

THE EXODUS THEME
IN THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENT.

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CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
CHAPTER ONE: <u>The Exodus Theme in the Psalms</u>	1
Reasons for beginning the study with an analysis of the Psalms	1
Psalter compiled over a long period ..	1
Individual and communal expressions of Israel's faith	1
Method of analysis	2
<u>I. Book I.</u>	
Psalm 22: The Exodus and the Problem of Suffering	2
<u>II. Book II.</u>	
i. Psalm 66: A Warning to the Rebellious.....	3
ii. Psalm 68: Father of the fatherless Dread Warrior	4
<u>III. Book III.</u>	
Significance of the title 'of Asaph'..	5
i. Psalm 77: Basis of faith in time of suffering.....	6
ii. Psalm 78: Lesson from history and interpretation of the Davidic monarchy.....	7
iii. Psalm 81: Plea for monolatry.....	8
Three Psalms with Exodus allusions....	8
iv. Psalm 76: God and his enemies.....	8
v. Psalm 80: Vine out of Egypt.....	9
vi. Psalm 74: Exodus and creation mythology.....	10
<u>IV. Book IV.</u>	
Brief allusions to Exodus in Pss. 99 & 103	12
i. Psalm 105: Interpretation of history according to promise, election and covenant.....	12
ii. Psalm 106: History of disobedience	14
Significance of juxtaposition of Pss. 105 & 106	15
<u>V. Book V.</u>	
Passing allusions to Exodus in Psalm 107.....	15
i. Psalm 114: Place in Hallel Group .	16
ii. Psalm 135: Omnipotence of Yahweh .	17
iii. Psalm 136: God's rule of nature and nations.....	17
<u>VI. An Outline of the Theology of the Exodus in the Psalms.</u>	18
i. Revelation	18
ii. Creation	19
iii. Sovereignty of God	19
iv. Moral Attributes of God	21

v.	Providence	21
vi.	Salvation	22
vii.	Election	22
viii.	Problem of Suffering	23
VII.	<u>Conclusion.</u>	24
	Exodus more than a subject for epic poetry	
	Exodus fundamental to the Psalmists' knowledge of God and to the worship of Israel.	

CHAPTER II: The Exodus in the Legislation of the Pentateuch.

A.:	<u>The Genesis Prologue</u>	26
	1. Abraham's exodus from Ur	27
	2. The Exodus revealed to Abraham in vision at the covenant ceremony ...	27
	3. Jacob and the Exodus	28
	4. Joseph and the Exodus	29
	<u>Appendix A.</u> A Critical Note.	30
	Pentateuchal sources	
	Historicity of Patriarchs	
B.:	<u>The Legislation</u>	32
	1. Method of analysis	32
	I. <u>The Exodus and the Covenant</u>	33
	1. Continuity with patriarchal covenant	33
	2. The Exodus reveals a God who ... intervenes	34
	3. The Exodus faith in time of war	35
	4. Covenant relationship as the ... goal of the Exodus	35
	A nation of priests	
	5. The Exodus not based on merit .. but on grace	36
	6. God in the midst	37
	7. The Exodus as separation to holiness	37
	8. The Exodus as the preface to the Ten Commandments	38
	9. Sin against the God of the Exodus	39
	10. The intercession of Moses based on the Exodus revelation of God's grace	40
	11. Summary of the Exodus in the ... covenantal faith	40

II. <u>The Exodus in Cultic Observance.</u> ...	41
The Theme of Three Feasts	
1. The Passover	41
2. The Feast of Unleavened Bread	42
3. The Feast of Booths	43
The consecration of the first-born .	43
The consecration of the Levites	44
Tassels - a reminder of the Exodus ..	44
Dietary laws enforced by the Exodus formula.	44
Diseases and plagues of Egypt as the punishment for disobedience	44
III. <u>The Exodus in Moral Teaching.</u>	45
1. The Exodus and slavery	45
2. The Exodus and the Sabbath	46
3. The Exodus and the attitude to the stranger and the defenceless	47
4. The Exodus and lending to a brother	47
General Conclusion.	48
1. The Exodus features prominently in the different aspects of the legislation, and thus	
2. Forms a link between the law and the prophets	
CHAPTER III- <u>The Exodus in the Historical Books.</u>	50
A: <u>Prologue: Two Historical Summaries in Deuteronomy.</u>	
1. In explanation of the covenant law	50
11. A ceremony of thanksgiving for the first-fruits	51
B: <u>The Historical Books.</u>	
I: <u>The Covenant Ceremony at Shechem</u>	
1. The background	54
2. The Exodus in Joshua's	55
3. The Exodus accepted by the people ... as the normative national and religious event	56
II: <u>The Inauguration of the Kingship.</u>	
1. The historical background	57
2. The role of the Ark	58
3. The Request for a king and Samuel's reaction to it	59
4. Samuel's address	59
5. Summary: Opposition to the monarchy based on Exodus theology	61
<u>Additional Note: The sources and the historicity of the narrative material</u>	61

III - <u>The Establishment of the Davidic Dynasty.</u>	62
1. Historical outline		63
2. David's patronage of the cult		63
3. The Ark and the Exodus		64
4. David's plan to build a Temple ...		65
5. The Exodus theology at the transition from tribal amphictony .		65
to empire and royal dynasty		
IV - <u>The Dedication of the Temple.</u>		
1. Dated from the Exodus		66
2. The Ark installed		66
3. The Exodus in Solomon's prayer ...		68
V - <u>The Division of the Kingdom.</u>		
1. The historical situation		68
2. Jeroboam's counterfeit Exodus		69
tradition		
VI - <u>The Fall of the Northern Kingdom.</u>		
1. Interpreted according to Exodus ...		71
theology		
2. Training in Exodus tradition for ..		72
the foreign settlers		
VII - <u>The Exodus Tradition after the Exile.</u>		
1. The mission of Ezra and Nehemiah .		73
2. Ezra and Moses		74
3. Revival of the feast of Booths ...		75
4. The Exodus in Ezra's prayer		76
5. Assessment of the reforms		77
<u>General Conclusion.</u>	78
1. The Exodus remembered throughout the history of Israel, especially at times of reformation.		
2. The Exodus was used to evaluate innovations such as monarchy and Temple		
3. The historical interpretation of the writer of Kings influenced by the Exodus tradition		

CHAPTER IV: The Exodus in the Prophets.

Introduction	79
A: <u>The Exodus in the Pre-exilic Prophets.</u>	
I: <u>Amos.</u>	83
1. Introduction	83
2. Election at the Exodus	84
3. The Exodus deliverance no exemption from judgement	85
4. Sacrifice at the Exodus period	86
<u>Conclusion:</u> Amos uses the Exodus	87
privilege to heighten the impending judgement	
II: <u>Hosea.</u>	87
Introduction	
1. The role of the prophet and the Exodus	88
ii. The Exodus - the origin of the nation	89
iii. Desire to return to the Exodus origins	91
iv. Judgement - a reversal of the Exodus	93
v. Hope of a new Exodus	95
<u>Conclusion:</u>	95
1. Hosea's marriage and the Exodus are the keys to interpretation of the book	
2. Great variety in Hosea's use of the Exodus motif	
III: <u>Isaiah.</u>	97
Introduction	
1. Eschatological use of the Exodus	98
motif: Chapter 4:2-6	
ii. A new Exodus from Assyrian captivity	100
Chapter 10:20-27	
iii. Development of the new Exodus theme	101
Chapter 11:11-16	
iv. A reversal of captivity	102
v. An Exodus experience for the	103
Egyptians: Chapter 19:19-22	
<u>Conclusion:</u>	105
1. The Exodus motif prominent in Isaiah	
2. Always used with a future or eschatological reference	
IV: <u>Micah.</u>	105
Introduction	
1. The Exodus in an indictment of Israel	106
Chapter 6:1-5	
ii. The Exodus as a pattern for.....	107
a future salvation: Chapter 7:15	
<u>Conclusion:</u>	107
1. Micah regards the Exodus as God's claim on Israel, and a	
2. Type of a future salvation	

V: <u>Jeremiah.</u>	108
Introduction	
i. The Exodus as the origin of the nation	109
ii. The Exodus as a betrothal	111
Chapter 2:1-6	
iii. The Exodus in the Deuteronomic law	111
concerning slavery: Chapter 34:12-16	
iv. The Exodus in Jeremiah's early preaching	112
Chapter 11:3-8, 7:21-26	
v. The Exodus and the New Covenant	113
Chapter 31:31-34	
vi. A new Exodus	115
Chapter 16:14, 23:5-7	
Conclusion:	116
1. Two stages in Jeremiah's use of the Exodus	
B: <u>The Exodus in the Exilic Prophets.</u>	118
I: <u>Ezekiel.</u>	118
Introduction	
i. The Exodus and idolatry	119
Chapter 20	
ii. The Exodus in the allegory of the two harlots: Chapter 23	121
Conclusion.	122
1. Ezekiel regards the Exodus as a change of address but not of heart	
2. Looks forward to a new Exodus to purgation	
II: <u>II Isaiah.</u>	123
Introduction	
Summary of Redemption	124
Summary of Exodus Passages	125
i. The New Exodus: its parallels and contrasts in relation to the old	125
Summary of points made	132
ii. The Exodus and creation	133
iii. The Servant and the New Exodus	135
iv. The Spirit and the New Exodus	139
Summary and Conclusion.	141
1. II Isaiah uses Exodus imagery in an eschatological picture of redemption	
C: <u>The Exodus in the Post-exilic Prophets.</u>	143
I: <u>Trito-Isaiah.</u>	
1. The Exodus in a prayer of intercession	
Conclusion: affinities with the Exodus and suffering in the Psalms	144
II: <u>Haggai.</u>	145
1. The Exodus as a guarantee of God's presence with the returned exiles	
III: <u>Zechariah.</u>	
1. Date of 10:8-11, an exodus from exile	145
General Conclusion: All the prophets, except one or two, use the Exodus theme	

<u>Appendix A.</u>	148
I: <u>Nahum.</u>	
1. Poetic imagery which recalls the .. Exodus	148
II: <u>Habbakuk.</u>	
1. The Exodus and the creation myth .. in the poem of chapter 3	149

THE EXODUS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

Introduction	150
I: <u>The Exodus in the Gospels.</u>	
1. The Infancy Narratives	150
2. The Passion Narratives	153
II: <u>The Exodus in Acts.</u>	
1. Historical recitals in early debate	155
III: <u>The Exodus in the Pauline Epistles.</u>	
1. An illustration from the Passover 1 Cor 5:6-8	157
2. A warning against falling away 1 Cor 10:1-13	158
IV: <u>The Exodus in the Book of Hebrews.</u>	
1. An example of faith	160
2. A warning against falling away ...	161
V: <u>The Exodus in I Peter and Jude.</u>	
1. A warning of destruction in Jude ..	162
2. A description of the redeemed in .. Exodus terminology	163
VI: <u>The Exodus in the Apocalypse.</u>	
1. The song of the redeemed	163
2. The plagues	164
3. A vision of the redeemed	165
<u>Summary and Conclusion.</u>	165
1. There is no developed typology of the Exodus in the New Testament	
2. An explanation of this fact - the Resurrection of Christ is for the New Testament what the Exodus is to the Old Testament	

<u>Appendix A: Definition of Typology</u>	169
<u>Appendix B: Exodus Typology in the Gospels</u>	172
1. The Baptismal Narratives	173
2. The Structure of Matthew's Gospel	175
3. The Transfiguration in Luke's Gospel .	175
<u>Appendix C: The Pauline Language of</u>	177
Redemption	

CHAPTER I

THE EXODUS THEME IN THE PSALMS

The Exodus Theme in the Psalms.

The best starting point for an examination of the theme and theology of the Exodus in the Old Testament is the Psalter, for here is recorded the living faith of Israel over a long period.

The compilation of the Psalter from its earliest poems to its latest additions and final editing spans several centuries. It is a collection of collections, revised and edited more than once. Most scholars today agree that its material ranges in date from pre-exilic to late post-exilic, there being a swing away from an extravagant preference for a Maccabean dating of many Psalms. The Exodus theme to be found in the Psalter thus falls within a broad historical sweep.

In the Psalter, individual and communal expressions of faith both have their place. Personal Psalms lay bare the human heart with the gamut of its emotions from despair to deep joy and praise. Psalms which were used corporately draw together the worshiping community in a way which reveals the unity of Israel, the nation, to be founded upon their relationship to Yahweh. Into the fabric of individual and national life, the thread of the Exodus faith was woven. Our task is to follow this thread, and discover the pattern which it weaves against its background.

In the analysis which follows, each of the five Books of the Psalter will be examined in turn, the important passages being dealt with first, then the oblique references to the Exodus, and, lastly, those which may be described as conjectural. There are some nine Psalms which deal directly with the Exodus and the wilderness wanderings, namely, Pss. 66, 68, 78, 81, 105, 106, 114, 135 and 136.

Passing allusions to the Exodus are found in Pss. 22, 74, 76, 77, 80, 99, 103, and 107. These Psalms are divided into the five Books of the Psalter as follows - one Psalm with an oblique allusion to the Exodus in Book I; two in Book II; six, all with the title "of Asaph", in Book III; four in Book IV; and four in Book V.

I

Book I.

As noted above, there is no explicit reference to the Exodus in the Psalms of this collection, so it only remains to consider what may be a conscious but oblique allusion to be found in Psalm 22. This reads as follows -

Yet thou art holy,
enthroned on the praises of Israel.
In thee our fathers trusted;
they trusted and thou didst deliver them.
To thee they cried, and were saved;
in thee they trusted and were not disappointed.
(vv. 3-5)

all you sons of Jacob, glorify him,
and stand in awe of him, all you sons of Israel !
For he has not despised or abhorred
the affliction of the afflicted;
and he has not hid his face from him,
but has heard when he cried to him.
(vv. 23-24)

The Psalm describes intense suffering, both physical and spiritual, which wrings a cry of despair from the poet's lips - "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me ?" (v.1). This cry was repeated by Jesus during the agonies of his crucifixion. The Psalm does not continue on this note of despair, however, but ascends to an affirmation that Yahweh will not hide his face, or despise his afflicted one. Faith triumphs because the Psalmist deliberately turns his attention away from his suffering to the experience of

the fathers whom Yahweh had saved from affliction. What greater affliction was suffered than the bondage in Egypt, and what greater deliverance than the Exodus ? The Hebrew root נִיָּצַח , 'affliction', used in verse 24, is that which is used in the book of Exodus to describe the bondage -

Therefore they set taskmasters over them to
afflict them (נִיָּצַח) with heavy burdens.
(Ex 1:11)

The deliverance from Egypt was the epitome, the type, the pattern-setter, the supreme revelation of all God's saving acts. The experience of the fathers(vv.4-5) - which surely must include the deliverance from affliction in Egypt - thus becomes the basis of the Psalmist's hope in his affliction. Hope drawn from the experiences of past history is an oft repeated feature of the Psalms. Our conclusion concerning its occurrence in Psalm 22 is that the Exodus provides the encouragement to move from despair to trust in God.

II

Book II.

There are two Psalms in this collection which deserve our attention, and these are Pss. 66 and 68.

1. Psalm 66: The unity of this Psalm has been questioned by Cesterley and others, who think that vv.13-20 were a later addition to fill up a space in the manuscript material, and who date this section as post-exilic on the basis of the developed sacrificial system, as they do the first half of the Psalm. Other interpretations are that the 'I' section (vv.13-20) represents the king's speech, or that an individual used the first half(vv.1-12) as a solemn prelude to his own prayer. Whatever may be the literary problems surrounding the interpretation of this Psalm, it is clear that the Exodus theme dominates the first half, at any rate.

Come and see what God has done:
he is terrible in his deeds among men.
He turned the sea into dry land;
men passed through the river on foot.
There we did rejoice in him,
who rules by his might for ever,
whose eyes keep watch on the nations —
let not the rebellious exalt themselves.
(vv. 5-7)

The theme is set in v.3 - "How terrible are thy deeds". Then the vivid invitation is given - "Come and see what God has done". He is a God of action whose power over the nations makes his enemies cringe, but is a source of joy to his people - "there we did rejoice in him". The crossing of the Red Sea is closely linked with that of the Jordan in v.6. The Psalmist regards the Exodus as a warning to the rebellious of Yahweh's power. It is a 'terrible deed' which calls forth awe, and proves His sovereign rule over His chosen people and over their enemies.

11. Psalm 68: The literary problems of this passage are so involved that they will have to be left on one side in this study in order to grasp what is clear, that is, the use of the Exodus theme. Two aspects of the Exodus are portrayed - one is its moral revelation, the other is the glory of theophany.

Father of the fatherless and protector
of widows
is God in his holy habitation.
God gives the desolate a home to dwell in;
he leads out the prisoners to prosperity;
but the rebellious dwell in a parched land.
(vv. 5-6)

Israel learnt that God chooses what is weak in this world to shame the strong. He cares for the fatherless, the widow, and the stranger, as we shall see in the analysis of the Pentateuchal legislation. He brings forth the prisoner from captivity. This theme is sounded again in describing the work of the Servant. Its roots are in the Exodus. Once again God's action on behalf of His chosen ones is set off against the fate of the rebellious who will "dwell in a parched land". This might be an allusion to the Israelites who fell in the wilderness. Certainly, the disobedience of

Israel is often set off against the steadfast love of Yahweh in Psalms which deal with the Exodus.

O God when thou didst go forth before
thy people,
when thou didst march through the
wilderness,
the earth quaked, the heavens poured
down rain,
at the presence of God;
yon Sinai quaked at the presence of God,
the God of Israel.

(vv. 7-8)

This God, who was the father of the fatherless, appears like a dread warrior striding at the head of His people, at whose tread the earth shakes. His was a majesty which "provided for the needy". The mention of rain is taken by some scholars to indicate that the Psalm was recited at the autumn festival. Whatever its cultic usage, it is a striking poem because of the way in which it blends the numinous glory of Yahweh with His tenderness, and finds expression of both in the Exodus.

III

Book III.

The three Psalms of major importance for our study in this collection all bear the title "of Asaph", who is mentioned nineteen times in Chronicles as one of the Levites appointed by David to minister before the Ark. He was to sound the cymbals - which meant that he had a certain official standing. Elsewhere, he is referred to as the head of a choral guild. His name is linked with that of David in 2 Chronicles 29:30, which describes the reforms of king Hezekiah -

and Hezekiah the king and the princes
commanded the Levites to sing praises to the Lord
with the words of David and of Asaph the seer.

At the reform under Ezra and Nehemiah, he is recalled again in conjunction with David -

for in the days of David
and Asaph of old there was a chief of the singers,
and there were songs of praise and thanksgiving
to God.
(Neh 14:26)

If this tradition is judged to be reliable, as well as the titles of the Psalms in this instance, then much of the

Exodus material in the Psalter is pre-exilic.

1. Psalm 77: Like Psalm 22, this is a poem of suffering, and the sense of desertion which is conveyed by a series of rhetorical questions, such as - "Will the Lord spurn for ever?"; "Are his promises at an end for all time?"; "Has God forgotten to be gracious?". The poet's faith is stabilized by recalling the Exodus.

I will meditate on all thy work,
and muse on thy mighty deeds.
Thy way, O God, is holy,
what God is great like our God?
Thou art the God who workest wonders,
who hast manifested thy might among the
peoples.
Thou didst with thy arm redeem thy people,
the sons of Jacob and Joseph.
(vv. 12-15)

Holiness and miracle-working power were two attributes of Yahweh in the faith which was based on the Exodus. The Psalm continues to describe the Exodus using the dramatic imagery of a storm-theophany -

When the waters saw thee, O God,
when the waters saw thee they were afraid,
yea, the deep trembled.
The clouds poured out water;
the skies gave forth thunder;
thy arrows flashed on every side.
The crash of thy thunder was in the whirlwind;
thy lightnings lighted up the world;
the earth trembled and shook.
Thy way was through the sea,
thy path through the great waters;
yet thy footprints were unseen.
Thou didst lead thy people like a flock
by the hand of Moses and Aaron.
(vv. 16-20)

The use of לִימִן may possibly suggest that combined with the imagery of the storm is imagery drawn from the chaos myth. The crossing of the Red Sea is depicted in terms of this myth elsewhere in the Old Testament,¹ but on the other hand, in this passage לִימִן could be used in a simple, geographical sense parallel to 'clouds', and 'skies'.

Again, the tenderness of Yahweh, as portrayed in terms of Shepherd and flock, is found in harmony with the drama of theophany and the giant-like invisible footprints.

¹eg. Psa 74:12-15; Isaiah 51:9-10.

11. Psalm 78: The Psalm begins in a manner reminiscent of the Wisdom literature, even using its vocabulary by calling attention to a 'parable' (פֶּשֶׁל), and 'dark sayings' (חֲדָשִׁים). It is teaching (תּוֹרָה) from the past, handed down from father to son at the command of Yahweh, a warning against rebellion, "so that they should set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments"(v.7). The Ephraimites forgot, and stand as a warning.

They forgot what he had done,
and the miracles he had shown them.
In the sight of their fathers he wrought marvels
in the land of Egypt, in the fields of Zoan.
He divided the sea and let them pass through it,
and made the waters stand like a heap.
(vv. 11-13)

The Psalm goes on to describe God's wonderful provision in the wilderness. Yet despite this, "they had no faith, and did not trust his saving power"(v.22). They provoked His anger, and he slew them. Even their repentance was shallow and feigned: "they flattered him with their mouths; they lied to him with their tongues...they were not true to his covenant"(vv.36-37). Their hardness of heart is contrasted with the compassion and forgiveness of Yahweh who "restrained his anger often" for "he remembered that they were but flesh"(vv.38-39). Again and again the extraordinary miracles are set off against Israel's extraordinarily short memory.

They did not keep in mind his power,
or the day when he redeemed them
from the foe;
when he wrought his signs in Egypt,
and his miracles in the fields of Zoan.
(vv.42-43)

Then follows a description of the plagues which includes the rivers turned to blood, swarms of flies, frogs, caterpillars, and locusts, hail, and the death of the first-born. Then the Shepherd imagery is introduced, and later linked with the choice of the shepherd David.

Then he led forth his people like sheep,
and guided them in the wilderness
like a flock.
He led them in safety, so that they
were not afraid;
but the sea overwhelmed their enemies.
(vv.52-53)

The writer concludes that idolatry in the land of promise brought wrath and judgement leading to the rejection of Ephraim, and the choice of Judah, Mount Zion and David, whom Yahweh took from the sheepfolds "to be the shepherd of Jacob his people, of Israel his inheritance"(v.71). The Psalm is a lesson from history. Here the kingship of David with its attendant promises is joined to the Exodus in a way which indicates that nothing in the history of Israel between these two events has an equal significance. The Exodus is not merely an event of the past but one which provides the type, or pattern, of the constant divine care. The kingly rule of David follows the pattern of the divine shepherding revealed in the Exodus from Egypt, and the wilderness journeying. Thus the theological importance of the Exodus is evident in that the monarchy is interpreted according to Yahweh's activity in the Exodus.

iii. Psalm 81: The setting of this Psalm is a festival- "Blow the trumpet at the new moon, at the full moon, on our feast day"(v.3). It might be the Passover or Tabernacles festival. The central appeal of the Psalm is to an undivided allegiance to Yahweh expressed in words which echo the legislation formula.

I relieved your shoulder of the burden
your hands were freed from the basket.
In distress you called and I delivered you
(vv.6-7)
There shall be no strange god among you;
you shall not bow down to a foreign god.
I am Yahweh your God,
who brought you up out of the land of Egypt.
Open your mouth wide and I will fill it.
(vv.9-10)

The Psalmist believes that obedience would result in material blessings - the finest of the wheat, and honey - which call to mind the blessings of the promised land.

There are three Psalms in this collection which contain the Exodus theme in the form of passing allusions. These are Psalms 74, 76 and 80. We shall deal with Psalm 74 last.

iv. Psalm 76: This celebrates the wrath and might of Yahweh "who cuts off the spirit of princes, who is terrible

to the kings of the earth"(v.12). Before Him, armies are helpless -

they sank into sleep;
all the men of war
were unable to use their hands.
At thy rebuke, O God of Jacob,
both rider and horse lay stunned.
(vv.5-6)

There was no better example of this than the overthrow of the Egyptian chariotry, when "God arose to establish judgement to save all the oppressed of the earth"(v.9). This vigorous battle Psalm echoes the Song of Miriam recorded in Exodus 15 -

I will sing to Yahweh, for he has triumphed
gloriously,
the horse and his rider he has thrown
into the sea.
(v.1)
Pharaoh's chariots and his host he cast
into the sea;
and his picked officers are sunk in the
Red sea
The floods cover them,
they went down into the depths like a stone.
(vv.4-5)

The exalted praise of God who breaks the flashing arrows, the shield, the sword, and the weapons of war, and who turns the wrath of man to His own glory is based therefore on the defeat of Pharaoh's glittering chariotry at the Red Sea, where Israel stood still and saw the Lord fight for them.

v. Psalm 80: This is a national lament and prayer for restoration which reveals a richness of pastoral imagery reminiscent of the parables of Jesus. From the common life of agriculture and husbandry comes profound teaching when the Psalmist or prophet illustrates his message with inspired imagination. The figure of the vine recurs in the Old Testament and in the New, where it forms the background of several parables, and reveals Jesus Christ as the true Vine. Here it describes Israel.

Thou didst bring a vine out of Egypt;
thou didst drive out the nations
and plant it;
Thou didst clear the ground for it;
it took deep root and filled the land.
(vv,8-9)

The Psalmist then goes on to lament the set-backs which Israel has suffered under the figure of fire and the ravages of the boar, and prays that God will tend His vine again.

Turn again, O God of hosts !
Look down from heaven and see;
have regard for this vine,
the stock which thy right hand
has planted.
(vv.14-15)

This image of Husbandman and Vine occurs in the Song of Moses in Exodus 15 - "Thou wilt bring them in and plant them on thy own mountain"(v.17) - and shows God's special care for the chosen nation of Israel which was elected in the Exodus to be planted in the land of promise.

vi. Psalm 74: This Psalm is also a lament, and its subject is the destruction of the sanctuary by hammer, axe and fire(vv.5-7). "There is no longer any prophet"(v.9), and none who knows how much longer the enemy will exult. In the midst of despair, the Psalmist reaches out to the King of Israel.

Yet God my King is from of old,
working salvation in the midst of the earth.
Thou didst divide the sea by thy might;
thou didst break the heads of the dragons
on the waters.
Thou didst crush the heads of Leviathan,
thou didst give him as food for the
creatures of the wilderness.
Thou didst cleave open springs and brooks;
thou didst dry up ever-flowing streams.
Thine is the day, thine also the night;
thou hast established the luminaries
and the sun.
Thou hast fixed all the bounds of the earth;
thou hast made summer and winter.
(vv.12-17)

At first glance, there appears to be no allusion to the Exodus, but rather a poetic description of God's kingship in terms of the defeat of the chaos-monster at creation. A more careful study, however, reveals a fascinating interweaving of imagery, uniting the Exodus with the theology of creation. There are several arguments to support this interpretation. Of least weight is the position of this Psalm in the collection, coming as it

does in a group of Psalms, the 'Psalms of Asaph' (Pss.73-83), whose recurrent theme is the Exodus. Secondly, an appeal is made - "Have regard for thy covenant"(v.20) - and so the Exodus, which led up to the Sinai covenant referred to here, would fit the context well. This is confirmed by the delicate play of the imagery between the mythical and Exodus allusions. This is not unique in the Old Testament. With Psalm 74, we may compare Isaiah 51 -

Was it not thou that didst cut Rahab
in pieces,
that didst pierce the dragon ?
Was it not thou that didst dry up the
sea,
the waters of the great deep;
that didst make the depths of the sea a way
for the redeemed to pass over ?
And the ransomed of the Lord shall return
and come to Zion with singing. (vv.9-11)

Turning back to the Psalm, we see that God's work is described as salvation - 'working salvation' (v.12: Heb. פִּלַּעַל יְשׁוּעוֹת), which is used characteristically of the Exodus. The crossing of the Red Sea is alluded to in the phrases - "Thou didst divide (פִּלַּעַל Polel, to cleave, rend: פִּרַּךְ in Qal, to break in pieces) the sea" (v.13), and "thou didst dry up the ever-flowing streams" (v.15). There are also allusions to the wilderness wanderings: water from the rock - "Thou didst cleave open springs and brooks" (v.15a). Another allusion becomes clear when the text is read correctly. The Revised Standard Version translates verse 14 thus - "thou didst give him as food for the creatures in the wilderness". This is quite groundless. Kittel suggests that we read לְעַמִּי לֵזֶה, but this is a conjecture with no MS support. Against this, and the RSV emendation, we uphold the MT which reads לְעַם לֵזֶה - 'to the people in the wilderness', which accords perfectly with the context of the Exodus and wilderness theme in this passage. Not only is Leviathan defeated, but he is chopped into pieces and consumed by the people of Israel.

This close study of imagery reveals the importance of the Exodus for the theology of Israel from another aspect. Even creation is related to the Exodus. The Kingship of Yahweh over the entire creation is known by His power displayed in the overthrow of Pharaoh, and the opening of a way through the Red Sea.

Book IV.

In this collection, there are two lengthy historical Psalms dealing with the Exodus, Pss. 105 and 106, and in two other Psalms passing reference is made to the leaders of the Exodus. Psalm 99 points out three great men in the nation's history who were recipients of divine revelation -

Moses and Aaron were among his priests
 Samuel also was among those who called
 on his name.
 They cried to the Lord, and he answered them.
 He spoke to them in the pillar of cloud;
 (vv.6-7)

The allusion to Moses in Psalm 103 is much the same; it states the principle that knowledge of God is given by revelation through His acts, not by speculation. Thus it captures the essence of the Israelite faith -

The Lord works vindication
and justice for all who are oppressed.
He made known his ways to Moses
his acts to the people of Israel.
(vv.6-7)

With this principle of revelation in our minds, we now turn to the two historical Psalms which are complementary, one dwelling on the bright side of Yahweh's goodness, while the other dwells on Israel's disobedience.

1. Psalm 105: This is indeed a Psalm of praise which enumerates "the wonderful works that he has done", "his miracles, and the judgements he uttered" (v.5). Promise, election, covenant and providence are the key to an understanding of Israel's history, as this Psalm makes clear. They are traced through the lives of the patriarchs -

He is mindful of his covenant for ever

.....
the covenant which he made with Abraham,
his sworn promise to Isaac,
which he confirmed to Jacob as a statute,
to Israel as an everlasting covenant.
(vv.8-10)

As we shall see in our analysis of the Exodus theme in the book of Genesis, the Exodus was regarded as a fulfillment of what had been made known to the fathers.

God continually cared for His elect - "Touch not my anointed ones"(v.15) - so that when evil times came, He had foreseen and provided - "he had sent a man ahead of them"(v.17). This, of course, refers to Joseph who was the victim of his brothers' jealousy, but the instrument of God's providential plan. When the period of Joseph came to a close, and the crafty dealing of Israel's enemies had apparently triumphed -

He sent Moses his servant
and Aaron whom he had chosen.
They wrought his signs among them,
and miracles in the land of Ham.
(vv.26-27)

Then follows a description of the plagues which mentions the darkness, blood, frogs, flies, gnats, hail, locusts and finally the death of the first-born. Then, because "he remembered his holy promise, and Abraham his servant"(v.42), not only did He rescue His people, but He brought them out laden with gifts and full of joy -

Then he led forth Israel with silver
and gold,
and there was none among his tribes
who stumbled.
(v. 37)
So he led forth his people with joy
his chosen ones with singing.
(v. 43)

Israel delighted in the memory of despoiling the Egyptians for there was a certain irony about this tradition of accepting gifts to leave Egypt in haste after working there as slaves without payment. The note of joy is also sounded by II Isaiah in his description of the New Exodus, and belongs to the heart of a relationship between God and his people. It captures the superabundance of God's

giving which is full measure, pressed down and running over. Thus this little detail of the Exodus is very appropriate in this Psalm of praise.

The Psalm concludes on this high note, adding a brief description of the Conquest which enhances the election of Israel in receiving the land of those whom they dispossessed, and with a reminder that the Exodus was -

to the end that they should keep
his statutes,
and observe his laws. (v. 45)

11. Psalm 106: If the previous Psalm glories in the covenant-love and providence of Yahweh, this Psalm dwells on the dark side of Israel's history - her sin. It is a confession.

Both we and our fathers have sinned
we have committed iniquity,
we have done wickedly. (v.6)

The sad story of unbelief, rebellion and syncretism is traced from the banks of the Red Sea to the punishment of exile which scattered Israel among the nations. The Psalmist shows that all sin subsequent to the Exodus was rooted in a short-lived memory of the wonderful works, the steadfast love, the mighty power, and the glory of God which were so clearly revealed at the crossing of the Red Sea, and which, the writer infers, should have decisively shaped Israel's life and beliefs.

But they soon forgot his works
(v.13)
They forgot God, their Saviour,
who had done great things in Egypt,
wondrous works in the land of Ham,
and terrible things by the Red Sea.
(vv.21-22)

Such is the fickleness of human nature that the very generation which was brought out of Egypt was characterised by a spirit of rebellion.

Our fathers, when they were in Egypt,
did not consider thy wonderful works;
they did not remember the abundance of
thy steadfast love,
but rebelled against the Most High
at the Red Sea.
Yet he saved them for his name's sake,
that he might make known his mighty power.
He rebuked the Red Sea and it became dry;
and he led them through the deep as
through a desert.
So he saved them from the hand of the foe,
and delivered them from the power of
the enemy.
And the waters covered their adversaries;
not one of them was left. (vv.7-11)

The Psalm then goes on to describe the occasions during the wilderness wanderings when Israel sinned, and angered the Lord who yet spared them. Idolatry and syncretism are noted down until the exile when Israel was scattered among the lands of her enemies. The Psalm concludes with a prayer - "Save us, O Yahweh our God, and gather us from among the nations"(v.45).

The juxtaposition of Pss. 105 and 106 is not accidental. Both late post-exilic, they include many echoes of the Pentateuchal narratives, and of material found in other Psalms.¹ They illustrate how selected historical material was used in worship - Psalm 105 in thanksgiving; Psalm 106 in confession - thus providing the foundations and pillars on which the holy temple of Israel's faith rested. In this theological recital, the Exodus dominates to the virtual exclusion of traditions such as those of the Sinai covenant, which one might have expected to be given an equal prominence.

V

Book V.

In this collection, Pss. 114, 135 and 136 are moulded by the Exodus theme, while in Psa. 107 there is a generalised allusion to it -

He turns rivers into a desert,
springs of water into thirsty ground,

¹eg. Psa 105:1-15 is virtually identical with I Chron 16:8-36.

a fruitful land into a salty waste
because of the wickedness of its inhabitants.
He turns a desert into pools of water,
a parched land into springs of water.
(vv.33-35)

The Psalm is a generalised description of God's care for wanderers(vv 4-9), prisoners(vv.10-16), the sick(vv.17-22) and sea traders(vv.23-32). The stanzas devoted to wanderers and to prisoners carry many Exodus recollections, but their imagery is suited to a wider frame of reference just as it is in the passage quoted above. We shall find that II Isaiah makes great use of this generalised poetic imagery in his description of the New Exodus with its way through the desert which would blossom with new life, and rejuvenating streams.

We turn now to consider the final three Exodus Psalms in the Psalter.

1. Psalm 114: Oesterley says of this Psalm - "The oft referred-to story of the flight from Egypt was so familiar that the Psalmist merely mentions the great event without giving details, as in Psa.105,but it is a remarkable example of concise, yet vivid, description, reminiscent of some of the prophetic discourses".¹ One quotation will suffice to illustrate this.

What ails you, O sea, that you flee ?
O Jordan, that you turn back ?
O mountains that you skip like rams ?
O hills, like lambs ? (vv.5-6)

Soon after the end of the Maccabean wars, towards the end of the second century BC, when there is evidence that Synagogue worship had become part of Jewish life, this Psalm was used in what was known as the Hallel group (Psalms 113-118) taken over from the Temple Liturgy and sung after morning prayer on eighteen days of the year, including those of the New Moon.² The group was treated as a single composition in the Jewish liturgy, and was known as the "Hallel of Egypt", from the opening words of

¹ Oesterley: The Psalms, p.

² *ibid.* p.99

Psalm 114 - "When Israel went forth from Egypt". This distinguished it from 'The Great Hallel', Psalm 136.

11. Psalm 135: This Psalm designed for congregational worship has as its theme the omnipotence of Yahweh.

Whatever the LORD pleases he does,
in heaven and on earth,
in the seas and in all deeps.
(v.6)

He is portrayed as the Lord of nature and the Lord of history. In this connection His power over Pharaoh is recalled, special mention being made of the death of the first-born.

He it was who smote the first-born
of Egypt,
both of man and of beast;
who in thy midst, O Egypt,
sent signs and wonders,
against Pharaoh and all his servants.
(vv. 8-9)

Yahweh controls kings as easily as He controls clouds and lightnings and the wind. This assures the Psalmist that "Yahweh will vindicate his people, and have compassion on his servants" (v.14).

111. Psalm 136: This poem follows the same pattern as the previous one in extolling the Lordship of Yahweh in creation followed by the illustration of His rule over men which was demonstrated in the defeat of Pharaoh. The plagues are passed over with the exception of the death of the first-born, so that the actual Sea crossing holds pride of place. Between each line comes the antiphonal refrain - "for his hesed endures for ever".

To him who smote the first-born of Egypt,
and brought Israel out from among them,
with a strong hand and an outstretched arm,
to him who divided the Red Sea in sunder
and made Israel pass through the midst of it,
but overthrew Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea,
to him who led his people through the wilderness
..... (vv.10-16)
it is he who remembered us in our low estate
and rescued us from our foes (vv.23-24)
.....
O give thanks to the God of heaven, (v. 26)
for his steadfast love endures for ever.

This refrain forms a fitting conclusion to the Psalm, and sums up the reaction of a devout Israelite to a recital of the Exodus history.

VI

Outline of the Theology based on the Exodus in the Psalms.

It is apparent from the amount of material in the Psalter that the Exodus held a place of honour in Israel's poetic reflections, and more than that, a place of honour in Israel's knowledge of God, for the Psalter records a living communion between Yahweh and His people. The Psalmists celebrated the Exodus because it established the basis of a knowledge of Yahweh from which communion with Him flowed. We may now summarise the theology of the Exodus found in the Psalms which we have examined.

1. Revelation. The Israelite knew God because He had made Himself known. The whole movement in the dynamic of revelation is from God manwards. Thus Yahweh makes known His name, that is, His character to Moses. This revelation was the first step in the Exodus drama. Thus God made known the course and purpose of "His ways" to a chosen servant before He brought them to pass. The subsequent events are interpreted by an inspired spokesman. His name which was revealed to Moses at the burning bush is given content and meaning for all Israel in the subsequent Exodus events.

E.Jacob puts this pithily when he writes -

Les idées exprimées par la racine hayah à laquelle se rattache le nom de Yahweh sont celles d'existence et pouvoir; or, cette existence, et ce pouvoir ne se sont manifestés nulle part avec autant d'intensité qu'au moment de l'Exode. Le fait de l'Exode est le plus éloquent commentaire du nom de Yahweh, et de même que Yahweh était toujours un dieu présent.¹

The treatment of the Exodus in the Psalms supports the doctrine of revelation in its three aspects: the fact of revelation - God makes Himself known; the mediator of revelation - Moses, like the prophets, is God's mouthpiece

¹E.Jacob: La Révélation dans l'Histoire d'Israel, p.150

to the people of Israel, giving them an authoritative interpretation of the events; and the act of revelation - the living God intervenes directly to work out His purposes in history, and thus history rightly understood imparts a knowledge of God. In conclusion, we agree with E. Jacob when he sums up the Exodus in terms of revelation -

La sortie d'Egypte est de toutes les manifestations dans l'histoire la plus décisive et les manifestations subséquentes lui apportent moins un complément qu'une confirmation.¹

This is the way in which the Exodus is presented in the Psalms - as a supreme revelation of Yahweh.

11. Creation. The Exodus and the Creation are linked, as we have seen, in revealing the triumph of Yahweh over the elements, in particular over the sea. The power of Yahweh to divide the Red Sea was the power of the Creator who subdued the monster, tamed the deep and brought order out of the primeval chaos.

111. The Sovereignty of God. There could hardly be a clearer affirmation of the sovereignty of God than that of Psalm 135:6 - "Whatever the LORD pleases he does in heaven and on earth, in the seas and all deeps". The Psalms continually exalt the power of Yahweh, and invite attention to the Exodus as the great display of His sovereign control.

"Come and see what God has done", they say, "for he is terrible in his deeds among men". The power of Pharaoh cannot measure up to that of Yahweh, the majestic King, who shakes the earth as He marches at the head of His people. He also controls all natural forces, turning them to His own use in the plagues. He is the God who works miracles, signs and wonders. Three Hebrew words are used of this divine activity. פֶּלִי has the idea of something being hard or difficult, and of its being a wonder.

(cf. LXX θαυμα: noun from θαυμαζω - to wonder). It is often translated by the English miracle, that is, something

¹ ibid. p.150

too hard for man to do. But the word to Abraham was - "Is anything too hard for Yahweh ?"(Gen 18:14). Similarly, Jeremiah says - "Nothing is too hard for thee...who hast shown signs and wonders in the land of Egypt"(Jer 32:17,20). What was too hard for the slaves or Moses to do, Yahweh performed. The second word is $\lambda\iota\chi$, a sign(LXX σημεῖον), which is the word used, for example, when Isaiah challenges king Ahaz to ask for a sign from Yahweh. It marks something as being the work of God in a special way, so that one who understands the sign will see that in it Yahweh is active. In the New Testament, the Greek which translates this word in the LXX is the favourite word for miracle in John's gospel. The third word used in connection with the Exodus is $\lambda\epsilon\iota\sigma\mu\acute{o}\varsigma$ (LXX τερας), which usually occurs as a pair with one of the other words, and seems best translated by various words such as sign, wonder, mark or portent according to the context. These three words which we have noted are all used in the Exodus Psalms to bear witness to a God who intervened actively in the course of the world in a way which was unexplained, arousing wonder. The Exodus is the first great period of miracles, followed by the Elijah-Elisha era, and then the age of the New Testament, all crucial times for the faith. C.S.Lewis has described them as "ganglia of history" for the power of divine activity has been manifested in extraordinary intensity, providing a basis for faith in God's sovereignty during the long years of apparent silence. This is the reason for the prominence of the Exodus in the Psalms which were often written in times of spiritual bleakness.

God's sovereignty is made clear at the Exodus in rule of the nations, control of the elements and the majesty of theophany. A sovereignty of this kind could only properly belong to a monotheistic faith. Whether this was realised at the Exodus or only much later is still debated. Scholars

such as Albright, Rowley and Bright uphold the monotheistic nature of Mosaic religion, understanding by that not a philosophical, rationalistic monotheism but....

if, on the other hand, the term 'monotheist' means one who teaches the existence of only one God, the Creator of everything, the source of justice, who is equally powerful in Egypt, in the desert, and in Palestine, who has no sexuality, and no mythology, who is human in form but cannot be seen by human eye and cannot be represented in any form -- then¹ the founder of Yahwism was certainly a monotheist.

Certainly the conclusions from the Exodus revelation of Yahweh had been firmly drawn by the time our Psalms were written. Thus Psalm 81 makes a plea for practical monotheism because Yahweh is the One who brought Israel out of the land of Egypt.

iv. The Moral Attributes of God. Meditating on the Exodus, the author of Psalm 77 exclaims - "Thy way, O God, is holy"(v.13). But the prime attribute of God which the Psalmists derive from the Exodus is the steadfast love (Heb. חַסֵּד) revealed in "leading out the prisoners to prosperity", and being a "father of the fatherless"(Psa 68:5). He is a God of compassion who "does not despise the affliction of the afflicted"(Psa 22:24), but who arises "to establish חַסֵּד"(Psa 76:9).

v. Providence. The Psalmists have a strong sense of God's providence which may be described as His preventent care which extends from events on a national scale to the every day needs of food and water. Often men are the instruments of God's providence. Thus the Psalmist sees divine providence in the circumstances by which Joseph was sold into slavery by his brothers - "He had sent a man ahead of them"(Psa.105:17). This applied to Moses and Aaron as well - "He sent Moses his servant, and Aaron whom he had chosen"(Psa 105:26). Yahweh provided for their physical needs in the wilderness(Psa 105:39-41), and was known as the 'Shepherd of Israel' (Psa 78:52, 80:1).

¹ Albright: From the Stone Age to Christianity, p.272

vi. Salvation. It is generally true to say that in the Old Testament salvation was thought of in terms of salvation from an external foe, and not from the penalty and power of sin. That is why so many of the Psalms are prayers to be saved from the wiles of the wicked. In this light, the importance of the Exodus for the hope of salvation may be readily understood. Just as the term 'Shepherd', as applied to Yahweh, appears to belong primarily to the Exodus tradition - for it is certainly used in this way in Psalms which celebrate the Exodus, so too the title of 'Saviour' derives primarily from the Exodus salvation. God is called 'Saviour' in Psalm 106:21 (Heb. יְשׁוּעָה), and many other words are used by the Psalmists to describe the Exodus as a great salvation, for example, "being brought out, being delivered, freed, ransomed, redeemed, being vindicated" which translate such Hebrew roots as - Hiphil of יָצָא (Psa 68:6, 136:11); לָאָץ (Psa 77:15, 106:10); הִצִּיל (Psa 78:42); Piel of קָדַשׁ (Psa 81:6); Hiphil of יָשַׁע (Psa 106:9, 74:12, 76:9); $\text{לִירֵדָה יְשׁוּעָה}$ (Psa 103:6).

The value of the Exodus for a doctrine of salvation may be seen in the use which II Isaiah makes of it in his eschatological soteriology.¹ ²

vii. Election. The Psalmists look to the Exodus as the demonstration of Israel's election. There Israel is spoken of as being chosen as Yahweh's own possession (Psa 135:4). In another Psalm, election is described in terms of viniculture - "Thou didst bring a vine out of Egypt" (Psa 80:8). The election of the nation at the Exodus is linked to the election of the royal house of David by means of the Shepherd imagery applied to Yahweh's care in the Exodus and David's early life, and kingly role.

The elect enjoy the felicity of the redeemed. The

¹ see Chapter IV, pp.

² for the influence of the Exodus on Paul's terminology of

one-time slaves are heaped with gold and silver as they leave Egypt (Psa 105:37), and know the joy of His salvation - "He led forth his people with joy, his chosen ones with singing" (Psa 105:43). This is most appropriate in the Psalter which belongs essentially to singing and praise, and it is a motif which is used extensively in II Isaiah.

viii. The Problem of Suffering. Of greatest interest is the way in which the Psalmists use the Exodus to find a solution to the problem of suffering. Prior to the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and the light which that threw upon the meaning of suffering, and life after death, men of faith in the Old Testament wrestled with the problem of the sufferings of the righteous. Many of the Psalms fret at the prosperity of the wicked; others are a cry of distress; some approach the problem philosophically. The vision of the author of the Servant Songs was unknown to the ordinary Israelite. His thinkers in the school of Wisdom poured over the problem, and such works as the book of Job offer noble solutions. The sensitive prophets were distressed by the judgements which they had to proclaim upon God's chosen people, and thus arose the questionings of Jeremiah, and the pathos of Lamentations, and the faith of Habbakuk. Among these attempts to solve the mysteries of the theodicy, the Psalmists whose theme is the Exodus deserve a place of honour. Many of these Psalms were written in times of despair, yet by a conscious effort their author turns from his own misery to draw courage from the Exodus story. This is clearly illustrated by Psalm 22 which begins with a cry of desolation - "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me ?", but which concludes on a note of triumph - "those who seek him shall praise Yahweh... all the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the LORD" (vv.26-27). The Psalmist has turned an agonised eye to the Exodus, and seen that "the fathers were not disappointed" for God "did not despise or abhor the affliction of the afflicted" (vv.5,24). Similarly, when the house of Yahweh

had been razed to the ground, the Psalmist asks -

"How long, O God, is the foe to scoff ? Is the enemy to revile thy name for ever ? Why dost thou hold back thy hand ?"(Psa 74:10,11), but is reassured that Yahweh is in control as the eternal King when he reflects on the Exodus. Similarly, the author of Psalm 77 ceases to ask the question - "Has God forgotten to be gracious ?"(v.9)- when he remembers the divine Shepherd of the Exodus - "Thou didst lead thy people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron"(v.20).

The solution which the Psalmists reach is in many ways similar to that of the book of Job, and the apocalyptic vision of the prophets, namely, that Yahweh's direct intervention will resolve the conflict. The Psalmists base their hope in this intervention on the Exodus, and read in it the overthrow of all opposed to God. Just as salvation hopes were based on the Exodus, so the judgement of evil men is founded on the destruction of the Egyptians in the Red Sea. The Exodus guarantees that Yahweh is a God who sees, and who hears the cry of the afflicted. If the Psalmists must wait for the pattern of salvation to be fulfilled, they are able to wait in hope, because the Exodus has revealed God's care for His chosen ones, and foreshadowed His triumph over evil.

VII

This outline of the theology of the Exodus as it appears in the Psalter is sufficient to show that the Exodus was far more than a national epic describing the tribal history of the Hebrew race. The Psalmists recall the Exodus not only because it lends itself to dramatic poetry, but because it was fundamental to their knowledge of the God with whom they communed.

The Psalter is a microcosm of the broad sweep of

Israel's faith. At the end of our analysis of the Exodus theme in the Psalter, we have reached the conclusion that the Exodus held a place of great honour in the worship of individual and community recorded over a long period. From the microcosm of the Psalter, we may now turn to the macrocosm of the remainder of the Old Testament and trace the Exodus theme through the book of Genesis, the legislation of the Pentateuch and the historical books to its form in the writings of the prophets.

CHAPTER II

THE EXODUS IN THE LEGISLATION OF THE PENTATEUCH

The Exodus in the Legislation of the Pentateuch.

A.

The Genesis Prologue.

By faith Joseph, at the end of his life, made mention of the exodus of the Israelites, and gave directions concerning his burial. (Heb 11:22)

Before we consider the Exodus theme in the legislation of the Pentateuch, we shall examine the prologue to it which the Old Testament supplies in the book of Genesis.

The patriarchs received promises of blessing and an inheritance as "the assurance of things hoped for, and the conviction of things not seen". In their trek along the dusty road of the divine calling, their gaze was directed towards the horizon of God's plan. Ahead lay the promised land, a land flowing with milk and honey, awaiting the arrival of a nation which was to be multiplied as the sand of its shores. The fathers had glimpses of this from afar. More than that, they witnessed the genesis of fulfillment in their own time. The birth of Isaac, child of promise, was like the appearance of the first evening star which heralds a twinkling sky. The exodus of Terah and his family from Ur of the Chaldees, and the exodus of Abraham from Haran in answer to the divine command - "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing" (Gen 12:1-2), these foreshadow the call and election of Israel as a nation, and the great Exodus to the land of promise.

The pattern of the Exodus was established in the life of Abraham in his exodus from Ur and Haran, and in the covenant which God made with him, pointing forward to the Exodus of the nation and the Sinai covenant. In fact, Abraham was told of the great Exodus during the solemnising of the covenant. This is recorded in Genesis 15.

Abraham is granted assurance of the divine faithfulness in vision - "Fear not, Abram, I am your shield; your reward shall be very great"(v.1). He is promised a son and heir whose descendants would be like the stars in number, and "he believed Yahweh; and he reckoned it to him as righteousness" (v.6). He is reminded of his call out of Ur, and the promise of an inheritance of land - "I am Yahweh who brought you from Ur of the Chaldeans, to give you this land to possess"(v7). This form of address is in the same style as the oft repeated phrase - "I am Yahweh who brought you up out of the land of Egypt", and we may see a certain parallelism in it between the exodus of Abraham and the Exodus from Egypt. Abraham and his descendants knew a God who called, a God who led out a people for Himself, who acted in individual, tribal and national history with good purpose.

In answer to Abraham's question - "O Lord GOD, how am I to know that I shall possess it ?"(v.8), he is given a glimpse of the outworking of the divine promise. The word is first confirmed by covenant ritual(vv.9-11,17-21), a solemn ceremony which implied that if the oath were broken, the fate of the breaker would be like that of the severed sacrificial victims. Then....

as the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell on Abram; and lo, a dread and great darkness fell upon him. Then Yahweh said to Abram, "Know of a surety that your descendants will be sojourners in a land that is not theirs, and will be slaves there, and they will be oppressed for four hundred years; but I will bring judgement on the nation which they serve, and afterward they shall come out with great possessions...And they shall come back here in the fourth generation; for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete.

(vv.12-14,16)

Egypt is not named in this visionary revelation, but the period of oppression(cf. Ex 12:40-41), the judgement of the oppressors, the exodus with great possessions(cf.Ex 12:35, Psa 105:37), and the return to the land of Canaan are all mentioned. That this first appearance of the Exodus theme should be in the solemn and mysterious covenant narrative makes clear its key importance in understanding the portrayal of the patriarchs in Genesis, and the continuity of God's electing and saving purpose in the history and the faith of Israel.

The revelation to Abraham is confirmed to Jacob -

and God spoke to Israel in visions of the night, and said, "Jacob, Jacob". And he said, Here am I". Then he said, "I am God, the God of your father; do not be afraid to go down to Egypt; for I will there make of you a great nation. I will go down with you to Egypt, and I will also bring you up again; and Joseph's hand shall close your eyes." (Gen 46:2-4)

Isaac had been forbidden to go down to Egypt(Gen 26:2-3), and so Jacob needed the divine word of permission which indicated that all would fall in with God's sovereign purpose. Jacob knew a God who went with him(v.4), just as Moses proclaimed the desire of Yahweh to dwell in the midst of His people, and Isaiah prophesied the birth of Immanuel. The phrase - "I will bring you up again" - is not individualistic. Jacob is addressed both in his individual capacity ("Jacob, Jacob !"),and as "Israel", the father of the nation. Thus the word addressed to Jacob should be understood in terms of the corporate personality so characteristic of Semitic thought. God would bring up the nation of his descendants.

When Jacob drew near to the time of his death, he made Joseph swear that he would not bury him in Egypt, but would carry him up to the land of Canaan -

If now I have found favour in your sight, put your hand under my thigh, and promise to deal loyally and truly with me. Do not bury me in Egypt, but let me lie with my fathers; carry me out of Egypt, and bury me in their burying place. (Gen 47:29-30)

Jacob's burial beyond the borders of Egypt was but a hint of of the nation's Exodus from that land.

Then Israel said to Joseph, "Behold, I am about to die, but God will be with you, and will bring you again to the land of your fathers". (Gen 48:21)

In his turn, Joseph reminds his brothers of the foretold Exodus which had been passed on from father to son.

And Joseph said to his brothers, "I am about to die; but God will visit you and bring you out of this land to the land which he swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob".

Then Joseph took an oath of the sons of Israel, saying, "God will visit you, and you shall carry up my bones from here". (Gen 50:24-25)

So ends the prologue to the Exodus. The promise has been given, and reiterated. The nation has been born, and is in Egypt. The first act of the Exodus drama concludes in stately dignity with Joseph lying embalmed in his coffin. His word was not forgotten, for we read in the book of Exodus that -

Moses took the bones of Joseph with him; for Joseph had solemnly sworn to the people of Israel, saying, "God will visit you, then you must carry my bones with you from here". (Ex 13:19)

The oath was finally completed by Joshua - "The bones of Joseph which the people of Israel brought up from Egypt were buried at Shechem" (Joshua 24:32).

APPENDIX A.

A Critical Note.

We have not dealt with the historicity of these prophecies of the Exodus given to the patriarchs. Many scholars would no doubt regard them as vaticinia ex eventu woven into the narrative by one or other of the Pentateuchal redactors. In fact, there appears to be no objective proof which may be led either for or against their historicity. There is little agreement as to their analysis according to the usual source criticism of J, E, D, and P. For example, Skinner commenting on Jacob's word to Joseph in Genesis 48:21 says -

A prediction of the return to Canaan, in terms very similar to 50:24(also E). The explicit anticipations of the Exodus are probably all from this document (15:16?, 46:4, 50:24).¹

And in dealing with the key passage, the revelation to Abraham at the confirmation of the covenant in Genesis 15:13-16, Skinner notes -

vv.13-16 are obviously out of place in J, because they presuppose v.18 (the promise of land). They are generally assigned to a redactor, although it is difficult to conceive a motive for their insertion ...Since v.11 is intimately connected with vv.13-16, and at the same time has no influence on the account of J, the natural conclusion is that both v.11 and vv.13-16 are documentary, but that the document is not J but E (so Gunkel)... E's partiality for the visionary mode of revelation may be sufficient justification for assigning the to him, and the to J; but the choice is immaterial.²

But S.H.Hooke divides it differently assigning vv.1-2,5 and 16 to E; and vv.3-4, 6-15, 17-18, 19-21 to J, with the tag 'Deuteronomic redactor' in brackets after them.³ Where there is such divergence of opinion, it is clear that sufficiently objective criteria are lacking, and certainly in this instance it would be of no purpose to

¹Skinner: Genesis, ICC, p.507 ²op. cit. p.282

³S.H.Hooke: Genesis, Peake, p.176.

draw conclusions as to the historicity or unreliability of the Exodus predictions in Genesis from a documentary analysis.

To conclude this critical note, we may quote from M.Noth who is skeptical of the historical reliability of the Exodus tradition in Genesis, but who recognises its importance in the structure of the book as we have it .
He writes -

Through the association of the patriarchs with other traditions, however, the promises not only acquired a significance for Israel as a whole, but they also became elements of an act of divine guidance in which the goal of the occupation of the land by a numerous people was not attained simply and suddenly, but by the round-about way of the sojourn in Egypt and the miraculous deliverance from the hand of the Egyptians. Thus the entry of the tradition of the patriarchs into the faith of the Israelite confederacy of the twelve tribes made a substantial contribution to the development of the theological explanation of the divine action which had led Israel to its present position in history,¹ a people of God in a land which God had given it.

¹M.Noth: The History of Israel, p.126

B.

The Legislation.

We have seen that the book of Genesis leads up to a climax of anticipation as the promises of offspring and inheritance are reiterated by God and passed on from father to son. Genesis leaves the chosen family in Egypt where their fortunes were bound up with the Egyptian economy. For a while, especially during the famine, it was of advantage to the sojourners, but all too soon this situation was reversed. There arose a Pharaoh with building plans, made feasible by slave labour.

It is beyond the compass of this thesis to give an analysis of the Exodus narrative told in such dramatic style in the first fifteen chapters of the book. Instead, we shall outline the theological understanding of these events which had decisive formative influence on the faith of Israel. The Exodus was not forgotten when Egypt was left behind across the vistas of sand traversed only by caravan tracks. Almost every section of the legislation is illuminated by a miniature sketch of the Exodus deliverance, like the brightly painted Lindesfarne Gospels.

For convenience, we shall divide the material of our analysis into three parts under the headings -

- i. The Exodus in Covenantal Faith.
- ii. The Exodus in Cultic and Ritual Observance.
- iii. The Exodus in Moral Teaching.

Passages from the four books, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy will be drawn together, because this study is concerned with the motif and theology of the Exodus rather than documentary analysis, and for this purpose, the similarities of the Exodus material found in the four books are greater than their differences.

I

The Exodus and the Covenant.

We saw in our study of Genesis that God's covenant with the patriarchs included a revelation of the period of oppression, and a deliverance which would take place prior to the inheritance of the promised land. The narrative in the book of Exodus deliberately continues this thread of promise from the fathers to the call of Moses, and explains the Exodus in the light of the covenant with Abraham.

God heard their groaning, and remembered his
covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with
Jacob. (Ex 2:23)

Whenever the Old Testament speaks of God remembering something, it indicates His movement towards it in timely intervention (cf. 'God remembered Noah and all the beasts and all the cattle that were with him in the ark' - Gen 8:1)¹. So here God remembers His covenant with the patriarchs, and this marks the next step, the continuation of His purpose which He was working out in the world through these chosen men. God's main action is through people, a chosen, elected individual, family or nation, and it leads to a relationship with Himself which is expressed in terms of covenant. Thus in the Old Testament, we have the covenant with Noah concerning all flesh, the covenant with Abraham concerning his seed, the covenant with Israel concerning Yahweh's laws - a covenant which was more than once renewed, - and the covenant with David concerning his royal house. At the opening of the Exodus narrative, we stand between the covenant with Abraham and the Sinai covenant. The action is about to begin as the story of God's covenant-love is unfolded. Thus the continuity is stressed again at the call of Moses - God appears to him in the burning bush as "the God of your fathers, the God of

¹BS.Childs: Memory and Tradition in Israel, SCM Studies in Biblical Theology, No.37, p.34.

Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob" (Ex 3:15). Then if we jump over the intervening events to look at the Deuteronmic reflection upon the Exodus, we shall find similar stress upon God's covenant-love for the patriarchs and His work of deliverance in the Exodus -

He loved your fathers and chose their descendants after them....Yahweh loves you and is keeping the oath which he swore to your fathers. (Deut 4:37, 7:8)

We should read the Exodus, then, in the light of the covenantal faith. It follows on from the covenant with Abraham; it leads up to the Sinai covenant.

The covenant pre-supposes belief in a God who is concerned with the affairs of men, who does intervene directly. For an Israelite of the covenant and Exodus tradition, any form of theology which denied the intervening activity of God was unthinkable. After the Exodus, no thinking akin to modern death-of-God theology, secularisation or deism was possible for a man of Israel. Only a fool would deny God's activity (Psa 14:1). The Exodus witnessed to a living, intervening God in a way unsurpassed until the birth of Jesus Christ. This intervention is vividly presented in the narrative.

The Israelites had got clear of Egypt with haste only to find themselves trapped by the Red Sea with the flower of the Egyptian army in hot pursuit. Would God intervene? Moses was instructed to proclaim that He would, so that their faith might be tested and startlingly confirmed. "Fear not", he told them, "stand firm and see the salvation of Yahweh, which he will work for you today; for the Egyptians whom you see today, you shall never see again. Yahweh will fight for you, and you have only to be still" (Ex 14:13-14). The crossing of the Red Sea remained the most celebrated occasion in the poetry of the Exodus theme, and the refrain of Moses' song which Miriam recited as she

led the Israelite maidens with her timbrel held high rings through the whole Bible from here to the book of Revelation as the redeemed sing the triumph songs of Yahweh -

Sing to Yahweh for he has triumphed gloriously;
the horse and his rider
he has thrown into the sea.

(Ex 15:1,21 cf. Rev 5:9,
15:1-4)

This faith in a God who intervenes was the mainstay of the Conquest as well, for the invading band was able to look back to the Exodus in living memory and press the attack on peoples stronger than themselves.

When you go forth to war against your enemies, and see horses and chariots and an army larger than your own, you shall not be afraid of them; for Yahweh your God is with you, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt. (Deut 20:1 cf. Ex 15:3, Deut 1:30-31, 7:17-19)

Yahweh was a covenant-keeping God, and so a God who intervened. The two belong together, for, as the purpose of the Exodus is unfolded, we recognise its wonderful deliverance as the prevenient grace of God leading up to a covenant relationship with the whole nation.

This is apparent in the beautiful description of the Exodus as Yahweh bearing Israel on the wings of an eagle -

You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself. Now therefore if you will obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my own possession among all peoples; for all the earth is mine, and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. (Ex 19:4 cf. Lev 26:41-45)

As Dillman remarks - "It is the classic passage in the Old Testament on the nature and aim of the theocratic covenant".¹ The love of Yahweh draws Israel to Him sweeping the Egyptians and all obstacles aside with one stroke. The Exodus was the concrete expression of the divine initiative, but there was room for a human response too - obedience. The nation of Israel was to be a nation of priests, that is, they would stand in relation to the nations of the world

¹ quoted by Stalker, Exodus, Peake, p.227.

as the priest stood to Yahweh. Israel, as God's possession, was intended to be the mediator of His revelation. But, though this privilege and responsibility was understood by one or two of the prophets, the missionary programme was never, and did not become part of Israel's way of life, until the time of the new Israel in the apostolic age. Significantly, Peter echoes the verses quoted above in his description of the new Israel of God with great emphasis on its outgoing mission - "But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, that you may declare the wonderful deeds of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light"(1 Peter 2:9). The Exodus, then, opened up the possibility of a national covenant relationship with an international effect. Just as it was so clearly the divine initiative which led up to the covenant, it is a corollary of this that the Exodus deliverance was due to no merit on the part of its participants. Thus the Deuteronomist writes -

It was not because you were more in number than any other people that Yahweh set his love upon you and chose you, for you were the fewest of all peoples; but it is because Yahweh loves you, and is keeping the oath which he swore to your fathers that Yahweh has brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you from the house of bondage, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt. (Deut 7:7-8)

The theological implications of the Exodus are further unfolded in terms of Yahweh desiring to dwell in the midst of His people. Seen in this light, the Exodus was but the beginning. Yahweh who had shown His presence so vividly at the Exodus, guarding the fugitives with a pillar of cloud and fire, did not withdraw after the crossing of the Red Sea. On the contrary, Israel was assured of that same dynamic power in her midst continually. What guarantee was given of this to a people whose faith worked best when believing was seeing? This was the role of the Tabernacle which was to be the visible reminder both of the Exodus,

and of Yahweh's abiding presence. So we read at the ordination of the priests and of Aaron of a link with the Exodus ...

I will dwell among the people of Israel, and will be their God. And they shall know that I am Yahweh their God, who brought them forth out of the land of Egypt that I might dwell among them. I am Yahweh their God. (Ex 29:43-46)

The covenant, which meant Yahweh's presence in the midst of Israel, as we have seen, had a practical outworking - the demand for holiness. Yahweh was a holy God, and Israel was a separated people. The need for spiritual separation was conveyed by the geographical parting with Egypt. "You shall not do as they do in the land of Egypt, where you dwelt" (Lev 18:3). The Exodus gives us an insight into the root meaning of sanctification: it is separation. Thus the Israelites were told: "you shall not profane my holy name, but I will be hallowed among the people of Israel; I am Yahweh who sanctifies you, who brought you out of the land of Egypt to be your God: I am Yahweh" (Lev 22:31-33).

Summing up our conclusions so far, we may say that the Exodus led to the covenant, and the covenant meant that Yahweh dwelt in the midst, and that in turn meant that Israel must be holy. In the vivid Hebrew terminology, Yahweh was pictured as walking about the camp -

I will walk among you, and will be your God, and you shall be my people. I am Yahweh your God who brought you forth out of the land of Egypt, that you should not be their slaves; and I have broken the bars of your yoke and made you walk erect. (Lev 26:11-13)

The freedom which the Exodus brought was a freedom to live as a holy people, to walk uprightly, not freedom from the obligation of obedience and discipline, which should, in fact, have followed naturally upon meditation on the Exodus. This is the point made in the moralising tones of Deuteronomy -

Consider the discipline of Yahweh your God, his greatness, his mighty hand and his outstretched arm, his signs and his deeds which he did in Egypt to Pharaoh, the king of Egypt

and all his lands, and what he did to the army of Egypt, to their horses and to their chariots; how he made the water of the Red Sea overflow them as they pursued after you, and how Yahweh destroyed them to this day. (Deut 11:2-4)

Some guidance had to be given in the details of obedience, and so there had to be a code containing all that the Exodus and covenant meant in its practical outworking. At the head of this code, epitomised in the Ten Commandments, stands the phrase - 'I am Yahweh your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage' (Ex 20:2, Deut 5:6). No ethical arguments are led. No definition of the good is given. There stands but one irrefutable claim upon Israel's obedience - the absolute sovereignty of the God of the Exodus. There is the announcement of the name - 'I am Yahweh', and the commentary which gave the name its content - 'your God who brought you forth from the land of Egypt'. That is sufficient. Grave warnings against apostasy are issued on the same basis in the didactic monologues of Deuteronomy. By the Exodus, Yahweh laid claim to Israel, and He was a jealous God who will brook no rival. So the people are warned lest they err when they are established and enjoying the prosperity of the promised land -

Take heed lest you forget the LORD who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. You shall serve Yahweh your God; him you shall serve, and swear by his name. You shall not go after other gods. (Deut 6:12-14)
(cf. Deut 8:11,14-16, 9:7,12, 29:2,16)

The false prophet is singled out especially - "you shall stone him to death with stones, because he sought to draw you away from Yahweh your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage" (Deut 13:5,10). So too is the danger of an apostate king, since he too was a religious figure: "he (the king) shall not multiply horses for himself or cause the people to return to Egypt or to multiply horses, since Yahweh has said to you, 'You

shall never return that way again"(Deut 17:16). This reference to the king is often read as a comment on the reign of Solomon. Certainly, any military or marital alliance with Egypt is regarded as contrary to the whole movement of the Exodus. We find in the prophets a similar threat of judgement in terms of a reversal of the Exodus and a return to Egypt.¹ The Ten Commandments and the warnings about king and false prophet all point to the Exodus as Yahweh's ineradicable claim upon Israel.

But human nature is sinful, and the Exodus proved to be a change of address rather than a change of heart, as Ezekiel was to point out vigorously. At the very scene of the covenant inauguration, Israel sinned in a dire parody of the Exodus which had brought them to the foot of Mount Sinai. The people persuaded Aaron to make a golden calf, preferring a tangible idol to the invisible God. "Up, make us gods who shall go before us", they said, "as for this man Moses, the man who brought us up from the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him"(Ex 32:1). So the golden calf was formed, and the cry went up, "These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt"(Ex 32:4). On this one occasion, God dissociates Himself from the Exodus -

Then Yahweh said to me(Moses), Arise, go down quickly from here; for your people whom you have brought from Egypt have acted corruptly.
(Deut 9:12)

God would have destroyed them there and then, as also on the occasion at the border of the promised land when the people groaned at the strength of the resident population: "Would that we had died in the land of Egypt ! ...would it not be better for us to go back to Egypt ?"(Num 13:2). But Moses interceded for them, basing his plea for their forgiveness on the grace of Yahweh revealed at the Exodus,

¹Hosea 8:13, 9:3, 11:5 cf. Deut 28:68.

and the name which He had made for Himself in triumphing over the Egyptians -

And I prayed to Yahweh, 'O Lord Yahweh, destroy not thy people and thy heritage, whom thou hast redeemed through thy greatness, whom thou hast brought out of Egypt with a mighty hand.
(Deut 9:26 cf. Ex 34:4-14)
the Egyptians will hear of it, for thou didst bring up this people in thy might from among them... Pardon the iniquity of this people, I pray thee, according to the greatness of thy steadfast love, and according as thou hast forgiven this people, from Egypt even until now. (Num 14:14-19)

We have come the full round from the Exodus which continued the promises made to the forefathers to the need for forgiveness and renewal of the covenant relationship because of national sin. The meaning of the Exodus has been unfolded in relation to the past, and to its immediate purpose in the covenant relationship sealed at Sinai. The Exodus did not lack an international missionary consequence at least in intention, for God intended that the dynamic knowledge of Himself which He gave in the Exodus events should not be confined to Israel, but spread by them to other nations in such a way that they would be mediators of His revelation, a kingdom of priests to the rest of mankind. The consequences of Yahweh's active presence among the Israelites which the Exodus began were worked out. A code of obedience was formulated in order to regulate the response to the divine grace which released Israel from servitude and enabled her to walk uprightly.

Thus the Exodus was not regarded as an isolated event in the covenantal faith of the Israelites. Rather it was a spectacular bridge between the covenant with Abraham and the Sinai covenant, a widening of Abraham's deep knowledge of Yahweh, a personal experience, into a national experience of Him.

II

The Exodus in Cultic Observance.

The cult played a more important role in ancient Israel than we can readily imagine who live in such a different world from the ethos of sacrifice and all the ritual which went with it. Even in the 'highest' of modern Churches, the sacraments hardly compare in dramatic character with such festivals as the Passover, or with the ritual of the day of atonement.

There were three national feasts given over to celebrating the Exodus - supremely the Passover, and associated with it the feast of Unleavened Bread, and lastly the feast of Booths. The key to these festivals is representation of past history which was also a revelation of Yahweh in redemption. Speaking of the categories of time involved in representation, Martin Noth says -

'Re-presentation' is founded on this - that God and his action are always present, while man in his inevitable temporality cannot grasp this present-ness except by 're-presenting' the action of God over and over again in his worship.¹

The celebration of the Exodus in Passover, Unleavened Bread and Booths differs radically from the cult dramas of cyclical mythology, since it is founded upon a linear view of history, which, as we have noticed, is stressed by the pattern of promise and fulfillment running from the covenant with Abraham through the age of the patriarchs to the call of Moses, and the escape from Egypt.

To describe adequately the origin, celebration and theology of the Passover would require a study in itself, so here we can only note a few of the key points. By many scholars, the Passover feast is traced to a time, considerably pre-dating the Exodus, at which it was part of the agricultural year of nomad people, as an annual event to

¹ M. Noth: The 'Re-presentation' of the Old Testament in Proclamation, p.85, in Essays on OT Interpretation ed. Westermann.

secure protection for moving the flocks to new grazing without the unwelcome attention of demons. If this be so, it only goes to show the strong historicising nature of Israel's faith, for while its celebration remained an annual event, it pointed back to the specific occasion of the Exodus, and thus was not of the same ilk as the mythical rituals of her neighbours who annually celebrated the triumph of one of their gods over chaos at the time of creation, or the dying and rising of the gods of fertility with the changes of the seasons.

When your children say to you, 'What do you mean by this service?', you shall say, 'It is the sacrifice of the LORD's passover, for he passed over the houses of the people of Israel in Egypt, when he slew the Egyptians, but spared our houses'.
(Ex 12:26-27 cf. Deut 16:1-12)

In this passage, the Passover is regarded as a sacrificial feast which put Israel into a special relationship with Yahweh so that they were preserved from destruction in contrast to their neighbours, the Egyptians. The Passover, therefore, is the occasion when each succeeding generation knows itself as a redeemed people, elected to a saving relationship with Yahweh. As such the Passover gained future significance also, for it became the guarantee of God's continued action on behalf of those who were partakers of this feast of remembrance. Though the Passover fell into disuse, at least on a national scale, at times of reformation, such as in Josiah's day, the Passover was the focal point of attention as being the tradition which distinguished Israel's from the religions of her neighbours. The Passover runs through history like a scarlet thread from the Exodus to the Last Supper where it was to become transformed into the feast of the New Covenant.

The feast of Unleavened Bread is also thought to have an independent history which was eclipsed by its association with the Exodus. The Israelites were to explain

it thus to their little ones -

Remember this day, in which you came out from Egypt, out of the house of bondage; for by strength of hand Yahweh brought you out from this place; no leavened bread shall be eaten... And you shall tell your son on that day, 'It is because of what Yahweh did for me when I came out of Egypt'. (Ex 13:3-10 cf. 23:15, 34:18, Deut 16:1-8)

In the New Testament, Paul uses this ceremony to warn against sin within the Church by analogy with the leaven which was eradicated from the dough.

The feast of Booths was a living re-enactment of the time when Israel was in the wilderness dwelling in tents on their journey to the promised land.

Israel shall dwell in booths that your generations may know that I made the people of Israel dwell in booths when I brought them out of the land of Egypt; I am Yahweh your God. (Lev 23:39-43 cf. Deut 16:13-15)

It must have fallen into disuse too, for we find that it was revived during the reforms of Ezra and Nehemiah with the comment - "for from the days of Joshua, son of Nun, to that day the people of Israel had not done so" (Neh 8:13-18).

There were, then, three ritual enforcements of the redemption from Egypt, and ideally Israel never forgot that she had come from slavery to serve a living God. The fact that the central feast of Judaism, the Passover, together with two others, is devoted to the Exodus, while there is no equivalent to the pagan festivals in the legislation¹ shows beyond doubt the importance of the Exodus in Israel's whole faith, and the essentially historical character of that faith.

Besides the three feasts, there are several other institutions designed to commemorate the Exodus to be found in the legislation. One such is the consecration of the first-born. On the Passover night, when the first-born

¹there have been attempts made by such scholars as Mowinkel, Hooke and Johnson to discover a creation-struggle ceremony and an enthronement ritual in which the king played a leading role representing Yahweh, but these interpretations, mainly based on certain Psalms, have not gained universal acceptance among Old Testament scholars.

of the Egyptians died, both man and beast, the first-born of the Israelites were preserved safely behind doors which were sprinkled with the sacrificial blood. In this way, the first-born were living witnesses to the saving event, and so they were to be specially consecrated to Yahweh.

Every first-born among your sons you shall redeem. And when in time to come your son asks you, 'What does this mean?', you shall say to him, 'By strength of hand Yahweh brought us out of Egypt from the house of bondage.... It shall be as a mark on your hand or frontlet between your eyes; for by a strong hand Yahweh brought us out of Egypt.(Ex 13:1-16)

The idea of consecrating the first-born was also applied in a special way to the Levites who were devoted to Yahweh in the stead of the 'secular' first-born. Historically, the origin of the Levites, and the distinction of priests and Levites is one of the most debated problems in Old Testament studies upon which it would be impossible to embark here. We may simply note that in the legislation of the book of Numbers, the distinction of the tribe of Levi is given a theological reason derived from the Exodus -

Behold I have taken the Levites from among the people of Israel instead of every first-born that opens the womb among the people of Israel. The Levites shall be mine for all the first-born are mine, on the day that I slew all the first-born in the land of Egypt, I consecrated for my own all the first-born of Israel, both of man and of beast; they shall be mine: I am Yahweh.(Num 3:11-13)

Reminders of the commandments which were based on the formula 'I am Yahweh who brought you up out of the land of Egypt' extend even to details of dress. Thus the Israelites were instructed to make borders of tassels on their garments, that seeing them they might be reminded of their deliverance from Egypt(Num 15:37-41). Moreover the dietary laws carried the same formula - "You shall not defile yourself with any swarming thing that crawls on the earth. For I am Yahweh who brought you up out of the land of Egypt to be your God; you shall therefore be holy, for I am holy"(Lev 11:45). If Israel was disobedient, especially in apostasy from the

the God of the Exodus, she would receive the ironical punishment of having laid upon her the diseases and plagues of Egypt (Deut 7:15, 28:27, 60). As well as being the theme of three festivals, we find that the Exodus has left its mark upon these miscellaneous ritual details.

III

The Exodus in Moral Teaching.

In the Psalms, we saw that the poet reflected on the Exodus and found comfort in it because it revealed that Yahweh did not despise the affliction of the afflicted (Psa 22:4). Some of Yahweh's compassion for those in servitude has been enshrined in the humanistic precepts of the law. One example of this is found in the regulations for the treatment of slaves. An Israelite by birth, as opposed to a sojourner, could never be degraded to the permanent rank of slave, even though he might be reduced to the temporary expedient of selling himself as a slave until the year of jubilee, when the law said that he must be set free, giving as its reason that Yahweh had freed the whole nation from servitude -

for they are my servants, whom I brought forth
out of the land of Egypt; they shall not be sold
as slaves. You shall not rule over him with
harshness, but shall fear your God. (Lev 23:35-43, 55)

There is an interesting example of this law being obeyed and then abrogated during the time of Jeremiah when Jerusalem lay under siege by the Assyrian army, and king Zedekiah and the princes agreed to set free their fellow Hebrews. To their shame, when the invader withdrew temporarily, they took back their slaves again, which earned them a bitter lashing from the prophet's tongue. The Deuteronomic law lays down further that this Hebrew who must be released after seven years should not go out empty-handed, but with gifts -

and when you let him go free from you, you shall not let him go empty-handed; you shall furnish him liberally out of your flock, out of your threshing floor and out of your wine press. As Yahweh your God has blessed you, you shall give to him. You shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and Yahweh your God redeemed you. (Deut 12:12-15)

This relates, of course, to the story of the departure from Egypt when the Israelites not only went out, but were urged to go, and were laden with gifts to encourage their departure. That night 'they despoiled the Egyptians'. Daube, who is a Professor of Civil Law at Oxford, has a theory that there must have been some precedent for this feature of the narrative, some law already in existence which then influenced the Exodus narrative, and finally from there influenced the compilation of the legal codes. Thus he says - "We may distinguish three stages: there is the ancient social practice, there is the Exodus depicting God as acting in conformity with that practice, and there is social practice advancing under the stimulus of the story".¹ But he has hardly established his case with specific examples of this law before Exodus times. If the Exodus narrative is historically reliable at this juncture, there is then, of course, no need to look beyond it in order to understand the appearance of this law of furnishing a released slave with gifts, since the Deuteronomic code is a theological meditation on the meaning of the Exodus and the covenant.

The Sabbath - one of the characteristics of Judaism - was not beyond the scope of influence from the Exodus tradition. Similar to the concern for Hebrews who had become slaves is the concern for domestic servants on the Sabbath.

¹D.Daube: The Exodus Pattern in the Bible, p.16.

Six days you shall labour and do all your work; but the seventh day is a sabbath to Yahweh your God; in it you shall not do any work...that your manservant and your maidservant may rest as well as you. You shall remember that you were a servant in the land of Egypt, and Yahweh your God brought you out thence with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm; therefore Yahweh your God commanded you to keep the sabbath day. (Deut 5:12-15)

The Sabbath is sometimes linked with God's rest on the seventh day following the six days of creation. It was the sign of the Sinai covenant, just as circumcision was in the covenant with Abraham. Here the humanitarian aspect of the sabbath day rest is emphasised. Just as the blessings of material prosperity were to be shared with the slave in the preceding law, so here the domestic servants were to share fully in the rest of the covenant day.

The stranger or sojourner was also to benefit from moral teaching based on the Exodus experience, for the law holds out kindness to the stranger as the ideal for a righteous nation. The appeal is a telling one -

you shall not oppress a stranger; you know the heart of a stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt. (Ex 23:9 cf. Ex 22:21, Lev 19:33)

The Israelites were taught that the weak and defenceless were the objects of Yahweh's special care, just as they had been when in affliction -

You shall not oppress a hired servant who is poor and needy...you shall not pervert justice due to the sojourner, or to the fatherless, or take a widow's garment in pledge; but you shall remember that you were a slave in Egypt, and Yahweh your God redeemed you from there. (Deut 24:14-22)

A startling example of how far this could go, and of the purity of the moral code concerns Israel's arch-enemy: "you shall not abhor an Egyptian", they were told, "because you were a sojourner in his land" (Deut 23:7).

Lending to a brother on interest was forbidden too because this was contrary to the unearned freedom of the divine grace which gave Israel the promised land. Thus we

read -

you shall have just balances, just weights, a just ephah, and a just hin; I am Yahweh your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt. And you shall observe my statutes and all my ordinances and do them; I am Yahweh. (Lev 19:35-37)

We see, then, that at the places where the legislation is notable for the moral and humanitarian nature of its teaching, this teaching is given a basis in the Exodus experience, which in effect is in the compassion of Yahweh for an afflicted people.

What better foundation for a legal code could there be than the revelation of God's character ? And what deeper revelation of His name was there than that which was given to Moses, and to the generation who were brought out of Egypt ?

As regards Moses, scholars like H.H.Rowley and Bright have said that if there was no such man, if the historicity of Moses was denied, we should have to invent someone with the same name. Similarly, should the historical reliability of the Exodus event be denied, we should have to invent a great and impressive revelation of Yahweh which might serve as a connecting theme running through the teaching on the covenant, the regulations of festal and ritual observation, and the precepts of humanitarian concern.

It is worth noting here the light which the analysis throws on the relation of the law and the prophets. Sometimes the prophetic and the cultic aspects of Israel's religion are divided too rigidly from each other in Old Testament studies. It is true that the prophets were often set against the proponents of the cult because there was an elaborate external observance divorced from right living.

Thus Amos, Hosea, Isaiah and Jeremiah denounced the sacrifices and feasts as things which Yahweh despised. That there was no fundamental contradiction between the law and the prophets is clear for two reasons. Firstly, the prophets exalt the law of Yahweh in their portrait of the Messianic age, and the reign of Yahweh; thus Isaiah, in a passage shared with Micah, depicts the torah(here best translated broadly as 'teaching') going forth from Zion, while Jeremiah speaks of a new covenant when the law would be written on the heart. Secondly, we have seen how the Exodus radically shaped Israel's attitude to the oppressed and weak. This theme, the need for justice to the weak, the stranger and the poor, and of care for the widow and the fatherless, is constantly on the lips of the prophets as the positive side of their denunciation of moral corruption. Thus the prophets also reflect what was learned by Israel through being freed from oppression at the Exodus, and which was enshrined in the legislation. The prophets were concerned with the sovereignty of God in history, and addressed Israel as an elect, covenant people. This was the implication of the Passover which was both sacrificial and historical in character. This key cultic celebration is therefore in full accord with the burden of the prophets. When due recognition is given to the Exodus theme in the legislation, the fundamental unity of the prophetic and legislative spheres of Israel's religion becomes clear.

In the legislation, the Exodus binds together the historical narrative, the understanding of election and covenant, the moral requirements of a holy God, and the ritual worship in which Israel honours Him as her redeeming-out-of-Egypt God.

CHAPTER III

THE EXODUS IN THE HISTORICAL BOOKS

The Exodus in the Historical Books

A

Prologue.

Before we leave behind the Exodus theme in the legislation, there are two passages which we must examine in the book of Deuteronomy which will serve as a link between the legal codes and the historical writings of the Old Testament, many of which reflect the profound influence of the Deuteronomic or Priestly traditions. Both passages are historical summaries whose main topic is the Exodus.

1. An Explanation of the Covenant Law.

The form of this summary statement of Israel's history is identical to that of the explanation of the Passover ceremony; the child asks a question, and is told the meaning of the rite.

When your son asks you in time to come, "What is the meaning of the testimonies, and the statutes, and the ordinances which Yahweh our God has commanded you?", then you shall say to your son, "We were slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt; and Yahweh brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand; and Yahweh showed signs and wonders great and grievous against Egypt, and against Pharaoh and all his household before our eyes; and he brought us out from there that he might bring us in and give us the land which he swore to give to our fathers. And Yahweh commanded us to do all these statutes, to fear Yahweh our God for our good always, that he might preserve us alive, as at this day. And it will be righteousness for us if we are careful to do all this commandment before Yahweh our God as he commanded us". (Deut 6:20-25)

The didactic style is characteristic of Deuteronomy. The contents fall into four clauses -

- a. slavery in Egypt.
- b. miraculous divine intervention witnessed by Israel.
- c. the gift of land promised to the forefathers.
- d. the acceptance of the law in response to this.

We cannot go so far as to call this the gospel or kerygma

of the Old Testament, as some scholars have done, because this would be to omit the Messianic hope and the Day of Yahweh, but we may fairly say that this credo precedes and opens the way for the progressive revelation of the implications of God's relationship with the elect people, the kingdom of God and the righteousness through faith in Jesus Christ. This brief summary stands at the head of all the subsequent history of Israel recorded in the historical books, and illuminated by the prophets.

11. A Ceremony of Thanksgiving for the First Fruits.

Like the previous passage, this ceremony involved a recitation of the history of Israel up to the time of entry into the promised land. This was made when the Israelite brought a basket of the first fruits of the harvest in thankfulness that Yahweh had filled his hands with blessing. He also gave thanks that the promise of possessing an inheritance had been fulfilled - "I declare this day to Yahweh your God that I have come into the land which Yahweh swore to our fathers to give us" (Deut 26:3).

And you shall make response before Yahweh your God, "A wandering (Heb. :Qal Part.Act. masc.s. - 'ready to perish') Aramean was my father; and he went down into Egypt and sojourned there, few in number; and there he became a nation, great, mighty and populous. And the Egyptians treated us harshly and afflicted us, and laid upon us hard bondage. Then we cried to Yahweh the God of our fathers, and Yahweh heard our voice, and saw our affliction, our toil and our oppression; and Yahweh brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, with great terror, with signs and wonders; and he brought us into this place, and gave us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey. (Deut 26:5-9)

It is not immediately clear whether this was an annual rite, or was only enacted at the harvest of the very first crop on settling into the land. The ritual is simple; the offerer hands his basket to the priest who sets it against the altar. In prosperity, there was always danger of 'sitting at ease in Zion', but this ritual recital of the Exodus history reminded the Israelite that he had been a slave in hard bondage, released only by the love



of Yahweh. It is yet another example of the strong historical slant of Israel's religion in contrast to the rituals of the fertility cult. Commenting on the passage G.H.Davies remarks - "It is the combination of right and creed which is so striking, for it thus sets the pattern for Israel's feasts. In these verses, history is being added to harvest festival, Israel's gospel is being joined with harvest to explain the harvest and to bring the harvest within the orbit of Israel's historical faith".¹

According to G. van Rad, who is supported in this by Wright and Bright, these historical credos are early, and provide a framework around which other pentateuchal traditions were collected. "The credos contain the Hexateuch in miniature, in which the confessional elements are

emphasised -
1. God's election of Abraham.
2. His deliverance at the Exodus.
3. His gift of land."²

These scholars distinguish between the antiquity of these credos and the later linguistic and stylistic forms in which they now appear in the Pentateuch. For example, Wright says of the passage, Deut 26:5-10 -

The confession in Deut 26 certainly presupposes a time when the old sacral, tribal covenant, the amphictony, was still in force; in other words, it reflects cultic practice in the time of the Judges.³

While there appears to be no good reason to deny an early date to these historical summaries, as a theory of the compilation of the Pentateuch, van Rad's theory will remain an hypothesis. We have mentioned it because it does serve to underline the importance of the Exodus in the Pentateuch as we have it. The two passages themselves emphasise the thoroughly historical tenor of Israel's faith, and as such form a suitable bridge between the legislation, and the historical books which bear the

¹GH.Davies: Deuteronomy, Peake, p. 280.

²GE.Wright: God who Acts, p.72. ³ibid.

Deuteronomic stamp in many places.

B

The Historical Books.

The method which will be employed in this section of our analysis of the Exodus theme will differ a little from the one employed in the previous sections. Whereas before, in dealing with the Psalms or Genesis or the legislation, our aim was to show what part was played by the Exodus tradition in the theological structure of the literature, in this section our aim is to focus attention on specific historical occasions on which the Exodus tradition came to the fore. Of course, the historical books are not chronological records written according to secular, western principles of historiography. They are essentially religious books concerned with interpreting events according to religious principles such as prophetic oracles, faithfulness or disobedience to the covenant, cultic observation, centralised worship and so on. Thus it is not surprising that events such as the inauguration of the kingship, the establishment of the Davidic dynasty, the dedication of the Temple and the sin of Jeroboam are given a religious interpretation in which the Exodus theology plays a large part. The occasions on which the Exodus comes to the fore as part of the writer's interpretative apparatus are crucial occasions in the history of the nation subsequent to its entry into the promised land.

I

The Covenant Ceremony at Shechem.

Chapter 23 of the book of Joshua describes a gathering of "all Israel, their elders, and heads, their judges and officers" to hear the final address of Moses' successor. It is not immediately clear whether this is meant to be

the same occasion as that described in the following chapter. Some scholars explain it as a doublet, but this appears to be unnecessary. Chapter 23 relates Joshua's exhortation, while chapter 24 describes the response of the tribes in renewing the Sinai covenant..

The conquest had been completed, though there were still foreign tribes entrenched in certain areas. The Jebusites, for example, were evicted only in the time of David who took over the stronghold in Jerusalem. Where the invading Israelites had not wiped out the indigenous population, there was semi-peaceful coexistence. The Gibeonites, for example, had secured their continued existence by a skilful deceit, and lived on as serfs.

The time of this covenant renewal ceremony was, in the words of the narrative..."a long time afterward, when Yahweh had given rest to Israel from all her enemies round about, and Joshua was old and advanced in years"(Josh 23:1). No reason is given why Shechem was the site chosen for the gathering of the tribes. Attempts have been made to explain it in terms of its ancient cultic character. Another view is that Shechem was inhabited by some of Israel's distant blood relations who had not been in Egypt, and who in this ceremony gave their allegiance to Yahweh who had brought the Israelites out of Egypt. But since the narrative itself supplies no reason for the choice of Shechem, reticence on the subject is wiser. Many modern scholars, and notably M.Nothe, see in these assemblies a strong suggestion of an amphictyonic league centred at Shechem.

G.E.Wright supports the historicity of the covenant ceremony on the basis of its form, saying that "while the present form of this passage is to be dated between the ninth and seventh centuries BC, its basic form is not a new literary creation. It bears the form of the old cultic credo, here elaborated with some freedom of expression".¹

¹Wright op.cit. p.72.

Joshua's account of the history of Israel falls into three divisions - the patriarchal period from Terah to Jacob; the Exodus; the conquest and settlement. The opening picture is one of ignorance and idolatry - "Your fathers lived of old beyond the Euphrates...and they served other gods"(Josh 24:2). Against this background is set the call of Abraham, the first journey to the land of Canaan, and the multiplication of the chosen seed - "Then I took your father Abraham from beyond the River, and led him through all the land of Canaan, and made his offspring many"(v.3). There was a choice between the brothers Abraham and Nahor in God's elective purpose, and later between Jacob and Esau who was given the hill country of Seir to possess, but "Jacob and his children went down to Egypt"(v.4). There is no mention of Joseph, or how the Israelites became enslaved. This is assumed. The call of Moses and Aaron introduces an account of the Exodus which mentions the plagues in general terms, and the sea crossing in detail -

Then I brought your fathers out of Egypt, and you came to the sea; and the Egyptians pursued your fathers with chariots and horsemen to the Red Sea. And when they cried to Yahweh, he put darkness between you and the Egyptians, and made the sea come upon them and cover them; and your eyes saw what I did to Egypt. (vv.6-7)

There is here an interesting alternation of person between the past generation and the present which illustrates how the Exodus was accepted as the community-creating event for all time. There is no question that the people whom Joshua addressed had stood at the bank of the sea, been shielded by the cloud and witnessed what Yahweh did to the Egyptians. The generation which had come out of Egypt had perished in the wilderness because of their unbelief. We are here meeting a characteristically Semitic mode of thought in which the group had a far greater extension than it has in modern thought. The work of Wheeler Robinson has made this concept of corporate personality familiar to english speaking scholars. In this instance, the people

whom Joshua addressed were being challenged to make the Exodus their own and corporately identify themselves with the people who came out of Egypt through the Red Sea, and so Joshua speaks as though their unity of nationality transcended the passing of the years in the eternal purpose of Yahweh to form a people for Himself. In the context of election, and of the categories of Semitic thought, theirs was the Exodus experience. Joshua urges them to be faithful to Yahweh, and to serve Him alone, unlike their fathers who served many gods beyond the River.

We should distinguish between the religious practices of the nation, which was never wholly true to the one true God at any period of its history, and the faith of its leaders, Moses, Joshua, David, and the prophets. The nation was never free from the influence of the surrounding cults, but at each time of crisis for true religion, there was a man chosen by God and equipped for the task of calling the nation back to the God of the Exodus.

At Shechem, Joshua's challenge - "Choose you this day whom you will serve" (v.15) - aroused a true response.

Then the people answered, "Far be it from us that we should forsake Yahweh, to serve other gods; for it is Yahweh our God who brought us and our fathers up from the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage, and who did those great signs in our sight ...therefore we also will serve Yahweh, for he is our God". (vv.16-18)

We should see this ceremony as a confirmation, a renewal of the previous national covenant rather than an innovation. Just as the Sinai covenant had its outward signs, so here "Joshua wrote these words in the book of the law of God; and he took a great stone, and set it up under the oak in the sanctuary of Yahweh" (v.26). This stone fulfills the same function as the pillar which Jacob and Laban set up as witness between them when they made their covenant (Gen 31:45-54). The Shechem covenant follows the typical covenant pattern well known in the East between 1500-700 BC.

It is of great significance that in each of the three major covenants - that with Abraham, the Sinai covenant, and this covenant at Shechem - the Exodus is in the foreground. At the covenant with Abraham, there is a revelation of the Exodus; at Sinai, the Decalogue is introduced with the formula "I am Yahweh who brought you out of the land of Egypt"; at Shechem, the Exodus is accepted as Yahweh's decisive act.

II

The Inauguration of the Kingship.

Moses and Joshua were unique in their leadership. They were called by Yahweh, and endowed with the Spirit. Moses combined the roles of prophet, priest and administrator. Joshua a war leader, and champion of the covenant. "And Israel served Yahweh all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders who outlived Joshua and who had known all the work which Yahweh did for Israel" (Josh 24:31). The combination of political and charismatic leadership was continued in the period of the Judges, but the cohesion had gone with the loss of a successor to Moses and Joshua. "In those days there was no king in Israel; every man did what was right in his own eyes" (Judges 17:6, 21:25).

When the book of Samuel opens, we find that the spiritual leadership was spineless and ineffective, typified by Eli, a devout and humble man who lacked the vigour to discipline his own sons. Samuel is born into this lax situation, and soon his zeal establishes him as a man who stood in the counsel of Yahweh. "All Israel from Dan to Beer-sheba knew that Samuel was established as a prophet of Yahweh... and the word of Samuel came to all Israel" (1 Sam 3:19-4:1). He exercised a peripatetic ministry, moving from shrine to shrine officiating at sacrifices. "Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life. And he went

on circuit year by year to Bethel, Gilgal and Mizpah; and he judged Israel in all these places. Then he would come back to Ramah, for his home was there, and there also he administered justice to Israel"(1 Sam 7:15-17).

During this ministry there was continual fighting against the Philistines, sometimes flaring up into open warfare, at others subsiding into an uneasy co-existence. After a battle near Aphek, the Ark was brought into the front line from the sanctuary at Shiloh. This was a link with the earlier traditions of Israel, with the God who overthrew Pharaoh, and scattered their enemies before them at the conquest. The Ark dismayed the Philistines at first for they knew of the Exodus traditions too -

The Philistines were afraid, for they said, "The gods have come into the camp". And they said, "Woe to us! For nothing like this has happened before. Woe to us! Who can deliver us from the power of these mighty gods? These are the gods who smote the Egyptians with every sort of plague in the wilderness".
(1 Sam 4:7-8)

But the Ark itself was captured. It was an unruly captive, for plague broke out wherever it went, leading their priests to say - "Why should you harden your hearts as the Egyptians and Pharaoh hardened their hearts? After Yahweh made sport of them, did not they let the people go, and they departed?" (1 Sam 6:6). So the Ark was returned, but Israel remained under Philistine overlordship.

The Israelites had thought that carrying the Ark with them would be sufficient to secure the overthrow of their enemies, as when Yahweh had fought for them at the Exodus. Yahweh was a God who intervened, but His intervention came in response to obedience to His Exodus claim upon Israel. "So Israel put away the Baals and the Ashtaroth, and they served Yahweh only"(1 Sam 7:4), and after this they did win a victory at Mizpah by divine intervention. At this period the Ark enshrined the Exodus tradition, but as is evident from the above narrative, this incurred the

danger of turning faith from the God of the Exodus to the Ark as a talisman.

Samuel grew old, and his sons were of the same ilk as Eli's. No successor to Samuel as spiritual or political leader had appeared. In these circumstances, the people asked for a king. "Behold you are old, and your sons do not walk in your ways; now appoint for us a king to govern us like all the nations" (1 Sam 8:5). This displeased Samuel who brought the matter before the Lord and was told-

They have not rejected you, but they have rejected me from being king over them. According to all the deeds which they have done from the day I brought them up out of Egypt, even to this day, forsaking me and serving other gods. (1 Sam 8:8)

Whatever the political reasons which were advanced to justify a king, this strand of the narrative represents the request as infidelity to the Exodus experience which was one of God's direct, controlling sovereignty. This Samuel pointed out to them most strongly -

Thus says Yahweh, the God of Israel, "I brought up Israel out of the land of Egypt, and I delivered you from the hand of the Egyptians, and from the hand of all the kingdoms that were oppressing you". But you have this day rejected your God, who saves you from all calamities, and all your distresses. (1 Sam 10:17-19)

Politically, the request for a king seemed fully justified, for he would be a rallying force against the Philistines. Yet Samuel, viewing it in the light of the Exodus, saw that it shifted faith from Yahweh, the God who was unseen, to a more tangible deliverer - a shift of faith in some ways similar to that which moved Aaron to form the golden calf.

The Exodus experience is also the main theme of Samuel's speech in Chapter 12. Most scholars think that this Chapter has suffered chronological displacement, and that it continues the narrative which left off at 10:24.¹ The tenor of the speech is resignation, but Samuel continued to be active after this, and in fact he played a determinative

¹ for a brief discussion of the sources, see Additional Note A.

role in the rejection of Saul, and the anointing of David. In this speech he lays before Israel his lifetime of service as spiritual leader and administrator of justice, challenging them to find fault with any of his judgements. After they had declared him righteous throughout, he addresses them in these terms -

Now therefore, stand still that I may plead with you concerning all the saving deeds of Yahweh which he performed for you and your fathers.
(1 Sam 12:7)

This sermon supports Wright's thesis that biblical theology is basically a recital of salvation history. Here, the phrase "saving deeds" which is used to characterise God's work on behalf of Israel may be translated more literally as "the righteousnesses of Yahweh" (Heb. *צדקות יהוה*), by which we may understand that the acts of Yahweh are consistent with and reveal His holy character.

Samuel omits any reference to the patriarchal history besides a mention of Jacob, and instead goes straight to the Exodus, and follows that with a description of the period of the Judges.

And Samuel said to the people, "Yahweh is witness who appointed Moses and Aaron, and brought your fathers up out of the land of Egypt...when Jacob went into Egypt, then your fathers cried unto Yahweh, and Yahweh sent Moses and Aaron who brought forth your fathers out of Egypt and made them dwell in this place. But they forgot Yahweh their God...
(vv.6,8-9)

Samuel's point is that God rescued the fathers from their enemies, and was able to rescue the present generation from the Philistines. Though Samuel exposed the root of unbelief which lay behind the request for a king, he then threw his weight in behind the monarchy because God had allowed it. Given the monarchy, Samuel continued his role of prophet by exhorting obedience to Yahweh in the new situation - "if both you and the king who reigns over you will follow Yahweh your God, it will be well with you"(v.14).

To sum up, we may say that reference to the Exodus theology is the main argument used in opposing the inauguration of the kingship in Israel. The Exodus proved that Israel's fate at the hand of her enemies did not depend upon matching her strength with theirs, but on her faithfulness to Yahweh who was a God who acted on behalf of His people, intervening and fighting for them. Hence kingship was not answer to defeat at the hands of the Philistines. In Samuel's speech, we have an example of the prophetic use of history as the unfolding of God's acts of righteousness. When history is interpreted by God's spokesman it becomes the source of knowledge of God. At this early date, represented by Samuel's sermon, we find that the Exodus is firmly set at the foundation of Israel's faith, awaiting a fuller exposition in the oracles of the latter prophets.

Additional Note A.

As with the Pentateuch, the historical books are analysed into sources and redactions by modern scholars. Two or more sources are detected in the account of the inauguration of the monarchy. One source (8:1-22, 10:17-27, 12:1-25) is allegedly highly antagonistic to the monarchy, and is attributed to D, or if not, to some exilic or post-exilic source at a time when the redactor was disallusioned with the monarchy. The other source (9:1 - 10:16, 11:1-11,15) is said to be the earlier, favourable to the monarchy, and variously designated as J, Sl, or M. The passages in which the Exodus theme occurs belong to the so-called D source. Because it is unfavourable to the monarchy, some scholars have attributed it to the reign of Solomon or later, and suppose that a redactor wrote it back into the days of Samuel to add weight to his condemnation of the monarchy.

This view is unwarranted, as Bright points out, who at the same time agrees with a three document analysis of this section (1 Sam 8-12). He writes -

In view of these varying accounts, we cannot undertake to reconstruct the sequence of events. But it is unsound to dismiss the last of these narratives as a reflection of subsequent bitter experience with the monarchy, as so many have done. Whatever the date of the passage, it can hardly be doubted that a step as drastic as this, and involving such a break with tradition, evoked opposition from the beginning. Samuel's personal feelings remain ambiguous... That he took a leading role in the proceedings is witnessed by all strands of the narrative, and, in view of his position, is what one would expect. Yet it is quite certain that Samuel, whatever his initial feelings, soon broke with Saul and became his bitter foe. It is in every way likely that he viewed the step with misgivings all along, as the younger narrative insists, fearing where it would lead, yet acting under pressure, and because he could see no other course.¹

We take it, therefore, that Samuel's sermon based on the Exodus theology (1 Sam 12:6-17) is historically reliable, and important for its bearing on the transition from the tribal amphictony with its covenant league to the monarchy.

III

The Establishment of the Davidic Dynasty.

After the institution of the monarchy, the next event of crucial theological significance in the history of Israel was the establishment of the Davidic lineage by special election and covenant, and David's patronage of the cult.

Saul failed both as a charismatic leader and a warrior, for the Spirit of Yahweh departed from him, and he died in the disastrous battle of Gilboa with three of his sons. A son, Ishbosheth, survived him, and attempted to uphold his dynastic claims, succeeding for a while with the

¹J.Bright: History of Israel, p.167.

support of Abner, commander of the army, and a section of Northern Israel, while David ruled in Hebron, presumably with the Philistines' consent, since he was their vassal. Ishbosheth was a weak man, and it was not long after Abner's murder by Joab that he too was murdered. After this, the people flocked to David at Hebron, and he was installed as king over all Israel in a solemn covenant ceremony. Bright takes pains to stress that David's success was not solely political or military, but religious -

What decided the issue in favour of David was the fact that the people saw in him the one upon whom Yahweh's Spirit rested. Eshbaal had lost out precisely because, the principle of dynastic succession not being recognised, he had shown no evidence of charismatic gifts.¹

David's kingship was integrated into the framework of the covenant from the outset - "so all the leaders of Israel came to the king at Hebron; and king David made a covenant with them at Hebron before Yahweh, and they anointed David king over Israel"(2 Sam 5:3). David wisely moved his capital to Jerusalem which lay strategically between the North and South.

More important than this even was David's patronage of the cult which he revealed early in his reign by the removal of the Ark from Baalejudah to Jerusalem. This was interrupted by the death of one of its attendants, Uzzah, who put out his hand to steady the Ark on its cart and was struck dead, showing that it had lost none of its ancient sanctity. This cult object embodied the Exodus and wilderness traditions. It was a hollow rectangular box about 4'x 2½ x 2½, overlaid with gold, and bearing rings through which poles were inserted in order to carry it. Inside the Ark were placed the stone tablets of the Decalogue, a pot of manna, and Aaron's rod which budded. How much of this survived, we do not know, for at the

¹op.cit. p.176.

time when it was installed in the Temple, "there was nothing in the Ark except the two tablets of stone which Moses put there at Horeb, when Yahweh made a covenant with the people of Israel when they came out of Egypt"(1 Kings 8:9). Over the Ark was a solid gold lid which supported two antithetically placed cherubim. On this lid, translated by the phrase "mercy-seat", the sacrificial blood was sprinkled on the day of Atonement, and it was from above the Ark that Moses heard the voice of Yahweh speaking to him. The Ark, therefore, summed up the Exodus traditions in itself.

The Ark eventually arrived in Jerusalem, and the king took a leading part in the celebrations which accompanied the occasion, and no doubt secured the favour of the priests by this. That he was supported by the prophetic school may be seen in the presence of Nathan in the court in an official capacity. Thus David was successful in uniting the tribal and religious divisions by his judicial choice of capital, and his zeal for the religion of the fathers.

The next turning point in the religious interpretation of the kingdom of Israel came with David's desire to build a permanent house for the Ark, and Nathan's oracle concerning Yahweh's choice of his lineage. How long after the arrival of the Ark in Jerusalem these events took place is difficult to say. The writer wishes to continue his theme of David's zeal for the cult, and for a central sanctuary, and so he juxtaposes the two narratives.

Now when the king dwelt in his house, and Yahweh had given him rest from all his enemies round about, the king said to Nathan the prophet, "See now, I dwell in a house of cedar, but the Ark of God dwells in a tent". (II Sam 7:1-2)

Would David build a house for Yahweh ? No, rather it was Yahweh who would build a permanent house for David! This was the message Nathan brought to the king on the following morning.

David was overwhelmed by the greatness of Yahweh, and the wonder of his election, and the thought of Yahweh's sovereignty turns his thoughts to the early traditions of the Exodus and conquest in which Yahweh was so clearly revealed -

What other nation on earth is like thy people Israel, whom God went to redeem to be his people, making himself a name and doing for them great and terrible things¹ (II Sam 7: 23)

David understood the prophetic oracle given to him in terms of Yahweh's character known through the Exodus at the time of the nation's origin.

The idea of a permanent central shrine which came to David prior to this oracle was an innovation which accompanied the tremendous political transition from a tribal league to a great kingdom. Bright notes the change in these words -

With dramatic suddenness David's conquests had transformed Israel into the foremost power of Palestine and Syria. In fact, she was for the moment probably as strong as any power in the contemporary world. With it all, she was committed irrevocably to the new order.²

The religious nature of this transition is dealt with by Nathan's oracle -

Would you build a house for me to dwell in ? I have not dwelt in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent for my dwelling. (II Sam 7:5-6)

Once again we find that the Exodus is regarded as the origin of Israel's religion. Somehow, whatever innovations were introduced, they had to be related to the Exodus. The people were settled, the Ark was settled, and the royal line established. Our analysis has shown that at the origin of the kingship, of the royal house and of plans for the Temple, the Exodus tradition was the point of

¹ the text is difficult here; 23b reads -

וְיִרְאוּ לְאַתָּה מִכִּי עָמַד אֲשֶׁר כָּדִיתָ לָּךְ מִמֶּצְרַיִם וְאַלְהֵינוּ

RSV: reads

לְאַתָּה מִכִּי עָמַד אֲשֶׁר כָּדִיתָ לָּךְ מִמֶּצְרַיִם

But there is no MS support for these emendations.

deletes מִמֶּצְרַיִם אֲשֶׁר

cf. I Chron 17:21 - "...terrible things, in driving out nations before thy people whom thou didst redeem from Egypt".

² op. cit. p. 176.

reference in the light of which these innovations were read. David overcame the early objections to the monarchy by showing a great zeal for the religion of the fathers, and notably the Exodus tradition enshrined in the Ark which received his special care.

IV

The Dedication of the Temple.

Nathan had indicated that David's son, Solomon, would build the Temple, and once Solomon was securely established on the throne, there was little delay, for David had already drawn up plans and collected much of the building material. Construction commenced in the fourth year of Solomon's reign, and this is dated by the Exodus -

he began to build the house in the four hundred and eightieth year after the people of Israel came out of the land of Egypt. (1 Kings 6:1)

When the Temple was completed, all Israel assembled to dedicate it before Yahweh. The king reminded them of the promise made to David, and goes on to relate the Temple to the ancient traditions -

Now Yahweh has fulfilled his promise which he made; for I have risen in the place of David my father, and sit on the throne of Israel as Yahweh promised, and I have built the house for the name of Yahweh, the God of Israel. And there I have provided a place for the ark, in which is the covenant of Yahweh which he made with our fathers, when he brought them out of the land of Egypt. (1 Kings 8:20-21)

The new, that is, the Temple, must be related to the old, that is, the Exodus and the covenant. The Ark bridges the intervening years uniting these past events to the new worship of Yahweh, who caused His name, that is, His character and presence in the Deuteronomic parlance, to fill the Temple. When the Ark had been installed, "the priests came out of the holy place, and a cloud filled the house of Yahweh, so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud; for the glory of Yahweh filled the house of Yahweh" (vv. 10-11). This cloud of glory

also recalls the Exodus tradition, since the Israelites were led by a pillar of fire and cloud, and the Tabernacle was filled with the Shekinah glory.

The Ark installed, and the Temple filled with the glory of Yahweh, king Solomon stands before the altar to offer up a dedicatory prayer which dwells on the greatness of God which transcends human imagination - "Behold, heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain thee; how much less this house which I have built !"(v.27). The theology of the prayer is essentially Deuteronomic. This is seen in the use of the Name ("thou hast said, 'My name shall be there'"), the 'if...then' clauses turning on obedience, and the concept of promise and fulfilment in a salvation history based on the covenant. It is not surprising that the Exodus finds a prominent place in this context.

We have already noted its occurrence in the preliminaries (vv. 9,16,21). Now we find it in a clause of the prayer concerned with captivity and exile. By the very subject, most scholars would agree that it shows signs of editing and expansion, and some go so far as to give it a post-exilic date. While it might seem unlikely that captivity and exile should be contemplated at the dedication of the Temple which typified the greatness of Solomon's empire, it cannot be ruled out completely. The prayer is an exposition of the covenant which certainly was familiar to the Israelites of that day. With the concept of covenant may well have gone warnings of the consequences of infidelity to it, whether or not in such an articulate form as we find in the book of Deuteronomy. One of these consequences may well have been defeat by Israel's enemies - something which would have been remembered and given prominence later when this state of affairs had come about in exactly the manner hinted at in the covenant exposition at the dedication of the Temple. We should hesitate to rule out any historical

basis for this clause in the dedication ceremony.

The form of the intercession runs as follows. If Israel should sin, and God punish them by giving them into the hand of their enemies - something which had happened frequently from Achan's sin at Ai to the Philistine conflict - and then should repent, might God accept their penitence and restore them. The basis of this plea is that Israel was God's people even in disobedience and exile because He made her so at the Exodus -

Grant them compassion in the sight of those who have carried them captive, that they may have compassion on them - for they are thy people, and thy heritage, which thou didst bring out of Egypt, from the midst of the iron furnace.(vv.50-51)

For thou didst separate them from among all the peoples of the earth, to be thy heritage, as thou didst declare through Moses, thy servant, when thou didst bring our fathers out of Egypt, O my Lord Yahweh.(v.53)

If this exposition of captivity and exile is indeed to be dated in Solomon's day, then we have in it the precursor of the New Exodus expounded by the prophets, for it is not a far step from interceding for a captive people on the basis of the Exodus to expecting God to act again in accord with that past deliverance, and once more to free His people from subjection.

V

The Division of the Kingdom.

The historian of the book of Kings believed that all the magnificence of Solomon's empire was conditional upon his obedience to Yahweh. This he makes clear by recording a warning of the Temple's destruction immediately after his account of the dedication ceremony -

This house will become a heap of ruins; everyone passing by it will be astonished and will hiss; and they will say, "Why has the LORD done thus to this land and to this house ?". Then they will say, "Because they forsook Yahweh their God who brought their fathers out of the land of Egypt, and laid hold on other gods, and worshiped and served them; therefore Yahweh has brought all this evil upon them".
(1 Kings 9:8-9)

The writer then begins the story of Israel's decline leading to the division of the kingdom, and the fall of Ephraim.

In brief, the events which led up to this were as follows. Solomon died c.930 BC, and the empire which he had consolidated and held together began to crumble internally and externally. Forces of mounting discontent, both tribal and religious, found an outlet. Though the tribal differences are touched on by the writer, he obviously considers the religious factors of greater significance. Solomon had lapsed into syncretism, worshiping Yahweh and the foreign deities of allied nations(1 Kings 11:1-13), and at least one prophet, Ahijah the Shilonite, had foretold that the kingdom would be torn from Solomon and given to Jeroboam, an able young man who had been in charge of the forced labour from the house of Joseph(1 Kings 11:28). On Solomon's death, Jeroboam returned from Egypt, whence he had fled, and made an attempt to win the loyalty of the Northern tribes who were not enamoured with Rehoboam on account of his hot-headed and overbearing policy, a policy of suppression more rigorous than his father's (1 Kings 12:1-14).

Jeroboam realised that to succeed he needed religious support to counteract the unifying power of the central cult at Jerusalem. His solution was to set up rival shrines at Dan and Bethel, and to discourage the people from making the long journey to the Temple at Jerusalem. As we have seen in the course of our analysis, any religious innovation had to be reconciled with the Exodus tradition in order to gain adherence from the main stream of Yahwism which remained faithful to it. Jeroboam made a bold bid to use the Exodus tradition for his own ends. He placed a golden calf in each of the shrines, and declared that they represented the God of the Exodus.

So the king took counsel, and made two calves of gold. And he said to the people, "You have gone up to Jerusalem long enough. Behold your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt". And the one he set in Bethel, and the other he put in Dan. (1 Kings 12:28-29)

Were these golden calves idols ? Albright argues that on analogy with other ancient Eastern beliefs, the bulls represent the throne or pedestal of an invisible God who sat above them, and says that this would be in accord with the Israelite conception of Yahweh dwelling above the Ark.

It is true that the golden calves have been assumed by most scholars to have been direct representations of Yahweh as bull-god, but this gross conception is not only unparalleled in biblical tradition, but is contrary to all that we know of Syro-Palestinian iconography in the second and early first millennia BC. Among the Canaanites, Aramaeans, and Hittites, we find the gods nearly always represented as standing on the back of an animal or as seated on a throne borne by animals - but never themselves in animal form.¹

If this be granted in theory, then all the same we must recognise that it amounted to practical idolatry, and was regarded by the historical writers with an abhorance which suggests that they considered it to be a breach of the commandment not to have any graven image. Jeroboam is throughout referred to bitterly as the one who caused Israel to sin. He could hardly have chosen a worse link with the Exodus tradition, since his images recalled the golden calf which Aaron made while Moses was with God on the mountain. Besides "sacrificing to the calves that he had made" (v.32) - which does suggest idolatry, Jeroboam appointed priest who were not Levites, and a feast to rival that in Judah.

This counterfeit revival of the Exodus tradition apparently had its desired effect in strengthening the tribal differences sufficiently to divide the kingdom. Therafter, religion in the Northern kingdom steadily deteriorated, and soon Baalism came to the fore, especially under the encouragement of Jezebel, and the Exodus tradition

¹ WF. Albright: From the Stone Age to Christianity, p.299ff

suffered an eclipse.

VI

The Fall of the Northern Kingdom.

After Ahab and Jezebel, the Northern kingdom saw a succession of kings, some opposed to Baalism, others bad or indifferent. During this time the power of Syria increased and Damascus began to play an important role in the politics of the Northern state, eventually joining in a coalition with it against the gathering might of Assyria. This proved futile, for Ahaz king of the Southern state requested the Assyrian king to intervene and save him from the combined onslaught of Ephraim and Syria who apparently were attempting to force him into their coalition. Syria was invaded and Damascus sacked. For a short while the king of Ephraim was allowed to reign in Samaria as a vassal of Assyria, but a suicidal attempt at rebellion with the help of Egypt led to an Assyrian invasion under Tiglath-pileser's son, Shalmaneser V, who died before the end of the three year siege of Samaria which fell to Sargon II in 722 BC.

The author of Kings introduces a theological explanation of the downfall of the Northern kingdom at this juncture. He attributes the disaster to spiritual decline which could be traced to its root in the abandonment of the Exodus faith -

This was so, because the people of Israel had sinned against Yahweh their God, who had brought them up out of the land of Egypt from under the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt. (II Kings 17:7)

The policy of the Assyrian king was to resettle the towns of conquered nations with foreigners, and so it was that the Northern kingdom was re-populated with peoples from Babylon, Cuthah, Avva, Hamath and Shepharvaim. This made for religious syncretism. Apparently the new-comers were attacked by lions, and the Assyrians interpreted this as the anger of Yahweh, and sent for a priest to train

them in Yahwism. He exhorted them to -

fear no other gods...but you shall fear Yahweh who brought you out of the land of Egypt with great power and with an outstretched arm; you shall bow yourselves to him, and to him you shall sacrifice.
(II Kings 17:36)

But there was to be no return to the Exodus faith at this time, and the writer sums the situation up pessimistically - "However they would not listen, but did according to their former manner"(v.40).

The fall of Judah was delayed until 586 BC by revivals of the Exodus faith under such kings as Josiah and Hezekiah, but was prophesied more or less continuously, especially under evil kings like Manasseh. The writer gives a summary of the prophets' message in I Kings 21:10-15 which revolves around punishment for apostasy from the God of the Exodus -

I will cast off the remnant of my heritage... because they have done what is evil in my sight and have provoked me to anger, since the day their fathers came out of Egypt even to this day.

Of course, the historian of the book of Kings should be read in conjunction with the message of the prophets before and after the fall of the Northern kingdom, especially Amos and Hosea, and it will be found that he is not alone in his use of the Exodus tradition as a guiding principle of interpretation.

VII

The Exodus Tradition after the Exile.

What happened to the faith of Israel during and after the Exile? Did it lose touch with its early traditions? Did they disappear without a trace like the Ark which was presumably destroyed in the sack of Jerusalem? The answer is no; the early traditions did not perish with the horrors of the siege, nor during the march in chains to the conqueror's land, nor in the busy commercial life of Babylon where the Jews quickly adapted themselves, and

where many grew rich. Thanks to the work of devoted scribes, the Exodus faith was preserved and disseminated in a way unprecedented before in Israel's history. We may now turn to examine the evidence for this in the work of Ezra.

This is hardly the place to enter into a discussion of the date and relationship between Ezra's and Nehemiah's mission, since this is recognised as one of the knottiest problems of Old Testament studies, and many attempts have been made to resolve it, but so far none has won undisputed favour. In brief, the 'traditional' interpretation dates Ezra's (first ?) visit to Jerusalem in the year 458 BC, and Nehemiah's arrival as civil governor in 445 BC. Between Ezra's reforms in 458 and 445 BC, there is no evidence of his whereabouts until both he and Nehemiah are found in Jerusalem together. Again, after the dedication of the walls in that year, we hear no more of Ezra. Had he died during the period of Nehemiah's first governorship of 445-433 BC, or had he returned to his official duties in Babylon ? We simply cannot say. The major alternative is to place Nehemiah before Ezra. Thus Albright, who is supported by Bright would bring Ezra to Jerusalem, not in the 7th year of Artaxerxes I (458 BC), but in the 37th year, that is 428 BC. To go into the detailed arguments which are led to support these conflicting interpretations would lead us too far astray from our analysis which is concerned with the evidence for the survival of the Exodus tradition.

The main facts are clear. The early traditions of Israel were carefully cherished during the Exile, and probably received their codification at this time into the forms substantially the same as those which have come down to us. In all likelihood, Ezra played a leading part in this work, for he is described to us as a priest, a scribe skilled in the law of Moses. He returned to Jerusalem with a scroll under his arm ready to read it, expound it and

give the sense, for Ezra "had set his heart to study the law of Yahweh, and to do it, and to teach his statutes and ordinances in Israel"(Ezra 7:10). Perhaps the ink was hardly dry upon a new manuscript narrating the story of the descent into Egypt, the hard times that had befallen the sons of Israel there, their bondage and cry of suffering, and the glorious release with a way opening through the Red Sea. Certainly, the poignancy of the Exile made Ezra sigh at this new bondage, and wish for a new Exodus -

Yet thou hast been just in all that has come upon us, for thou hast dealt faithfully and we have acted wickedly... Behold, we are slaves this day; in the land that thou gavest to our fathers to enjoy its fruit and its good gifts, behold, we are slaves !
(Nehemiah 9:36)

He acknowledges the justice of Yahweh's judgement and prays for forgiveness, renewal and freedom -

May God brighten our eyes and grant us a little reviving in our bondage. For we are bondmen; yet our God has not forsaken us in our bondage, but has extended to us his steadfast love before the kings of Persia.
(Ezra 9:9)

Ezra hoped that God would liberate them from this new bondage by acting according to His character revealed at the Exodus. Perhaps he saw in his own return from Exile a guarantee of God's covenant love, and even may have viewed his work in the light of his great predecessor, Moses. This is by no means far-fetched if we remember that he must have lived with this great leader of Israel day by day as he codified the Pentateuch. Bright comments on the similarities between the work of the two men -

Ezra was in any event a figure of towering importance. Though the exaggerations whereby legend made of him no less than a second Moses are fantastic, they are nevertheless not wholly without justification. If Moses was Israel's founder, it was Ezra who reconstituted Israel, and gave her faith a form in which it could survive through the centuries.¹

With this background, we may turn to the record of Ezra's reform.

¹Bright op.cit. p.374

There is a twofold witness to the Exodus tradition which reveals it as a cornerstone for the genesis and reconstitution of Israel. The first witness is the revival of the festival laws, specifically the feast of Booths. The Passover and feast of Unleavened Bread associated with it are not mentioned here, but there is a simple explanation for this omission. The writer was concerned to show how all the reforms sprang directly from the reading of the law, and since it was the seventh month at the time, the regulations for the seventh month are singled out to show that the law was immediately applied to the situation at hand.

And when the seventh month had come, the children of Israel were in their towns. (Neh 7:73b)

On the second day, the heads of fathers' houses of all the people with the priests and the Levites came together to Ezra the scribe in order to study the words of the law. And they found it written in the law that Yahweh had commanded by Moses that the people of Israel should dwell in booths during the feast of the seventh month....

And all the assembly of those who had returned from the captivity made booths and dwelt in the booths; for from the days of Joshua, the son of Nun to that day the people of Israel had not done so. (Neh 8:13-14,17)

The second witness to the Exodus tradition is the prayer of confession in which Ezra led the people. It is an amazing prayer which embraces the entire salvation history from creation to exile. The prayer adores Yahweh as Creator: "Thou art Yahweh, thou alone; thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth and all that is on it, the seas and all that is in them; and thou preservest all of them, and the host of heaven worships thee"(v.6). Then Abraham comes to the fore: "Thou art Yahweh, the God who didst chose Abram, and bring him forth out of Ur of the Chaldees, and give him the name Abraham"(v.7). His was the first exodus, the escape from Egypt the second, and the return from exile the third, all three of crucial moment for the religion of Israel.

From there, Ezra jumps straight to the Egyptian bondage. This is typical of Hebrew historical thinking which passes over secondary events to what is spiritually significant. Ezra is thinking in terms of promise and fulfilment; the way to the promised land was via Egypt.

And thou didst see the affliction of our fathers in Egypt and hear their cry at the Red Sea, and didst perform signs and wonders against Pharaoh and all his servants and all the people of his land, for thou knewest that they acted insolently against our fathers; and thou didst get thee a name, as it is to this day. And thou didst divide the sea before them, so that they went through the midst of the sea on dry land; and thou didst cast their pursuers into the depths, as a stone into mighty waters. (vv.9-11)

The key phrase, "thou didst get thee a name" (v.10) continues the tone of worship through this prayer:¹ "Thou art Yahweh thou alone; thou art righteous; thou didst get thee a name" The Hebrew has more force than our English 'to make a name for oneself'. As E.Jacob remarks, the Exodus is the greatest commentary on the holy name YHWH²

The prayer passes on from creation, election, deliverance to providence in the wilderness period when the "right ordinances and true laws, good statutes and commandments", especially "the holy sabbath", were made known. The disobedience of Israel is not glossed over since it serves to reveal "a God ready to forgive, gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love" (v.17b). Theirs was the epitome of sin - rejection of all that God had done for their salvation: "they stiffened their neck and appointed a leader to return to their bondage in Egypt" (v.17a). The sinfulness of sin is seen most clearly against the Exodus revelation of God - "they made for themselves a molten calf and said, 'This is your God who brought you up out of Egypt', and committed great blasphemies" (v.18). The prayer follows the pattern of sin all the way down to

¹cf. Daniel's prayer - And now O Lord our God, who didst bring thy people out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand, and hast made thee a name as at this day, we have sinned, we have done wickedly. (Dan 9:15)

²'Le fait de l'Exode est le plus éloquent commentaire du nom de Yahweh': La Révélation dans l'Histoire d'Israël, p.151.

the Exile, and concludes with the ironical twist that now the people were no longer slaves in Egypt but slaves in the promised land - "Behold, we are slaves this day; in the land that thou gavest to our fathers to enjoy its fruit and its good gifts, behold, we are slaves"(v.36)

The prayer has told the story of national history. The nation is born at the Exodus in continuation of the ejection of Abraham. The whole world is God's creation, but Israel is a community within that world distinct from other nations and heir to the promise of a land given by God. The surrounding nations also play a part in God's purpose. They experience His judgement, as in the destruction of Pharaoh and the nations uprooted by the conquest, but they may also be the agents with which He punishes the chosen people, when they sinned. The Exodus revelation is the key to an understanding of sin as well as election, since sin is rejection of revelation, and this revelation came superlatively at the Exodus - "Thou didst get thee a name as it is to this day"(v.10b). That is why the molten calf which Aaron made, the desire to return to Egypt, and much later the sin of Jeroboam were regarded with such horror.

Ezra's work involved the national resettlement of the promised land, and the spiritual reconstruction of the returned exiles. To reshape Israel as the elect, covenant nation, Ezra turned their attention to the Exodus which moulded ancient Israel into a national a spiritual unity. It is often said that Ezra's reforms consisted of a rigorous application of the law. While this is true, it is not a complete statement. In fact, Ezra was attempting to renew the covenant by observance of the law, and more than that, he wished to remind Israel of God's grace. The order historically and spiritually was Exodus, covenant, law; that is grace leading to a relationship with Yahweh which elicited a response of obedience. Ezra was conscious of

the priority of the Exodus, as our analysis has shown. Therefore it is unfair to term his reform purely and simply legalistic. His prayer declares throughout the divine initiative in creation, election, deliverance and providence. Unfortunately, the law was later isolated from the covenant and the Exodus, and in the hands of the Pharisees became an end in itself. If they had realised that God's work - the Exodus - precedes man's work, they would not have fallen into a doctrine of salvation by merit. In the faith of Israel, the Exodus tradition maintained a witness to the initiative of Yahweh's grace. The history of Israel is a covenant history, and so at the head of that history stands the Exodus which preceded the covenant.

This conclusion is borne out by our analysis of the Exodus theme in the historical books, for we have seen that though the Exodus tradition at times suffered near eclipse, it was constantly revived, and indeed the strength of Yahwism at any given period may be assessed by the strength of the Exodus tradition in festal celebration and theological evaluation. Our analysis has also revealed that a major portion of the historical writings use the Exodus faith as their guiding principle of interpretation in their scheme of theological and political evaluation.

CHAPTER IV

THE EXODUS THEME IN THE PROPHETS

Introduction.

We have seen that the Exodus theme is hallowed in three traditions of the Old Testament - in the praises of the worshipping community, in the narratives and legislation of the Pentateuch, and in the historical books. It is a leading motif in each, a stimulus to praise, a ground for moral law and festal celebration, and a normative event to which each new development must be related.

There is one section of the Old Testament which does not follow in the footsteps of the Israelites through the Red Sea and away into the desert. The Wisdom literature by-passes the formative events of Israel's history. This is as we might have expected, for the essence of Wisdom was its international passport enabling it to travel across the ancient East, finding hospitality in the schools of the Sages who met with their pupils in many lands. The Wisemen of Israel received Wisdom and strengthened it on its way. Though they cast an Israelite mantle about its shoulders, they in no way altered its intrinsic character. The God of Wisdom was Yahweh, to be sure. It was not any religion, but it was the "fear of Yahweh" which was the beginning of wisdom for the Hebrew. Yet it was Yahweh in His Godhead, His Oneness, that is characteristic of the Wisdom literature, and not Yahweh the delivering-out-of-Egypt God. The Wisdom literature thus contains less of what is distinctive to Israel, and more of what is common to the thoughtful literature of the ancient East. The silence of the Wisdom literature on the Exodus theme serves to underline the distinctive nature of the experience.

The method of the Wisdom writers and the characteristics of the prophetic writings illuminate each other by their contrasts. The Wisdom writers began with certain assumed

axioms - God is one, and orders the affairs of men; God is good, and blesses those who honour him. They then apply these principles to the complexities of life in order to tease out the underlying pattern, to understand the fortunes of good or evil men. For example, a certain pattern has become established - "Pride comes before a fall". Bad fortune has befallen a certain man; how is it to be explained? Could they apply the principle? Roughly speaking the method is to work from the general to the particular, and we see this happening in the dialogues of Job's three friends, all foreigners who attempt an explanation of his misery according to the maxim of "pride before a fall". But Job refused to wear the cap which they felt should fit, and we find that in Job's case the traditional method fails. The Exodus gave its own pointer to the solution of the problem of suffering by demonstrating that Yahweh did not despise the affliction of the afflicted, but intervened, and made the affliction the occasion for a greater revelation of Himself, saving those who waited for Him but destroying those who hardened their hearts against Him. In the minds of the prophets, this provided a basis for the doctrine of salvation and judgement on a world scale, as we shall see. Though the solution offered in the book of Job - the staggering intervention of Yahweh unveiling His power and greatness - is atypical of the Wisdom writings, there are other features which bear the mark of the traditional Wisdom school, which we may contrast with the prophets.

The historical setting of Job is quite vague, and intentionally so, for the subject is timeless. The Wisdom writers dealt with life in any age, and the school of Wisdom itself spanned many centuries, being in existence long before the Exodus and continuing, in Israel at any rate, until Ben Sirach and the Wisdom of Solomon which were composed around the first century BC. In contrast to this, the prophets spoke to men of their times. The Sages

collected and transmitted the wisdom of generations; the prophets brought a dynamic word which proclaimed the consequences of contemporary living. The Wisdom writers addressed Israelites as young men, or civil servants, or as members of a family, or as people in business or the diplomatic service, but as members of a class in whatever age; the prophets spoke to the covenant people who were marked off from the mass of humanity by their election to this covenant relationship with Yahweh, the Holy One in their midst. The Wisdom writers dealt with the conduct befitting kings; the prophets praised or denounced this or that king by name. Wisdom was a literary genre independent of national politics; the prophets played a leading role in national politics. The Wisdom writers assumed that their readers believed God to be over all; the prophets declared that God's sovereignty would be demonstrated in this or that particular event. For these reasons, no reference to the Exodus is to be found in the Wisdom literature, whereas the Exodus is one theme which the major writing prophets have in common.

The prophets were exponents of Yahweh's action. His sovereignty was exercised because He was the living God who intervened freely at all levels of life - in nature, in national affairs, in personal life. The Sages understood the sovereignty of God through wisdom, which was a gift imparted by God to those who sought it diligently. The attainment of wisdom brought the knowledge that by wisdom God had founded the earth. God's sovereignty was His action according to wisdom, for all God's work from the beginning had been directed by His wisdom. In contrast, the prophets understood the sovereignty of God in terms of His action according to His holiness, and thus saw His sovereignty in the judgements which they proclaimed upon the nations of the day, upon Ephraim, Moab, Tyre, Nineveh, Babylon, Assyria and Egypt.

If the Exodus tradition is a leading interpretive

constant in the historical books, we might expect it to appear in the prophets also, since they were heralds of God's sovereignty in history, interpreting events according to their divine inspiration.

The prophets declared the word of a God who intervened in personal, national and natural life. This was indeed the God of the Exodus for His intervention in each sphere was demonstrated superlatively at the Exodus: His intervention in personal life, by the call of Moses; in national life, by dealing with the Egyptians; in natural life, by heightening physical phenomena to the degree of the miraculous in His purposes.

Moses himself was regarded as the great type of the prophet - "there has not arisen a prophet since in Israel like Moses whom the LORD knew face to face" (Deut 34:10). Thus in the Exodus tradition, the prophets had both a revelation of Yahweh, and a pattern for their ministry to guide them. It would indeed be strange in view of these considerations, if the spokesmen of Yahweh had neglected to use the Exodus tradition in their message.

With this introduction, we may now turn to an analysis of the prophetic writings, examining them in their chronological order in so far as this is possible, and dividing them into pre-exilic, exilic, and post-exilic groupings.

The Exodus in the Pre-exilic Prophets.

I

Amos.

Despite the careful dating of the prophecy as "two years before the earthquake"(v.1) - an event remembered long afterwards(Zech 14:5) - we cannot be certain of the year of Amos' call. He lived during the reigns of Uzziah, king of Judah(779-740) and Jeroboam II, king of Northern Israel(783-743). These two kings reigned concurrently for thirty-six years(779-743), and perhaps a date midway through this period would be most likely as the commencement of Amos' ministry.

In brief, the background of his prophecy is as follows. In 803 BC, Adad-nirari III of Assyria inflicted a crushing defeat on the Syrian confederacy to the north of Israel which gave Ephraim an opportunity of extending her territory under king Jeroboam II. With all the main trade routes in her control, Samaria became a lucrative commercial centre for merchants moving between Egypt and Mesopotamia. But material prosperity was confined to the upper class merchant-princes who indulged in accumulating wealth and lavishing it on houses of ivory and feasting, while the poor grew poorer still, forced 'to sell themselves for a pair of shoes'. The wealthy, who cared not a straw for justice, salved their consciences by an elaborate patronage of the cult. The apostate shrines at Bethel and Gilgal were crowded with devotees who were morally rotten to the core.

Amos unleashed a flailing attack on this political, ethical, social and religious life. He came from the desert,

like Moses, leaving his flocks and the dressing of his sycamore trees to travel to Samaria, emboldened by his call to proclaim doom, even upon his enemies such as Amaziah, priest of the Bethel cult.

Amos' use of the Exodus accords with his tone of doom, for he uses it always in the context of judgement, and never as the ground of hope in a future salvation. He acknowledges that the Exodus betokened Israel's special election -

Also I brought you up out of the land of Egypt,
and led you forty years in the wilderness,
to possess the land of the Amorite (2:10)

But far from securing Israel from Yahweh's judgements, it exposed her to them -

Hear this word that the LORD has spoken against you,
O people of Israel, against the whole family which I
brought up out of the land of Egypt:

You only have I known
of all the families of the earth;
therefore I will punish you
for all your iniquities. (3:1-2)

Amos was not concerned to deny either the historical fact of the Exodus, or its spiritual significance, but was at pains to destroy the illusion that the Exodus would be a wall of security for a sinful people. The special relationship to Yahweh which the Exodus brought was undeniable - "you only have I known among all the families of the earth". The use of וְיָדָעְתִּי with the preposition יָדָע combines the connotations of choice and intimate relationship. But this very election became a snare and delusion in a manner similar to the false trust in the Temple of Yahweh which Jeremiah denounced. The glories of the Exodus heightened the blackness of Israel's spiritual condition, and beckoned on her judgement.

This theme is taken up in the last chapter of the book in much the same way.

Are you not like the Ethiopians to me,
O people of Israel? , says the LORD.
Did I not bring up Israel from the land of Egypt,
and the Philistines from Caphtor
and the Syrians from Kir ?

Behold the eyes of the Lord GOD are
upon the sinful kingdom,
and I will destroy it from the surface
of the ground;
except that I will not utterly destroy
the house of Jacob,
says the LORD. (9:7-8)

These verses have been interpreted in more than one way:
the first, reading it thus - "Are you not in your conduct
in my sight like the Ethiopians ?", that is, apostasy has
become second nature to Israel, and she can no more change
than can the Ethiopians their skin(cf. Jer 13:23); the second,
understanding it as - "Now that you have broken your side
of the covenant, you are not different in my sight from
the Ethiopians, with whom I have not had a covenant". We
favour the second interpretation with some modifications.
Firstly, the passage affirms Yahweh's control over the
movements of all nations. The migrations of the Philistines
and Syrians were equally under Yahweh's sway as was the
Exodus. There is no consistency in denying this universalism
to Amos while admitting as genuine the oracles of doom
pronounced against the surrounding nations. Yahweh's control
extends over all nations, and His justice is impartial for
"the eyes of the LORD are upon the sinful kingdom", that is,
any sinful kingdom, Israel or the Gentile nations. Amos
is not concerned to deny any relationship between Israel
and Yahweh, but to contend that Israel had acted as though
she were not Yahweh's possession, and thus had become
"like the Ethiopians" to Yahweh. Israel was indeed an
elect nation, but not exempt because of this from Yahweh's
judgement which He meted out to every sinful kingdom. In
the realm of election, Israel was unique; in the realm of
punishment, she was on a level with all the nations over
whom Yahweh exercised control.

The remaining use of the Exodus theme in Amos occurs in his denunciation of the hypocritical sacrificial system. The elaborate external observance which was being maintained was not characteristic of Israel during her early origins. This emerges from the condemnation of Sakkuth and Kaiwan, Assyrian deities associated with the planet Saturn.

Did you bring me sacrifices and offerings the
forty years in the wilderness, O house of Israel ?
(5:25)

This denunciation of an elaborate ritualism divorced from morality may be compared with Jeremiah's: For in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, I did not speak to your fathers or command them concerning burnt offerings and sacrifices. But this commandment I gave them, Obey my voice"(Jer 7:22-26). In neither passage is it likely that the prophet is making an historical statement so much as a value judgement. It was a matter of obedience rather than sacrifice, justice and righteousness rather than offerings which Yahweh valued. The oracles would not be denials that there were sacrifices in the wilderness period, if this interpretation be true, but a plea for their subordination to heart-worship in the form of Oriental hyperbole of the kind - "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated"(Mal 1:3).

It was the shrine at Bethel which provoked much of Amos' anger, and it was here that his call was challenged by Amaziah, priest of Bethel who threatened Amos with the royal displeasure, and here that Amos affirmed his Mosaic-like call: "I am no prophet, nor one of the sons of the prophets (I am not a professional like you); but I am a herdsman, and a dresser of sycamore trees, and the LORD took me from following the flock, and the LORD said to me, Go prophesy to my people Israel"(7:14-15). It is no wonder that in the proximity of this apostate calf cult Amos should see the original Exodus as an awful witness

to the glory of God despised in his generation. Even judgements designed to turn Israel back to Yahweh were ignored - famine, blight, drought and locusts(4:6-9), and Amos notes with grim irony...

I sent among you a pestilence after the manner
..... of Egypt
yet you did not return to me,
says the LORD. (4:10)

The moral background being what it was, Amos could only strip away all delusions of security, of which the Exodus tradition was one, as our analysis has shown. For Amos, the Exodus of the past only blackened the horizon of a people who had turned from following the light of the pillar of cloud and fire.

II

Hosea.

Hosea's ministry probably comes between that of Amos and that of Isaiah, who received his call in the year 740 BC, the year King Uzziah died. Hosea possibly died just before the fall of the Northern kingdom in 722 BC, to which his message was mainly addressed, and to which he also belonged.

The general background is the same as that of Amos, except that the moral decay has advanced, and the social collapse which Amos foretold has taken place. The prosperous times of Jeroboam II were followed by violence and anarchy, Jeroboam's son, Zechariah, being murdered after only six months reign by Shallum who in turn fell by the hand of Menahem after one month. The internal instability was reflected in the vacillations between foreign alliance with Egypt and Assyria which led Hosea to describe Ephraim as a silly dove fluttering to and fro. The religious background is one of Baal worship which was basically a fertility cult involving sacred prostitution which symbolised the marriage of the father-god with the mother-earth ensuring the success of the crops. Indeed, Hosea used the very idioms

of the Baal cult in a holy framework.

In all, there are five different uses of the Exodus theme in Hosea in contrast to Amos' unilateral exposition. The first which we shall examine concerns the role of the prophet; the second, a plain historical reference to the origin; the third, a desire for a spiritual return to the Exodus period; the fourth, a reversal of the Exodus in judgement; and fifthly, a new Exodus from captivity.

1. The Role of the Prophet: 12:10-14.

This section is difficult to follow, and commentators are not agreed on the division of the oracle, or on whether it relates at all to what precedes and follows it. The Revised Standard Version makes verses 10-14 into a unit preceded by a series of short oracles against Ephraim mainly concerned with the Assyrian league, and the sense of vv.10-14 in the context of this indictment of Ephraim appears to be an assertion that God was continually giving His word through His true prophets just as He had spoken through Moses to the people of Israel.

I spoke to the prophets;
it was I who multiplied visions,
and through the prophets gave parables.
If there is iniquity in Gilead
they shall surely come to nought;
If in Gilgal they sacrifice bulls,
their altars also shall be like stone heaps
on the furrows of the field.
(Jacob fled to the land of Aram,
there Israel did service for a wife,
and for a wife he herded sheep.)
By a prophet the LORD brought Israel
up from Egypt,
and by a prophet he was preserved.
Ephraim has given bitter provocation;
so his lord will leave his bloodguilt
upon him,
and will turn back upon him his reproaches.
(12:10-14)

We have underlined the relevant verses; the rest which condemns spurious sacrifice and Ephraim does not connect well, nor does verse 12 which the Revised Standard Version sets in parenthesis. The phrase 'to multiply visions' is often used of false prophets who invent a word of Yahweh, but here it is not so used, but describes genuine prophecy as the inspiration of Yahweh. Hosea then refers to Moses -

"By a prophet Yahweh brought up Israel from Egypt, and by a prophet he was preserved", and in this way magnifies his own office, for if a prophet played such an important part in the Exodus, then one who follows on in the prophetic succession from Moses is not to be despised. Hosea might have repeated Amos' conviction - "Surely the Lord GOD does nothing, without revealing his secret to his servants the prophets"(Amos 3:7). If Hosea interpreted his ministry in the light of the role which Moses played in the Exodus, as we have suggested, then we may conclude that the Exodus was a cornerstone of his theological thinking.

11. The Exodus as the Origin of the Nation; 11:1-4, 13:4-5.

Hosea traces the birth of the nation to the Exodus in language which is couched in family terms -

When Israel was a child I loved him,
and out of Egypt I called my son.

The more I called them,
the more they went from me
they kept sacrificing to the Baals
and burning incense to idols.

Yet it was I who taught Ephraim to walk,
I took them up in my arms;
but they did not know that I healed them.
I led them with cords of compassion
with the bands of love,
and I became to them as one
who eases the yoke on their jaws,
and I bent down to them and fed them. (11:1-4)

Hosea is particularly fond of using human relationships as a picture of the divine love. Though the metaphor of Yahweh as Husband is more characteristic of Hosea, the prophet also makes use of the Father-son relationship. This oracle should be read in conjunction with the message which came through the birth of his son to the unfaithful Gomer. This child's name, Lo-Ammi, was the symbol of Israel which through disobedience had become an illegitimate child. But in the latter days ... "in the place where it was said to them, 'You are not my people(Heb. Lo-Ammi)', it shall be said to them, 'Sons of the living God' "(Hosea 1:8-10). The oracle which we have quoted above looks back to the time of the

Exodus, when the nation in its infancy took its first stumbling steps to Yahweh who tenderly watched over it with fatherly patience and love.

Either there is textual corruption in 2a, and we should read the first person ("I" and "they") for the Hebrew third person ("they" and "them"), or understand "they" as referring to the prophets of Yahweh calling the people back to Him. The former explanation is preferable, since there is nothing in the context to suggest that the prophets are in Hosea's mind. The sense is straightforward: Ignoring Yahweh, their Father, the Israelites adopted Baalism, when it had been Yahweh who had caught up the child, Israel, at the Exodus, and who had healed them (cf. Exodus 15:26 - $\text{וְיִשְׁׁמְרֵם יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם} \text{ } \text{וְיִשְׁׁמְרֵם יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם}$). The imagery then changes to that of husbandry: Israel is a heifer which Yahweh leads gently with "cords of a man", a phrase in the Hebrew whose meaning may be read from the poetic parallel in the following line - "bands of love".¹ So there are three pictures in this short oracle: the first, of Israel as a child and Yahweh as its Father; the second, of Israel as the devotee of the Baal cult; the third, of Israel as a yoke animal with Yahweh as Husbandman. At the head of these portraits stands the Exodus theme.

The second oracle which affirms that the origin of the nation and her relationship with Yahweh were from the Exodus is embedded in chapter 13, which consists of a group of vivid pictures painting the judgement of Ephraim. Ephraim will vanish like the morning mist, or chaff that swirls from the threshing floor, or smoke which escapes from a window(13:1-3). Yahweh will set upon them like a leopard, a lion or a bear(vv.7-8). Pangs of childbirth and death will overtake them(vv.12-14). Assyria will sweep in like the sirocco wind and wither the land(v.15). Nothing

¹ some scholars amend to meaning 'faithfulness, stability'.

can save Ephraim from perishing, not a prince or a king, for..."I have given you kings in my anger, and I have taken them away in my wrath"(v.11). Only God can save them -

I am Yahweh your God
from the land of Egypt;
you know no God but me,
and besides me there is no saviour.
It was I who knew you in the wilderness
in the land of drought. (13:4-5)

The Exodus was the great revelation of God as Saviour; the wilderness wanderings of God as Giver and Guide.

iii. Desire for a Return to the Exodus Origins.

There was a sect in Israel, the Rechabites, who revolted against the corruption of commercial city life, and adhered to the life of the wilderness period with a fanatical zeal, eschewing all the marks of a settled civilisation - a house, regular sowing of crops and cultivation of the vine which demanded years of unbroken attention if it was to bear good fruit. This sect had all the qualities of a stern Yahwism, but like many ascetic orders lacked the practicability by which they could integrate their ideals to the economic and social complexities of worldly life.

Hosea, too, looked back to the Exodus and wilderness period with nostalgia, but he envisaged a spiritual and not a literal return to that experience. He expresses this in two oracles(2:14-20 and 12:7-9) which should be read together for a complete understanding of the prophet's meaning. The oracle of 12:7-9 is a little unit on its own in the form which seems to be characteristic of the literary structure of Hosea.

A trader in whose hands are false balances
he loves to oppress.
Ephraim has said, "Ah, but I am rich,
I have gained wealth for myself";
but all his riches can never offset
the guilt he has incurred.
I am the LORD your God
from the land of Egypt;
I will again make you dwell in tents,
as in the days of the appointed feast.
(12:7-9)

Against the materialism of commercial life, Hosea sets the

desert experience of a social life centred round the awful presence of Yahweh in the camp. God was simply left out of the traders' reckoning; as far as they were concerned, Yahweh did not see, or if He did, He would not act to do either good or evil. It was a return to the experience of a living God, once known with such intensity at the Exodus, which Hosea desired for Israel. The "appointed feast" is presumably the feast of Booths which recalled the trek through the wilderness.

A lengthier exposition of Hosea's desire to return to the spiritual condition of the Exodus is found in conjunction with the central motif of the marriage of Yahweh and Israel in chapter 2.

Therefore, behold, I will allure her,
and bring her into the wilderness,
and speak tenderly to her.
And there I will give her her vineyards,
and make the valley of Achor a door of hope.
And there she shall answer as in the days
of her youth,
as at the time when she came out of the
land of Egypt. (2:14-15)

At the opening of the chapter, Israel is an unfaithful wife against whom Yahweh launches a complaint - "Plead with your mother, plead — for she is not my wife, and I am not her husband"(v.2). Israel had "gone after lovers" - the Baals, which she honoured in "all her mirth, her feasts, her new moons, her sabbaths and all her appointed feasts". Either these had been entirely given over to Baal worship, or, more likely, there was a kind of syncretism by which Yahweh was worshiped as a Baal. "I will punish her for the feast days of the Baals when she burned incense to them and decked herself with her ring and jewelry, and went after her lovers, and forgot me", said Yahweh(v.13). The Baals were fertility gods, and apostate Israel attributed Yahweh's providence to them: "I will go after my lovers who give me my bread and my water, my wool and my flax, my oil and my drink". Though Yahweh pronounces judgement, His love still reaches out, and He is pictured as a young

lover who desires to allure and woo His bride, speaking tenderly to her in the language of the Song of Songs to draw her after Him into the wilderness. That experience would open the door to a new life. The Valley of Achor, which was the scene of Achan's sin, would become a "door of hope", that is, to drop the metaphor, sin would be blotted out in this return to the covenant relationship which Israel had known after the Exodus.

We can appreciate Hosea's boldness in the use of the betrothal metaphor, when we read it against the background of Baalism with its sacred marriage which was in fact a pretext for gross sensualism. Hosea has used the very idiom of apostasy to teach the truth of Yahweh's covenant love. He continues: "I, Yahweh, will betroth you to me for ever; I will betroth you to me in righteousness and in justice, in steadfast love and in mercy. I will betroth you to me in faithfulness; and you shall know the LORD"(vv.19-20). There is surely no deeper revelation of the love of God in the Old Testament, and this prophetic utterance is based on two pillars - Hosea's personal life, and the Exodus.

iv. Judgement as the Reversal of the Exodus.

The great revelation of Yahweh's love in this prophecy does not mean that judgement is glossed over, but rather that the mercy of God is seen so clearly because it shines through the sombreness of punishment. Hosea's use of the Exodus in the context of judgement is far more subtle than that of Amos because he adds an ironical twist to it. Punishment will consist of a reversal of the Exodus. For her sin Israel will go back into slavery. This is put across in four short phrases scattered throughout the book.

This shall be their derision in the land of Egypt
(7:16)

Now he will remember their iniquity,
and punish their sins;
they shall return to Egypt. (8:13b)

They shall not remain in the land of the LORD;
but Ephraim shall return to Egypt.(9:3)

They shall return to the land of Egypt,
and Assyria shall be their king
because they have refused to return to me.(11:5)

This ironical judgement is set out in different contexts, each of which deals with an aspect of Israel's sin. Thus the first mocks the foreign alliances: "Ephraim is like a dove, silly and without sense, calling to Egypt, going to Assyria"(7:11). The second rejects false religion, and in particular the calf worship: "A workman made it; it is not God. The calf of Samaria shall be broken to pieces"(8:5b). It is indeed ironical that the very calf which was worshiped as the deliverer from Egypt(1 Kings 12:28) should be the raison d'être for the reversal of the Exodus in punishment. Hosea notes its destruction with obvious satisfaction -

The inhabitants of Samaria tremble
for the calf of Beth-aven.
Its people shall mourn for it,
and its idolatrous priests shall wail over it,
over its glory which has departed from it.
Yea, the thing itself shall be carried to Assyria
as tribute to the great king. (10:5-6)

Though a couplet like the one - "Egypt shall gather them, Memphis shall bury them"(9:6) - might sound as though the prophet was thinking in terms of locality, the reversal of the Exodus is to be understood in a spiritual rather than a literal sense, as is clear from the Hebrew poetry which uses Egypt in parallel with Assyria, meaning that Assyria would be Israel's new Egypt. However, there was a certain geographical appropriateness too about this judgement, for after the fall of the Southern kingdom, a group of Jews fled to Egypt where a colony was established in which syncretism flourished and which heard its doom pronounced by the prophet Jeremiah who had been forced into fleeing there.

v. The New Exodus.

To match the reversal of the Exodus in judgement, Hosea goes on to speak of a new Exodus salvation when Israel would be gathered again from captivity among the foreign nations.

They shall go after Yahweh,
he will roar like a lion;
yea, he will roar,
and his sons shall come trembling
from the west;
they shall come trembling like birds
from Egypt,
and like doves from the land of
Assyria:
I will return them to their homes,
says the LORD. (11:10-11)

The imagery is rather abrupt for English canons, changing from the roar of a lion to the flight of doves. The lion symbolises the majestic, awe-inspiring authority of Yahweh, while the dove is the silly bird which called to Egypt and Assyria, but now is frightened off homewards. Captivity has reduced the pomp of the wealthy princes, and they have been left vulnerable, without pride or resources, and better able to hear the word of Yahweh. Far from the promised land, neither they nor their conquerors lie without the scope of Yahweh's jurisdiction. He controlled the Exodus, the reversal of the Exodus in a new captivity, and then the return from Exile in a new Exodus.

There are two keys to an understanding: the first is his personal experience; the second, his exposition of the Exodus theme. As with the loneliness of Jeremiah, Hosea learned the deep things of God in the school of experience. Through his love for the unfaithful Gomer, his very life became a revelation of Yahweh's love for Israel, and this too was the burden of his message. He interpreted his marriage as being ordained by God, and no doubt was strengthened to go through the agonies which it brought

by the knowledge of God's love for unfaithful Israel which it opened to his vision.

Because of his personal suffering, Hosea's message has a warmth about it which Amos' lacks, though the two are in fundamental agreement. Hosea's is the fuller revelation of God, and indeed it is not surpassed in the Old Testament in its teaching concerning the covenant love of Yahweh.

The second fundamental aspect of his message is his understanding and use of the Exodus theme. He understood his own ministry in terms of Moses' role as spokesman of God in the Exodus events. The Exodus theme is not entirely shut off from the marriage theme which is based on his personal life, for he regards the Exodus as a betrothal of unfaithful Israel to Yahweh, just as he had married the unfaithful Gomer bath-Diblain. Gomer's child was called Lo-Ammi, Not-My-People; the sons of Israel had become illegitimate sons, issuing from an adulterous religious liaison with Baalism. This meant that the Exodus betrothal-bond was broken, and so Israel would once more be scattered among foreign overlords. But even as Hosea took back the unfaithful Gomer to himself, so God would again gather the exiles. It is clear from these parallels that the two themes illuminate each other, the events of Israel's history and the events of Hosea's personal history throwing light on each other.

So full is Hosea's use of the Exodus theme that all the expositions of the later prophets may be regarded as variations on his themes rather than innovations, though whether this implies a literary or oral dependance is another question.

III

Isaiah.

Jewish tradition holds that Isaiah was of royal blood, but while this is uncertain, he may well have been of noble family for he had free access to the palace and the king. He was a married man with two sons whose names were known to the king, and which bore a prophetic message. His call came in the year that king Uzziah died, that is, 740 BC, and his ministry continued through the reigns of Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah. His last appearance which may be dated with certainty was at the time of Sennacherib's campaign in 701 BC, or, if we assume a second campaign against Jerusalem, the date would be c.688 BC. Tradition has it that Isaiah suffered a martyr's death by being sawn in half under the evil rule of Manasseh, but this is too late to bear historical weight. His ministry, which was concentrated on the Southern kingdom, was at any rate a long one - forty years at least.

As Ephraim had prospered under Jeroboam II, so Judah under king Uzziah enjoyed a time of prosperity unequalled since the since the division of the monarchy after Solomon. During this period Assyria was weak, and concerned with internal divisions until, five years before Uzziah's death, Pul, an Assyrian general, seized the crown assuming the title of Tiglath-pileser III in 745 BC. This marked the beginning of a new wave of aggression which threatened to roll over Palestine, and which reached its highwater-mark in the conquest of Egypt and the destruction of Nineveh in 612 BC. By 738 BC, Rezin of Damascus, Hiram of Tyre and Menahem of Ephraim had been bound over to paying tribute. In 735, Pekah who had murdered Menahem's son, joined Rezin in raising the standard of revolt, and then together they attacked Judah to force her into their alliance against the Assyrians. Despite Isaiah's warnings, Ahaz appealed to Tiglath-pileser to intervene which he

did readily, capturing Damascus in 732 BC and forcing Hoshea to yield Transjordan and Galilee, while Ahaz himself became tributary. For a time Judah remained loyal to Assyria, but later became involved in Egyptian intrigues, and when Sennacherib followed Sargon in 705 BC, Hezekiah was a leader of revolt in the West. This was not put down until 701 BC, when the Egyptian army was decisively defeated and Hezekiah forced to yield on onerous terms.

The religious and social background is much the same as it was in the Northern kingdom with gross national sins such as drunkenness, luxury, materialism, apostacy, injustice to the poor and defenceless, and reliance on foreign powers instead of on Yahweh. Against this background, Isaiah proclaims the word of the Holy One of Israel, saying that only a remnant would be saved from destruction.

We shall follow the same method of exposition as used with Hosea, namely, to deal with the Exodus theme where it occurs rather than give an outline of the whole book, but as far as possible to relate the Exodus motif to the rest of the prophet's message where this is justified by the literary structure of the book.

Chapter 4:2-6.

This is an eschatological re-creation of the wilderness period which makes use of the cloud and the glory to achieve its effect.

In that day the branch of Yahweh shall be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the land shall be the pride and glory of the survivors of Israel. And he who is left in Zion and remains in Jerusalem will be called holy, every one who has been recorded for life in Jerusalem, when Yahweh shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion and cleansed the bloodstains of Jerusalem from its midst by a spirit of judgement and by a spirit of burning. Then Yahweh will create over the whole site of Mount Zion and over her assemblies a cloud by day, and smoke and shining of a flaming fire by night; for over all the glory there will be a canopy and a pavilion. It will be for a shade by day from the heat, and for a refuge and shelter from the storm and rain.

(4:2-6)

This forms a unit on its own quite separate from what

precedes and follows it, but possibly linked by the catchword 'daughters of Zion'(v.4). For this and reasons of style, vocabulary and ideas, it has often been denied to Isaiah¹, but on the other hand, Driver and Bright argue for Isaianic authorship. Its prose style may be due to transmission, since Gray show parallelisms which perhaps point to a poetic substratum. As regards the ideas, Bright says - "The passage speaks of a purge out of which a purified remnant will emerge - a thoroughly Isaianic notion (eg.1:24-26). There is no hint of an exile or a destruction of Jerusalem. The notion of the glory of Yahweh, the pillar of cloud and fire, is present in the older Pentateuchal sources(JE), and was certainly well known in Judah in the 8th century. It is true that Isaiah does not elsewhere apply the epithet 'holy' to individuals, but the ideal of a holy people - and the present passage speaks of the ideal to be realised 'in that day' - is incontestably pre-exilic(cf. Ex 19:5f, Deut 7:6, 14:2,21). While one cannot prove that the passage comes from Isaiah, there is little reason to relegate it to a post-exilic date".

The theme of the passage may be summed up as cleansing, purging and renewal focused on Zion with the imagery drawn from the wilderness theophany. The Exodus is assumed, and attention is drawn to its purpose, namely that Israel should be a holy people with Yahweh dwelling in their midst. The "cloud by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night" recalls the Exodus phenomena, and the Shekinah glory which rested over the Tabernacle.

The passage give us an insight into the working of the prophetic mind, for we see that the past history of Israel is projected into the future, providing the language

¹eg. by Gray (ICC) and Scott(IB)

²Bright: Isaiah, Peake,p. 493.

of prophecy with diverse images, colours in which to paint the canvas of future renewal and hope. The reality of the future prediction is thus based on the past, for the prophet believes that God will again act as He did in the Exodus. There is thus a form of typology employed in order to understand God's action in the world, interpreting the present and the future according to past revelation. There is a fluidity between the literal and the spiritual force of this imagery.

11. Chapter 10:26-27.

Here we have a clear statement of a new Exodus from Assyrian captivity. The passage dates from around or just after 701 BC, for although Judah was subject to Assyria from 734 onwards, she only felt the lash of her military power in 701, when the Assyrians handed over large sections of her territory to her neighbours and laid upon her a crushing tribute.

Therefore thus says the LORD, Yahweh of hosts: 'O my people who dwell in Zion, do not be afraid of the Assyrians when they smite with the rod and lift up their staff against you as the Egyptians did. For in a very little while my indignation will come to an end, and my anger will be directed to their destruction. And Yahweh of hosts will wield against them a scourge as when he smote Midian at the rock of Oreb; and his rod will be over the sea, and he will lift it as he did in Egypt. And in that day his burden will depart from his shoulder, and his yoke will be destroyed from your neck. (10:24-27)

Two aspects of the early history are used by the prophet - the Exodus and Gideon's conquests (Judges 7:25ff). The Assyrians were Yahweh's tool, an axe in His hand (v.15), and in fearing Yahweh the Israelites had none else to fear. Isaiah had preached reliance on God and not on foreign aid: 'in returning and rest you shall be saved; in quietness and in trust shall be your strength' (30:15). One day 'the remnant of Israel and the survivors of the house of Jacob will no more lean upon him that smote them, but will lean upon Yahweh, the Holy One of Israel, in truth' (v.20). Judgement was indeed certain - 'a remnant

will return to the mighty God. For though your people, Israel, be as the sand of the sea, only a remnant of them will return. Destruction is decreed overflowing with righteousness'(v.22). But this was not the final word, for if there was to be a new oppression and bondage, there was also to be a new deliverance. The Assyrian rod recalled that of the Egyptian taskmasters'(v.24), but there was to be another rod stretched out by God like Moses' rod of old - 'his rod will be over the sea, and he will lift it as he did in Egypt'(v.26). Captivity would give way to freedom - 'his burden will depart from your shoulder'(v.27). As in Hosea, judgement and mercy are found in juxtaposition.

111. Chapter 11:11-16.

The idea of the new Exodus is developed further in this passage.

In that day the LORD will extend his hand yet a second time to recover the remnant which is left of his people from Assyria, from Egypt, from Pathros, from Ethiopia, from Elam, from Shinar, from Hamath and from the coastlands of the sea.

He will raise an ensign for the nations,
and will assemble the outcasts of Israel,
and gather the dispersed of Judah
from the four corners of the earth. (11:11-12)

And Yahweh will utterly destroy
the tongue of the sea of Egypt;
and will wave his hand over the River
with his scorching wind,
and smite it into seven channels
that men may cross dryshod.
And there will be a highway from Assyria
for the remnant which is left of his people,
as there was for Israel
when they came up from the land of Egypt.
(11:15-16)

This passage is thought to be post-exilic by many commentators. This may be so, but the dispersion referred to in verse 11 could equally be a prophetic generalisation based on the fact that the Northern kingdom had already been overrun and its peoples deported to Assyria. This is supported by the vague and expansive phrase - "the four corners of the earth"(v.12), which serves emphasise the greatness of God's ingathering rather than the precise geography of it. Further, verses 10 and 13-14 speak of a re-uniting of Northern and

Southern kingdoms under a Davidic monarch, and this could well be pre-exilic.¹ More than this we cannot say, but Isaianic authorship, or at any rate an Isaianic core, need not be ruled out.

The passage portrays the dynamic intervention of Yahweh: "the Lord will (extend) his hand yet a second time" (v.11) - the Exodus being the first time, and the word "hand" signifying the active power of Yahweh. True to Isaiah's essential insight, the scope of election has narrowed from the day of the first Exodus for this time "there will be a highway from Assyria for the remnant which is left of his people" (v.16). Again the crossing of the Red Sea has captured the poet's imagination as the most striking detail of the Exodus events to which he compares a new Exodus crossing over the "tongue of the Sea of Egypt" (that is, the Gulf of Suez, or the Nile) "and the River" (usually the Euphrates, but possibly the Nile in this passage). In ancient times rivers were natural boundaries. It required the miraculous work of God to afford a way to freedom. Just as Israel sang a song of thanksgiving on the occasion of the Exodus, so here at the announcement of a new Exodus there follows a song of thanksgiving in the following chapter.

iv. Chapter 14:1-2.

In Hosea, there was a reversal of the Exodus in judgement; here, there is the opposite - a reversal of captivity.

Yahweh will have compassion on Jacob and will again chose Israel, and will set them in their own land, and aliens will join them and will cleave to the house of Jacob. And the peoples will take them and bring them to their place, and the house of Israel will possess them in Yahweh's land as male and female slaves; they will take captive those who were their captors, and rule over those who oppressed them. (14:1-2)

We shall do no more than note this passage here, for though it draws on the experience of slavery and the choice of Israel - "Yahweh will again chose Israel" - which shows

that the imagery is derived from the Exodus, it does not expound this at any length, and the passage falls within a section which is generally denied to Isaiah, though Bright notes - "It cannot be proved that any part goes back to Isaiah himself; but the possibility exists that pre-exilic material, some of it perhaps originally spoken of Assyria, has here been reapplied to Babylon".¹

v. Chapter 19:19-22.

This passage contains a startling variation on the Exodus theme. The chapter opens with a poetic oracle (vv.1-15) about Egypt, followed by five brief prose oracles introduced by the phrase "in that day"(vv.16,18,19, 23,24). The first section is sometimes denied to Isaiah, but there is little compelling evidence for a post-exilic date. "A plausible background can be found in the circumstances of Isaiah's lifetime", says Bright.² Verse 19 is sometimes related to a temple of Yahweh built c.160 BC at Leontopolis by the exiled High Priest Onias IV. There is little to comment that these verses were inserted after 160 BC. Besides the question of the closure of the canon, it is difficult to imagine how the universalism which characterises the whole passage could have appeared after the reforms of Ezra and Nehemiah, or later, when those who guarded the prophetic traditions of Israel were bitterly opposing internationalism. Since universalism in prophecy reached its peak in Deutero-Isaiah, it would seem likely that no long period separates this passage from the latter, and this is also the implication of their collection in one book.

The five oracles, in brief, predict - the Egyptians reduced to humility before Yahweh; five cities in Egypt speaking the Hebrew language; an altar and pillar erected in Egypt for a sign and witness to Yahweh; international

¹op. cit. p. 499

²op.cit. p. 502

commerce between Assyria and Egypt; and a triple alliance between Israel, Egypt and Assyria, blessed by Yahweh. The third oracle concerns us most, since this predicts that Yahweh will care for the Egyptians in a way identical with His care for Israel at the Exodus.

When the Egyptians cry to Yahweh because of oppressors, he will send them a saviour, and will defend and deliver them. And Yahweh will make himself known to the Egyptians; and the Egyptians will know Yahweh in that day and worship with sacrifice and burnt offering, and they will make vows to Yahweh and will perform them. And Yahweh will smite Egypt, smiting and healing, and they will return to Yahweh, and he will heed their supplications and heal them. (19:20-22)

Just as Yahweh sent Moses, so He will send a saviour to the Egyptians when they cry to him. First, there is judgement - "Yahweh will smite Egypt" - just as He had smitten her at the Exodus, striking down the first-born. But this time His dealings with them are on a new footing, for the Egyptians will not be destroyed, but will turn and be healed. Yahweh will become their Healer (cf. 'I am Yahweh your healer' - Ex 15:26). The whole tenor of the passage is that the Egyptians would have an Exodus experience too. "In that day there will be a highway from Egypt to Assyria"(v.23). The same word is used in 11:16 of a new Exodus: "there will be a highway (Heb. *חַסְלָה*) from Assyria...as there was for Israel when they came up from the land of Egypt". Thus it probably continues the Exodus imagery, but with this new twist that the Assyrians would move freely into Egypt as well. All this leads up to a blessing which Yahweh would pronounce in that day, saying, "Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel my heritage"(v.24b).

There could be no more startling universalism, and our appreciation of it is deepened by an understanding of the Exodus imagery which underlies it, for thereby it makes what was the distinctive experience of Israel, God's miraculous deliverance and revelation of Himself at the Exodus, available for the very enemies and oppressors in that drama.

In summary and conclusion, we may note that the Exodus motif appears prominently in Proto-Isaiah. (We have not considered chapter 35 in this section, since its material goes more fittingly with corresponding material in II Isaiah, whatever may be the outcome of the literary debate which surrounds it). Isaiah always uses the Exodus with reference to the future, sometimes in the shorter perspective of the Assyrian empire, at others in an eschatological perspective. He rings the changes on the motif with considerable variety and fluidity. Outstanding is his use of the Exodus theme in setting forth his universalistic outlook.

IV

Micah.

Micah was probably a younger contemporary of Isaiah. The superscription of the book places his ministry in the reigns of Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, that is roughly from 740 - 687 BC. This has been questioned by scholars, but we may be certain that Micah was active during Hezekiah's reign at any rate, for his word at that time was remembered a hundred years later during Jeremiah's lifetime (Jer 26:16-19).

The background of his prophecies is the same as for Isaiah and Hosea, but he differs from them in that he does not deal with political events or utter condemnations of foreign nations, yet his denunciation of moral degradation, especially oppression of the poor, is as vigorous as that of his predecessors.

The Exodus motif is not of great importance in comparison with the rest of his message, but it does appear, once as the whole basis of God's claim on Israel, and again as a type of the future work of Yahweh. Both occurrences (6:1-5 and 7:15) fall within sections which are denied to Micah, for reasons which we consider inadequate.

1. Micah 6:1-5.

D.Winton Thomas says of this passage - "This section is probably post-exilic, but a pre-exilic origin is possible. It is independent of vv.6-8, being probably a fragment of a longer address whose conclusion has not been preserved".¹

Hear what Yahweh says:
Arise, plead your case before the mountains,
and let the hills hear your voice.
Hear, you mountains, the controversy of Yahweh,
and you enduring foundation of the earth.
For Yahweh has a controversy with his people,
and he will contend with Israel.
O my people what have I done to you ?
In what have I wearied you ?
Answer me !
For I brought you up from the land of Egypt,
and redeemed you from the house of bondage;
and I sent before you Moses, Aaron and Miriam.
(6:1-4)

The literary form of this passage is a controversy (נִסְיָן) between Yahweh and Israel which draws on the imagery of legal procedure, and is a favourite device in Old Testament literature (cf. Job: Isa 3:13ff, 5:3ff, 43:26 ; Jer 25:31; Hosea 4:1, 12:2).

Though we cannot go so far as to affirm literary dependance, there is an interesting parallel between this passage and 1 Samuel 12:6-8 -

Now, therefore, stand still, that I may plead with you before Yahweh concerning all the saving deeds of Yahweh which he performed for you and for your fathers....Yahweh sent Moses and Aaron, who brought forth your fathers out of Egypt, and made them dwell in this place.

Similarly the passage before us concludes.."that you may know the saving acts of Yahweh"(v.5b). In this controversy, Yahweh is both prosecutor and judge; Israel is the defendant. The indictment is pronounced "before the mountains" because they are old and wise witnesses of Israel's early history. Yahweh opens the case with an outburst of rhetorical questions - "O my people, what have I done to you ? In what have I wearied you ? Answer me!"(v.3).

¹DW Thomas: Micah, Peake, p.633.

This is a favourite literary device of Jeremiah, who asks similar questions(eg. Jer 2:5,14,17,18,23,24,28,29,31,32). What can Israel reply in the face of the Exodus ? There is no answer; she can only admit her guilt. What does God require of her ?

He has showed you,O man, what is good;
and what does Yahweh require of you
but to do justice, and to love hesed,
and to walk humbly with your God ?
(Micah 6:8)

11. Chapter 7:15.

This passage uses the Exodus as a type of the future salvation prophesied by Micah.

As in the days when you came out of the
land of Egypt,
I will show him marvellous things.(7:15)

Either this verse stands in isolation, or much of the analysis of some modern scholars is mistaken. Thomas, for example, divides the chapter as follows -

- vv. 1-4 : pre-exilic; possibly by Micah.
- vv. 5-7 : post-exilic; an addition by a pious scribe.
- vv. 8-10 : exilic or post-exilic.
- vv. 11-13 : period of Nehemiah or earlier, but hardly earlier than the exile.
- vv. 14-20 : late post-exilic.

If this is so there is nothing further to be said; the promise of an Exodus-like revelation of God is an unrelated pious scrap tacked on to an ill-fitting background without direction or context.

But it is tempting to see a link between this promise and what has gone before in the chapter and the book. In the book, there is the universalism of 4:1-10: all the nations will come to Jerusalem where the reign of Yahweh will be set up. The Israelites would be gathered in from dispersion(2:12-13, 5:7-8). In accord with this future hope in the book as a whole are portions of chapter 7: the shepherding of Israel(v.14), which is a picture often used to describe the Exodus, and so would be apt for use in relation to a new Exodus here; the turning of foreign nations to Yahweh(vv.16-17). These would give the prophecy of a "marvellous thing"(v.15) some content. If we must leave this open, we may at any rate note that whether this belongs

to the work of Micah in the 8th century or not, the theme itself is there. The Exodus is God's unanswerable claim over Israel in the past, and the proto-type of His work in the future.

V

Jeremiah.

We now move on from the great eight century prophets to the seventh century and the period which saw the long foretold downfall of Jerusalem and the exile. Between the death of Hezekiah and the fall of Jerusalem to the Babylonians lies exactly one hundred years of crisis and reversal, 687-587 BC, which witnessed the peak of Assyrian power, and then its decline and collapse as revolt tore its empire, and Babylon rose to power, eventually crushing Egypt which had grown stronger and stronger until Nebuchadrezzar routed their army at the battle of Carchemish in 605.

Jeremiah was born some time between 650-45, in the last years of the evil king Manasseh. He began his ministry five years before the Law Book was discovered in the Temple during Josiah's reforms. We cannot say what part he played in this reform, if any, but we find that he soon had misgivings when he realised that it had not changed the externalism of the cultic system, and reliance upon the Temple as a kind of talisman. King Jehoiakim allowed the reform to lapse, and his solution to Jeremiah's words of doom was a free use of the penknife. Thereafter Jeremiah preached an inevitable exile, and advocated surrender to the Chaldeans, a policy which landed him in prison out of which he escaped with his life only by the care of the eunuch Ebed-melech. Zedekiah gave Jeremiah his ear but not his heart, left surrender too late, was overhauled in his

flight when the city wall was breached, and witnessed the execution of his sons before his eyes were put out, and he was led prisoner to Babylon where he died. Jeremiah received favour from the Babylonian commander, and elected to remain in Jerusalem, but after the murder of Gedaliah was forcibly abducted to Egypt with the fugitive rebels, and presumably died there.

Jeremiah's use of the Exodus theme is in some ways similar to the other prophets, especially Hosea, and in others follows the direction of his distinctive proclamation of the new Covenant.

1. Jeremiah 32:17-22.

We may begin with his attestation to the historical origin of the nation of Israel at the Exodus which is found in a prayer, similar to Ezra's, which summarises the history of Israel.

Ah Lord GOD ! It is thou who hast made the heavens and the earth by thy great power and thy outstretched arm ! Nothing is too hard for thee, who showest steadfast love to thousands, but dost requite the guilt of fathers to their children after, O great and mighty God whose name is Yahweh of hosts, great in counsel and mighty in deed; whose eyes are open to all the ways of men, rewarding every man according to his ways and according to the fruit of his doings; who hast shown signs and wonders in the land of Egypt and to this day in Israel and among all mankind, and hast made thee a name as at this day. Thou didst bring thy people Israel out of the land of Egypt with signs and wonders, with a strong hand and outstretched arm, and with great terror; and thou gavest them this land which thou didst swear to their fathers to give them, a land flowing with milk and honey; and they entered and took possession of it. (32:17-22)

The date was 588 BC, when Jerusalem was under seige, and Jeremiah who was in prison had just bought a field in enemy occupied territory - something like purchasing a holiday cottage at Dunkirk in World War II ! His faith rises to the occasion as his mind opens to the greatness of God revealed in creation and the Exodus. "Nothing is too hard for thee", confesses the prophet.

This prayer is denied to Jeremiah by Hyatt for the following reasons: 1) 'the prayer is largely irrelevant to the situation' 11) it is 'more like a prayer for use in a public service of worship by a group rather than the

prayer of an individual' iii) 'the terminology and ideas are Deuteronomic'.¹ These objections do not seem to be overwhelming. Firstly, we cannot agree that the prayer is irrelevant. With the land overrun by an enemy, faith in the sovereignty of Yahweh which came to the prophet through meditating on the wonders of the Exodus appears highly relevant. All human odds were weighted against the move of purchasing the field in Anathoth. Therefore the conviction that 'nothing is too hard for thee' was relevant, and must have had some basis. The basis of the prophet's conviction lay in past revelation - the miracles of the Exodus. Secondly, Jeremiah was of priestly family, and thus it would not be strange for his prayers to echo the language of public worship. He was well aware of the Deuteronomic standard and this is reflected in many other parts of the prophecy which are reckoned as genuine. Since the standard stated that punishment would follow disobedience to the covenant, and Jeremiah had unceasingly predicted that Judah's disobedience would lead to her destruction, what could be more natural than that he should recall the Deuteronomic standard and interpret the enemy's presence outside the walls of the city according to it? Finally, verses 26-27 are held to be genuine - "The word of Yahwēh came to Jeremiah; Behold I am Yahweh the God of all flesh; is anything too hard for me?". But this only repeats the central thought of the prayer - "Nothing is too hard for thee!". If we may not affirm this prayer to be Jeremiah's categorically, it is undeniable that the creation and the Exodus were part of his theology, and therefore the prayer is quite consistent with the rest of the prophecy.

¹JP.Hyatt: Jeremiah, IB, p.1046.

ii. Chapter 2:1-6.

Jeremiah used the Exodus to highlight Judah's sin speaking in the betrothal metaphor of which Hosea was so fond.

The word of Yahweh came to me, saying, "Go and proclaim in the hearing of Jerusalem, Thus says Yahweh,

I remember the devotion of your youth
your love as a bride,
how you followed me in the wilderness,
in a land not sown. (2:1-2)

What wrong did your fathers find in me
that they went far from me,
and went after worthlessness?
They did not say, 'Where is the LORD
who brought us up from the land of Egypt,
who led us in the wilderness (2:5-6)

It seems likely Hosea is the source of this imagery for there are a number of verbal echoes, and close affinities of thought. Thus v.32 speaks of Israel as a bride; 3:20 describes her as a 'faithless wife'; and later Yahweh is pictured as a Father with His child Israel, 'my first-born' (31:9b). Jeremiah, then, shares Hosea's estimate of contemporary religion as unfaithfulness to the origins of the nation, to its election, and to God's fatherly love made known in the Exodus.

iii. Chapter 34:12-16.

That Jeremiah held to the Deuteronomic theology concerning slaves may be seen in the narrative describing events in Jerusalem during the siege. A moment of national sentiment led to the release of all Hebrew slaves. 'King Zedekiah made a covenant with all the people in Jerusalem to make a proclamation of liberty to them, that every one should free his Hebrew slaves, male and female, that no one should enslave a Jew, his brother' (34:8-9). To their shame, they did not abide by this compassionate agreement, which earned Jeremiah's caustic comment.

The word of the LORD came to Jeremiah from Yahweh: Thus says Yahweh, the God of Israel: I made a covenant with your fathers when I brought them out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage, saying, At the end of six years each of you must set free the fellow Hebrew who has been sold to you and has served you six years; you must set him free from your service. But your fathers did not listen to me or incline their ears to me. You recently repented and did what was right in my eyes ...but then you turned around and profaned my name... (34:12-16)

Behind the humanitarian move lay the Deuteronomic code which forbade the enslavement of Hebrews because Yahweh had freed the whole nation at the Exodus (Deut 15:15-25 cf. Lev 23:39-43, 25:52-55). No doubt seeing how easily the code was set aside and annulled by self-interest led Jeremiah to his understanding that "the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately corrupt" (17:9), and to hope for a new Covenant written on the heart.

iv. Chapter 11:3-8 and 7:21-26.

Before Jeremiah turned his attention to the hope of a new Covenant, he had apparently looked back to the Sinai covenant, and preached it with enthusiasm.

You shall say to them, Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: Cursed be the man who does not hear the words of this covenant which I commanded your fathers when I brought them out of the land of Egypt, from the iron furnace, saying, Listen to my voice and do all that I commanded you. So shall you be my people, and I will be your God...

For I solemnly warned your fathers when I brought them up out of the land of Egypt...yet they did not obey or incline their ear, but everyone walked in the stubbornness of his heart. (11:-34,7-8)

This covenant was broken in two ways, both flagrantly and by a divorce of the external forms of worship from the reality of inward communion. Jeremiah fought this externalism with denunciation and a positive interpretation of the covenant as demanding a spiritual participation not won by birth alone but by integrity of heart. This he put into terms of inward circumcision - "Circumcise yourselves to Yahweh, remove the foreskin of your hearts, O men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem" (4:4). An elaborate sacrificial system was not important at the time of Israel's origin.

For in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, I did not speak to your fathers or command them concerning burnt offerings and sacrifices.But from the day that your fathers came out of the land of Egypt to this day, I have persistently sent all my servants the prophets to them, day after day; yet they did not listen to me, or incline their ear, but stiffened their neck. They did worse than their fathers. (7:21-26)

This commentary on the Exodus is probably best read in the mood of "The Temple of Yahweh, the Temple of Yahweh, the Temple of Yahweh", and "Away with the Ark!", as an extreme denunciation of externalism rather than a plain historical statement about the sacrificial system at the time of the Exodus.

v. Chapter 31:31-34.

Disillusionment with the old covenant brought Jeremiah to see that there would have to be a New Covenant which gripped the heart in a way that the Sinai covenant apparently had not done.

Behold, the days are coming, says Yahweh, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, not like the covenant which I made with their fathers when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant which they broke, though I was their husband, says the LORD. But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put my law within them and I will write it upon their hearts; and I will be their God and they shall be my people. And no longer shall each man teach his neighbour and each his brother, saying, Know the LORD, for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the LORD; for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more. (31:31-34)

It is interesting to see the development in Jeremiah's thinking which we have traced from his reference to the Exodus period as an ideal of devotion(hesed) to Yahweh(2:2), passing through a period when he preached the consequences of disobedience to that covenant, until he turns from the 'covenant which Yahweh made with the fathers when he brought them out of the land of Egypt' to look for a New Covenant.

Long before Paul expounded the inadequacy of man to be justified by works of the law, and so enter into a

right relationship with God through merit, Jeremiah had seen the need for inward regeneration, spiritual, of the heart, which somehow would prevent the covenant relationship from degenerating into an external code with an external cult.

Paul, like Jeremiah, affirmed that "he is not a real Jew who is one outwardly, nor is true circumcision something external and physical. He is a Jew who is one inwardly, and real circumcision is a matter of the heart, spiritual and not literal"(Rom 2:28-29). Like Jeremiah, Paul agreed that 'the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately corrupt'(Jer 17:9-10 cf. Rom 3:9-20). But the forgiveness which Jeremiah foretold ('I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more' - 31:34) has become a reality through the atoning death of Christ. The work of the Holy Spirit within the believer revealing to him the full and final revelation of God in Christ makes this reconciled relationship one of knowledge('they shall all know me' - 31:34). The Spirit also writes God's law upon the believer's heart producing obedience and right living. Thus Paul speaks of "a new covenant, not in a written code but in the Spirit; for the written code kills but the Spirit gives life"(2 Cor 3:6).

There are three steps - the Exodus and the Sinai covenant; Jeremiah's perception of the inadequacy of this old covenant, and his hope for a New Covenant; and the inauguration of the New Covenant with the coming of Jesus Christ. It is perhaps no accident that the Christ-like Jeremiah should have heralded the New Covenant. He was despised and rejected - "But I was like a gentle lamb led to the slaughter"(Jer 11:19). He rejected the external cultus which had no ear for the word of Yahweh, and predicted the sweeping away of Temple and Ark, just as Jesus foretold the destruction of the Temple(John 2:19; Mark 13:2 etc.), because He himself was God in their midst, and communion with the Father was through Him.

vi. Chapter 16:14 and 23:5-7.

If the Exodus and its covenant were used in Jeremiah's teaching of a New Covenant, his prophecy of restoration used the Exodus motif too. Jeremiah was by no means a prophet of doom only. Chapters 30 and 31 are full of pictures of renewal whose elements have much in common with Hosea and II Isaiah. There is the Davidic theology: "they shall serve Yahweh their God and David their king, whom I will raise up for them"(Jer 30:9 cf. Hos 3:5). There is the Hosean understanding of covenant love: "I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore have I continued my faithfulness to you...for I am a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my first-born"(Jer 31:3,9b). There is Isaiah's doctrine of the remnant: "Yahweh has saved his people, the remnant of Jacob"(Jer 31:7). There is the shepherd imagery of Micah: "He who scattered Israel will gather him, and will keep him as a shepherd keeps his flock"(Jer 31:10). There are also the songs and joy of the returning exiles so characteristic of II Isaiah. Jeremiah's picture includes all these images, and with them combines Exodus imagery.

Therefore, behold the days are coming, says the LORD, when it shall no longer be said, "As the LORD lives who brought up the people of Israel out of Egypt", but "As the LORD lives who brought up the people of Israel out of the north country and out of all the countries where he had driven them". For I will bring them back to their own land which I gave to their fathers. (Jer 16:14)

This is later reiterated and linked to the theology of the Branch -

Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In his days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell securely. And this is the name by which he will be called: Yahweh our righteousness. Therefore behold the days are coming, says the LORD, when shall no longer say, "As the LORD lives who brought up the people of Israel out of the land of Egypt", but, "As the LORD lives who brought up and led the descendants of the house of Israel out of the north country and out of all the countries where he had driven them". Then they shall dwell in their own land. (23:5-7)

These verses have been regarded as a post-exilic addition, but there appears to be no overwhelming reason for accepting this judgement. The picture is of a Davidic Messiah reigning over a people gathered from exile. Very likely there is a play on Zedekiah's name -

יְדִידָא נֶמֶץ : a righteous Branch.

יְהוֹדָא : Zedekiah; righteousness of Yahweh.

יְהוֹדָא הוּא : Yahweh our righteousness.

Jeremiah is saying that great as the Exodus was, it will not compare with Yahweh's future work, so that whereas Yahweh was formerly known as the redeeming-out-of-Egypt-God, He will now be called the redeeming-from-exile-God.

The Exodus theme in Jeremiah falls into two parts. The first, which appears to have come in the earlier in his ministry, was a period when he looked back to the Exodus as an ideal in the history of Israel, referring to it as the time of "the devotion(hesed) of Israel's youth". During this period he preached and upheld the Exodus covenant. We may call it the Exodus covenant rather than the Sinai covenant, for this is the association which Jeremiah gives it, since he links the old covenant to the Exodus itself rather than seeing it as a later development in the course of the wilderness wanderings. The Exodus and the covenant are inextricably interlocked in a true interpretation of Israel's history. For a time, then, Jeremiah looked back to the Exodus.

Gradually his prophetic gaze turned from the past to look ahead into the future. Probably this was influenced by the failure of Josiah's reform to re-create that living relationship with Yahweh of the Exodus drama. The Passover was revived on a grand scale, to be sure, but the reality of God's presence among the people did not compare with His dynamic activity at the Exodus. Soon the heart-obedience

which the Law Book spoke of was forgotten, and the people returned to a cultic life which was elaborate but which cost nothing morally or spiritually. Dissatisfied, Jeremiah looked to a New Covenant with an accompanying new Exodus.

The Exodus in the Exilic Prophets.

I

Ezekiel.

Ezekiel was a priest, the son of a priest, born in 622 BC, and thus some twenty or more years younger than Jeremiah, and an infant in arms when Josiah's reformation was under way. When he was twenty-five years old, he was deported with king Jehoiachin to Babylon in 597 BC, and lived in the community of Tel-Abib on the banks of the river Chebar. About five years later, he saw an astounding vision of Yahweh surrounded with glory and seated on a throne which moved through the air with wheels revolving within wheels, and living creatures in attendance. He was filled with the Spirit of Yahweh, given a scroll to consume and appointed as a watchman for the house of Israel. His call in this strange symbolic vision sets the pattern for the rest of the book.

There have been many attempts at a psychological analysis of this unusual prophet, but these miss the mark. God works through His agents the prophets by using the personalities which He has formed especially to receive the revelation He wishes to give. Albright rightly remarks - "a certain 'abnormality' is required to divert a man's thoughts and his emotional experiences from the common treadmill of human thinking and feeling".¹

Ezekiel's use of the Exodus theme is confined to two chapters, but in these it receives a full exposition.

¹Albright: op.cit. p. 248f.

1. Chapter 20.

On the first of September, 590 BC, 'certain of the elders of Israel came to inquire of the LORD'. They were met with a rebuffal. We do not know what their question was, but perhaps it concerned the worship of Yahweh in a foreign land. The reply was as follows -

Thus says the LORD to Yahweh: On the day when I chose Israel, I swore to the seed of the house of Jacob, making myself known to them in the land of Egypt, I swore to them saying, I am Yahweh your God. On that day I swore to them that I would bring them out of the land of Egypt into a land that I had searched out for them, a land flowing with milk and honey, the most glorious of all lands. And I said to them, Cast away the detestable things your eyes feed on, every one of you, and do not defile yourselves with the idols of Egypt; I am Yahweh your God. But they rebelled against me, and would not listen to me...nor did they forsake the idols of Egypt. (Ezek 20:5-8)

Before we continue the quotation there are several points to note. Firstly, this passage asserts that God revealed Himself to Israel and chose them at the Exodus period, swearing by Himself (for He could swear by no greater - cf. Amos 6:8, 4:2: 'The Lord GOD has sworn by himself; the Lord GOD has sworn by his holiness') that He would bring them out of Egypt and give them the promised land. But in the very time of God's revelation and election, the people adhered to their idolatry. This is Ezekiel's theme - Israel's history is the story of continual disobedience. He continues...

Then I thought that I would pour out my wrath upon them and spend my anger against them in the midst of the land of Egypt. But I acted for the sake of my name that it should not be profaned in the sight of the nations among whom they dwelt, in whose sight I made myself known to them in bringing them out of the land of Egypt. So I led them out of the land of Egypt, and brought them into the wilderness. I gave them my statutes and showed them my ordinances by whose observance man shall live. (26:8b-11)

Ezekiel is quite clear that the Exodus took place, not because of the outstanding qualities of Israel, and despite their idolatry, because God had sworn by Himself and bound Himself to them with the covenant words: 'I am Yahweh'.

He acted thereafter to safeguard His name, lest it be dishonoured in the destruction of Israel which His wrath would cause. Instead of destroying them, He acted 'for his name's sake' (cf. Psa 106:8, Isa 43:25, 48:9, Jer 14:7, 21). Unbroken disobedience and suspended judgement provide the key to Israel's fortunes according to Ezekiel. But this is not the last word. Ezekiel has more to tell.

There will be a new Exodus, a new 'entering into judgement' -

As I live says the Lord GOD surely with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm and wrath poured out I will be king over you. I will bring you out from the peoples and gather you from the countries where you are scattered, with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, and with wrath poured out; and I will bring you into the wilderness of the peoples, and there I will enter into judgement with you face to face. As I entered into judgement with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so I will enter into judgement with you....

I will manifest my holiness among you in the sight of the nations. And you shall know that I am Yahweh, when I bring you into the land of Israel, the country which I swore to give to your fathers. (20:33-36, 42)

This is an Exodus to judgement, judgement being expressed in terms of the law-court, and the dialogue between the accused and the Prosecutor, when Israel would appear before her Judge 'face to face'. It would be a time of purging, for all the exiles would be assembled in the wilderness prior to re-entry into the promised land, but not all would enter. "I will make you pass under the rod...I will purge out the rebels from among you, and those who transgress against me; I will bring them out of the land where they sojourn, but they shall not enter the land of Israel" (vv. 37-8). Ezekiel, the priest, uses terms from the practice of sacrifice to picture God's acceptance of this purged remnant - "As a pleasing odour I will accept you" (v. 41). His affirmation of the holiness of God is not lacking - "I will manifest my holiness among you in the sight of the nations" (v. 41b). Yahweh will be vindicated, feared by Israel, and held in awe by the Gentiles. Ezekiel's God

is not One who can be lightly set aside. He is a living God, and a holy God. There is something threatening about the phrase - "I will be king over you" - in this context, unlike other passages in the prophetic writings where Yahweh's kingly rule is a source of comfort and security. Ezekiel recaptures some of the numinous and the danger of Yahweh's presence, just as there was at Mount Sinai when the people were warned not to draw near, lest God break forth against them. This new Exodus would be no less awesome.

11. Chapter 23.

Some of the Israelites shook their heads at Ezekiel and went away. He turned to God - "Ah, Lord GOD ! they are saying of me, 'Is he not a maker of allegories ?' ". We now turn to one of these allegories, a notable passage in the Old Testament, not written according to our canons of taste, but extremely effective.

Samaria and Jerusalem are represented as two harlots called Cholah and Oholibah,¹ whose evil ways began in their youth in Egypt -

they played the harlot in Egypt; they played the harlot in their youth; there their breasts were pressed and their virgin bosoms handled. (23:3)

This refers to the religious syncretism which Ezekiel had already described in plain language, as we have just seen. In the figure, Israel was officially betrothed to Yahweh at the Exodus - "they became mine and bore sons and daughters" (v.4), but their devotion never came up to the standard of bridal faithfulness -

She (Cholah: ie. Samaria) did not give up her harlotry which she had practised since her days in Egypt; for in her youth men had lain with her and handled her virgin bosom and poured out their lust upon her. (23:8)

The unfaithfulness referred to here has changed from a metaphor for idolatry, and represents political alliance with Assyria, for which Samaria was punished by being

¹their names are not of significance, unless 'tent' refers to booths set up on high places for sacred prostitution.

ravaged by her so-called lover. Her sister, Jerusalem, observed all this, but showed herself more perfidious even than her sister. Like the sin of Samaria, the infidelity of the Southern kingdom is traced back to the character traits of her youth, already discernable in Egypt -

Yet she increased her harlotry, remembering the days of her youth, when she played the harlot in the land of Egypt, and doted upon her paramours there, whose members were like those of asses, and whose issue was like that of horses. Thus you longed for the lewdness of your youth when the Egyptians handled your bosom and pressed your young breasts.(23:19-21)

As far as Ezekiel is concerned, the Exodus was a change of address but not of heart. Nowhere else is the Exodus reduced to such an ineffectual and worthless operation. Ezekiel is not considering it here from the point of view as a revelation of God, of course, but from the point of view of the effect which it should, but did not have, upon the people who experienced it. After this indictment, there was nothing further to say except to draw the logical conclusion that Jerusalem would be handed over to her lovers so that she might discover how they treated her, and possibly be purged by it.

Thus I will put an end to your lewdness and your harlotry brought from the land of Egypt; so that you shall not lift up your eyes to the Egyptians or remember them any more.(23:27)

The Southern kingdom had been looking to Egyptian aid against the Assyrians and the Babylonians. But "Rahab who sits still" consisted of men and not God, her horses were flesh and not spirit, and her help was worthless. Ezekiel looked to a new Exodus, an exodus to judgement and purgation rather than the occasion of rejoicing and the blossoming of the desert like a rose.

II

II Isaiah.

Döderlein(1775) and Eichhorn(1780) did the most significant work in popularising the hypothesis that chapters 40-66 were not written by Isaiah of Jerusalem. Since then, a vast literature has accumulated dealing with the problem, and especially with the Servant poems which are found in these chapters. To give even an outline of the arguments which are led from the historical background reflected in the book, the language, literary style and form, and the theological ideas of chapters 40-66 to distinguish them from the first half of the book would lead us too far from our theme, namely, the Exodus motif and theology. We must therefore assume what is held by the majority of Old Testament scholars: chapters 40-55 come from the middle of the sixth century towards the end of the Babylonian exile, and are allotted to an anonymous hand, sometimes thought of as an individual, and sometimes as a school of disciples of the Isaimic tradition, and generally called Deutero-Isaiah.

II Isaiah begins(40:3-5) and ends(55:12-13) with the New Exodus. Professor James Muilenberg has rightly said - "The conception of the new exodus is the most profound and most prominent of the motifs in the tradition which Second Isaiah employs to portray the eschatological finale".¹ As we have seen, the Exodus tradition is not absent from Proto-Isaiah, but in II Isaiah it is transformed into a poetic eschatology describing the immanence of a great divine event, an intervention of Yahweh which is to mark the decisive end of the age. While the Exodus supplies the recurrent imagery, it is not alone, but interwoven with other themes such as the Servant and Israel's mission, the covenant with David, and the kingly rule of Yahweh who alone is God, and who is described as the Holy One of Israel,

¹J.Muilenberg: II Isaiah, IB, vol.5, p.602.

²op.cit. p.401.

the Creator, the Redeemer, the Judge, King, Saviour, Comforter and Teacher. One stream of thought flows into the next on the way to the ocean, the goal of history and the revelation of the glory of God to all flesh. For example, one of the themes, Redemption, channels together several others, including the New Exodus. To quote Muilenberg again -

It is perhaps not too much to say that the whole eschatological event associated with Yahweh's coming, or the events preliminary to his advent, are included in redemption.¹

To show this more clearly, we may set it out in point form -

Events in II Isaiah's Doctrine of Redemption.

- a. Release from bondage; a counterpart to the release from Egypt. (43:5-7, 45:13, 48:20, 49:9,11,14, 52:2-3, 55:12-13)
- b. Judgement upon Israel's enemies.
(41:11-13, 49:25-26, 51:23)
- c. Return home to Palestine.
(40:9-10, 43:20, 49:11, 51:11, 55:12-13)
- d. Rebuilding Jerusalem.
(44:26, 45:13, 49:16-17, 51:3, 52:9)
- e. Restoration of the holy city.
(52:1, 54:11-12)
- f. Restoration of the land; a counterpart to the gift of the land. (44:26, 49:8,19)
- g. The conversion of the nations.
(45:20-23, 51:4-5 cf.49:6)

Here the New Exodus leads on the rebuilding of Jerusalem, the revelation of Yahweh's glory there, and the submission of all the nations. It will not be possible to deal with the subsidiary themes as fully as with the New Exodus, but where there is a fundamental connection we shall draw it out.

First, we shall consider the passages in which the New Exodus is most clearly delineated, and then move from them to the passages where the underlying Exodus motif is less obvious because it is interwoven with other themes. Finally, we must weigh the more difficult issues, such as

¹ op.cit. p.401.

the interrelation, if any, between the New Exodus and the Servant, and the New Exodus and the outpouring of the Spirit. It will prove helpful to have a complete list of passages with an outline of their content before we begin. This reads as follows -

- | | |
|----------|--|
| 35:1-10 | - the blossoming of the desert; the rejoicing of the blind, deaf, dumb and lame; the Holy Way to Zion; the song and journey of the redeemed. |
| 40:3-5 | - a way in the wilderness. |
| 41:17-20 | - water in the wilderness. |
| 42:7 | - captives set free by the Servant. |
| 42:14-17 | - a way for the blind. |
| 43:1-7 | - redemption and ingathering. |
| 43:14-21 | - overthrow of the enemy. |
| 44:3 | - water and the Spirit. |
| 48:20-21 | - exodus from Babylon. |
| 49:8-11 | - the Servant leads a new exodus. |
| 49:24-26 | - deliverance from oppression. |
| 50:2-3 | - God is able to save. |
| 51:9-11 | - creation myth and exodus. |
| 51:12-16 | - comfort from the oppressor. |
| 52:3-6 | - the revelation of Yahweh's name. |
| 52:7-10 | - God reigns in Zion; depart in peace. |
| 55:12-13 | - joy in nature. |

1. The New Exodus.

We shall begin by examining 43:14-21 which is a clear prediction of an end to the Babylonian captivity. The passage forms the first four strophes of nine which run from 43:14 to 44:5, and which have as their theme Redemption by Grace. The clue to the message which the prophet proclaimed is given in vv.18-19: "Remember not the former things, nor consider the things of old. Behold I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it ?" . In this instance, the 'former things' are the events of the Exodus. Sometimes they are the patriarchal times, or of Noah, or of Eden, but pre-eminently they refer to the first great act of redemption. This announcement is made in controversy with the idols of the nations. Israel is called to stand witness to Yahweh, who issues the challenge - "Who among the nations can declare this, and show us the

the former things ? Let them bring forth their witnesses to justify them"(43:9). Israel is designated as Yahweh's witness and chosen servant(v.10), because her Exodus experience enables her to proclaim God's former acts: "Have I not told you from of old and declared it ? And you are my witnesses!"(v8). The question is thrown out - "Is there a God besides me ?", and the reply given - "There is no Rock; I know not any. There is no other god besides me, a righteous God and a Saviour; there is none besides me"(45:21). This statement of God's sovereignty is made in order to assert that the New Exodus would be His work. The prophet does not hesitate to use the argument from prophecy to support his doctrine of God's sovereignty: "I am God, and there is no other...declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times things not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all my purpose"(46:9-10). God was concerned to announce the New Exodus before it took place that it might be seen as His act, planned and brought about according to His purpose. This the prophet stresses time and again, and this is the background of the New Exodus. We may quote one final passage in support -

The former things I declared of old,
they went forth from my mouth
and I made them known;
then suddenly I did them
and they came to pass.

From this time forth I make you hear new things
hidden things which you have not known.
They are created now, not long ago;
before today you have never heard of them,
lest you should say, 'Behold I knew them'.
You have never heard, you have never known,
from of old your ear has not been opened.
(48:3,6-8)

With this prologue, the prophet then begins to unfold the new thing which Yahweh was about to do, and the first part of the programme was bringing an end to the captivity in Babylon.

Thus says Yahweh, your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel;
For your sake I will send to Babylon,
and break down all the bars,
and the shouting of the Chaldeans
will be turned to lamentations.
I am Yahweh your Holy One, the Creator
of Israel, your King.
Thus says Yahweh,
who makes a way in the sea,
a path in the mighty waters,
who brings forth chariot and horse,
army and warrior;
they lie down, they cannot rise,
they are extinguished, quenched like a wick:
Remember not the former things,
nor consider the things of old.
Now I am doing a new thing;
now it springs forth,
do you not perceive it ?
I will make a way in the wilderness
and rivers in the desert.
The wild beasts will honour me,
the jackals and the ostriches;
for I give water in the wilderness
and rivers in the desert,
to give drink to my chosen people,
the people whom I formed for myself
that they might declare my praise. (Isa 43:14-21)

First, there are the titles of Yahweh which unfold His character in relation to the New Exodus. He is the 'Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; the Creator of Israel, your King'(vv.15). Each of these phrases conveys a wealth of meaning, and their combination and order is not accidental. The first pair occurs six times in chapters 40-55, each in a passage of great import; in fact, Second Isaiah uses the word of Yahweh more often than all the other writers of the Old Testament. The epithet 'Holy One' is characteristic of the Isaianic corpus, and it is particularly apt when linked with 'Redeemer', for it reveals the way in which Israel knew God. It was through the Exodus, the call of Moses, the destruction of Pharaoh, and the theophany of Sinai, that Yahweh was known as a holy God. To the epithets 'Redeemer' and 'Holy One' are added two more - 'Creator of Israel' and 'King'. Creation on a cosmic scale is a recurring theme in II Isaiah, as well as the individual relation of a man to his Maker, and of the nation to her Creator. Israel was created at the Exodus; the New Exodus was to be part of a new creation, the rejuvenation of nature at the end time. We shall return to this theme when considering 51:9-11.

The kingly reign of Yahweh is often expressed too in connection with the good news of the New Exodus. "How beautiful upon the mountains", exclaims the prophet, "are the feet of him who brings good tidings, who publishes peace, who brings good tidings of good, who publishes salvation, who says to Zion, 'Your God reigns' " (52:7). The New Exodus was to issue in the kingdom of God.

The prophet goes on to tell of the overthrow of the Babylonian captors: "they lie down, they cannot rise" (43:17) - they are out for the count, we might say; "Extinguished, quenched like a wick" - this is one of II Isaiah's favourite similies. From Babylon there stretches a way back to Zion. Just as the rock was smitten by Moses at Rephidim, so on the New Exodus Yahweh will "make rivers in the desert.. to give drink to my chosen people whom I formed for myself" (v20). We see, then, that with this picture of the overthrow of Israel's captor go many of the poetic themes - redemption, creation, the reign of Yahweh, the way through the wilderness, rivers of water in the desert and so on, and from this we may conclude that where these themes occur without specific mention of the New Exodus that it is nevertheless the underlying thought in the prophet's mind.

A similar passage is found in chapter 48, where the escape from Babylon is transported into an eschatological picture of redemption -

Go forth from Babylon, flee from Chaldea,
declare this with a shout of joy,
proclaim it,
send it forth to the end of the earth:
say, 'Yahweh has redeemed his servant Jacob !'
They thirsted not when he led them
through the deserts;
he made water flow for them from the rock;
he cleft the rock and water gushed out. (48:20-21)

There are certain features which will distinguish this Exodus from Babylon from that of former times, for there was to be no hint of flight about it, but rather the atmosphere of a triumphal march.

Depart, depart, go out thence,
touch no unclean thing;
go out from the midst of her,
purify yourselves
you who bear the vessels of Yahweh.
For you shall not go out in haste,
and you shall not go in flight,
for Yahweh will go before you,
and the God of Israel
will be your rearguard. (52:11-12)

This will happen 'when Yahweh has comforted his people, and redeemed Jerusalem'(v.10), and will be a great revelation of His power to all the world - 'Yahweh has bared his holy arm before the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God'(v.10). Thus the New Exodus will transcend the old because it will be a revelation not only to Israel, but this time to all nations. Nor will Israel leave in haste as they did on the Passover night; neither will they need the treasures of Egypt as when they despoiled the Egyptians, for they are commanded - 'touch no unclean thing'. Just as Yahweh was their guard in the pillar of cloud and fire, so in the New Exodus He will lead them and guard their rear.

Even the captives of the mighty shall be taken,
and the prey of the tyrant be rescued,
for I will contend with those who contend with you
and I will save your children,
I will make your oppressors eat their own flesh,
and they shall be drunk with their own blood
as with wine.
Then all flesh shall know
that I am Yahweh your Saviour
and your Redeemer,
the Mighty One of Jacob. (49:25-26)

This passage forms the conclusion to an exposition of the work of the Servant followed by a prophecy of the rebuilding of Zion. We shall return to the Servant subsequently to consider his part in the programme. The 'prophet puts a proverb in the mouth of Yahweh - "Can a woman forget her sucking child ?"(v.15) - a rhetorical question which demands the answer, 'No!'. But, says Yahweh, even if this unnatural thing were to happen, it is beyond the bounds of possibility to forget Zion. Zion is graven on the palms of His hands. Picturing the walls of the city in ruins in his mind's eye,

the prophet assures his hearers that Zion's builders will outstrip her destroyers. This leads on to a prediction of the return from the Diaspora, but on a royal scale, for the sons and daughters of Zion will be carried home by kings and suckled by queens who would bow down and lick the dust at their feet. The passage which we have set out above concludes the section on a high note. Perhaps the most forceful poetry of the Old Testament is found in taunt songs and war songs - the book of Nahum, for example, which is unsurpassed in its vivid portrayal of the sacking and razing of a great city. Here too we have the combination of religious and national fervour. Muilenberg comments aptly - "The excessive fury of the passage reflects the passionate hatred of the Oriental. Whatever ethical judgement one may register, the poem comes to an end at a pitch of great intensity, yet not without a magnificent theocentric conclusion".¹ This climax is the New Exodus which was to reveal Yahweh as Saviour, Redeemer and Mighty One of Jacob.

The theme of comfort and deliverance from the oppressor is continued in chapter 51: 'I, I am he who comforts you', says Yahweh(v.12). Taking up themes of chapter 40, the prophet assures Zion that the Almighty Creator's comfort will banish fear of the cruelty of man who is but flesh - 'who are you that you are afraid of man who dies, of the son of man who is made like grass, and have forgotten Yahweh your Maker who stretched out the heavens ?'(vv.12-13). The cruelty of the oppressor is not denied - 'your tormentors have said to you, Bow down that we may pass over; and you have made your back like the ground and like the street for them to pass over'(v.23), but his is not the last word.

And where is the fury of the oppressor,
when he sets himself to destroy ?
He who is bowed down shall speedily be released;
he shall not die and go down to the Pit
neither shall his bread fail.
I am Yahweh your God
who stirs up the sea
so that its waves roar -
Yahweh of hosts is his name. (51:14-15)

¹op.cit. p.270

Lest the exiles should think that Yahweh was powerless in Babylon, and could not intervene, the prophet asserts that Yahweh was indeed able to save -

Is my hand shortened that it cannot redeem ?
Or have I no power to deliver ?
Behold, by my rebuke I dry up the sea,
I make the rivers a desert;
their fish stink for lack of water,
and die of thirst.
I clothe the heavens with blackness,
and make sackcloth their covering. (50:2-3)

These words obviously recall the plagues which smote Egypt, and the Red Sea crossing. The pattern of salvation for God's people, and destruction of His enemies is to be repeated.

Before we summarise the ground covered so far, there are a further two clear statements of the New Exodus worth noting. The prose insert of 52:3-6 surveys Israelite history and observes two milestones - bondage in Egypt, and bondage in Assyria.

For thus says the LORD Yahweh: my people went down at the first into Egypt to sojourn there, and the Assyrian oppressed them for nothing. (52:4)

But since they were 'sold for nothing' they would 'be redeemed without money' (v.3), and this redemption would be the occasion of a new revelation of the name of Yahweh - 'therefore my people shall know my name; therefore in that day they shall know that it is I who speak; here am I' (v.6). In this passage the New Exodus is thought of primarily as Redemption and Revelation, whereas the next passage deals with the re-creation and ingathering of Israel.

But now thus says Yahweh,
he who created you, O Jacob,
he who formed you, O Israel:
Fear not for I have redeemed you;
I have called you by my name,
you are mine.
When you pass through the waters
I will be with you;
and through the rivers,
they shall not overwhelm you;
(43:1-2)

For I am Yahweh your God,
the Holy One of Israel, your Saviour.
I give Egypt as your ransom,
Ethiopia and Seba in exchange for you.
Because you are precious in my eyes,
and honoured, and I love you,
I give men in return for you,
peoples in exchange for your life.
Fear not for I am with you;
I will bring your offspring from the East,
and from the West I will gather you;
I will say to the North, Give up,
and to the South, Do not withhold...
(43:3-6)

The metaphor used is of the ransom price paid by the nearest of kin to free his relative from slavery. God is the Redeemer who reclaims Israel from captivity with this difference that He gives other nations over to destruction in order to redeem His chosen nation, and does not transact the deal with money. When the nation passes through waters of affliction (v.2, which recalls the Red Sea crossing), God promises to be with her. He will re-create Israel by gathering her from the Diaspora (vv.5-6). The passage illustrates the truth of Mullenberg's remark that redemption includes all the events of the end time and Yahweh's intervention.

So far we have observed the following aspects of II Isaiah's treatment of the New Exodus theme. Firstly, it is a New Thing which will surpass the first Exodus so that it will be the occasion when the glory of Yahweh will be revealed to all flesh. It spells an end to captivity. God will act in it as Redeemer, Holy One, Creator and King. The oppressing enemy will be overthrown, and Israel will depart from Babylon under the guard of her Saviour and Mighty One, while plagues will fall upon her foes. The destiny of this New Exodus is Zion rebuilt, and with Yahweh's presence in her midst restored. All of the dispersed Jewish race will be gathered in, and the Gentile powers will become its servants.

ii. Creation.

With the general outline of the New Exodus established, we may now look at one of the most striking uses of the Exodus motif in II Isaiah in which he boldly makes use of a foreign myth to create his poetic effect.

Awake, awake, put on strength,
O arm of Yahweh;
awake as in days of old,
the generations of long ago.
Was it not thou that didst cut Rahab in pieces ?
that didst pierce the dragon ?
Was it not thou that didst dry up the sea,
the waters of the great deep;
That did make the depths of the sea a way
for the redeemed to pass over ?
And the ransomed of the LORD shall return,
and come to Zion with singing,
everlasting joy shall be upon their heads;
they shall obtain joy and gladness,
and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.
(51:9-11)

Throughout the ancient East there was a myth of a battle fought between a chaos-monster and a god of which the best known is the Akkadian version known as *Enûma Elish*, the first two words of this epic being used as the title, in which Marduk slays Tiamat, the great dragon, and out of her two halves forms the heaven and the earth. In the Canaanite version recently uncovered at Ras Shamra, it is a battle between Baal and the Sea (*yam*). In our passage the monster is called Rahab, which possibly has etymological links with the Akkadian *ra'abbu*, the Rager. In the Old Testament, Rahab is used of Egypt, the classical example of this being found in Isaiah 30:7 - "Egypt's help is worthless and empty, therefore I have called her 'Rahab who sits still'". The monster is further described as the Dragon (𐤓𐤁𐤏𐤍), the Sea (𐤓𐤁𐤏) and the Great Deep (𐤓𐤁𐤏𐤍 𐤓𐤁𐤏𐤍). By a play on ideas, the prophet identifies the defeat of this monster with the crossing of the Red Sea. The myth is thus historicised, brought from the primordial into the time of Israel's national origin, her creation as God's people. God's action in creation, at the Exodus, and in the end time is the same. It is one of victory over all opposed to Him, and of creation, here the forming of the redeemed community. Joined to the imagery drawn from foreign myth is the very

Hebrew metaphor of the way (דִּלְגָּה דִּלְגָּה) which occurs throughout chapters 40-55. Compare also 35:8-10...

And a highway shall be there,
and it shall be called the Holy Way;
the unclean shall not pass over it,
and fools shall not err therein,

but the redeemed shall walk there
And the ransomed of the LORD shall return,
and come to Zion with singing;
everlasting joy shall be upon their heads;
they shall obtain joy and gladness,
and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

In both instances, it is a narrow way in the sense that it is for the holy, the redeemed, the ransomed who are a joyful people, for just as Miriam led Israel in a dance and song of thanksgiving beyond the Red Sea, so there is song and gladness at the New Exodus. In the New Testament, 'sorrow and sighing flee away at the eradication of evil and the coming of the New Jerusalem from heaven. Even nature is reborn and joins in thanksgiving to Yahweh - "the wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice with joy and singing" (35:1-2). This is the concluding picture of II Isaiah -

For you shall go out in joy,
and be led forth in peace;
the mountains and hills before you
shall break forth into singing,
and all the trees of the field
shall clap their hands.
Instead of the thorn
shall come up the cypress;
instead of the briar
shall come up the myrtle;
it shall be to the LORD a memorial,
for an everlasting sign
which shall not be cut off. (55:12-13)

So we may add to the creation of the redeemed community the re-creation of nature. All these themes - victory over primordial chaos, the crossing of the Red Sea, the way of the redeemed to Zion, the songs of thanksgiving, and the rejuvenation of nature are woven together in the remarkable poem of 51:9-11. It reveals the strength of the prophetic faith for so sure was he that Yahweh alone was God from first to last that he could use a polytheistic myth to

illustrate his picture of God's new act, and at the same time claim Yahweh's sovereignty in creation. Pagan myth becomes poetic symbolism in the historical Hebrew religion: the Exodus as the prime event of Israel's history unseats the primeval account of foreign nations. Yahweh is known as Creator because He was Israel's Redeemer.

111. The Servant and the New Exodus.

Is there any relation between the New Exodus and the Servant ? The answer to this will be in the negative if with Duhm we decide that the Servant passages are intrusions into the text such that their deletion would not be noticed. But the onus rests with Duhm and his followers to prove conclusively that these passages - and he and his followers disagree on the exact extent of the poems - do not belong to II Isaiah's composition. Far from doing this, his arguments fail to discount the literary and theological relationships which a close examination reveals, and Muilenberg is able to set out a convincing set of parallels between the Servant Songs and the rest of II Isaiah in his excellent commentary.¹ These reveal close affinities of language, motifs and theology. The first step in analysing the relation of the New Exodus to the Servant may thus be taken, since we affirm with Muilenberg and many other leading scholars the integrity of the Servant passages with the rest of chapters 40-55.

The second point to note is the distinction between the Servant and the rest of Israel. The Servant is undoubtedly Israel in certain passages, for there is no justification for mutilation of the text in a verse such as 49:3 - "You are my servant, Israel, in whom I will be glorified". But equally clearly in other passages, the Servant is set over against the nation. His mission is to bring the nation back to Yahweh. This may be seen in the same chapter as the

¹ J. Muilenberg: II Isaiah, IB, vol 5, p.407.

as the verse referred to above: "And now says Yahweh, who formed me from the womb to be his servant, to bring Jacob back to him, and that Israel might be gathered to him(v5) ... It is too light a thing that you should be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to restore the preserved of Israel; I will give you as a light to the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth(v.6)". This distinction is well made by Fischer, and worth quoting in full:

The Servant of Yahweh and the servant Israel are also basically different in their character. The servant Israel is despondent and faint-hearted and must be admonished again and again to turn to trust in God(40:27, 41:8ff, 44:1-2,21 etc), the Servant of Yahweh overcomes momentary despair through unshakable trust in God(49:4, 50:7-9). The Servant of Yahweh is guiltless and sinless(50:5, 53:4-6,12), the servant Israel on the contrary is a sinner from birth(48:4, cf. 43:27). The suffering of the Servant of God is only explicable as suffering for the sins of others (53:4-6,9,11-12), the servant Israel suffers in exile for her own sins(42:18-25, 43:22-28, 47:6, 50:1, 54:7). The Servant of Yahweh suffers patiently(53:7), the servant Israel in discouragement(40:27, 49:14, 50:1-2); the Servant of Yahweh suffers voluntarily, he intercedes for sinners; the servant Israel suffers unwillingly and his enemies are to be avenged(41:11-12,15-16, 42:13-15 etc). To this basically different characterisation is to be added the fact that the Servant of the pericopes has an active mission to Israel... Finally, the Servant of Yahweh has a mission of suffering for Israel(52:13-53:12) and thus cannot be identical with Israel.¹

It is with the Servant in his individual capacity vis-à-vis Israel that we are concerned in analysing the relation between the Servant and the New Exodus. We need not concern ourselves further with the debate over the identity of the Servant about which a vast literature has sprung up.²

Having established the basic relationship between the Servant Songs and the remainder of their setting, and the the relationship between the Servant of Yahweh and the servant Israel, we may now look at the Servant and the New Exodus in detail.

The New Exodus may be described in one word as Redemption; we have noted this all along. But redemption

¹ J.Fischer: Das Buch Isaias; quoted in IB, p.408

² reviewed by H.H.Rowley: The Servant of Yahweh in the light of three decades of criticism,1952.

is also the work of the Servant. Just as the New Exodus will be a revelation of the glory of Yahweh to all flesh, so the Servant will be a light to the nations. The New Exodus is described as a New Thing in contrast to the Former Things; but the coming of the Servant and his mission is similarly described in the previous chapter: "Behold, the former things have come to pass, and new things I now declare; before they spring forth I tell you of them"(42:9). This statement concludes the first Servant Song of 4:1-9.

The effect of the Servant's work is the same as that of the New Exodus. This may be seen most clearly by comparing the relevant passages in tabular form.

The New Exodus.

I will lead the blind
in a way they know not,
in paths that they have not
known,
I will guide them.
I will turn the darkness
before them into light,
the rough places into
level ground.
(42:16)

Then the eyes of the blind
shall be opened,
and the ears of the deaf
unstopped;
then shall the lame man leap
a hart,
and the tongue of the dumb
sing for joy.
(35:5-6)

For your sake I will send
to Babylon
and break down all the
bars.
(43:14)

Even the captives of the
mighty
shall be taken,
and the prey of the
tyrant be rescued.
(49:25)

He who is bowed down shall
speedily be released;
he shall not die and go
down to the Pit
(51:14)

The Servant's Mission.

I have given you as a covenant to
the people,
a light to the nations
to open the eyes that are blind.

to bring out the prisoners from
the dungeon,
from the prison those who sit
in darkness.
(42:7)

saying to the prisoners, Come forth,
and to those who are in
darkness,
Appear
(49:9)

to proclaim liberty to the
captives,
and the opening of the prison
to those who are bound
(61:1)

The subjects of the New Exodus and the benefactors of the Servant's work are the same. The blind are given their sight; the dumb and deaf and lame rejoice; the captives are liberated; and the poor and needy are fed. Thus it is no surprise to find that the Servant is pictured as leading the New Exodus. It is, of course, the Servant vis-à-vis Israel, as will be clear from the passage below ...

Thus says Yahweh:

In a time of favour I have answered you,
in a day of salvation I have helped you;
I have kept you and given you
as a covenant to the people,
to establish the land,
to apportion the desolate heritages;
saying to the prisoners, Come forth,
to those who are in darkness, Appear.
They shall feed along the ways,
on all bare heights shall be their pasture;
they shall not hunger or thirst,
neither scorching wind nor sun shall smite them,
for he who has pity on them will lead them,
and by springs of water he will guide them.
And I will make all my mountains a way,
and my highways shall be raised up.
Lo, these shall come from afar,
and lo, these from the north and from the west,
and these from the land of Syene.

(49:8-12)

The 'you' of v.8 is the Servant. Thus 'I have given you... as a covenant to the people' takes up the theme of the previous strophe in v.6 - 'I will give you (ie. the Servant) as a light to the nations'. So also the 'you' of v.8 distinguishes the Servant from Israel, the nation. The imagery changes rapidly from prisons and chains to a flock of sheep grazing along mountain pastures. Once again the way of Yahweh, the Highway, stretches out leading homewards to Zion echoing previous chapters (35:8-10, 40:3-4 etc). Again there is joy and singing which is taken up by nature, 'for Yahweh has comforted his people, and will have compassion on his afflicted' (v.13). It is Redemption which draws together the New Exodus and the Servant. In the descriptions which are given of the New Exodus, it is the redeemed, the ransomed who tread the way to Zion (35:9-10, 43:1, 48:20, 51:10 etc). In chapter 53, we are shown how this redemption is to be won. It is by the various suffering of the Servant, wounded

for Israel's transgressions, bruised for her iniquities. When this basic unity in the plan of Redemption is understood, it will be seen that the two themes of the New Exodus and the Suffering Servant illuminate each other, and should be read together, just as they have been interwoven in II Isaiah.

iv. The New Exodus and the Spirit.

In most of the descriptions of the New Exodus, nature is rejuvenated, the arid desert burgeons, grass, flowers and trees spring up in the wilderness. Water is the elixir of life to the thirsty East, and in the New Exodus water bubbles out of the ground freely, and nature returns to her paradisaical state - 'Yahweh will comfort Zion...and will make her wilderness like Eden, her desert like the garden of the LORD' (51:3). Two examples of the opening of springs and streams will suffice to illustrate this motif -

For waters shall break forth in the wilderness
and streams in the desert;
the burning sand shall become a pool,
and the thirsty ground springs of water;
the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp,
the grass shall become reeds and rushes. (35:6b-7)

When the poor and needy seek water,
and there is none
and their tongue is parched with thirst,
I Yahweh will answer them,
I the God of Israel will not forsake them.
I will open rivers on the bare heights,
and fountains in the midst of valleys;
I will make the wilderness a pool of water,
and the dry land springs of water. (41:17-18)

The first passage describes a blessing upon nature, but the second is a little different in that it emphasises Yahweh's provision for His people and refers back to the wilderness wanderings of the first Exodus. This is seen more clearly in 48:21 -

They thirsted not when he led them through
the deserts;
he made water flow for them from the rock;
he cleft the rock and the water gushed out.

In the eschatology of II Isaiah, this life-giving water came to be associated with the outpouring of the Spirit

This may be seen in chapter 44 -

Fear not Jacob my servant,
Jeshurun whom I have chosen
For I will pour water on the thirsty land,
and streams on the dry ground;
I will pour my Spirit upon your descendants,
and my blessing on your offspring.
They shall spring up in among grass,
like willows by flowing streams. (44:3)

cf. until the Spirit is poured upon us from on high,
and the wilderness becomes a fruitful field
(32:15)

This outpouring of the Spirit was wished for by Moses (Num 11:29J), foreseen by Ezekiel in his vision of the valley of dry bones (Ezek 37), and placed within Joel's eschatology in conjunction with the blessing of rain and fruitfulness (Joel 2:23-29). In the New Testament, the apostle Peter identifies the outpouring at Pentecost as the fulfilment of these hopes for the gift of God's Spirit in the Old Testament.

In the Gospel of John, the celebration of the feast of Tabernacles is described. This feast commemorated the Exodus and wilderness experience, and on the last day water drawn from the pool of Siloam was poured out as the climax of the feast, recalling the gift of water in the desert. It was then that Jesus stood up and proclaimed, "If any one thirst, let him come to me and drink. He who believes in me, as the scripture has said, 'Out of his heart shall flow rivers of living water'". The writer adds, "now this he said about the Spirit which those who believed in him were to receive" (John 7:37-39). The Old Testament scriptures which Jesus referred to appear to have been Isaiah 55:1, 58:11 and 44:3 - the verse which identifies the outpouring of the Spirit with the rejuvenation of the wilderness, and so with the New Exodus.

This does not mean that there is an elaborately worked-out allegory in II Isaiah, whereby every reference to streams of water in the desert is to be identified as the gift of the Spirit of Yahweh. That would not be sound exegesis, but what we may say is that the symbolism of

rejuvenation accompanying the New Exodus lends itself to a development along spiritual lines. The re-birth and growth of withered nature is understood by the New Testament writers to illustrate the growth of the new life in Christ brought about by the work of the Holy Spirit. This is quite legitimate, since II Isaiah has himself drawn together the New Exodus, the living streams in the wilderness, and the outpouring of the Spirit(44:3).

Summary and Conclusion.

When we look back over II Isaiah's use of the New Exodus motif, we see that he has used it to illumine his doctrine of redemption. There are many echoes and parallels from the Egyptian Exodus: release from captivity; the mighty hand of Yahweh outstretched to intervene; the revelation of the Name; the threat of plagues; the overthrow of the oppressor; the protection of Yahweh like the pillar of cloud and fire as vanguard and rearguard; the songs of thanksgiving by those walking along the way to the promised land; the miraculous supply of food and water in the wilderness. But II Isaiah is describing a New Thing, not a repeat performance, and whatever parallels there are with the old Exodus, this act of redemption far surpasses the former. It is international in scope, revealing the glory of Yahweh to all flesh, and kings, queens and foreign powers join the ransomed as their servants.

It would be a mistake to suppose that II Isaiah was teaching a cyclical view of history. He has used the past to supply the colours for his canvas of the future. Anderson likens it to a movement in a symphony - "in II Isaiah's typology of the old Exodus and the new, there is a Steigerung or heightening, like the shift of music into a new key as it crescendoes to a climax".¹ His theology is not

¹GW.Anderson: Exodus Typology in Second Isaiah, p.190
essay in Israel's Prophetic Heritage, ed.Anderson

cyclical but linear: history has a goal, and running through it there is a pattern of redemption. The redeemed narrow down from the whole nation which came out of Egypt to a remnant before broadening out again to include many from all nations. What we have in the New Exodus is an eschatology, not a cyclical myth; an eschatology which sees that the intervention of Yahweh at the finale of world history will in some ways resemble His continuous activity in the world, the clearest example of which was the Exodus from Egypt. That II Isaiah did not think in terms of the cyclical view of history is apparent from his historicisation of the pagan creation myth of the defeat of the chaos-monster. Furthermore, II Isaiah's Exodus typology goes far beyond anything else in the Old Testament, including Hosea, because it is enriched by association with the teaching of redemption through the figure of the Servant, and also includes the gift of the Spirit in germ form.

Thus at the close of our analysis of the Exodus theme and theology in II Isaiah, we are able to draw together Muilenberg's two judgements, namely, that 'the New Exodus is the most profound and most prominent of the motifs in the tradition which II Isaiah employs to portray the eschatological finale',¹ and that all the eschatological events associated with the preliminaries and Yahweh's final intervention are included in Redemption. II Isaiah wishes to unfold God's plan of salvation, and to do so he uses the imagery of salvation from Egypt.

¹ op.cit.

The Exodus in the Post-exilic Prophets.

I

Trito-Isaiah.

In general scholars do not think of chapters 56-66 as written by a man dubbed Trito-Isaiah. Several hands are detected in the composition, and so these chapters are imagined to be the product of a school of II Isaiah's disciples composed during the period of the return from Exile and shortly thereafter. For example, a passage which envisages the entry of Jerusalem could have been written by one who was in the vanguard of the return, and was looking back to beckon others after him -

Go through, go through the gates
prepare the way for the people;
build up, build up the highway,
clear it of stones,
lift up an ensign over the peoples. (62:10)

The Exodus theme occurs at some length in what appears to be a prayer of intercession which begins at 63:7 and runs through to 64:12 in seven movements which are as follows -

- | | |
|----------|--|
| 63:7-10 | - the election of Israel and her subsequent judgement. |
| 63:11-14 | - the wonders of the Exodus recalled. |
| 63:15-16 | - the Fatherhood of Yahweh. |
| 63:17-19 | - a plea for Yahweh's return. |
| 64:1-5a | - a prayer for a new theophany. |
| 64:5b-7 | - a confession of guilt. |
| 64:8-12 | - final plea to look on the Temple in ruins. |

Apparently Jerusalem was in ruins when this was composed, and the Temple itself razed to the ground - 'Our holy and beautiful house where our fathers praised thee has been burned with fire'(v.11). In the face of the disaster, the prophet turns his attention to the goodness, mercy and steadfast love of Yahweh. The Exodus provides him with stability for it revealed Yahweh's character superlatively,

and Yahweh had not changed since then when...

In all their affliction he was afflicted
and the angel of his presence saved them;
in his love and in his pity he redeemed them;
he lifted them up and carried them all
the days of old. (63:9)

But after He had become their Saviour, the rebellion of the children of Israel grieved His Holy Spirit(v.10). This accounted for the judgement and exile. But now would not Yahweh again vindicate His name ?

Where is he who brought up out of the sea
the shepherds of his flock ?
Where is he who put in the midst of them
his holy Spirit,
who caused his glorious arm
to go at the right hand of Moses,
who divided the waters before them
to make for himself an everlasting name,
who led them through the depths ?

Like a horse in the desert
they did not stumble
Like cattle that go down into the valley
the Spirit of Yahweh gave them rest.
So thou didst lead thy people,
to make for thyself a glorious name.
(63:11-14)

Recalling the Exodus in this way assured the prophet once again of Yahweh's fatherly concern - "For thou art our Father, though Abraham does not know us and Israel does not acknowledge us; thou, O Yahweh, art our Father, our Redeemer from of old is thy name"(v.16).

We find that the Exodus theme in Trito-Isaiah has close affinities with several Psalms in which the Exodus is a means to faith in the face of the problem of suffering, and that it has hardly any future reference comparable to the eschatology of II Isaiah, though the prophet does pray for a theophany of Yahweh even greater than that of the Exodus-Sinai era.

II

Haggai.

There is little to detain us in this short book which stems from Jerusalem after the return from Exile during the reign of Darius I of Persia(522-486), and before the completion of the Temple. Haggai was endeavouring to encourage work on the rebuilding of the Temple for it had been begun with enthusiasm but the effort had petered out when the settlers devoted their time to their own properties. Haggai went to Zerubbabel, the governor and Joshua the high priest with this message -

Take courage all you people of the land, says Yahweh of hosts, according to the promise I made you when you came out of Egypt. My Spirit abides among you, fear not. (2:4-5)

The interest of the passage lies in the mention of the Spirit as characteristic of God's presence at the Exodus.. The theology of the Spirit of Yahweh had apparently developed during the Exile as we saw in II Isaiah, and the prayer of Trito-Isaiah. Here the Exodus is regarded as the time when there was the most living communion between Yahweh and His people. This has not changed, says Haggai. God is still with you in power just as He was in the midst at the Exodus, which was indeed encouragement for the builders and settlers.

III

Zechariah.

The passage which concerns us falls into the section of the book generally referred to as Second Zechariah in which several hands are traced. In chapter 10, there is a prophecy of a return from far countries to Palestine on such a scale that there will be no more room left in the land for those who go back

I will signal for them and gather them in
for I have redeemed them,
and they shall be as many as of old.
Though I scattered them among the nations,
yet in far countries they shall remember me,
and with their children they shall live and return.
I will bring them home from the land of Egypt
and gather them from Assyria;
and I will bring them to the land of Gilead
and to Lebanon,
till there is no room for them.
They shall pass through the sea of Egypt,
and the waves of the sea shall be smitten
and all the depths of the Nile dried up.
The pride of Assyria shall be laid low,
and the sceptre of Egypt shall depart. (Zech 10:8-11)

This prophecy comes closest to Hosea 11:10-11 and Isaiah 11:15-16
which similarly describe a return from Assyria and Egypt.

There is no compelling argument for a late post-exilic date
since there is nothing in the above passage which goes
beyond what is stated in the pre-exilic prophecies of Hosea
and Isaiah. The argument which is put forward for a date
in the Greek period is based on occasional usage of 'Assyria'
for Babylon or even Persia, but this is hardly sufficient
to tip the balance against the vast weight of normal
prophetic usage. There is little to be said against an
early post-exilic date, for the dispersion into 'far
countries' is assumed, and the time of a mass return
anticipated. It is difficult to imagine how this prophecy
could have appeared at a really late post-exilic date when
the paltry return from Exile showed no sign of developing
into a rush, whereas we know that immediately after the
first return, there was a revival of Messianic hopes fixed
on Zerubbabel, and that Haggai prophesied the shaking of
the nations which was to restore her former wealth to Israel.
Into this period of high hopes would best fit this prediction
of a New Exodus return. As such it is the last mention of
a New Exodus in the Old Testament. In the face of a handful
return to a land over which there was no independent Jewish
rule, but rather a succession of foreign overlords, there
was plenty of scope for apocalyptic, but this could not
aptly assume the form of a New Exodus imagery since it was

not bondage and captivity which kept Jews away from Palestine, but commercial interests in the lands which they had adopted as their own.

General Conclusion.

Analysis has shown that all of the prophets, except one or two of the minor ones, were aware and made use of the Exodus theme to a greater or lesser extent in their interpretation of the past, the present or the future. A comparison of the conclusions at the end of the analysis of each book reveals that the Exodus motif was employed with a great diversity even within the writings of a single prophet, of which the best examples are Hosea and II Isaiah, and indeed the Exodus theme and theology forms the crux interpretationis of these two important prophets.

Appendix A

Analysis has shown that the prophets sometimes used poetic imagery drawn from the Exodus without explicit allusion to that event. Often the nature of the imagery is revealed by the context, but there are passages where the context is not of much help in determining whether or not the poetic expression which the writer employs is dependant on the Exodus experience. Passages in which it is possible that there are poetic recollections of the Exodus are to be found in the books of Nahum and Habbakuk.

I

Nahum.

This little book is a prophetic exultation over the fall of Nineveh which came about in 612 BC, and contains some of the most vigorous and vivid poetry in the Old Testament in its description of the sack of that much hated city. One or two lines of the poem suggest that there was an implicit comparison between the overthrow of the arch-enemy Nineveh and the overthrow of Pharaoh in the author's mind.

He rebukes the sea and makes it dry,
he dries up all the rivers; (1:4)

But with an overflowing flood
he will make a full end of his
adversaries (1:8)

These lines certainly convey a picture of what happened to Pharaoh, though he is never mentioned by name, and the ode of exultation reflects the mood of Miriam's song - 'The horse and his rider he has thrown into the sea' (Ex 15:1). At the prediction of Nineveh's destruction, it would indeed have been fitting for the prophet to recall Yahweh's action against the Egyptians, but if the lines quoted above do recall the Exodus, the comparison is left undeveloped.

II

Habbakuk.

The Psalm of chapter 3 is what draws our attention in this book. It does not follow on from the rest of the prophecy, and for this reason and the fact that there are liturgical directions and echoes of many Psalms, it has often been denied to the prophet Habbakuk, and been accorded a post-exilic date. However, W.A. Irwin sees the influence of the old cosmological myth best known in the Babylonian Enuma Elish, and thinks that the poem may be pre-exilic in origin, while Albright sees the influence of Ugaritic mythology of the triumph of Baal over the primordial Sea, especially in vv.8-15, and thinks that it was composed by Habbakuk, a prophet-musician who lived in a strongly archaizing period.

J.P. Hyatt sums it up as follows - "It seems possible, if not very probable, that the prophet Habbakuk made use of ancient poems, to which he added 3:16-19. In its present form and position the poem has a powerful message; Yahweh the God who created the world by subduing Chaos and once delivered his people from the Red Sea, is ever available for the salvation of his people and for fellowship with those who serve him".¹

The interweaving of the Exodus and the creation myth is not foreign to the poetry of the Old Testament (cf. Psa 74, Isa 51:9-11), and is suggested here by the language of such verses as 3,5,8,15.

God came from Teman,
and the Holy One from Mount Paran² (v.3a)

Before him went pestilence,
and plague followed close behind. (v.5)

Was thy wrath against the rivers, O Yahweh?
Was thy anger against the rivers,
or thy indignation against the sea
when thou didst ride upon thy horses,
upon thy chariot of victory? (v.8)

Thou didst trample the sea with thy horses,
the surging of mighty waters. (v.15)

¹ J.P. Hyatt: Habbakuk, Peake, p.639.

² a mountain near, or synonymous with Sinai (cf. Deut 33:2)

CHAPTER V

THE EXODUS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

The Exodus in the New Testament.

Jesus taught his disciples that his birth, life, death and resurrection came as a fulfilment of all that was written in the scriptures of the Old Testament. He was the Second Adam, the seed of Abraham, the prophet spoken of by Moses, the eternal high priest and mediator, the lamb without blemish, David's greater son, the Suffering Servant, and so on. In Christ, there is both continuity and newness. There is the closest bond between the Old Testament and the New because Jesus came not to destroy the law but to fulfil it. At the same time, his coming heralded the dawn of the New Age with the new birth, the New Covenant, the New Israel, and the New Jerusalem. If we lose sight of either the continuity of the Christ-event with the faith of the Old Testament or of the innovations which it brought, we shall fall into the heresy of Marcion, or miss the message of the book of Hebrews. God spoke of old in many and various ways, but His final word has been given to the world through Christ, for with him has come a better priesthood, a better covenant, a perfect sacrifice, and better promises. Bearing in mind this relationship between the Old Testament and the New, we turn to examine the Exodus in the writings of the New Testament.

The Exodus Theme in the Gospels.

The Infancy Narratives draw our attention first. They are, of course, confined to the two Evangelists, Matthew and Luke, whose accounts are considered to be independent by most New Testament scholars.

Luke begins his narrative with the birth of John the Baptist whose ministry was to be like that of Elijah(1:17). After his birth, his father Zechariah 'was filled with the

Holy Spirit and prophesied¹(1:67), and the language of this prayer appears to recall the descriptions of the Exodus as it was revealed to Abraham (Gen 15)¹, and in the prophecies of the New Exodus in such books as Hosea and Isaiah².

Blessed be the Lord God of Israel,
for he has visited and redeemed his people,
and has raised up a horn of salvation for us
in the house of his servant David,
as he spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets
from of old,
that we should be saved from our enemies,
and from the hand of all who hate us;
to perform the mercy promised to our fathers,
and to remember his holy covenant,
the oath which he swore to our father
Abraham, to grant us
that we, being delivered from the hand
of our enemies,
might serve him without fear,
in holiness and righteousness before him
all the days of our life.
(Luke 1:70-75)

When God made the covenant with Abraham, He told him that his descendants would be sojourners in a land that was not theirs, and would be slaves there, but that afterwards they would be set free from their oppressors and would come out with great possessions(Gen 15:13-14). In his hymn of praise, Zechariah thanks God that He has remembered this covenant with Abraham and the promise of being delivered from the hand of the enemy. But the overtones of the Exodus do not stand alone in this speech. There is also the theology of the Davidic Messiah - the 'horn of salvation...in the house of his servant David'. This is the theme of Gabriel's annunciation to Mary(1:32-33) as well, with the result that the allusions to the Exodus are overshadowed by the heralding of Jesus as the heir to the royal throne of David.

In Matthew, Jesus is first identified as 'the son of David, the son of Abraham'(1:1), and subsequently as the Immanuel of Isaiah 7 (1:23), and the Messianic ruler of Micah 5 (2:6). Then comes the account of the flight into Egypt, and the return to Palestine after Herod the

¹ see pp.27-28

² see pp. 89,91,95, 100-101

Herod had died.

an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, Rise, take the child and his mother and flee to Egypt, and remain there till I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him. And he rose and took the child and his mother by night, and departed to Egypt, and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet, Out of Egypt have I called my son.
(Matt 2:13-15)

In his gospel, Matthew deliberately sets out to show that Jesus fulfilled the prophecies of the Old Testament, and to do this he uses among other things ten quotations from the Old Testament which he attaches to the earthly life and ministry of Jesus Christ identifying the things which he did, and which happened to him, as fulfil-ments of various portions of scripture. In the example above, the Evangelist cites the flight and return from Egypt as the fulfilment of Hosea 11:1 which reads -

When Israel was a child, I loved him
and out of Egypt I called my son.

In what sense, then, does the Evangelist apply this to Jesus? At first glance it would seem to apply simply to his geographical moves from Palestine to Egypt and back, but when we examine the context of the quotation in Hosea, we find that the prophet was looking back to the Exodus period as the childhood of the nation Israel³. There may thus be a deeper meaning in the Evangelist's terse declaration. He probably saw Jesus as the true son of Israel. When Joseph and Mary brought him back from their sojourn in Egypt to all that lay ahead - his ministry, death and resurrection - the Evangelist perceived with a flash of insight that Jesus was the personification of Israel⁴, and that just as the nation had come out of Egypt at its origin, so Jesus too had come from there in his infancy. The Evangelist thus identifies Jesus as the One whose sonship recapitulates and transcends the sonship of the Israelites whom God called to Himself out of

³ see Exodus theme in Hosea pp.89ff.

⁴cf. the Servant as the personification of the nation Israel in II Isaiah.

Egypt. Many commentators have extended the recollection of the Exodus to a comparison between the slaughter of the innocents by Herod and Pharaoh's edict whose execution would have meant the death of the baby Moses, but since the Evangelist himself is silent on this, it cannot be reckoned as legitimate exegesis.

We now pass on from the Infancy Narratives to the Passion Narratives, and in particular that of John's gospel. Earlier in this gospel, Jesus had used events from the wilderness wanderings to illustrate the nature of his mission. Thus the erection of the brazen serpent by Moses served as a picture of his death on the cross (John 3:14). Later, he identifies himself as the true Bread come down from heaven. The manna which the fathers ate in the wilderness gave physical life, but he imparts eternal life to those who receive him (John 6:32-58). Indeed, he uses this symbolism to teach not only about his coming but also about his death, for the discourse goes on to speak of the eternal life offered to those who eat his flesh and drink his blood. Few would dispute this as eucharistic teaching concerning his atoning death and the sacrament which he was to inaugurate to commemorate it. When we come to the Passion Narrative, it is Passover time, the key Jewish feast. G.E. Wright has remarked pertinently - "The controversies with the Jews which John records are largely concerned with the question as to whether Jesus does or does not reveal the true significance of the festivals which celebrate the Israelite deliverance and wandering in the wilderness"⁵. The Exodus deliverance was in the air as thousands of Jews and proselytes assembled in Jerusalem to keep the Passover, to slay the lamb, and eat the bitter herbs. John the

⁵ G.E. Wright: God who Acts, p.63

Baptist's enigmatic utterance - "Behold the lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29) - is now unfolded. Jesus gathers the twelve to him around the table in the upper room in order to teach them about his death which he knew was upon him. It is a well known problem of New Testament studies as to the exact date and nature of the supper. This need not detain us here, but we may mention R.P. Martin's judgement with which we are in agreement - "Whether the date of the Supper will ever be conclusively determined is uncertain; but we may certainly believe that, whatever the exact nature of the meal, there were Passover ideas in the Lord's mind when He sat down with his disciples. The Jewish Passover... provides the indispensable key to an understanding of the meal and also the meaning of the Lord's Supper in the Church".⁶ John sets the death of Jesus at the very hour when the Passover lambs were being killed, and further identifies him as the sacrificial victim when he records that Jesus' legs were not broken to hasten death, as the scriptures had foretold - "For these things took place that the scriptures might be fulfilled, 'Not a bone of him shall be broken' " (John 19:36). This Old Testament reference is a composite allusion to Psalm 34:10 which speaks of the suffering of the righteous, and their deliverance and vindication by God, and Exodus 12:46 (cf. Num 9:12) which gives the regulations for the keeping of the Passover feast. The lamb's bones were not to be broken. In John's gospel, we have a genuine Exodus typology which does not depend on an obscure hint, but on the clear statement of the Evangelist, combined with the quotation from the Old Testament; and more than that, it rests on the identification of Jesus by his fore-runner, John, and on Jesus' own teaching. The sacrificial death of

⁶R.P. Martin: The Lord's Supper, NBD.

Jesus Christ was to lead to a New Covenant for those who appropriated its merits, for those who, in the graphic language of Jesus, ate of his flesh and drank of his blood - "for my flesh is food indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him"(John 6:55-56). In the celebration of the Lord's Supper, the Church, like Israel of old, looks back and knows itself as redeemed, for the Lamb without blemish has died, and the bread broken and wine poured out shew forth this sacrifice, and their eating by the individuals of the community signifies their appreciation of the merits of that atoning death. This is not a full theology of the Lord's Supper, of course, for the sacrament also points forward to the Marriage Feast of the Lamb. This eschatological picture of Christ and his Bride is illuminated by the Lord's Supper, which in turn is illuminated by the Passover feast of the Exodus. The interrelation of the Passover, the Lord's Supper and the Wedding Feast holds true because all three enshrine mighty acts of God's intervention along the line of salvation history.

Analysis has shown that the Exodus motif appears at the beginning and at the end of the gospel narratives. In the first instance, the Evangelist is concerned with a terse quotation, but in the second instance, teaching from the body of the gospel is given a deeper exposition in the context of the Passion Narrative. We shall meet the Exodus motif in connection with Christ's death in the Pauline writings. A different estimate of the Exodus material in the gospels from that of the present writer may be found in Appendix B.

The Exodus Theme in the Book of Acts.

Apparently a recital of the history of Israel regarded as Heilsgeschichte was a feature of early apologetic in Christian-Jewish debate. At Antioch, Paul began his sermon

with the Exodus, thus showing that he viewed it as the origin of the nation Israel.

Men of Israel, and you that fear God, listen.
The God of this people Israel chose our fathers
and made the people great during their stay in
the land of Egypt, and with uplifted arm he led
them out of it... (Acts 13:16-17)

On this occasion, Paul passed over the Exodus in one sentence because he wished to expound the royal theology of Jesus as the son of David and the Holy One who did not see corruption. Equally well he could have developed the idea of Jesus as the new Moses, as did Stephen in his lengthy speech (Acts 7:2-51). Stephen began his defense with the story of Abraham, mentioning the revelation of the Exodus which was given to him⁷ and following this with an account of Moses' birth and call, and the glories of the Exodus itself. Moses foretold the coming of a prophet like himself.

This is the Moses who said to the Israelites,
'God will raise up for you a prophet from
your brethren as he raised me up'. (Acts 7:37)

Christian apologetic identified Jesus as the prophet of whom Moses spoke. Peter does so too in his address to the crowd which had gathered in Solomon's porch after the healing of the lame man (Acts 3:19-23). We have, then, an early witness to the typology of Jesus as the new Moses, but we must add that the strength of the apologetic argument rested on fulfilled prophecy and not on a typological correspondance between Moses and Jesus standing on its own. In Stephen's speech, his main point is the consistent disobedience of the Jews, not a proclamation of Christ in terms of a new Moses and new Exodus typology⁸. In Acts, the Exodus motif remains undeveloped, and is overshadowed by the Davidic theology, and the identification of Jesus as the Suffering Servant.⁹

⁷ see pp. 27-28

⁸ for a definition of typology and further discussion see Appendix A.

⁹ see Philippians 2:6-11

The Exodus Theme in the Pauline Epistles.

The apostle says that the events of the Exodus and wilderness wanderings.... "happened to them as a warning, but they were written down for our instruction, upon whom the end of the ages has come" (1 Cor. 10:11). We may note that there is nothing in Paul's allusions to the Exodus which is comparable to his deep theological treatment of Christ as the second Adam or to his teaching on justification by faith which is based on an interpretation of the covenant with Abraham, and its sign of circumcision.

There are two passages concerning the Exodus which deserve our attention. Both are found in the Corinthian correspondence.

I Corinthians 5:6-8.

The context of this passage concerns the discipline of a church member. This convert was living incestuously with his mother - a thing 'not found even among pagans'. He was a stain upon the regenerate community, and Paul instructs the Corinthians on how to deal with the man. To do this, Paul uses an analogy from the regulations of the Passover feast. Just as all leaven was scrupulously removed in the preparations for the Passover meal, so this man should be removed from the fellowship of the Lord's Supper.

Do you not know that a little leaven ferments the whole lump of dough? Cleanse out the old leaven that you may be fresh dough, as you really are unleavened. For Christ, our paschal lamb, has been sacrificed. Let us, therefore, celebrate the festival, not with the old leaven, the leaven of malice and evil, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. (1 Cor 5:6-8)

Leaven represents sin, the old life of paganism. Christ is the lamb without blemish whose death was sacrificial in character, that is, a death which was necessary because of human sin in order to bring man back into fellowship with God. But we must note that the main point of this passage does not concern the work or death of Christ as a new Exodus salvation. Paul's concern is that the old life of paganism should not be brought within the sphere

of the redeemed community lest it 'ferment the whole lump'. The allusion to Christ as the paschal lamb, though it is consistent with John's gospel and the book of Revelation, is not developed here. Perhaps Denney's statement is too strict when he writes - "It would be wrong in a passage with this simply allusive reference to the passover, to urge the significance of the lamb in the twelfth and thirteenth chapters of Exodus, and to apply this to interpret the death of Christ. There is no indication that the apostle himself carried out his thought on these lines".¹⁰ But he is correct in that Paul in no place develops an Exodus typology of the death of Christ. We have noted as well that Paul's attention in this passage, which comes the nearest to being typological, is devoted to a moral and ecclesiastical problem. Our conclusion regarding this passage is that there is an Exodus reference or allusion, but that it is undeveloped.

I Corinthians 10:1-13.

The context of this second passage is one of warning and admonition. Paul is urging the importance of depending upon the power of God to keep the believer from falling, and warning his readers that setting out on the Christian life is to be followed by perseverance to the end. To clinch his point, he uses an illustration from the Old Testament.

I want you to know, brethren, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and all were baptised into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, and all ate the same supernatural food, and all drank the same supernatural drink. For they drank from the supernatural Rock which followed them, and the Rock was Christ. Nevertheless, with most of them God was not pleased; for they were overthrown in the wilderness.

Now these things are warnings for us...these things happened to them as a warning...therefore let anyone who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall. (I Cor 10:1ff)

¹⁰James Denney: The Death of Christ, ed. RVG Tasker, p.82.

Many exegetes have seized upon the Greek of verses 6 and 11 - "these things happened as τύποι (types, symbols, examples) for us"; "these things happened to them τύποις (by way of example) - and have deduced that Paul is giving a theology of the sacraments. This is to miss the point of the passage. 'Type' in the technical sense is not the best translation of τύπος in this context; renderings such as the Authorised Version's 'examples', or the freer Revised Standard Version's 'warnings', are consonant with the sense of the passage. As Beasley-Murray says - "It is not intended to be a typological statement of sacramental theology but a midrashic exposition of Old Testament stories for the elucidation of Christian ethics".¹¹ The main point of Paul's illustration is a warning against falling back into idolatry and disobedience, as did the Israelites who had been saved out of Egypt, and provided miraculously with food and water. Certainly they all came out of Egypt, but most of them never reached the promised land for they displeased God and perished in the wilderness. Paul is occupied with the consequences of disobedience, not with an exposition of baptism or the Lord's Supper. This is clear from the conclusions which he himself draws from his illustration -

Do not be idolaters....we must not indulge in immorality....we must not put the Lord to the test....nor grumble. (1 Cor 10:6-10)

Thus a sound exegesis will not find a detailed typological comparison of baptism with the crossing of the Red Sea, but a warning to the redeemed that God will judge them for wilful disobedience. A moderate estimate of the Exodus imagery is upheld. It is there, but it is not developed. At the end of our analysis, we may compare the Pauline use of Exodus imagery with a fully developed Exodus

¹¹ Beasley-Murray: Baptism in the New Testament, p.181.

typology of baptism, that of St. Cyril of Jerusalem in his catechetical lectures which date from about 350 AD. The great difference will be apparent.

The Exodus Theme in the Epistle to the Hebrews.

The writer deliberately sets out to show that the institutions of Jewish religion were but a shadow of Christ who is the reality, and that in him are better promises, a better sonship, a better leader than Moses, a better priesthood than Aaron's, a better rest than Joshua could give, a better sacrifice than the blood of bulls and goats, a better intercession and mediation, and so on. God spoke through the history and institutions of ancient Israel, but His final word is given in Christ. The Old Covenant served its purpose but has given way to the New Covenant sealed with the blood of Christ. The writer imparts his message by use of type and example¹². Generally speaking, chapters 1-10 of the epistle are typological, chapter 11 exhortation by example, and the remaining two, spiritual encouragement using a mixture of type and example. The Exodus has a prominent place in chapter 11, which is a portrait gallery of the saints of the Old Testament who were well attested by their faith but who died before the realisation of the promises in Christ. Thus Joseph is pictured looking forward to the Exodus, and Moses and Israel described too.

By faith Joseph, at the end of his life, made mention of the exodus of the Israelites and gave directions concerning his burial.

By faith Moses left Egypt, not being afraid of the anger of the king; for he endured as seeing him who is invisible. By faith he kept the Passover and sprinkled the blood, so that the Destroyer of the first-born might not touch them.

By faith the people crossed the Red Sea as if on dry land; but the Egyptians, when they attempted to do the same, were drowned. (Heb 11:27-29)

The Exodus is not a type of the redemption in Christ, but

¹² see Appendix A for discussion of type, allegory and example

is recalled here as an example of faith. We might not have expected this, since the Exodus might have been a plum for the typological picking, but the author prefers to concentrate on the Tabernacle and the Priesthood, leaving the crossing of the Red Sea as an example of faith.

When we turn to the typological section of the epistle, chapters 1-10, what use do we find has been made of the Exodus motif? There is a comparison of Christ with Moses. The latter was faithful as a servant over God's household, "yet Jesus has been counted worthy of as much more glory than Moses as the builder of a house has more honour than the house"(Heb 3:3), because Christ is faithful as a son over God's household. In other words, he is the heir of all things, whereas Moses was a servant working within the house of his Master. And "we are his house, if we hold fast to our confidence and pride in our hope"(v.6). Then follows a warning which is identical to that given by Paul in Corinthians. "Take care", says the writer, "lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God"(v.12). He enforces his point with the same illustration that Paul used -

Who were they who heard and yet were rebellious?
Was it not all those who left Egypt under the
leadership of Moses? And with whom was he
provoked forty years? Was it not with those who
sinned, whose bodies fell in the wilderness? And
to whom did he swear that they should never enter
his rest, but to those who were disobedient?

(Heb 3:16-18)

He concludes - "for we share in Christ, if only we hold our first confidence in him to the end"(v.14). His concern is with disobedience and punishment, not with a typological exposition of the New Covenant in terms of the Exodus. He quotes the experience of the Israelites as a perilous example. Where he does use typology is in the subsequent exposition of "the rest which remains for the people of God". Here the writer contrasts the uneasy rest after the

Conquest led by Joshua, with the sabbath rest which reflects the rest of God at the completion of His work of creation. Thus the writer's argument is that the events of the Exodus-Conquest do not correspond with the rest from works which salvation through the merits of Jesus Christ brings. We conclude, then, that there is no developed typology of the Exodus in the book of Hebrews. Though the writer uses Moses, Joshua, Aaron, and the Tabernacle in this manner, he does not expound the redemption in Christ in terms drawn from the Exodus. The Exodus is included only as an example of faith, while the body of the epistle is devoted to a sacrificial interpretation of Christ's death, and a priestly interpretation of his intercession.

The Exodus Theme in the First Epistle of Peter, and in Jude.

Jude need not detain us longer than to note that the Exodus is used in an identical manner to that of Paul in 1 Cor 10, when he warns that disobedience will bring punishment just as it did for the Israelites who left Egypt but disobeyed in the wilderness. So Jude writes -

Now I desire to remind you, though once you were fully informed, that he who saved a people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed those who did not believe. (v.5)

Jude applies this to scoffers and heretics who were troubling the Church, making it clear that they would receive their due.

A good case can be made out that imagery drawn from the Exodus underlies the language of redemption in the first epistle of Peter. F.L. Cross and others have attempted to prove that the epistle is a Paschal Liturgy associated with baptismal celebrations¹³. This theory would need elaboration at some length, and so we can only mention it here as an interesting hypothesis.

¹³ F.L. Cross: 1 Peter, a Paschal Liturgy. cf. Selwyn's discussion of this theory in his excellent commentary.

What draws our attention is the language which is applied to Christians as the redeemed community. They are "for sprinkling with his blood"(v.2); they have an "inheritance" (v.4); they must be holy just as Yahweh said to the Exodus community, "You shall be holy, for I am holy" (Leviticus 11:44-45 cf. 1 Peter 1:16); they were "ransomed with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot"(1 Pet 1:18-19. cf. the sacrificial lamb in John's Gospel, 1 Corinthians, Revelation); they are "a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people" that they might "declare the wonderful deeds of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light"(1 Pet 2:9). These latter words clearly echo those addressed to Israel in Exodus 19 -

You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself. Now therefore, if you will obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my possession among all peoples; for all the earth is mine, and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. (Exodus 19:4-6)

Although the analogy is quite clear, when we compare the typology in the rest of the epistle, such as that of Christ as the cornerstone(2:4-8), or as the Suffering Servant(2:21-35), or the Flood as a type of baptism(3:20-22), the Exodus typology appears to be relatively undeveloped.

The Exodus Theme in the Apocalypse.

This is a book of many symbols drawn most frequently from the prophetic and apocalyptic portions of the Old Testament. We noted the sacrificial language in John's gospel, 1 Corinthians, and 1 Peter which described Jesus Christ as the Lamb. This occurs again in Revelation, and probably refers to the Passover lamb, though this is not stated specifically. That this be so appears likely in chapter 5, where the Lamb is surrounded by the redeemed who sing a new song which may be the equivalent of the so-called Song of Moses or Miriam recorded in Exodus 15,

while its phrases are those of Exodus 19.

they sang a new song, saying,
Worthy art thou to take the scroll and
open its seals,
for thou wast slain and by thy blood
didst ransom men for God
from every tribe and tongue and people
and nation,
and hast made them a kingdom and
to our God,
and they shall reign on earth.
(Rev 5:9-10)

As we saw in connection with the Lord's Supper, there is a continuity between the community of Israel which was liberated from Egypt, the Christian community living in the first century, and the whole community of the redeemed at the end time. The continuity lies in the saving activity of God running through history.

Between this passage and the next Exodus allusion come the plagues which may recall the plagues of the Exodus narrative. Certainly, there are similarities. There is the plague of hail and fire(Rev 8:7), the sea turning into blood(8:9), darkness over the land(8:12), deadly locusts (9:3-5). Then in chapter 12, there comes the picture of Israel as the mother of the Messiah. She flees from her enemy into the wilderness where she is nourished. The dragon, or as he is variously called, the serpent, Satan, the Devil "poured out water like a river out of his mouth after the Woman to sweep her away with the flood, but the earth came to the help of the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed the river which the dragon had poured from his mouth"(12: 15-16). An Exodus symbolism is possible here. Flight into the wilderness seems to suggest it, and the defeat of the chaos-monster, a theme which we have met in Psalm 74:12-15 and Isaiah 51:9-11,¹⁴ used of the crossing of the Red Sea.

Finally, there is another picture of the redeemed which is cast into the Exodus mould in chapter 15.

14 see pp. 10, 133.

John sees

what appeared to be a sea of glass mingled with fire, and those who had conquered the beast and its image and the number of its name, standing beside the sea of glass with harps of God in their hands. And they sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb. (Rev 15:2-3)

The song of Moses first heard on the further bank of the Red Sea rings out again as the redeemed at the end time praise the Lamb by whom they have been ransomed to God. This forms a fitting end to our analysis of the Exodus theme in the New Testament.

We have surveyed the Exodus material in the New Testament, and may now draw together our conclusions. To what extent has this event which was formative in the history and theology of the Old Testament exerted an influence on the New? We must reply that it has not done so to the extent which we might have expected. In the Gospels, it is virtually confined to the Passion Narratives; in Paul's letters, it occurs only as a secondary accompaniment of a warning against falling into disobedience¹⁵, and nowhere receives such full treatment as the themes of Adam, Jacob and Esau, or Abraham, Sarah and Hagar; in Acts, it is mentioned in the recitals of the salvation history, but quite overshadowed by the theology of the Davidic king; in Hebrews, crossing the Red Sea is given as an example of faith, and the failure of the Israelites to enter the promised land is used as a warning against unbelief, just as it is in Paul; Jude's use of the Exodus is identical to the last mentioned in Hebrews; in 1 Peter, believers are definitely described in terms which applied to those who were delivered out of Egypt; in Revelation, Exodus imagery is used sparingly

¹⁵

but for a discussion of Exodus influence on his redemption terminology see Appendix C

but clearly, once again in descriptions of the redeemed community. We have found that there is an Exodus motif which runs through the New Testament, or at least through the books with which we have dealt, but that it is nowhere developed fully in the way, for example, that the motif of the priesthood of Melchisedek, or that of the Tabernacle and sacrificial system, is used by the author of the epistle to the Hebrews. The nearest it comes to being an important theological reference is in aiding our understanding of the death of Christ and the Lord's Supper. Many exegetes have also applied it to baptism by reading a sacramental theology into Paul's brief allusion to the Exodus in I Corinthians 10. This, as we have said, misses the main point of the passage to concentrate on a rough correspondance which Paul draws between the crossing through the Red Sea and Christian baptism. That Paul has not developed this line of thinking may be seen more clearly when we contrast what he says so briefly with an extended exposition of baptism in terms of the Exodus to be found in the writings of Cyril, bishop of Jerusalem in 350 AD.¹⁶ It is worth quoting at some length in order to make our point as clearly as possible.

You renounced Satan as if he were really present. Now you should know that this is prefigured in ancient history. For when that most bitter and cruel tyrant, Pharaoh, was oppressing the free and high-born people of the Hebrews, God sent Moses to lead them out of the bitter bondage of the Egyptians. And the doorposts were anointed with the blood of a lamb, that the destroying angel might flee the houses which were signed with blood. Thus were the Hebrew people marvellously delivered. But when the enemy, even after their rescue, pursued them and beheld the sea open marvellously before them, yet he went on, and following fast in their footsteps was suddenly submerged and engulfed in the Red Sea.

Cyril is delivering a lecture to the newly baptized in order to instruct them more fully in the implications of this rite in which the renunciation of Satan played an

¹⁶ St. Cyril of Jerusalem on the Mysteries, 348/350, in Sacraments and Worship, ed. P.F. Palmer, pp. 15-16.

important part. He likens Satan to Pharaoh; just as Pharaoh could not pass through the waters to get at the people of Israel, Satan's power over the believer was broken when he passed through the baptismal waters to a new life of freedom. Cyril goes on to draw this out -

Turn now from the old to the new, from figure to the reality. There we have Moses sent by God into Egypt; here, Christ dispatched by His Father to the world: there, that Moses might lead an oppressed people out of Egypt; here, that Christ might free a world oppressed by the burden of sin; there the blood of a lamb turned aside the destroying angel; here, the blood of the Lamb without blemish is the refuge from demons. That first tyrant kept pursuing the ancient people even to the sea, and now that reckless, shameless, demon-prince of wickedness has followed you even to the flowing waters of salvation. The former tyrant was drowned in the sea, and this one disappears in the waters of salvation.

Here we have a thorough-going Exodus typology applied to both sacraments, baptism and the Lord's Supper, and not without effect, but readily discernable as different from anything which may be found in the New Testament. Our conclusion is, then, that the Exodus theme does appear in the New Testament, but that it remains undeveloped in comparison to other material from the Old Testament, and to later expositions beyond the canonical period.¹⁷

It is beyond the proper scope of this thesis to go any further than the conclusion offered above, but there is one further point which we should like to put forward tentatively, and that is an explanation of why the Exodus theme is undeveloped in the New Testament.

The Exodus is undoubtedly the basis of the Old Testament faith and theology, as we have shown in our

¹⁷that others have drawn a different conclusion regarding the use of the Exodus theme in the New Testament from that just stated is evident from the number of recent studies which have appeared. The present writer's attitude towards these is set out in the Appendices.

analysis of the Psalms, the legislation, the historical books and the prophetic writings. Why is this ? The answer would seem to lie in the link forged by the Exodus between God and His chosen people, between history and revelation, between the powers of this world and the direct intervention of a sovereign God. What is the New Testament equivalent to this ? — the Christ-event. But what part of the Christ-event more than any other forms the historical, factual and revelatory basis of the apostolic faith ? What part would cause the collapse of the New Testament faith if it were removed ? The answer is clear — the Resurrection. By raising Jesus Christ from the dead God vindicated him, confirmed his claims, showed that his self-offering on the cross had been accepted as the means of reconciling the world unto Himself. It was the message which Paul took to slave and philosopher. So strongly did the apostle preach the resurrection to the Stoic and Epicurean intellectuals at Athens that they said of this strange message - "He seems to be a preacher of foreign divinities" - because he preached Jesus and the resurrection' (Acts 17:18). To the Corinthians he wrote - "If Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain...and you are still in your sins...and we are of all men most to be pitied"(1 Cor 15:14-19). Take away the Resurrection, and there is no gospel. Thus the Exodus has diminished in importance in the New Testament because there is a new event, a new knot tied between God and His people, a deeper revelation of His Character and sovereign power in the raising of His Son, Jesus Christ. The new has come; the old has been transformed.

APPENDIX A.

Typology.

The use of people, events or institutions from the Old Testament in the teaching of the New is generally known as typology. This broad term needs a little elucidation, especially in view of recent studies of the so-called Exodus typology of the New Testament by such scholars as Sahlin, Mauser, Hebert, Marsh, Nixon, Mánek and Glasson, to mention the best known ones.

Firstly, we may distinguish typology from example and allegory. When Jesus says - "Remember Lot's wife" (Luke 17:32) - he is citing her as an example. She was a woman who looked back, who was still attached to the sinful world of Sodom, and her fate serves as a warning to those who seek to gain their lives but will lose them because they are unprepared for the revealing of the Son of man. In common speech, we should say that her fate is typical of the unready, but she stands as an example, and not as a 'type' in the technical sense.

On the other hand, allegory delights in hidden meanings, the subtler the better. In the history of interpretation, allegory has been a fanciful by-way, extremely popular at certain periods, but today it is seen as a disservice to the scriptures, not their key. Apart from Paul's use of Sarah and Hagar in Galatians, allegory is not a feature of the New Testament. A good example of allegory is the misinterpretation of the Song of Songs on which Saint Bernard is said to have preached over eighty sermons drawing out the hidden story of Christ and his Church. One wonders what he would have made of the beloved's nose which is likened to the tower of Lebanon overlooking Damascus !

Typology differs from example and allegory. It is, first, history, and then, type. Thus Melchisedek appears in the historical narrative of Abraham and his battle with the kings, but the author uses him as an important type of the eternal priesthood of Christ. The sacrifices were everyday occurrences in Old Testament history which are used by the New to interpret Christ's death. Typology began within the Old Testament itself. For example, Hosea uses David as a type of the Messianic king; Deutero-Isaiah uses the Exodus to picture the events of the end time. Typology depends upon a real correspondence between the old and its counterpart, and usually there is what we may call an expansion, fulfilment or change of key between the former and the latter. Thus, Moses is a type of Christ because there is a real correspondence between his work as a prophet, priest and leader of Israel and the ministry of Jesus Christ, but there is a change of key too, for Christ is far superior to Moses. Similarly Christ's self-offering is of superior efficacy to the sacrifices of the blood of bulls and goats.

Although typology is admitted nowadays as a legitimate aid to an understanding of the unity of Old and New Testaments, it should not be stretched beyond its bound. We need guidelines for correct typological interpretation. The New Testament itself must serve as our norm. Where a New Testament writer points out a type, well and good, but once we go beyond the specific identifications of the New Testament, we skate on thin ice, however brilliant may be the figures which we perform. There must be a real correspondence between type and anti-type, and this will constitute the main point of the passage. When exegesis is governed by these guidelines, it will not be led astray by the minutiae of the text into forced and far-fetched interpretations.

Two examples will suffice to illustrate a genuine typological interpretation. The first is Peter's use of the Flood to aid the understanding of baptism(1 Peter 3:21). Baptism is the ἀντίτυπος which corresponds in figure to salvation from the Flood. This identification is made by the apostle himself, and not left to the guesswork of his readers. The second example, drawn from the wilderness history, is found on the lips of Jesus: "as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of man be lifted up"(John 3:14). The phrase 'lifted up' carries physical and spiritual connotations. There is a genuine correspondence between the efficacy of the brazen serpent and that of Christ's death, and at the same time there is the shift of key from the physical life which the serpent preserved to the eternal life which Christ imparts to those who believe in him(3:15). Both passages exemplify typology according to the definition and exegetical guidelines which we have offered.

APPENDIX B

Exodus Typology in the Gospels.

The extent of an Exodus typology in the gospels is keenly debated in recent New Testament scholarship, and this has led to widely diverging opinions being expressed. Lindars concludes - "in the Synoptic gospels, typology is rare"¹. Sahlin is of the opposite opinion: "the typology of the Exodus was fundamental for the Evangelists"². This typology is extended to cover the very form of the gospels as well as their content, as Richardson's estimate reveals. He says - "The fact is that the whole gospel tradition... is cast into Pentateuchal shape, because the Exodus-deliverance from Egypt was the only pattern of redemption which the New Testament writers knew" .

The present writer's conclusions about the Exodus typology in the gospels are set out in the discussion of the Exodus material in the gospels in the body of this thesis. The conclusion that an Exodus typology is indeed present, but not in a developed or fundamental manner, is based on the definition of typology given in Appendix A, and the exegetical guidelines laid down there.

In dealing with the views of Marsh, Sahlin, Mauser or Richardson, there is one further principle in need of clarification. This is to recognise that one's estimate of the historicity of the gospels has an important bearing on typological exegesis. If with Bultmann, we accept a radical view of the formative influence, nay the creative genius,

¹B.Lindars: New Testament Apologetic, p.274.

²H.Sahlin: The New Exodus Salvation according to St.Paul, essay in The Root of the Vine, ed. Fridrichsen.

³A.Richardson: Introduction to New Testament Theology, p.167.

of the early church, then there is scope for a gospel record constructed according to an external theological schema. But, granting that the Evangelists have selected their material, and that this selection is often governed by the theological significance of the material, if we accord some fidelity to them in recording what actually happened rather than constructing an illustration of their own beliefs, then we shall regard with caution Richardson's statement which virtually upholds the necessity of a prior theological pattern on which the gospels must needs be modelled, and finds this pattern in the Exodus-events. If the Evangelists have recorded the happenings of daily life in Palestine during the earthly ministry of Jesus, there is no reason to suppose - unless subsequent analysis proves it - that they had a fundamental concern to draw out typological correspondences with the Exodus events. Luke's prologue would appear to weigh against a fundamentally typological schema because he speaks in terms of 'narratives', 'eyewitnesses', and 'an orderly account' of the things which had just happened (Luke 1:1-4). With these preliminary remarks, we may look at one or two of the debated passages.

1.) The Baptismal Narrative.

Mauser⁴, Marsh⁵, Sahlin and Nixon⁶ are all convinced that there are Exodus overtones in the accounts of the baptism of Jesus. We take Marsh's statement as typical of this school of thinking -

By John's baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins in the setting that Mark gives it by association with Malachi, Isaiah and Elijah, we are to understand that it was related in imagery to the crossing of the Red Sea under Moses, (the baptism of the 'old Israel', cf. 1 Cor 10:1-2).

The argument runs as follows. Mark identifies John the Baptist as the messenger of Malachi (3:1), and Isaiah (40:3).

⁴UW.Mauser: Christ in the Wilderness, pp.77-89.

⁵J.Marsh: Theology of the New Testament, Peake p.756-768.

⁶RE.Nixon: The Exodus in the New Testament, Tyndale Monograph.

The passage from II Isaiah is about the voice which heralds the eschatological intervention of Yahweh, which is subsequently developed along the lines of a New Exodus.⁷ But in its immediate context, it merely speaks of preparing the way of the Lord, and does not elaborate in terms of a New Exodus. The second passage, Malachi 3:1 reads - "Behold I send my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will come suddenly to his temple". In order to find an Exodus allusion in this, it is linked to Exodus 23:20 - "Behold I send an angel before you to guard you on the way and to bring you to the place which I have prepared". But there is no reason to suppose that Malachi does depend on the verse from Exodus. The so-called Exodus typology disappears on analysis, for all that these passages do is to identify John as the forerunner of the Messiah, and so of the glory of the Lord which would be revealed to all flesh (Isa 40:5).

The exegesis which finds significance in the fact that the Greek word ἀναβαίνειν which translates the Hebrew אָבַע in the LXX in passages which describe the Exodus (eg. Ex 13:18), and the entry into the promised land (eg. Deut 1:21), should be used by Mark (1:10) and Matthew (3:16) of Jesus 'coming up' out of the Jordan, can only be judged as far-fetched.

If we adhere to the guidelines for typological interpretation which were set out in Appendix A, we shall not agree with Marsh and others that Exodus typology has had a formative influence on the baptismal narratives.

Following the account of Jesus' baptism comes the wilderness temptation story. Once again many exegetes find a continuation of Exodus typology, and point to the period of forty days as echoing the forty years that Israel was tested in the wilderness. Some go further and find a detailed

⁷for a full exposition, see pp.125-132.

correspondence between the desert history and the temptations of Jesus.

The temptations put to Christ are basically those to which Israel had yielded. Where they had been dissatisfied with Yahweh's provision of manna, He is tempted to turn stones into bread. Where they put God to the test at Massah demanding proof of His presence and power, He is tempted to jump from the Temple pinnacle to force God to honour His promises. Where they forgot the Lord who brought them out of Egypt and substituted a molten calf for Him, He is tempted to fall down and worship Satan. Christ is shown to meet the temptations not arbitrarily but deliberately from Moses' summary in Deuteronomy of the history of Israel in the wilderness.⁸

While this is attractive by the neatness of comparison and the anithesis between the disobedience of Israel and the perfect obedience of the Son, the Evangelist does not identify it as typological, nor is it elsewhere developed as such in the New Testament, not even in the book of Hebrews which deals with the theological implications of Christ's temptations.

11.) The Structure of Matthew.

Matthew has organised the teaching of Jesus into five discourses, and this has been taken by some commentators as evidence of an Exodus typology by assuming that his divisions correspond to the five-fold structure of the Penteteuch, and that the Sermon on the Mount corresponds to the giving of the Law on Mount Sinai. Of the Penteteuchal analogy, Matthew himself gives us not the slightest hint, and so Stendahl⁹ is right to conclude that "there is nothing to suggest that this five-fold structure in Matthew was intended as a 'New Pent. teuch' ". Attempts to discover a new law-giving in the Sermon on the Mount are unsupported by the text, and are open to serious theological objections.

111.) The Transfiguration.

In Luke's account, we read -

And behold, two men talked with him, Moses and Elijah, who appeared in glory and spoke of his exodus which he was to accomplish at Jerusalem. (Luke 9:30-31)

⁸Nixon op.cit. p.14.

⁹K.Stendahl: Matthew, Peake p.770.

Mánek has done a great deal of work on the Lucan material in order to establish the vitality of the Exodus typology in it. The Transfiguration passage is one of the corner-stones of his thesis.¹⁰ Parallels are drawn with great ingenuity between this and the wilderness history: Moses went up into the mountain with three companions; Moses' face shone with the glory of God; the cloud on the mount of transfiguration recalls the pillar of cloud, the clouds and smoke of Sinai, and the Shekinah glory which hung above the Tabernacle; the voice from heaven which declares - "This is my beloved Son: listen to him" recalls the prophecy of Moses describing the coming of a prophet like himself with the exhortation "him you shall heed". This all leads up to the reference to Jesus' death as an exodus. Does this mean that Jesus was to inaugurate a new exodus, a new redemption by his death? Of interest in this connection is Mauser's opinion of Mánek's exegesis of this passage. He writes - "His explanation of Luke 9:31 seems to me unlikely in view of Luke's total theology".¹¹ This judgement is illuminating in that Mauser himself is an avid exponent of Exodus typology. Our conclusion is that this passage does not meet with the exegetical criteria which we have laid down, and an exegesis which is founded on one Greek word, exodus, is tenuous in the extreme. As we understand it, exodus may be a term to describe Jesus' death simply in terms of transition (literally, 'departure') from his human earthly life in the flesh to the state of his pre-incarnate glory. Moses and Elijah appeared 'in glory', and for a moment Jesus too shone with a dazzling glory. Thus, it would appear more in context that he was talking of his death in terms of transition and exaltation, rather than in terms of a New Exodus.

¹⁰J. Mánek: The New Exodus in the Books of Luke,
Novum Testamentum II, 1957, pp.8-24.

¹¹U.W. Mauser: op.cit. p.149.

APPENDIX C

The Pauline Language of Redemption.

Some scholars feel that Paul's language of redemption is drawn from descriptions of the Exodus in the Old Testament. G.E. Wright expresses this well when he says¹-

The events of the Exodus, the wilderness wandering, and the conquest are as important for the New Testament as for the Old. In Christ is the new exodus and the new inheritance. The major portion of the vocabulary used to express the saving work of God in Christ is drawn from the Exodus event: thus the words 'redeem' and 'redemption', 'deliver', 'ransom', 'purchase', 'bondage', 'freedom'.

He is supported by another Old Testament scholar, Phythian-Adams², who uses the term 'homology' to describe the real correspondence between the work of God in redemption under the Old Covenant and in the New. As an example of Exodus influence on Paul's vocabulary, he cites a description of redemption in Christ which is found in Colossians -

the Father...has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in light. He has delivered us from the dominion of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of our sins. (Col 1:12-14)

Converts were once under oppression but have been brought out from under the 'dominion of darkness' and transferred to the land of inheritance. While we may accept the possibility that Exodus imagery does underlie some of Paul's theological terminology, we should also bear in mind that he was living in an age of slavery and slaves. Just as he used metaphors from the games, so he could use terms from the slave-market - in fact he called himself the bond-slave of Jesus Christ. Thus not every allusion to freedom from

¹G.E. Wright: God who Acts, p.63.

²W.J.Phythian-Adams: The Way of At-one-ment, p.23.

bondage need go as far back as the Exodus for its reference.

It might well be contemporary, not Exodus, imagery.

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ABBREVIATIONS.

- EOTI - Essays on Old Testament Interpretation.
ed. C. Westermann.
IB - Interpreter's Bible.
ICC - International Critical Commentary.
NBD - New Bible Dictionary.