the nation. Many of the pronouncements by the prophets were directed to the nation, but they were taken home by individuals.

Reasons for the elevation of the individual. Why did the individual emerge into such prominence under the ministry of the prophets? There were probably many reasons. It was probably a gradual transition which took many years. However, there were certain factors which contributed heavily to it.

The dynamic religious experiences of the prophets led to a greater emphasis in their teachings upon personalized religion. Some of their most vital religious experiences were realized apart from the established form of worship. In many cases, the prophets saw the perversions present in the established, religious ceremonies.¹³ Malachi directed his message against the degenerate priesthood who administered meaningless sacrifices. His warning from Jehovah was: ". . . I have no pleasure in you, saith Jehovah of hosts, neither will I accept an offering at your hand" (Malachi 1:10). Likewise, Amos spoke out against the corruption of the religious

¹²Ibid., p. 358.

¹³E.g., Isaiah 1:11; Jeremiah 6:20.

system:

I hate, I despise your feasts, and I will take no delight in your solemn assemblies. Yea, though ye offer me your burnt-offerings and meal-offerings, I will not accept them; neither will I regard the peace-offerings of your fat beasts. Take thou away from me the noise of thy songs; for I will not hear the melody of thy viols (Amos 5:21-23).

Because of the breakdown of the system of mass worship, the prophets' attention turned to individual worship. People began worshipping in smaller groups. This gave rise to the synagogue, as explained by Pratt:

The establishment of the synagogue had much to do in spreading among the people this new form of religious experience; for in these less formal gatherings of Yahweh's people the devout worshipper could himself take part in the service, without the intervention of priest or bloody victim, and thus felt a direct and personal relation to his God which his ancestors had never conceived.¹⁴

Another reason for the emergence of the individual was the dissolution of the nation. Davidson said:

But at all events the dissolution of the state as a religious unit naturally brought into prominence the standing of the individual towards God. The extreme hardships also borne by many pious men at this period forced upon men's thoughts the relation of evil in God's providence to sin and to righteousness.¹⁵

The ceremonial system of mass worship crumbled when Israel and Judah were conquered by heathen nations. Great masses of people were exiled

¹⁴Pratt, op. cit., p. 144.

¹⁵Davidson, op. cit., p. 285.

into surroundings very unfavorable to Hebrew worship. Thus, the pious Hebrew had to worship God as best he knew how apart from ceremonial worship. Very vivid descriptions of individual worship under such unfavorable circumstances were recorded in the book of Daniel.¹⁶

The degree of individual experience. To what extent did the individual Hebrew worshipper enter into a subjective experience similar to that of the prophets? Jehovah's promise was:

And ye shall call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart. And I will be found of you, saith Jehovah . . . (Jeremiah 29:12-14).

However, scholars have offered their opinions as to what they felt was the degree of subjective experience entered into by the pious Hebrew worshipper.

H. Wheeler Robinson felt that the religious experience of the prophets was beyond that generally experienced by the people. The demands of personal religion which were made by direct relation to God were too high for the common worshipper. Robinson believed that the law, with its expanding demands in personal life, was a compromise between personal and sacramental worship for the common worshipper.¹⁷

Although Walther Eichrodt thought the individual worshipper

¹⁶E.g., Daniel 3:8-30.

¹⁷H. Wheeler Robinson, The Religious Ideas of the Old Testament (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1915), pp. 128-129.

achieved quite a high religious experience, he did not believe that it led to isolation and mysticism. He said:

Nor on the other hand is it possible for the individual to become shut up in himself, and to achieve a private and isolated relation between God and the soul. Even the powerful summons to the individual which is found in the prophetic proclamation, and which sets the individual, in certain circumstances, quite alone, in opposition to the whole people, never for one moment questioned the fact that God's action is directed towards a community and seeks the individual as a member of this community. The intensive relation of the individual life to God, therefore, does not lead to ascetic forms of life which separate the homo religiosus [italics in the original], the religious virtuoso, from the crowd, and make concentration on his high goal easier for him.¹⁸

Scripture did record certain examples of individuals who did achieve a very high experience of personal devotion to Jehovah. Daniel, chapter 3, recorded the experiences of three Godly Hebrews (Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego) as they served Jehovah and experienced His mighty deliverance. Another notable example of a deep religious experience was Nehemiah's. Nehemiah was a layman whose prayer life revealed his close union with Jehovah (Nehemiah 1; 4:4-6).

IV. PERSONAL EXPERIENCES

The historic and prophetic literature recorded some vital

¹⁸ Walther Eichrodt, Man in the Old Testament (Chicago: Alec R. Allenson Inc., 1956), p. 37.

religious experiences. It was recognized that these experiences were probably not generally representative of the Hebrew people. However, these experiences gave insight into the very personal relationship which existed between some individuals and God.

David. David, the son of Jesse, was a shepherd boy. When David was a young lad, he was chosen of God to be king. Samuel was sent to anoint David as king and the Scripture recorded: ". . . the Spirit of Jehovah came mightily upon David from that day forward" (I Samuel 16:13). As evidence of God's Spirit being upon him, David slew the giant Philistine leader, Goliath. After he became king, David united all of the tribes of Israel into one nation. All of Israel's enemies were subdued.

David's devotion to Jehovah seemed to increase with his passing years. When David brought the ark of the covenant to Jerusalem, he worshipped Jehovah with all of his might (II Samuel 6). As an expression of his love for Jehovah, David desired to build a house for the ark (II Samuel 7). David was not permitted to build such a house, but he was assured that his kingdom would be established forever (II Samuel 7:16).

David committed a great sin by taking Bathsheba as his wife and having her husband slain in battle. David confessed this sin, and judgment was pronounced upon him. Psalm 51 recorded David's penitential prayer for forgiveness. David's latter days were filled with trouble as several insurrections were raised against his kingdom.

The inner experience of David's heart was best seen in his prayers and Psalms. The many recorded prayers of David revealed his close fellowship with Jehovah. David's devotion to Him was expressed in his Psalm recorded in II Samuel 22:2-3:

Jehovah is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer,
even mine; God, my rock, in him will I take refuge; My
shield, and the horn of my salvation, my high tower, and
my refuge; My saviour, thou savest me from violence.

Oehler pointed to David as one of the most significant characters in the Old Testament because of his spiritual development:

It is not, however, solely in virtue of his theocratic position, but also by reason of his personal religious development [italics in the original], that David is an important character in the history of the Old Testament. The contrast between sin and grace [italics in the original], which it is the object of the paedagogy of the law to bring to light, appeared in all its sharpness in his inner life; and that life brings to view, as its external course advanced in a state of continual conflict, both the deep degradation of the fallen, sin-burdened man, and the elevation of a spirit richly endowed with Divine grace. To a greater degree than any other Old Testament character, he experienced the restlessness and desolation of soul burdened with the consciousness of guilt, the longing after reconciliation with God, the struggle after purity and renovation of heart, the joy of forgiven sin, the heroic, all-conquering power of confidence in God, the ardent love of a gracious heart for God; and has given in his Psalms [italics in the original] imperishable testimony as to what is the fruit of the law and what [is] the fruit of faith in man.¹⁹

The psychological experience of David was characterized by deep

¹⁹ Oehler, op. cit., p. 373.

emotion. It ranged from the very heights of joy to the very depths of sorrow. His will to serve and praise Jehovah resulted in a deep confidence in God as the source of his salvation. In his many recorded prayers and Psalms, David gave expression and testimony to God's sufficiency.

Isaiah. The primary religious experience of Isaiah was recorded in Isaiah 6:1-13. This experience took the form of a vision in which Isaiah confronted God. The setting of the vision was as follows:

Isaiah is outside, near the altar in front of the temple. The doors are supposed to open, and the veil hiding the Holy of Holies to be withdrawn, unfolding to his view a vision of God represented as an Eastern monarch, attended by seraphim as His ministers of state (I Kings 22.19), and with a robe and following train (a badge of dignity in the East), which filled the temple.²⁰

With the physical properties of the Jewish temple before him, Isaiah envisioned Jehovah in His temple. This physical setting was probably the foundation upon which the spiritual dimensions of his vision were built.

Psychologically, Isaiah's experience was characterized by deep emotion. He was lifted to great heights of feeling as he saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, "high and lifted up" (Isaiah 6:1). In contrast, he experienced feelings of inferiority and personal unworthiness as he said: "Woe is me! for I am undone" (Isaiah 6:5).

²⁰ Commentary on the Whole Bible (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, [n.d.]), p. 435.

Isaiah's intellect was instrumental in giving representation to the spiritual reality which he saw. He made use of such symbols as seraphim, smoke and a live (fiery) coal. These symbols were representations of what Isaiah saw with spiritual eyes.

Isaiah's experience also involved a commitment of his will. After experiencing forgiveness and a sense of worthiness as a messenger of Jehovah, he committed his whole being to the service of Jehovah by saying: "Here am I: send me" (Isaiah 6:8).

Ezekiel. Ezekiel was the Hebrew prophet of the exile. He prophesied during the fall of Jerusalem and also while in exile in Babylon. Ezekiel was reared in the priestly order.

Ezekiel's vision of his calling as a prophet was recorded in Ezekiel, chapters 1-3. The vision occurred while he was by the river Chebar as a Babylonian captive. In this vision, Ezekiel saw four heavenly creatures. Four wheels appeared upon the earth and moved beside the creatures. Above these creatures was a firmament. Above the firmament appeared the likeness of a throne upon which appeared the likeness of the glory of God. The Spirit entered into Ezekiel and spoke to him. Ezekiel was to go to the rebellious household of Israel and bear Jehovah's message to them. The prophet was given a roll to eat which contained the message which he was to deliver to Israel.

Ezekiel experienced several recorded visions. His visions were characterized by a trance which took him out of the physical realm and lifted him into the spiritual realm. This was usually referred to as: "The Spirit lifted me up"²¹ Various explanations have been offered concerning the psychological and physical states of Ezekiel when he received these visions. Some have said that Ezekiel experienced catalepsy, which is a state of abnormal muscular rigidity with loss of volition and feeling.²²

Rust proposed that Ezekiel experienced "concentration ecstasy:"

. . . there is a concentration upon a specific feeling or idea, such that the normal consciousness is blotted out and even sense experience may cease. The theistic distance between God and man is preserved in such an experience. The prophet is possessed by an overmastering emotion accompanied by obsession with one idea or by abnormal stimulation of some bodily sense. So exclusive and channeled is the experience that other bodily functions cease. The instances of aphasia in the life of Ezekiel illustrate this.²³

Whatever psychological or physical explanations have been offered concerning Ezekiel's experience, certain things were evident. Ezekiel experienced spiritual reality and was, thus, overwhelmed with great emotion. His intellect gave representation by means of symbols to

²¹E.g., Ezekiel 3:12,14; 8:3; 11:1,24; 37:1; 43:5.

²²John B. Graybill, "Ezekiel," The Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1963), p. 270.

²³Rust, op. cit., p. 63.

the spiritual reality which he saw. That this was a symbolic expression of spiritual reality was evident from the prophet's repeated use of the expressions "a likeness of" and "as the appearance of."²⁴ That Ezekiel experienced Divine revelation was evident from his recurring statement: "The hand of the Lord was upon me."²⁵

Jeremiah. Jeremiah was born into the priestly family of Anathoth. He was called to prophesy in the thirteenth year of King Josiah. Jeremiah's task as a prophet was most heartbreaking. He saw his nation pass from the happy, prosperous conditions under Josiah to its state of iniquity under the last four godless kings. He saw the invasion of the Babylonians and the final destruction of Jerusalem.

Jeremiah's calling to be a prophet was very similar to that of Isaiah's. The word of Jehovah came to Jeremiah informing him that he had been set aside as a prophet to the nations. Jeremiah immediately felt a sense of personal unworthiness for the task and pleaded that he was but a child. Jehovah assured Jeremiah of His presence and put forth His hand and touched the prophet's lips. In this way, He assured the prophet that He had put His message in the prophet's mouth. From that day forward, Jeremiah experienced the immediate presence of Jehovah in his ministry; and his words

²⁴E.g., Ezekiel 1:5, 10, 13, 14, 16, 26.

²⁵E.g., Ezekiel 3:22; 8:1; 37:1; 40:1.

were usually prefaced with: "For thus saith Jehovah" or "The word came to Jeremiah from Jehovah."²⁶

The psychological experience of Jeremiah was characterized by deep emotion. He was often called the "weeping prophet." Davidson gave some insight into the nature of Jeremiah's experience:

First there was the isolation of the prophet. He felt himself, especially in opposition to the false prophets, the only true man in the State. This isolation, combined with his singular tendency to introspection and self-analysis, enables us to see his mind better than we see that of any other prophet. It was perhaps his isolation that compelled him to practise introspection; it required him to analyse his own mind, and to bring clearly before himself his relation to Jehovah, and perceive wherein the essence of that relation lay. And all this being the case of an individual, it established the position of the individual once for all. Secondly, another thing led to the same result, namely, his conception of Jehovah. Jehovah is to him a purely ethical being, and consequently His relation to the subject in fellowship with Him is a purely inward one. It must, therefore, be a relation to the individual mind. And, conversely, the service rendered to Him must be a service of the mind.²⁷

Daniel. In the third year of Jehoiakim, Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem and carried many people to Babylon, including Daniel. Daniel was a young lad who was selected for the king's service. He was a devoted follower of God when he was taken into captivity. He proved his devotion by

²⁶E.g., Jeremiah 1:13; 2:1; 3:6, 11; 4:27; 5:14; 6:9, 16, 22; 7:1, 21; 8:1.

²⁷Davidson, op. cit., p. 363.

refusing the profaned food set before him by the king. God gave Daniel "knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom" as well as "understanding in all visions and dreams" (Daniel 1:17). In a vision, God revealed to Daniel the meaning of the king's dream. Daniel found favor with the king because of the interpretation. After the fall of the Babylonian empire, Daniel received high honors in the Medo-Persian State. The real proof of his personal devotion to Jehovah was seen when certain jealous persons induced the king to sign a decree that anyone offering a petition to God within a thirty-day period should be thrown into a den of lions. Daniel continued to kneel and pray three times a day (Daniel 6:10). He was thrown into the lions' den but was protected from harm by an angel of God. Daniel spent his remaining years in the king's service and was much used of God in prophesying coming events.

The closeness of Daniel's walk with God was best seen in his unswerving devotion and trust in God. He obediently walked in the commandments of God. He was obedient to God even in the face of death. Daniel's experience revealed the prominence of his will and determination in serving God.

The personal communion between God and Daniel was best seen in his personal prayer life. Three times a day Daniel prayed to God. The largeness of Daniel's heart was seen in his intercessory prayer on behalf of himself and Israel (Daniel 9). This prayer was such an overwhelming

experience that Daniel was visited by the angel Gabriel:

And he instructed me and talked with me, and said, O Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee wisdom and understanding. At the beginning of thy supplications the commandment went forth, and I am come to tell thee; for thou art greatly beloved; therefore consider the matter, and understand the version (Daniel 9:22-23).

Daniel's visions were also overpowering, emotional experiences.

After one vision, it was recorded that he "fainted and was sick certain days" (Daniel 8:27).

V. THE CONCEPT OF A CHANGED HEART

There was considerable teaching by the prophets concerning a moral change of heart. They taught that this change was an ethical act whereby God's holiness was realized in the human heart. As was stated earlier,²⁸ the heart is the focus of man's inner life and the source of his motives, passions, thoughts and conscience.

A moral change. The cry of the prophets was for the individual to "turn."²⁹ The plea for the heart to turn to Jehovah was succinctly set forth by Joel when he said:

Yet even now, saith Jehovah, turn ye unto me with all

²⁸Supra, p. 74.

²⁹E.g., Isaiah 59:20; Jeremiah 3:14; 26:3; Ezekiel 14:6; 18:30; Hosea 12:6; Jonah 3:8; Zechariah 1:3.

your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning: and rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto Jehovah your God; for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abundant in lovingkindness, and repenteth him of the evil (Joel 2:12-13).

The prophet, Joel, pleaded for a turning to the grace, mercy and lovingkindness of Jehovah. It was a moral change. The Hebrew words for "turn" were shub or shubu which mean "to turn back."³⁰ This indicated a change of direction on the part of the individual's life. The significance of this plea "to turn" was described by Eichrodt:

The cry shubu [*italics in the original*] --"Turn!"--sounds through this whole period as one of the basic words of the prophetic proclamation, and this asks of the individual a conscious decision against the constraint of the collective will and against the pressure of a cultural development encouraged by the whole external situation the individual is torn from his comfortable position in the religious life of the community and summoned to use his own judgment and make his own decisive contribution. Most remarkable in this connexion are the new form and forceful concentration of the relation with God, which had hitherto simply been described as the fear of God, and is now expressed in words like faith, love, thankfulness, and knowledge of God, which are filled with spiritual tension.³¹

The prophets' emphasis was a turning away from the established acts of external worship. They directed attention toward the internal condition of the heart. Thus, their watch cry was: "not sacrifice but

³⁰Robert Young, Analytical Concordance to the Bible (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1956), p. 1006.

³¹Eichrodt, op. cit., p. 21.

obedience."³² Hosea said: "For I desire goodness, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt-offerings" (Hosea 6:6). The clear implication of the prophet was that Jehovah desired a moral change within the heart, rather than outward acts of worship.

Sanctification. The word "sanctification" or "sanctified" in Old Testament usage had two specific meanings. In some cases, it merely referred to a holiness of separation. This meant a setting apart of some physical object or person for holy use. Such was the case of sanctifying offerings as stated in Exodus 29:27.

The other meaning of sanctification in the Old Testament was that of moral change. The prophet Isaiah indicated that righteousness and justice were the consequences of sanctification (Isaiah 1:25-27; 4:3; 5:16).

J. Barton Payne said:

. . . sanctification may also describe that gracious, moral activity of God in the hearts of His own, by which he "cleanses you from all your iniquities" (Ezek. 36:33). Thus Isaiah 45:25, which was quoted in reference to justification--"In Yahweh shall Israel be justified"--goes beyond even the above-mentioned teaching on imputed righteousness. For the verb of the sentence, *sādhag* [italics in the original], is here employed in its simple (qal) stem and means, literally, "In Yahweh shall all the seed of Israel be righteous [italics in the original]".³³

³²E.g., I Samuel 15:22; Amos 5:21-24; Isaiah 1:1-11; Jeremiah 7:21-23.

³³J. Barton Payne, The Theology of the Older Testament (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1962), p. 417.

George Allen Turner further amplified the meaning of sanctification as a moral change within the human heart:

While holiness describes the state or condition of godlikeness, sanctification indicates the transfer of the quality of holiness from deity to others. It includes both the human act of dedication and the divine act of hallowing whether cultic or ethical.³⁴

The nature of heart-change. It was difficult to give the exact nature of the experience of conversion in the Old Testament. The subjective nature of the experience was expressed by feelings of joy, love, praise and thanksgiving. Oehler believed this heart-change was a state of justification whereby man received "somewhat of the assistance of that Divine Spirit who creates willingness in man."³⁵

Oehler cites Rougemont's Christus und seine Zeugen:

. . . under the Old Testament conversion was indeed reached as a moral change, but not regeneration as a new creation. It is true that spiritual energies were already active within the psychical province; but even the very highest operation of the Divine Spirit in the Old Testament, viz. the gift of prophecy, continued to be, as we shall soon see, an extraordinary condition, and one which even interfered in a violent manner with the ordinary course of its possessor's life.³⁶

The primary difference between the experience of conversion in the Old Testament as compared with the New Testament seemed to be the

³⁴George Allen Turner, The More Excellent Way (Winona Lake, Indiana: Light and Life Press, 1956), p. 28.

³⁵Oehler, op. cit., p. 462.

³⁶Ibid.

extent of operation of the Divine Spirit. Thus, the prophets looked toward a day when God's grace would be more fully revealed in the hearts of believers by His Spirit. Jeremiah prophesied:

Behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel; and with the house of Judah But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith Jehovah: I will put my law in their inward parts, and in their heart will I write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people (Jeremiah 31:31,33).

Ezekiel also prophesied concerning the fuller revelation of God's grace that was forthcoming:

And I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep mine ordinances, and do them (Ezekiel 36:25-27).

Evidences of heart-change. Many times the prophets seemed to be isolated cases of genuine spiritual change. Their writings gave evidence to the conversion they experienced. However, there was evidence that the masses of people also experienced spiritual renewal. There were several accounts in the Old Testament where the hearts of the larger community of Israel were revived.³⁷ Only two of these accounts were cited.

³⁷ E.g., I Samuel 7; II Samuel 6:12-23; I Kings 8; II Kings 11:17-21; 12:1-16; 18:1-12; 22:1-23:27; II Chronicles 5:1-7:11; 17:1-7; 19:4-11; Ezra 3:1-13.

A large revival of the nation of Judah was recorded in II Chronicles 15:8-19. King Asa's heart was moved by the words of the prophet Oded. He gathered his people together in the fifteenth year of his reign. They made sacrifice unto Jehovah and entered into a covenant to seek Jehovah with all their hearts and souls. This act of entering into a covenant was accompanied by shouts, music of instruments and great rejoicing of heart. The abominations were removed from the lands of Judah and Benjamin, and the altar of Jehovah was renewed. The Scripture records that the people ". . . sought him with their whole desire; and he was found of them: and Jehovah gave them rest round about" (II Chronicles 15:15). Thus, Jehovah honored the wholehearted commitment of a large number of people.

Another large-scale revival was recorded in Nehemiah 8:1-10:39. Many of the Hebrew people had returned to Palestine after the exile. Ezra, the priest, read the book of the law to a large assembly of men and women. The Levites caused the people to understand what was read. The people responded by bowing their heads and worshipping Jehovah. So moving was this experience that the people wept and mourned. They then kept the feast of Tabernacles according to the Mosaic law. At the end of this feast, the people again assembled for a time of confessing sin and worshipping God. They exalted and praised the name of Jehovah. A covenant was made to walk in God's law and observe and do all of God's statutes. This covenant was sealed by all of the leaders of the people. As a result of this covenant,

the people observed the Sabbath, brought their first fruits and tithes to the house of God and worshipped Jehovah with great joy. These acts were evidences of the change of heart that came upon this large assembly of people.

VI. THE LAW

Moral quality of the law. Previous reference was made to the moral character of the law.³⁸ The law was not intended to be a legal means of justification. The disposition of the heart in understanding and obeying the law was of primary importance. It was recorded in Nehemiah 8:8: "And they read in the book, in the law of God, distinctly; and they gave the sense, so that they understood the reading." Thus, the law was to be taken into the heart and understood. Isaiah told the people to give ear unto the law of God and ". . . learn to do well; seek justice, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow" (Isaiah 1:17). The law was to create a moral quality within the heart that worked outwardly in righteous acts. Micah seemed to sum up the moral nature of the law when he said: ". . . and what doth Jehovah require of thee, but to do justly, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with thy God" (Micah 6:8)?

³⁸Supra, pp. 46-50.

Prophetic criticism of the law. On the surface, it seemed that the prophets were very critical of the law. They strongly censured the manner in which the ceremonial law was being observed. Much criticism was directed at the priests who handled the law, but who did not know Jehovah (Jeremiah 2:8). They had a superficial knowledge of the law and made routine application of it. Thus, the priests led the people astray as pointed out by Isaiah:

. . . Forasmuch as this people draw nigh unto me, and with their mouth and with their lips do honor me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear of me is a commandment of men which hath been taught them (Isaiah 29:13).

Malachi stated that the vain sacrifices and offerings which were meaninglessly performed were the causes for weariness and displeasure to Jehovah (Malachi 1:10,13,17). According to Hosea 6:6, God desired mercy within the heart rather than meaningless sacrifice. Hermann Schultz³⁹ summed up the prophetic criticism of the law:

When the outward forms of religion are so much emphasized, it is quite impossible to retain, in its purity, the grand prophetic conception that the moral law has to do only with the disposition. Despite the fulness of moral knowledge by which even these ages are characterised, undue prominence is given to the details of ceremonial purity, and thus the connection between conduct and faith is loosened. Religion becomes more and more legal. Morality comes to mean doing "the works of the law."³⁹

³⁹Herman Schultz, Old Testament Theology (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clarke, 1892), II, 41-42.

VII. MODES OF REVELATION

God revealed Himself to the heart of man in various ways during the period covered by the historic and prophetic writings. Some of the common ways that God revealed Himself were examined.

The law. One of the most important ways in which God revealed Himself was through His written revelation. Through the law, God was able to speak to large assemblies of people. An example of this was during the reign of Josiah. The book of the law was found in the house of God. The king's heart was touched, and he had the book read to the people of Judah. When the people heard the words of the book, they entered into a covenant to keep God's commandments with all their hearts and souls. As a result of Josiah's reading of the law, Jehovah said:

. . . As touching the words which thou hast heard, because thy heart was tender, and thou didst humble thyself before Jehovah, when thou heardest what I spake against this place, and against the inhabitants thereof, that they should become a desolation and a curse, and hast rent thy clothes, and wept before me; I also have heard thee, saith Jehovah (II Kings 22: 18-19).

Ezra was a much-used man of God. He was able to bring many people to a knowledge of Jehovah through use of the law. The Scripture recorded: "For Ezra had set his heart to seek the law of Jehovah, and to do it, and to teach in Israel statutes and ordinances" (Ezra 7:10).

Prayers. Many times God revealed His will to men through the avenue of prayer. Jabez prayed: ". . . Oh that thou wouldest bless me indeed, and enlarge my border, and that thy hand might be with me, and that thou wouldest keep me from evil, that it be not to my sorrow . . ." (I Chronicles 4:10). The Scripture recorded: ". . . And God granted him that which he requested" (I Chronicles 4:10).

Gideon prayed concerning Jehovah's deliverance of Israel from its enemies. Jehovah used a sheep's fleece and the dew to reveal His answer to Gideon's request (Judges 6:36-40).

There are many instances in the Old Testament where God heard and answered the prayers of His people.⁴⁰ The opposite was also found to be true--Jehovah did not answer the prayers of those who were out of fellowship with Him. At the end of Saul's checkered career, he received no answer from God (I Samuel 28:6). The child of David's sin died in spite of David's prayers on its behalf (II Samuel 12:16,18). Thus, prayer was an avenue of revelation for those who were in fellowship with Jehovah.

Visions. Another mode of God's revelation was through visions. This was particularly true of the prophets. Visions were common to prophets, such as, Ezekiel, Isaiah, Jeremiah and Daniel. The nature of these

⁴⁰ E.g., I Samuel 1:11; I Kings 8:23-54; II Kings 6:18; Ezra 9:5-15; Daniel 9:4-19.

prophetic visions were discussed earlier.⁴¹

Another form of vision was evident in the experiences of Amos and Zechariah. The Lord gave them revealed sights. They saw that which Jehovah revealed to them.⁴² Closely akin to this was God's revelation through dreams.⁴³

Theophanies. God revealed Himself to men during this period through theophanies. Many times Jehovah revealed Himself through nature. He spoke to Elijah after a storm (I Kings 19:11,12). In answer to Samuel's call, He sent thunder and rain (I Samuel 12:17,18); He revealed His glory in a cloud when Solomon's temple was built (I Kings 8:10); and Jehovah came to Ezekiel in a stormy wind and a great cloud (Ezekiel 1:4). These are but a few of the instances where Jehovah revealed Himself through natural phenomena.

Another way in which Jehovah commonly revealed Himself was through an angel. An angel of God spoke to Gideon (Judges 6:20). Jehovah spoke through an angel to Joshua concerning the taking of Jericho (Joshua 5:13-15). Other instances of angelic appearances could be cited.⁴⁴

⁴¹Supra, pp. 91-95.

⁴²Amos 7-9; Zechariah 1:7-8.

⁴³E.g., I Kings 3:5; 9:2.

⁴⁴E.g., Judges 2:1,5; 6:11,14,16; Hosea 12:4; Zechariah 1:11-12.

The Divine Spirit. The Spirit of God was active in the lives of men in the Old Testament. The prophet was spoken of as "the man that hath the Spirit" (Hosea 9:7).⁴⁵ I Peter 1:10-11 refers to this as being the Spirit of Christ that was in them. Through the Spirit, the prophets received and declared God's word.⁴⁶

The Divine Spirit came mightily upon men as a special energizing agency. Thus, Samson received superhuman strength when the Spirit came upon him (Judges 14:6). Likewise, the Spirit came mightily upon Saul (I Samuel 11:6).

The Hebrew word used in the Old Testament for Spirit was ruach.

Robinson explained the significance of this word:

Just as the mysterious "wind" is one of His instruments, so the "spirit" is another. Both are denoted by the same word in Hebrew, for both are energies much akin in their effects, especially to those who have not learnt to distinguish clearly between the physical and the psychical worlds The Hebrew seems in this way to have connected the "blowing" of the wind without, and the "blowing" of the wind-like spirit within.⁴⁷

It was difficult to determine to what extent the Spirit assisted the Godly Hebrew worshipper. The prophet, Haggai, spoke of Jehovah as stirring the spirit of all the remnant of the people (Haggai 1:14). Oehler

⁴⁵ Cf., Ezekiel 2:2; 3:24.

⁴⁶ Cf., Amos 3:7; Micah 3:8; Zechariah 7:12.

⁴⁷ Robinson, op. cit., p. 110.

believed that the Godly man experienced "somewhat of the assistance of that Divine Spirit who creates willingness in man."⁴⁸ The fullness of the Spirit, as experienced in New Testament times, was not yet fully realized. The prophets looked to the day when God's Spirit would be poured out upon all flesh.⁴⁹

VIII. SUMMARY

The summary of information found in the historic and prophetic writings was as follows:

1. The prophetic writings disclosed a fuller revelation of God's grace. The full plan of salvation was gradually unfolded in history.

The prophetic consciousness was the experience of the prophets whereby they experienced the immediate presence of Jehovah. Jehovah's presence was experienced through prophetic trances, intuition, visions and inspiration of the Divine Spirit. Emotion and ecstasy were secondary factors in their experiences.

2. The prophetic teaching brought about the emergence of a new individualism among the masses of people. The individual became the unit before God rather than the nation.

⁴⁸ Oehler, loc. cit.

⁴⁹ E.g., Isaiah 44:3; Ezekiel 36:27; Joel 2:23.

This elevation of the individual was enhanced by the personal, religious experiences of the prophets. Corruption of the priesthood and breakdown of the religious system of worship brought about a more individualized worship experience. The dissolution of the nation and the exile of large masses of people caused the Hebrew people to individually seek God.

The religious experience of the individual Hebrew worshipper was probably somewhat less than that experienced by the prophets. His experience did not lead to isolation and mysticism.

3. Some of the experiences recorded in Scripture were examined. It was possible that these experiences were not generally representative of the Hebrew people.

David's experience revealed personal, religious development and the contrast between sin and grace.

Isaiah's experience progressed from personal unworthiness to cleansing and, finally, to a life of service.

Ezekiel's experience was characterized by high emotion.

Jeremiah's experience was characterized by much introspection and self-analysis. He recognized God as an ethical Being.

Daniel's life was one of tenacious devotion and obedience to God. He experienced close fellowship with God through prayer.

4. The concept of a changed heart was found in the prophetic

writings. The prophetic cry was for the individual to "turn," or change direction of living. This was a moral change evidenced by goodness, love and mercy.

The word "sanctify" had two basic meanings in the Old Testament. It meant: (1) the setting apart of physical objects and persons for holy use and (2) the gracious activity of God in the individual heart.

The heart-change realized in the Old Testament brought about feelings of joy, love, praise and thanksgiving. It was characterized by the assistance of God in the human heart. However, the full possession of the heart by the Holy Spirit was not yet realized. The prophets looked to a day when the Spirit would possess the human heart in a fuller experience of conversion.

That large numbers of people experienced genuine heart-change was evident from the revivals recorded in the Old Testament.

5. The prophetic concept of the law was that it created a moral quality within the heart which worked outwardly in righteous acts.

The prophetic criticism of the ceremonial law was directed toward outward forms of religion without inner purity of heart.

6. Some of the modes of God's revelation to man were the law, prayers, visions, theophanies and the Divine Spirit.

CHAPTER VI

SYNTHESIS OF RESEARCH

I. INTRODUCTION

Chapter VI contained a synthesis of the research material recorded in Chapters III, IV and V. Each of these chapters dealt with separate categories of writings in the Old Testament. The purpose of this study was to make an inquiry into the nature of the religious experience of the Godly Hebrew under the Old Covenant. This chapter lifted the general principles relating to this inquiry from the three previous chapters. The general findings of each chapter were compared and interrelated to those of the other chapters.

II. THE MOSAIC WRITINGS

The covenant relationship. The first general principle found in Chapter III was that Jehovah entered into a covenant relationship with Israel as a nation, but this relationship was sustained by faith on the part of the individual members of the nation. The spiritual relationship of each Israelite to God determined the standing of the nation in His eyes. The promise of a homeland was a material blessing which could be realized by the nation as a whole. However, spiritual blessings were realized by

individuals in accordance with their faith.

Symbolic and typical meanings of worship. The second principle was that the ceremonial system of worship had symbolic and typical meanings in the spiritual experience of the individual Israelite. The outward acts of worship were secondary in importance to a proper heart attitude. Faithful adherence to sacrificial worship resulted in forgiveness, acceptance and fellowship with God. The special feasts and days also had symbolic meaning which enhanced the spiritual richness of the pious Hebrew worshipper.

The mediatorial role of the priests. The third principle was that mediation between God and man was the sanctified responsibility of a group of holy men known as priests. Jehovah used these select men to convey spiritual meaning and blessing to the Godly worshipper. Faithful performance of their holy acts resulted in bringing God and man to a point of spiritual contact. This mediatorial role did not negate the need of a heart attitude of faith on the part of the individual seeker.

The moral purpose of the law. The fourth principle was that the law of God had moral significance and acted as a conscience in directing the Godly Hebrew to his need of God's grace. It served as a guide rule for personal behavior and set forth a standard of holiness which caused a wholehearted dependence upon God's grace to achieve just satisfaction. The law

was not given as a means of justification, but constantly pointed to man's need of justification. God's appointed means of justification was through the sacrifices.

The channels of God's revelation. The fifth principle was that God objectively and subjectively revealed Himself to the consciousness of man. Some of the more objective forms of revelation were theophanies of nature, angels, divinely-appointed men and the law. The Divine Spirit generally was not functional in the role of revelation to all men. However, He was actively used in the performance of special missions. Faith and prayers were the channels of God's manifestation of Himself to the consciousness of the earnest worshipper.

Correlation of principles. The principles above set forth contained the very rudiments of Hebrew worship. The Mosaic writings laid a foundation for Israel's approach to God--both as a nation and as individuals. Chapter III was basic in outlining the forms of worship which were the divinely-appointed means of bringing God and man into a vital, spiritual relationship. It did not deal with the outworkings of these fundamental principles in the area of experience. The experiential results of these forms of worship were found more fully in the poetic and wisdom books. The Psalms, in particular--as examined in Chapter IV--contained a diary of spiritual experience. Many of the spiritual highlights found in Chapter IV

were realized through faithful adherence to the forms of worship set forth in Chapter III. The prophetic writings examined in Chapter V built further upon the foundation laid in Chapter III. The prophets realized the spiritual detriment that could result from an emphasis upon the outer form of worship rather than the inner meaning of worship. The prophets experienced a fuller revelation of God's grace and drove the meaning of worship into the heart of the individual. They did not find fault with the divinely-appointed means of worship, but exposed the sinfulness of man in perverting this form of worship.

III. THE POETIC AND WISDOM WRITINGS

Individual experience divorced from external circumstances. The first general principle found in Chapter IV was that both blessing and suffering were experienced by the individual apart from his external circumstances. Job's suffering and blessing were not the results of national circumstances. He was not caused to suffer because of the sins of his fellow men or of his fathers. The Psalms indicated punishment as the result of personally-committed sin. Likewise, Proverbs linked personal blessing with personal morality and personal retribution with personal wrong. Blessing and suffering were detached from national behavior.

Personal morality. The second principle was that the spiritual life of the Godly Hebrew was characterized by a high sense of personal

morality. Evident in the life of the Godly Hebrew were such virtues as: righteousness, humility, truthfulness, integrity, love and chastity. The root of these virtues was the fear of Jehovah.

Subjective religious experience. The third principle was that a subjective experience took place in the life of the Godly Hebrew which was expressed in outbursts of joy, praise and exultation. His experience was characterized by deep feeling. This subjective element, which was particularly evident in the Psalms, revealed the depths of personal religion under the Old Covenant.

Wholehearted devotion to God. The fourth principle evident in Chapter V was that the Godly Hebrew experienced a change in his life which was characterized by wholehearted devotion to Jehovah. This change of heart was evidenced by forgiveness of sins and a deep trust in Jehovah. The one who had experienced this heart-change followed Jehovah in faith.

Correlation of principles. The above-outlined principles indicated the individual nature and depth of the religious experience of the Godly Hebrew. Thus, Chapter IV made a significant contribution to the nature of the Godly Hebrew's religious experience. Chapter III set forth the outward form which his worship was to follow; whereas, Chapter IV revealed the experience of worship which took place when the prescribed form was followed. The poetic and wisdom writings gave evidence to the depth of spiritual

experience which was realized under the sacrificial system set forth in the Mosaic writings. The prophets were used of God to build further upon this foundation of personal, religious experience.

IV. THE HISTORIC AND PROPHETIC WRITINGS

The prominence of the individual. The first principle found in Chapter V was that the individual stood as the religious unit before God. A new sense of individualism arose which tended to detach the Godly Hebrew from the nation. This was particularly true in the area of public worship which was perverted in the pre-exilic period and was very difficult to maintain during the exile.

Consciousness of God's immediate presence. The second principle was that there was a greater consciousness of the immediate presence of God in the lives of individuals. This was particularly true of the prophets who experienced direct revelations from God. There was a consciousness of God's presence which hitherto had been more indirect. Thus, the prophets experienced visions, dreams and theophanies.

Increased activity of the Spirit. The third principle was that there was an ever-increasing evidence of the activity of the Spirit of God in the affairs of men as time progressed. The changed heart experienced during prophetic times bore an increasing evidence of the moving of God's

Spirit to effect holiness of life. There seemed to be a progressing emphasis of teaching concerning the Divine Spirit by the prophets of the exilic and restoration periods. The prophets also pointed to the day when the out-pouring of the Spirit would be further realized.

Internal religion. The fourth principle was an emphasis upon inward religion because of the hypocrisy of ceremonial worship. The meaning of outer acts of worship became perverted to the point that it gave vent to spiritual corruption. Thus, personal morality became the cry of the latter prophets.

Correlation of principles. Chapter V gave evidence of an increasing emphasis upon a personal, religious experience on the part of the Godly Hebrew. This was counterbalanced by the increasing activity of the Spirit of God in the life of the common worshipper. A progression was seen in the unfolding of God's plan of salvation to man in Chapters III, IV and V of this study. The basic principles of public and private worship were set forth in the Mosaic writings. Predominant stress was given to Israel's role as a nation in realizing God's plan. The poetic and wisdom writings revealed the subjective nature of spiritual experience which was realized under the sacrificial system. Under this system of worship the Godly Hebrew experienced great depth of feeling toward Jehovah and lived a life evidenced by a high degree of personal morality. The experience of

the Godly Hebrew increased in vitality during the kingdom and divided kingdom periods. This progression of spiritual vitality was realized even more under the exilic and post-exilic prophets. Their teachings revealed the increasing activity of God in relating His grace to the heart of the Godly Hebrew. This was not the pinnacle of religious experience as these prophets spoke of a day when God would pour out His Spirit upon men in an even greater measure.

CHAPTER VII

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

A summary of the major findings of this study, the conclusions derived therefrom and suggestions for further study were recorded in this chapter .

I. SUMMARY

The general inquiry into the basis of Hebrew worship as found in the Mosaic writings revealed some significant findings . There was a mutual relationship between God and the Hebrew people which was established by the covenant of Mount Sinai . This was a reciprocal relationship between God and the people which was sustained by individual faith . The Hebrew sacrificial system was sanctioned by God as a means of bringing God and man together in fellowship . The ritualistic pattern of this system had symbolic and typical significance in the spiritual life of the Godly Hebrew worshipper . The outer form of worship had an inner application in the life of the pious seeker . The priesthood was a divinely-appointed order of men which performed special acts of worship . Through the faithful performance of their duties, God mediated blessing to the seeker . The law served as a moral guide for life and also pointed to the need of God's grace for the

fulfillment of its demands. God objectively revealed Himself through theophanies, divinely-appointed men and the law. The Divine Spirit generally did not function in the role of revelation to all men. For the most part, the Mosaic writings did not contain findings regarding the subjective experience of the Godly Hebrew in worship.

The poetic and wisdom literature revealed the more subjective nature of the Godly Hebrew's worship experience. The individual Hebrew experienced a spiritual relationship to God which was not dependent upon or resultant from the circumstances of his nation. The Godly Hebrew possessed a high sense of personal morality which was evidenced by the virtues of righteousness, humility, truthfulness, integrity, love and chastity. The subjective experience of the Hebrew worshipper was evidenced by punctuated outbursts of joy, praise and exultation. There was evidence of a change of life on the part of the pious seeker which resulted in whole-hearted devotion to God.

The findings from the study of the historic and prophetic writings were noteworthy. Individual standing before God took on new significance. With the disruption of the nation of Israel, the individual became the prominent religious unit. The prophets experienced an immediate consciousness of God's presence. Revelation was received in a more direct manner. There was increased activity of God's Spirit in the lives of men. The prophets foresaw a day when the Spirit would more fully possess the lives of

III. SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

This study was a helpful and gratifying experience for the writer.

It was not exhaustive and suggestions for further study were recognized:

1. Because of the limitations of this study, it could not be carried forward into the New Testament. Definite implications of man's experience in the Old Testament are found in the New Testament. Jesus was quite outspoken with the religious leaders of His day regarding that which was important in man's relationship to God. The book of Hebrews deals quite extensively with the manner of worship found under the New Covenant as compared to the Old Covenant. A study which would tie together the religious experience of man in the Old Testament with that in the New Testament would be helpful.

2. The function of the Holy Spirit in Old Testament times could also be further investigated. This study dealt with the Spirit primarily in the area of man's experience of salvation in the Old Testament. The Holy Spirit functioned in other capacities in Old Testament times which could be the basis of further study.

3. Another area of investigation could be the typology found in the ceremonial form of worship outlined in the Old Testament. The types of Christ as foreshadowed in the early Hebrew forms of worship would, particularly, make a rewarding study.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BIBLIOGRAPHY

A. BOOKS

- Baab, Otto J. The Theology of the Old Testament. New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1949.
- Clark, Walter Houston. The Psychology of Religion. New York: The MacMillan Company, 1958.
- Davidson, A. B. The Theology of the Old Testament. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1910.
- Davidson, Robert. The Bible Speaks. New York: Thomas Y. Crowall Company, 1959.
- Edersheim, Alfred. The Temple. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1954.
- Eichrodt, Walther. Man in the Old Testament. Chicago: Alec R. Allenson Inc., 1956.
- Elmslie, W. A. L. How Came Our Faith. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1949.
- Hague, George. Some Practical Studies in the History and Biography of the Old Testament. Chicago: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1900.
- Hanke, Howard A. From Eden to Eternity. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1960.
- Hutchings, William J. The Religious Experience of Israel. New York: Association Press, 1920.
- Jacob, Edmond. Theology of the Old Testament. New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1958.
- James, William. Varieties of Religious Experience. New York: Modern Library, 1902.

- Johnson, Paul E. Psychology of Religion. New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1945.
- Jones, E. Stanley. Conversion. New York: Abingdon Press, 1959.
- Kent, Charles Foster. The Origin and Permanent Value of the Old Testament. Boston: The Pilgrim Press, 1906.
- Macmurray, John. The Structure of Religious Experience. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1936.
- Mavis, W. Curry. The Psychology of Christian Experience. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1963.
- Mould, Elmer W. K. Essentials of Bible History. New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1939.
- Norborg, S. V. Varieties of Christian Experience. Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1937.
- Oehler, Gustav Friedrich. Theology of the Old Testament. Fourth edition. New York: Funk & Wagnalls Company, 1883.
- Outler, Albert C. Psychotherapy and the Christian Message. New York: Harper and Bros., 1954.
- Payne, J. Barton. The Theology of the Older Testament. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1962.
- Pratt, James Bissett. The Psychology of Religious Belief. New York: The MacMillan Company, 1907.
- _____. The Religious Consciousness. a psychological study. New York: The MacMillan Company, 1930.
- Rall, Harris Franklin and Samuel S. Cohon. Christianity and Judaism Compare Notes. New York: The MacMillan Company, 1927.
- Raven, John H. Old Testament Introduction. New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1910.
- Ringenberg, Loyal R. The Word of God in History. Butler, Indiana: The Higley Press, 1953.

- Robinson, H. Wheeler. Corporate Personality in Ancient Israel. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1964.
- _____. The Religious Ideas of the Old Testament. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1915.
- Rust, Eric C. Salvation History. Richmond, Virginia: John Knox Press, 1962.
- Sauer, Erich. The Dawn of World Redemption. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1963.
- Schultz, Hermann. Old Testament Theology. 2 vols. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1892.
- Stevens, George Barker. The Theology of the New Testament. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1905.
- Strickland, Francis L. Psychology of Religious Experience. New York: The Abingdon Press, 1924.
- Terry, Milton S. Biblical Dogmatics: An Exposition of the Principal Doctrines of the Holy Scriptures. New York: Eaton & Mains, 1907.
- Tozer, A. W. The Knowledge of the Holy. New York: Harper & Brothers, Publishers, 1961.
- Turner, George Allen. The More Excellent Way. Winona Lake, Indiana: Light and Life Press, 1956.
- Witherington, H. C. Psychology of Religion. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1955.

B. ENCYCLOPEDIA ARTICLES

- Hermann, W. "Religion," The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge, IX, 453-457. New York: Funk and Wagnalls Company, 1911.
- Kilpatrick, T. B. "Salvation," Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, XI, 110-131. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1928.

McCullough, W. Stewart. "Psalms," The Interpreter's Bible, IV, 1-17.
New York: Abingdon Press, 1955.

Moorehead, William G. "Priest," The International Standard Bible
Encyclopaedia, IV, 2439-2445. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans
Publishing Co., 1943.

Thwing, Charles F. "Religion and Literature," The New Schaff-Herzog
Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge, IX, 458-460. New York:
Funk and Wagnalls Company, 1911.

C. DICTIONARIES AND COMMENTARIES

Baker's Dictionary of Theology. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1960.

Barabas, Steven. "Circumcision," The Zondervan Pictorial Bible
Dictionary, 172. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1963.

_____. "Faith," The Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary, 274-275.
Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1963.

Brandon, Owen R. "Heart," Baker's Dictionary of Theology, 262-263.
Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1960.

Broomall, Wick. "Ecclesiastes," The Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary,
231-232. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1963.

_____. "Theophany," Baker's Dictionary of Theology, 520-521. Grand
Rapids: Baker Book House, 1960.

English, Horace B. and Ava Champney English. A Comprehensive Dictionary
of Psychological and Psychoanalytical Terms. New York: Longmans,
Green and Co., 1959.

"Grace," The Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary, 322. Grand Rapids:
Zondervan Publishing House, 1963.

Graybill, John B. "Ezekiel," The Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary, 270-
271. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1963.

Jamieson, Robert, A. R. Fausset, and David Brown. Commentary on the Whole Bible. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, [n.d].

Packer, James I. "Faith," Baker's Dictionary of Theology, 208-211. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1960.

Stanton, Gerald B. "Praise," Baker's Dictionary of Theology, 412. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1960.

Tenney, Merrill C. "Feasts," The Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary, 280-281. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1963.

_____. "Revelation," The Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary, 720-721. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1963.

_____. "Sacrifice," The Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary, 237-240. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1963.

The Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1963.

Webster's New International Dictionary. Second edition. Springfield, Massachusetts: G. & C. Merriam Company, Publishers, 1957.

D. CONCORDANCES

Young, Robert. Analytical Concordance to the Bible. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1956.

E. BIBLES

American Standard, The Holy Bible Containing the Old and New Testaments. New York: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1901.

Old Testament Greek Septuagint. 'E Palaia Diathēkē kata tous 'Ebdomēkonta. Edited by Leandri van Ess. Leipsig: 1824.

