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# 'THE JOHANNINE LOGOS DOCTRINE AND ITS SOURCES'

(Thesis for M.Litt., by D.D.Whitfield Mowbray).

INTRODUCTION: The authorship, occasion, date and general background to the Fourth Gospel are briefly considered.

## PART I. The Johannine Prologue.

The Prologue to the Fourth Gospel is commented on with a view to bringing into prominence the chief elements in the Logos doctrine. The Logos had pre-temporal existence; is personal and Divine; was the Agent in the Divine act of creation; is the Source of all life, in particular that form called 'eternal life' in the body of the Gospel; is the true Revealer of God to men, the Mediator of Grace and Truth. The Logos became flesh in the historical Person of Jesus Christ. The Prologue is not separable from the Gospel: it contains in embryo the basic Christological ideas of the Gospel.

## PART II. Sources of the Johannine Logos Doctrine - (i) HELLENISTIC THOUGHT.

The use of the term LOGOS with special significance is traced from Heraclitus' "cosmic reason", through the Stoic doctrine, to its place in Alexandrian and Alexandrian Jewish philosophy and religion. Special consideration is given to Philo Judaeus, since many influential scholars have sought in Alexandrian Judaism generally, and Philo more particularly, the source of the Johannine Logos Doctrine. Examination of these claims leads us to reject this position.

Nor is it considered likely that the author of the Prologue drew his ideas from Mandaeism, the syncretistic mystery cults, or from the various forms of the Primal Man idea.

## PART III. Sources of the Johannine Logos Doctrine - (ii) HEBREW THOUGHT.

The attractive theories of Drs. R.Harris and C.F.Burney are examined and found to be inadequate as the source.

PART IV. Sources of the Johannine Logos  
Doctrine - (iii) HEBREW THOUGHT.

The O.T. concept of the D'BHAR YHWH is thoroughly reviewed, and its main characteristics emphasized. Other possible sources have been eliminated, and we discover that the salient features of the dynamic Word of God in the O.T. are reflected - only much more powerfully - in the Person of the Word of God incarnate. These features are, dynamic creativity, personal mediation, Divine self-revelation, purposeful redemption.

Thus we regard the Old Testament to be the source.

THE  
JOHANNINE LOGOS DOCTRINE  
AND ITS SOURCES

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being a thesis submitted to the University of Durham  
for the degree of Master of Letters,

by

D.D.WHITFIELD MOWBRAY, B.D.(London)

• •

January 1952

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## ' F O R E W O R D '

THE second quarter of this century has seen a marked turning to the study of the great allied themes - Revelation, Mediation, Inspiration and Authority in religion. A number of the most respected scholars have given them prominence in researches and writings, including such reverend doctors as H.Wheeler Robinson, H.H.Rowley and C.H.Dodd, together with A.G.Hebert and H.Cunliffe-Jones. Renewed interest in the subjects on the part of a wider reading public is indicated further by the re-printing of works by James Orr and B.B.Warfield. Many lesser scholars and disciples, too, over and above the masters mentioned above, have felt the fascination of a subject at once so fundamental to the Christian Faith, and so complex and extensive.

One aspect of this so vast a sphere of study is that suggested by the terminus technicus, THE WORD OF GOD - rendered more highly significant for all time by its application to the Person of Jesus Christ. Attracted to a territory which has been as much explored as any

within the bounds of the Bible, the writer has found deep satisfaction in pursuing for himself (and, he trusts, with open mind) the exploration of the noble Johannine Prologue. He has tried to discover for himself the probable source of the Logos-doctrine. What lay behind John's use of the title LOGOS - one so rarely given to Jesus Christ in the New Testament ? What significance did John attach to it ? Was its introduction into first century Christology an innovation - an attempt to embrace oriental or Hellenistic thought forms and speculative principles for the Christian Faith ? Or, did it really continue and consummate lines of thought and religious principles operative in the first Christians' Bible, the Old Testament ? These are some of the leading questions we have set ourselves to answer in the following study.



Geschrieben steht: "Im Anfang war das WORT ! "

Hier stock ich schon ! Wer hilft mir weiter fort ?  
 Ich kann das WORT so hoch unmöglich schätzen,  
 Ich muss es anders übersetzen,  
 Wenn ich vom Geiste recht erleuchtet bin.

Geschrieben steht: "Im Anfang war der SINN."  
 Bedenke wohl die erste Zeile,

Dass deine Feder sich nicht übereile !  
 Ist es der SINN, der alles wirkt und schafft ?

Es sollte stehn: "Im Anfang war die KRAFT ! "  
 Doch, auch indem ich dieses niederschreibe,

Schon warnt mich was, dass ich dabei nicht bleibe.  
 Mir hilft der Geist ! auf einmal seh ich Rat

Und schreibe getrost: "Im Anfang war die TAT ! "

- GOETHE, Faust, (Erster Teil).

## THE PROLOGUE TO ST. JOHN'S GOSPEL

- \* 1. Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ Λόγος,  
καὶ ὁ Λόγος ἦν πρὸς τὸν Θεόν,  
καὶ Θεὸς ἦν ὁ Λόγος.
- \* 2. οὗτος ἦν ἐν ἀρχῇ πρὸς τὸν Θεόν.
- \* 3. πάντα δι' αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο,  
καὶ χωρὶς αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο οὐδὲ ἓν ὃ γέγονεν.
- \* 4. ἐν αὐτῷ ζωὴ ἦν,  
καὶ ἡ ζωὴ ἦν τὸ φῶς τῶν ἀνθρώπων.
- \* 5. καὶ τὸ φῶς ἐν τῇ σκοτίᾳ φαίνει,  
καὶ ἡ σκοτία αὐτὸ οὐ κατέλαβεν.
- 6. ἐγένετο ἄνθρωπος, ἀπεσταλμένος παρὰ Θεοῦ,  
ὄνομα αὐτῷ Ἰωάννης.
- 7. οὗτος ἦλθεν εἰς μαρτυρίαν, ἵνα μαρτυρήσῃ  
περὶ τοῦ φωτός, ἵνα πάντες πιστεύσωσι  
δι' αὐτοῦ.
- 8. οὐκ ἦν ἐκεῖνος τὸ φῶς, ἀλλ' ἵνα μαρτυρήσῃ  
περὶ τοῦ φωτός.
- 9. ἦν τὸ φῶς τὸ ἀληθινόν, ὃ φωτίζει πάντα  
ἄνθρωπον, ἐρχόμενον εἰς τὸν κόσμον.
- \* 10. ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ ἦν, καὶ ὁ κόσμος δι' αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο,  
— καὶ ὁ κόσμος αὐτὸν οὐκ ἔγνω.

- \* 11. εἰς τὰ ἴδια ἦλθεν,  
καὶ οἱ ἴδιοι αὐτὸν οὐ παρέλαβον.
12. ὅσοι δὲ ἔλαβον αὐτόν, ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς  
ἐξουσίαν τέκνα Θεοῦ γενέσθαι, τοῖς  
πιστεύουσιν εἰς τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ.
13. οἱ οὐκ ἐξ αἱμάτων, οὐδὲ ἐκ θελήματος σαρκός,  
οὐδὲ θελήματος ἀνδρός, ἀλλ' ἐκ Θεοῦ  
ἐγεννήθησαν.
- \* 14. καὶ ὁ Λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο,  
καὶ ἐσκήνωσεν ἐν ἡμῖν,  
καὶ ἐθεασάμεθα τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ,  
δόξαν ὡς μονογενοῦς παρὰ πατρός,  
πλήρης χάριτος καὶ ἀληθείας.
15. Ἰωάννης μαρτυρεῖ περὶ αὐτοῦ, καὶ κέκραγε λέγων,  
οὗτος ἦν ὃν εἶπον, Ὁ ὀπίσω μου ἐρχόμενος  
ἐμπροσθέν μου γέγονεν· ὅτι πρῶτος μου ἦν.
16. ὅτι ἐκ τοῦ πληρώματος αὐτοῦ ἡμεῖς πάντες  
ἐλάβομεν, καὶ χάριν ἀντὶ χάριτος.
17. ὅτι ὁ νόμος διὰ Μωσέως ἐδόθη, ἡ χάρις καὶ  
ἡ ἀλήθεια διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐγένετο.
- \* 18. Θεὸν οὐδεὶς ἑώρακε πώποτε·  
ὁ μονογενὴς υἱός, ὁ ὢν εἰς τὸν κόλπον τοῦ πατρὸς,  
ἐκεῖνος ἐξηγήσατο.

\* verses forming a possible Logos Hymn which John took  
and incorporated in his Prologue. - (after J.H. BERNARD.)

## I N T R O D U C T I O N

THE fascination of the Johannine Prologue is felt at the outset in its very simplicity. Three brisk and bold strokes and the author both focuses and fixes our attention on the subject - the Divine Word. Any suspicions, roused by the opening phrase of the proem, that the author was a Stoic are soon allayed by the second, and dispelled by the third:

In the beginning was the Logos,  
 And the Logos was with God,  
 And the Logos was God.

The first stanza of the Logos-hymn is typical of the Prologue as a whole - Jewish thought in Greek garb, and that, at times, thinly clad. The Fourth Gospel does not disclose its author. If, however, we may not know him by name, at least we may deduce a great deal about 'le grand anonyme', as Goguel calls him. He was, so we think, a Palestinian Jew who appears to have enjoyed intimate acquaintance with Jesus Christ during His ministry - certainly the latter part of that ministry. Later he went to Ephesus and settled in

that ancient centre of the Logos-idea as developed by the philosophical system of Heraclitus. Here he wrote the Gospel. English scholars have, in the main, tended to accept the traditional view that the authority of the Apostle John underlies the Gospel, though the question as to how much of the text is his divides opinion. On the Continent there has been less inclination to attach importance to the tradition which associates the Apostle with Ephesus or with any of the Johannine writings.

After all that has been written about the author of the Fourth Gospel we are still far from being able to state with any kind of certainty who penned this truly great work. Each student must examine the evidence, weigh it for himself and arrive at his own conclusion. The discussion of the authorship by Scott Holland\* is the most telling that we have read, and we think that it is very nearly conclusive. There is, admittedly, strong evidence against apostolic authorship, though this is by no means overwhelming. Far too much has been built upon the name of "John the Elder", whom Dr. Inge describes as "nebulous." Acknowledging the problem and the various theories which take into account Papias' Fragment, the tradition that the Apostle John was martyred with his brother in the middle of the first century, the fact that

\* The Philosophy of Faith & the Fourth Gospel, 1920

the 'witness' passages (19:35; 21:24) are capable of more than one interpretation, the linguistic differences between the Fourth Gospel and the Apocalypse (which some consider to be from the hand of the Apostle) - we are bound not to be over-dogmatic till some fresh and conclusive evidence comes to light. If another - perhaps the Elder John - did actually write the Gospel (on the authority of the Apostle) then, we suggest, he must have had a mind of such close affinity with the son of Zebedee that he was able to interpret the latter's mind without losing any of the fulness and force which the Gospel so clearly reflects. The Elder would have been so close a friend and disciple of the Apostle that he entered thoroughly into an appreciation of his master's mode of thinking and religious genius. Though using certain phrases of his own, the disciple was able to convey in writing some of the massive ideas and conclusions of the Apostle's prolonged meditation upon the words and works of Jesus Christ. In recognizing the arguments for non-apostolic authorship of the Fourth Gospel, we still regard it as more probable that the son of Zebedee was the real creative genius, even if, for whatever reason, a disciple or friend were the actual penman of the final edition.

"But the main theme of the letter is the gathering in of the harvest," write Sanday and Headlam of Paul's Epistle

to the Romans. Numerous external circumstances prompted that particular letter there and then; but sooner or later somebody would have received the contents of it, for "the Epistle is the ripened fruit of the thought and struggles of the eventful years by which it had been preceded" (Romans, I.C.O., 1895, pp. xliii f.). We feel that what Romans was to Paul, the Fourth Gospel was to John. Controversy with aggressive Jews; the over-exaltation of the Baptist; steadily increasing Docetism; tendencies towards sacramentalism; the desire to supersede the Synoptic Gospels; a positive re-statement of Christianity, interpretive of historic facts - these are some of the immediate occasions of the writing of the Gospel which have been proposed. The broad purpose, within which any or all of the fore-going may be considered, is stated in 20:31, "These are written that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life in his name." But beneath this, we are persuaded, there was a harvest within the soul of the aged Apostle. Whereas the spiritual experience and Christian career of Paul, with its intensity and immensity of thought, issued in an Epistle, John's corresponding expression crystallized in a Gospel.

The religious and cultural environment of Ephesus was quite different from that of Palestine, and it is natural to expect to find Christianity affected by these new contacts. The admission into the Church of representatives from many and diverse spheres would introduce differences both theological and practical. There might be Jews with their synagogue background; there would certainly be Greeks whose alma mater was the philosophical school; to say nothing of the devotees of Isis, Mithras, Artemis and a multitude of other deities. These all brought the fruit of their peculiar, respective upbringing into the Christian body. Brotherly love and harmony did not always prevail, hence the need for warnings both in the First Epistle and the Gospel. At the same time heresies constantly threatened the unity of the Church by promoting schism wherever the false doctrines thoroughly infected true believers in this still adolescent ecclesia. There was persecution at the hands of hostile Jews around them, and the wider Gentile world was antagonistic and jealous. The situation in which the Ephesian Christians found themselves as the first century drew to a close was becoming complex and perplexing. There was a widespread intellectual agitation within the company of believers, a disturbance which would harbour its own peculiar perils. Speculative



problems were growing and troubling the Christians now, which did not appear in the earlier days when the Gospel was first preached within the boundaries of Judaea and Samaria. These questionings had repercussions in the faith of the Ephesian Church touching the very foundation of spiritual life and belief. Was it in such a moment of anxiety that these perplexed Christians turned to the aged Apostle and sought authoritative counsel and confirmation of their first beliefs? This seems a reasonable enough explanation of the occasion which actually gave birth to the Gospel. The ripened harvest of a long life's contemplation on the words and acts of Jesus the Christ was reaped in the Ephesian Church's intellectual crisis, and garnered in the Gospel which stands fourth in our New Testament. It was just the oracle sorely needed at that place and in that hour, providentially prepared over many decades in the soul of John. Like the great prophecies of the Old Order, it was to be of permanent value and significance yet originally given in a particular situation and occasioned by a certain need.

On taking up the Gospel, however, we are soon aware that the character of the answer to the problem is not itself speculative. The message that John has to commend to the needy Church is not wrapped up in some new

system of philosophy, nor is it in any sense a metaphysical type of dissertation. It is, notwithstanding some of its enigmatical statements and terms which are found in speculative vocabulary, pre-eminently a GOSPEL. It is, as Herder said, the echo of the first three Gospels in a higher key. Time and time again the Fourth Gospel has been combed in order to find just one more difference from the first three. We do not consider that in the Fourth Gospel, "the purely religious view is overlaid and obscured by the conception of Christianity as a speculative system, which makes its primary appeal to the logical intelligence" (E.F.Scott, *The Fourth Gospel*, 1908, p.98). Neither has John "taken over the Greek conception of God as absolute Being," nor have metaphysical categories "assumed the place of the moral and religious categories of primitive Christianity" (op.cit., p.256). In order to help the questioners in their intellectual ferment, John ignores the particular and individual problems and goes straight to an account of the Jesus whom he had known personally. It is wholly different in its standpoint from the other narratives. It is an interpretation in which the author is frank to explain what, in the life and ministry of Jesus, was appreciated at the time and what was not understood till later. An acute mind, dwelling

in a contemplative personality, had forged this unified conception after a penetrating insight and deep devotion had concentrated on the Jesus known both after the flesh and inwardly by the Paraclete. John gave to the Ephesian Church, in its intellectual perplexity, a Gospel, whose deliberate aim was to prove that Jesus was the Messiah and Son of God (together with something of the implications of these truths), and the demonstration of the significance of faith in Him as the means of life.

We do not suppose that the writer looked only at the immediate situation when he set down his Gospel on paper. He saw the mighty Gentile world, with its manifold speculative systems, under the all-penetrating influence of Greek culture. He had, throughout the half-century which had witnessed the writing and circulation of the Synoptic Gospels and the various Epistles, registered the power of the written word. An appetite was being sharpened for Christian writings, the Churches wanted instruction and guidance and edification. There was, in short, a reading public (if you like, a listening public) within the Church and on the fringe of the Church. But even outside there were those who wanted to read the Christians' literature and hear its Gospel. The Apostle wanted a point of contact. 'Messiah',

'Suffering servant', 'Son of David' would mean nothing to the pagan Gentile. Revelation, creation, mediation, inspiration - these were the themes of the fundamental Christian truths John desired to impart concerning Jesus whose Image and Presence burned in his soul. The richest Old Testament term which carried ideas of revelation, creation, mediation and inspiration was DABHAR,- WORD ! A Greek term, LOGOS, also meant WORD and had similar associations. With the most natural movement John takes this term and makes it subserviant to his express purpose. With the ideas of the D'BHAR YHWH inherent in the religious tradition of the intensely religious people from whom he sprang; familiar with the Greek renderings in the LXX or other versions of the Old Testament, and well aware that it was widely known, what was more natural than to take LOGOS, use it as the theme of the Prologue and say at once what he wants to say. Thus, in a series of brief bold steps, John conducts his reader from consideration of the pre-mundane existence of the Logos-Son of God, till he reaches the climax - "THE WORD BECAME FLESH AND WE BEHELD HIS GLORY." There is nothing speculative about that. No Stoic would be under any misapprehension by the time he reached the end of the Prologue. And what if the author did take over a hymn and shape it to suit his purpose ?

Like Humpty Dumpty in 'Alice Through the Looking-Glass,' John used a word and it means just what he chose it to mean, - neither more nor less. Our task is to find out JUST what it meant, by an examination of the Logos doctrine in the Prologue itself and then possible sources of the doctrine.

Having reached the point where he declares that the Divine Word became flesh, John steps over into Gospel history deliberately and easily - easily because logically. " 'We beheld!' This is his ground and motive for writing... He appears to have judged that the best security that he can give his Greek hearers against the snaring subtleties of a philosophy so foreign to his own, was to draw out at length the process by which he and others had, stage by stage, arrived at the great conclusion which he had just formulated. So we will tell the old story of their discovery - of how they learned to behold" (SCOTT HOLLAND, op.cit., p.167).

The fundamental message of the Fourth Gospel is the expression of an inward, burning impression resulting from the author's insight into the inner consciousness of the Person of Jesus Christ, in whom was the Divine Person of the Father and who was Himself one with the Father - cf.10:30-38. It is a remarkable appreciation which John

had of the nature of the Son of God, an extra-ordinary penetration into the soul of Him who said, "For thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world" (17:24). John's prolonged consideration of all he had seen and heard led him to this conclusion, that here in Jesus Christ is One with a unique knowledge of God. Here is Divine Illumination sent into the world's darkness in order to bring truth to light. Here is the Author of eternal Life, the very Resurrection and the Life, regenerating humanity from its death in sin. Here is the Divine-man, living consciously in active communion with God, yet seeking to engage in fellowship with men, that He might be for them the true and living Way, none other than the Mediator. These are the stupendous themes of the Gospel: they are the embryonic themes, doctrines as yet undeveloped, in the Prologue. The religious consciousness of Jesus is the key to the Gospel: no less is it the key which opens the Proem. The majority of scholarly opinions have deserted Harnack in this matter. Few agree with his statement, "The Prologue of the Gospel is not the key to its comprehension. It begins with a well-known great object, the Logos, re-adapts and transforms it - implicitly opposing false Christologies - in order to substitute for it Jesus Christ, the *μονογενὴς Θεός*, in order to unveil it as this Christ. The idea of

the Logos is allowed to fall from the moment that this takes place. The author continues to narrate of Jesus only with the view of establishing the belief that he is the Messiah, the Son of God" (Hist. of Dogma, E.T.,i,p.97).

The study of the Fourth Gospel, and the Prologue in particular, leads us to two premises which we feel bound to accept. First, that the Prologue should be approached from the same standpoint as that taken for an examination of the Gospel. To enter upon the study of the Prologue with philosophical pre-suppositions as to the "mystery" is contrary to the spirit of a truly critical investigation. Secondly, we view the Logos Hymn as the true overture to the Gospel, which leads naturally and logically to the main work. If it be insisted that the Prologue is to be interpreted in the light of the Philonic LOGOS as Divine Principle, then we think that Harnack's is the logical conclusion. But, as we hope to demonstrate in the ensuing thesis, the metaphysical key is not the only one which will go into the lock: still less is it the one which, to our mind, really opens the door.

On the other hand, the term LOGOS is not confined to the Prologue, nor are the mighty doctrines it is meant to suggest interned within the first fourteen verses of the Gospel. It is the view that the LOGOS of the Johannine

Prologue must be interpreted metaphysically, which has segregated the term there from its use in the body of the Gospel and allowed it no connection with the characteristically Jewish account that follows. In anticipation of the thesis developed below, we may say at once that we think the underlying significance of LOGOS in the Prologue to have its roots in Hebrew thought as opposed to Hellenistic. The answer to the "riddle" of John's Logos-hymn is not to be found in the realm of classical philosophy, Hellenistic lexicology or comparative religions. It is to be found in the living drama of a Divine redemptive purpose, gradually unfolded as age succeeded age, of which some record is preserved in the Old Testament. Thus John leads us by his opening phrase to the Dawn of Creation, on by a few leaps to the moment when the Divine Agent of Creation was made flesh, and immediately to the wild Arabah where a rugged prophet proclaims his DABHAR: and, before we realize where we are, Jesus, His mother and friends are enjoying a wedding-breakfast before our eyes. Here is Emmanuel, God - beneficent, creative, self-revealing - with us, personally declaring His will and mind and nature to men through personal EXPERIENCE. This is the LOGOS of the Prologue: this is the JESUS of the Gospel. The Eternal Logos of God was made flesh in order that ALL men might receive the gift of eternal life which God will



bestow on any who accept the offer. For John the problem of problems lay in the separation of creature from Creator; of children from Father; of sheep from Shepherd. The solution of it was every man's business - the ministry of the Baptist included the rousing of men to see that it was their business. For the Hellenic thinker the problem of problems was the solution of the dualism created by an inherent dichotomy of thought. The Absolute is set over against the Relative; the Infinite, over against the Finite; the Universal, over against the Particular. Philosophy sought to transcend the antithesis. Platonism attempted to find a way of mediation; Gnosticism, with its involved series of evolutionary stages, strove to bridge the gulf; Mysticism, with all its intriguing rites and formulae, pressed on towards the state of higher unity when all antithesis would cease to be. For John there is no such chasm. It was amazing, but it was Divinely-natural for the Creator to visit His lost creation in order to restore it to Himself. Infinite touches Finite without defiling Itself; God becomes man, in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. "He came unto His own folk", "the Word became flesh - and we beheld His glory." Where? It was in all the homeliness of a village wedding that He began to manifest His glory. In their intellectual perplexity John bids the Ephesians join

their Lord and Saviour in Cana of Galilee.

The boldness of the Prologue lies not so much in its employment of the term, but of declaring, without lengthy pre-ambles and apology, that the Word became flesh, and of saying this in Ephesus! It is not the end of John's message, the point towards which he is directing the narrative. It is the springboard from which he can leap into the challenge of the crisis that had developed in his beloved Church. The Gospel is, all through, a declaration not dialectic. It is an interpretive portrait on a large canvas, demanded by a pressing need, describing a Person whose image lived in the soul of the artist. The whole thing never lost reality. So long as the production was guided by the twin principles, "the Word made flesh" and "that believing ye may have life in his name", it would not lose its reality, and thus move away from its essentially experiential character into something more or less metaphysical. O.J. WRIGHT, in a recent book on the Fourth Gospel, offers a suggestive epithet for the author, "the historian of the consciousness of Jesus"; the Gospel is as personal as that (cf. "Jesus the Revelation of God", 1950).

Ere we enter the fuller study of the Prologue, and

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the maze of many lines of argument, we re-iterate that this a Gospel for the 'whosoever' (3:16), and savours not a whit of the esoteric. Not a religio-philosophical theory of the Person of Christ for a few, it is good news for all - including Greeks and those familiar with Hellenistic modes of thought. Happily there were terms of their own ready to hand for the proclamation of the evangel of a LIVING PERSON.

P A R T I.

T H E J O H A N N I N E P R O L O G U E



## c h a p t e r            o n e

T H E   N A T U R E   O F   T H E   L O G O S  
 I N   T H E  
 J O H A N N I N E   P R O L O G U E

THE Gospel according to St. John tells of the ushering-in of the age of the New Creation: the inauguration of the era of the sons of God by new-birth. It is in keeping with the paramount theme of the Gospel that the opening verses of the Prologue take the reader back to the beginning of the Old Creation, and beyond that, to the timeless eternity before the foundation of the world, when 'the Word was with God, and the Word was God.' In a simple, symmetrical declaration the author sets the corner-stone of his Gospel - precisely and deliberately -, not only on his own behalf however, for this first verse is to become the chief of numerous basic Christological statements in the New Testament:

Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ Λόγος,  
 καὶ ὁ Λόγος ἦν πρὸς τὸν Θεόν,  
 καὶ Θεὸς ἦν ὁ Λόγος.

First, the existence of the Logos; then, the personal existence in living fellowship with God; then, without any qualification, the Logos as partaking of the Divine Nature ( $\Theta\epsilon\acute{o}\varsigma$ , being anarthrous, is the predicate).

Positively viewed, this is the enunciation of the grounds which made the Incarnation possible. It is the theological pre-supposition which makes it intelligible and reasonable, namely, that the invisible, inscrutable God could be revealed to men. Negatively, it is the denial of any false doctrine that the Logos became personal at the moment of Incarnation. The absolute, eternal (yet personal) relation - and inter-relation - between the Logos and the Almighty God is the basis of a valid revelation.

No reader, familiar with the Old Testament, will turn to the Johannine Prologue without at once recalling the first verse, and then the first chapter, of the book of Genesis. It begins:  $\acute{\epsilon}\nu \alpha\rho\chi\eta\varsigma \acute{\epsilon}\pi\omicron\iota\eta\sigma\epsilon\nu \delta\ \Theta\epsilon\acute{o}\varsigma$   
 $\tau\omicron\nu \omicron\upsilon\rho\alpha\nu\omicron\nu \kappa\alpha\iota \tau\eta\nu \gamma\eta\nu.$

The context of  $\acute{\epsilon}\nu \alpha\rho\chi\eta\varsigma$  in John 1:1 suggests that the writer is referring us back to the state before the creation of the material universe. Of the Logos it is

plainly stated ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν not ἐγένετο .

The Apocalypse says much the same thing in 22:13, "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning (ἀρχή) and the end." In 19:13 the formidable Vindicator of God's righteousness, none other than the Word of the Johannine Prologue, the Jesus of the Fourth Gospel, is also designated ὁ λόγος τοῦ Θεοῦ , cf. also John 17:5. The far-reaching implication of these verses is, of course, that the Logos had pre-mundane existence. Not that this doctrine is peculiar to the Johannine writings, for Paul explicitly says, "And he is before all things, and in him all things consist" (Col. 1:17).

The claim of Wisdom in Proverbs 8:23 is suggestive:

κύριος . . . πρὸ τοῦ αἰῶνος ἐθεμελίωσέ  
 με ἐν ἀρχῇ, πρὸ τοῦ τὴν γῆν ποιῆσαι.

It will be seen in the section\* dealing with the Wisdom passage of Proverbs as a possible source for the Logos-hymn, that the resemblance between the ideas and style of Proverbs 8 and John's Prologue are not restricted to the opening verse of the Fourth Gospel. However, John does not use the term SOPHIA, and allows LOGOS to serve

\* Chapter vi (a)

his purpose, whether he had that other Greek term in mind or not. But there is good reason to think that it is the Hebrew doctrine of the Divine Word proceeding from the Godhead, which underlies the Johannine teaching on the relation of the Logos to the Head.

Whilst LOGOS is a Greek term, gathering around itself a wealth of speculative tradition which might be broadly called *λόγος ἐνδιάθετος*, the Logos of the Gospel is most certainly not immanent Divine Reason. In our study of the Prologue we have always to be on our guard lest our procedure and conclusions become unreal; an unreality created by giving undue consideration to the Hellenic (or any other non-Christian) associations of LOGOS, and thereby underestimating the extent to which - in everything he wrote in the Gospel - John was dominated by the living Person of Jesus Christ. John was not a Greek philosopher; he was a Christian theologian who, evidently, had strong mystical qualities of soul. If he uses terms which have a pre-dominantly speculative flavour due to their use in philosophical literature and academic vocabulary, that is not to say he was bound to have used such (on which there was no copyright) in any sense which we venture to pre-suppose.



The Logos-hymn is the introduction to the Gospel; it could equally take its place at the end as a fitting conclusion. It may well have been written last, and, so far as the author was concerned, it could have been in part the fruit of the profound thought which bore the Gospel. The actual shape given to this poem is intentionally prologic. But the themes of the Gospel are epitomized in it: the relation between time and eternity; the Old Creation and the New; patriarchs and prophets, on the one hand - apostles and disciples, on the other; history and pre-history; law and grace; death and life; faith and unbelief. It is impossible to divorce the Prologue from the main corpus of the Gospel, as some have tried to do, as though it were merely an academic appendage to a devotional biography. The various strands of Divine truth run right through the Prologue, and on into the Gospel proper. It is the Person of Jesus Christ, portrayed phase by phase, in the Gospel that qualifies the idea of the Logos, as well as the term LOGOS delineating the Christ.

Much discussion has taken place in connection with the phrase  $\pi\rho\acute{\omicron}\varsigma \tau\acute{\omicron}\nu \theta\epsilon\acute{\omicron}\nu$ , as to its precise meaning. A similar construction is used to describe the relation of Wisdom to God -  $\eta\mu\eta\nu \pi\alpha\rho' \alpha\upsilon\tau\acute{\omega}$  (Proverbs 8:30).

There is no reason to suppose any essential difference between the  $\tau\alpha\rho\alpha\ \sigma\omicron\iota$  of 17:5 and the  $\pi\rho\acute{o}\varsigma\ \tau\omicron\nu\ \Theta\epsilon\acute{o}\nu$  of 1:1. No more adequate translation can be found than "with God". The significance is that of active intercourse between the Word and the Father: the Word realizing its personality to the full in this communion. He is not any less personal than the Father Himself. Hoskyns notes that "the Coptic Version alone has been able to reproduce the meaning of the original Greek. The Word is distinguished from the Father, without, however, thereby introducing any suggestion of lack of complete union between them. Since the anarthrous Theos is personal, more is stated than that the Word is divine. The Word of God is no neuter thing, no mere power: he acts with personal consciousness and will" (The Fourth Gospel, 1939, vol.1, p.136). Perhaps that is all that can be usefully said at this point.

The careful placing of the predicate first, for emphasis, and the omission of the article, in the third phrase of the first verse, serve to make it clear that the Logos is not identified with the totality of Divine existence. Had there been an article, the third proposition would have contradicted the second, and there would have been grounds for the deduction of a doctrine

approximating to later Sabellianism. We are immediately confronted here by the mystery of the relation of the members of the Godhead in its twofold aspect. Without denying the essential divinity of the Word, John is concerned to indicate a transcendent dependence of the Word upon the Father - a fundamental element in the exposition of the Person of Jesus Christ which follows in the Gospel. The thought of Wisdom as the companion of God occurs in Proverbs 8:22, 27, 30; Wisdom 9:4; and Ecclus. 1:1.

The divine Word, of pre-temporal existence, personal and in active communion with Almighty God, is the only One able to make known the Father to men. He alone can declare the invisible God whom no man hath at any time beheld. Those attributes qualify the Logos for His work as Revealer. And, as if to underline these three qualifications, John repeats (in a characteristic manner) the substance of the first verse in the second.

The Word of God was not first heard when, emerging from the seclusion of the Nazareth home, He entered the synagogue to startle everyone with a proclamation of His identity with the Servant of Isaiah 61. The conception and birth of the Son of God was not His first connection

with this world of matter. For, He who was before all creation was Himself the active medium and Agent of it. How do men apprehend God? Is it not through His works (cf. Rom. 1:18 ff.)? And then, in later ages was not God made known by words spoken through the agency of chosen mouth-pieces? In the beginning of created things God did not reveal His Being and Will through the medium of law (as the Pharisees taught), nor through reason (as the Hellenic teaching would suggest), but through the creative power of the Divine Word. "In the beginning" God spoke - "Let there be light" - and it was done, through the eternal Logos. As each phase of creation was inaugurated God spoke ("And God said") and, step by step, the progressive movement from CHAOS to KOSMOS went forward. The Psalmist takes up the idea and by poetic personalization says, "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth" (33:6). Not far removed in thought are the verses, "He sendeth out his commandment upon earth; his word runneth very swiftly" (Ps. 147:15), and "So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please...." (Isaiah 55:11).

Verse 3 continues, "All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that hath been made." The problem of the punctuation remains. Whilst it is of some significance in Christological controversy, and some support was claimed by the Arians from the reading which puts the full-stop after  $\xi\nu$ , for those who accept an orthodox trinitarian Christology the two readings have much the same meaning. The essentially Hebrew idea was carried over into Judaism, and we find it in such passages as II Esdras 6:38, "Thou saidst, Let heaven and earth be made, and thy Word perfected the work." It was this doctrine which Philo embraced and worked out in his Logos doctrine. True life is eternally in the Word of God. When that life goes forth it results in created life. The Jesus of the Gospel declared Himself to be life, "I am the resurrection, and the life; he that believeth on me, though he die, yet shall he live" (11:25); "I am the way, and the truth, and the life" (14:6). Paul avers, in the same line of tradition, that through the One who is life all created things cohere, "And he is before all things, and in him all things consist" ( $\tau\upsilon\nu\epsilon\sigma\tau\eta\kappa\epsilon\upsilon$ , Col. 1:17).

"In him was life", verse 4; or "That which has come into being was, in him, life" (Bernard), "and the life was the

light of men." In the Genesis story of creation, light is associated with life, for light pre-supposes life. The first phase of the mighty act of creation was that of light (Gen.1:3), and consequent upon it there came into being the series of living species both of vegetation, and of beasts and men. Man was the culmination of the whole creation, the most complex of the living creatures and, above all, unique in this respect - that he bore the image of God. In the second chapter of Genesis, in the account of the first man (woman, his helpmeet being created subsequently), life and light are again introduced together in the trees of life and of knowledge, 2:9. In Psalm 36:9, life and light occur in juxtaposition, "For with thee is the fountain of life: and in thy light shall we see light." In Proverbs 3:18, it is said of Wisdom, (who has so many affinities with the Logos), "She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her." Again, in Proverbs 8:35, 36, "For whoso findeth me (Wisdom) findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the Lord. But he that sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul: all they that hate me love death."

The two figures are found in later Jewish thought, the companion images which describe the effects of obedience to the Wisdom of God revealed in the Mosaic Law (I Bar.4:2,3);

cf. II Bar.59:2; 77:16; IV Ezra 14:20, 21, with Isaiah 9:2,3.

But when the New Age dawns no longer are these powerfully suggestive terms bound to the Law, but describe the grace of God that is now revealed through Jesus Christ, the Word of God. The Fourth Gospel illustrates these twin ideas in the miracles of the raising of Lazarus by the 'Life of the world', and the restoration of sight to the blind man by the 'Light of the world', John ch.11 and ch.9. That which Paul ascribes to God (in Acts 17:28) - that in Him we live, and move, and have our being - John, in the Prologue, endorses. He qualifies it only to the extent of introducing the benevolent mediation of the Logos, Himself the Life and Light of men.

The significance of 'light' in this verse has been variously interpreted. Calvin suggests that it is the UNDERSTANDING that most distinctly differentiates man from the rest of animal creation. But this scarcely coheres with another Johannine key phrase, "God is light" (I Jn.1:5), where 'light' is not synonymous with 'reason'. Hengstenberg (Commentary on the Gospel of St. John, E.T., 1865, 1, pp.24ff.) argues for 'salvation' as being the natural meaning in the face of consistent New Testament usage. Moreover, he is at pains to show that prior to the Incarnation mankind, including Israel, was in

darkness. "Christ in various connections calls Himself the Light, and is so called by John, always in such a manner that it is either expressly stated or assumed that the light did not shine until His advent in the flesh. So, e.g., in 3:19, 8:12, 12:35, but especially 9:5 where to be light, and to be in the world, are represented as inseparably connected" (p.27). Hengstenberg is emphatic that, whilst life and light (which to him are synonymous) have been in the Logos from the beginning, it was only when the appointed day of salvation and grace shall have come that the light shall shine upon men.

It is not stated here that the Word was the light of men, but that he is light through the medium of life. Godet refuses to allow an identification of light and life with the same significance here. He considers that, though light is a figure for salvation in Scripture, "this profound word appears to us to denote, in the language of John, the knowledge of moral good, or moral good fully conscious of itself in the living beings who realize it. The word TRUTH in John expresses the same thing without a figure. Light, thus understood, is accessible to no being on earth except man, the one being endowed with the inner organ necessary to perceive



moral good" (Commentary on the Gospel of St. John, E.T., 1876, 1, p.338). What Godet says, in brief, is that light proceeds from life; that the Logos is light through the mediation of life; and that the new Creation in Christ regains an inner spiritual light which is directly the fruit of the new moral life - the light clarifying in proportion to the intensifying of that life.

There can be little doubt that John pre-supposes an acquaintance with the Genesis narratives on the part of his readers. In vv.1-3 the references are to Genesis 1; in v.4, the allusion is to Genesis 2; and now, in v.5, the underlying truth of Genesis 3 appears. The Logos had been the Agent of the creation of the physical and animal worlds. More than that, He was the life, and, through life, the light of men. Without attempting to engage in an account of the Fall of man, John quite suddenly introduces DARKNESS, the actual result of the entrance of sin into human life. With the coming of sin, the fellowship between innocent man and a holy God (through the mediation of the Logos) was severed, and a great darkness covered the inner spirit of man.

Westcott neatly sums up the relation between vv. 4 & 5, "In v.4 the divine essence and the divine purpose of creation are declared from the side of God; in v.5 the evangelist describes the actual state of things from the side of man." To which we should like to add the qualification, 'from the moment when the perfect relationship, spoken of in v.4, was disrupted.' True moral light perished with the extinction of eternal life in man. Satan, God's eternally implacable foe, became 'the god of this world' and blinded the minds of men (II Cor.4:4) - the 'prince of this world' who has no part with the Logos (cf. Jn.14:30). Instead of man rejoicing in a condition of moral sanity, he was benighted within so that he could not make those moral choices and decisions whereby he should attain to spiritual maturity. Instead of increasing in the knowledge of the true and the good, which God intended to be the result of communion between man and the Logos, men "professing themselves to be wise, they became fools" to such an extent that they "changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man" (Rom.1:22, 23). Apart from the shining of the true light through the coming of the Word in person, the world lies in darkness (cf. IV Ezra 14:20, and I Jn.5:19). The Jews believed this and looked for a

new heaven and a new earth; the Christians knew that to reject the Word was to remain in darkness. The Evangelist does not attempt to explain the origin of the darkness. He goes no further than tacitly to assume the doctrine of Genesis 3. Some have sought to make the author of this Gospel a dualistic philosopher; but this verse cannot be used to imply a kingdom of evil co-eternal with that of good.

In passing to the second clause we encounter the controversial word, *κατέλαβεν*. It usually means 'seize', whether with the mind - and so 'comprehend'; or with the hand - and so 'overcome', 'destroy'. For the first alternative we may cite such examples as Ephesians 3:18, "(ye) may be strong to apprehend...what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge." On the other hand, I Thessalonians 5:4 illustrates the second meaning, "that that day should not overtake you as a thief." Therefore the fifth verse of the Prologue may be rendered, "the darkness did not comprehend it", i.e., failure to understand it; hence the Vulgate rendering, "tenebrae eam non comprehenderunt." But equally legitimate is the translation, "the darkness did not overtake it", i.e., to seize it in pursuit.

It has this sense in John 12:35, "Walk while ye have the light, that darkness overtake you not." However, the word must be interpreted by its own context. Some of the Fathers, including Origen and Chrysostom, translate verse 5 of the Prologue with the idea of darkness unable to extinguish the light.

Bernard, who takes the view, in any case, that the verse does not refer to the rejection of the Word by the Jews - and which could not properly appear until after the statement of His historical advent, in verses 9, 10 - thinks that "it is the spiritual interpretation of the Creation narrative that is still in view" (John, I.C.C., vol.i, p.6). He supports this by an appeal to a classical parallel (Herodotus 1. 87), and by reference to Wisdom 7:29 ("Night succeeds the Light, but evil does not overcome wisdom"). In taking this interpretation, like Westcott before him, Bernard is content to leave the line as a rather broad, poetic generalization, and actually sums it up in this terse sentence, "Good always conquers evil."

Hoskyns, and we think rightly, goes unhesitatingly for the other interpretation of *κατέλαβεν*, and the corresponding exegesis of the clause. "The reference

here is primarily not to the age-long opposition of men to God's revelation of Himself (I Bar.3:12-14, cf. Psalm 36), but to the opposition of the Jews to Jesus which issued in the crucifixion." He adds the epigram, "The victory of the Jews was, in fact, their defeat, for Jesus overcame the world (16:33; cf. 12:31, 14:30)." It is possibly as true to modify this and say that the words, "the darkness comprehended it not," refer to the rejection of the Gospel by the majority of men, but especially by the nation of Israel to whom such privileges had been given during the long period prior to the coming of the Light.

We must now suggest reasons for inclining to this view. Whilst the conflict between God (or Jesus Christ) and Satan is portrayed under the figures of light and darkness, the Hebrew mind was not apt to think in abstract terms. The very statement "good always conquers evil" is essentially a Westerner's way of thinking; and John was not a Westerner, indeed, were most of the authors of the Scriptures. The Israelite did not conceive the age-old struggle as between abstract forces, but as between personalities. Much less would the Christian, with the knowledge (for the Apostles a first-hand knowledge) of the intensely personal conflict between Jesus and the 'prince of this world.' They knew that the temptations in the wilderness

were real soul-wrestlings of Jesus with a personal enemy, which were to recur and intensify until they culminated in the agony of Gethsemane and the final triumph of the death on Calvary. Verse 5 epitomizes the section that immediately follows, down to verse 13: and verses 9-11 are plainly the elaboration of the brief declaration in verse 5. Again, there is a further commentary on this verse in 3:19-20, where the meaning is that Christ's personal appearance in time precipitates a judgment in men's souls, "And this is judgment, that light is come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the light." The parallel in I John 2:8 employs the same verb in the same tense ( φάινει ), and is applied to the historical appearance of Christ and the preaching of the Gospel, "The darkness is past, and the true light now shineth." Whilst the κατάλαβη of 12:35 is to be translated 'overtake', the object is 'you', and it in no way detracts from the value of the corroboration which the verse affords in the interpretation which we propose for the fifth verse of the Prologue. We have the Old Testament expectation of the Messiah couched in terms of the advent of light, eg. Isaiah 9:2, "The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light...upon them hath the light shined" (cf. Mtt.4:15, 16). We may note also the declaration of Zecharias in Luke 1:79.

The fact referred to in verse 4, and the historical event of verse 5, as far as time is concerned, are separated by the long interval between the Fall of man and the coming of Jesus. Verse 5 prepares for, and summarizes, the section which immediately follows. But before passing on to that section, it is convenient to remind ourselves of the tremendous truths, of such far-reaching significance, that John has enunciated in a remarkably concentrated manner in the first five verses. The Logos of God had pre-temporal existence, is personal and Divine. He was the Agent in the Divine act of creation. He is the Source of all life, and in particular that form which is called 'eternal life' in the Gospel, or signified by the term 'Divine image' (with reference to Genesis 1:26, cf. Col.3:10); the concomitant and consequent faculty of discerning between moral good ("light") and moral evil ("darkness"). The long period of spiritual and moral darkness ended with a personal visitation of the Logos, who was unrecognized and unreceived by men in general, and by the nation of Israel in particular.

THE HISTORIC MANIFESTATION  
OF THE LOGOS

(Verses 6 - 9 form an explanatory comment:)

6. There came a man, sent from God,  
whose name was John.
7. The same came for witness,  
that he might bear witness of the light,  
that all might believe through him.
8. He was not the light,  
but came that he might bear witness  
of the light.
9. There was the true light,  
even the light which lighteth every man,  
coming into the world.
10. He was in the world,  
and the world was made by him,  
and the world knew him not.
11. He came unto his own,  
and they that were his own  
received him not.
12. But as many as received him,  
to them gave he the right  
to become children of God,  
even to them that believe on his name:
13. Which were born, not of blood,  
nor of the will of the flesh,  
nor of the will of man, but of God.

It is one of the stylistic idiosyncrasies of the author of the Fourth Gospel to pause periodically and, in parenthesis, to comment on some of the things he has recorded.



In verses 6 - 9 there is such an explanatory note, in which the rhythmical form, evident in the first five verses, is suspended for a brief space and the parenthesis put in straightforward prose. John omits, as does Mark, the birth and infant narratives of the life of Jesus: and John actually devotes more space in his Gospel to the ministry of the Baptist than any other evangelist. The Prologue has begun with "a mystical hymn about the Logos, which reminds the reader that the true beginnings of the wonderful life are lost in the timeless and eternal life of God" (Bernard, p.7). But it is not the purpose of the evangelist to set forth a poetic speculation about the eternal and transcendent life of an ethereal Logos. John, as plainly as Luke, states the specific purpose of his own Gospel: "But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name" (20:31).

It has been suggested that this particular introduction of the Baptist was made in order to counter the claims of some Christians who exalted the last prophet of the Old Order out of his proper place as the fore-runner, the mere servant, of the Messiah. It is probable, for example, that a group of disciples of the Baptist was met by Paul in Ephesus (Acts 19:1-7): and some evidence

exists to indicate that by the end of the first century there was a Baptist community in that city whose members owed allegiance to the latter even above that due to Christ. But there is really no need to seek for a reason for this mention of John the Baptist beyond its aptness in introducing the subject of the coming of the Logos - pre-mundane and Divine - in human form into the realm of space and time. Indeed, the very fact that the Baptist is brought into the Prologue at all in connection with the Logos is in itself an exaltation. He was the unique herald of the Messiah.

"There arose (ἐγένετο) a man, John by name, sent from God." The very term used to describe the historical appearance of the Baptist contrasts with the word (ᾔν) which describes the eternal existence of the Logos. "The same came (ἦλθε)" suggests the public appearance of the herald as opposed to his birth (ἐγένετο). The phrase ἐγένετο ἄνθρωπος ἀπεσταλμένος is not a circumlocution for ἀπεστάλη. John the Baptist was sent by God for one supreme purpose, to bear witness to the light. The Gospel is full of the idea of witness: it is one of the fundamental conceptions (μαρτυρία, μαρτυρεῖν, are frequent in the Fourth Gospel, though infrequent in the rest of the New Testament.) To bear witness is

inseparable from belief: it is co-relative with it. Testimony is given with a view to faith: and the only belief that is valid and effectual is one based on a true witness of Divine truth. It is one of the curious paradoxes of the Gospel-stories that the LIGHT needed a preparatory witness. The fact is, of course, that by the very conditions of the Incarnation, voluntarily undertaken, the glory of the invisible Godhead was concealed under the cloak of the flesh (v.14). It was necessary to send the herald to bestir men - blinded by their sinful condition - to a realization of who was in their midst, "that ALL through Him might believe", i.e. believe on Christ through John, (not on God through Christ, as Grotius, Ewald, Abbott). Verse 8 serves to re-inforce what has been said in the previous statement, and to emphasize the absolute superiority of Jesus to John the Baptist, whether some polemical intention be understood or not.

The ambiguity of verse 9 was appreciated at least as early as Origen ('In Ioann.', ed. Brooke, 18.216). The problem centres chiefly in the agreement of the present participle  $\epsilon\rho\chi\acute{o}\mu\epsilon\nu\omicron\nu$  ('coming'). There is also the precise interpretation of  $\hat{\eta}\nu$  ('was'). In taking 'coming' with 'every man' there are two possible

renderings:

- (i) "The true light, which lightens every man coming into the world, was (present)."
- (ii) "It (i.e. the 'light' of vv.7,8) was the true light which lightens every man coming into the world."

The first of these two alternatives was promoted by Meyer, but stands to be criticized on two chief grounds, that this is an irregular use of the verb  $\eta\gamma\gamma\iota\lambda\alpha\iota$ ; and that, if at the time when John announced Jesus, the light (i.e. in Jesus) was already in their midst, the effect of what the Evangelist wants to say is considerably lessened. The other translation is sounder from the point of view of the verb, and this leaves us to comment on the linking of the participle with 'every man.' This was the rendering in the Latin, Syriac and Coptic versions. It is, however, to be criticized on the following grounds:

- (a) The phrase is superfluous, and does not add usefully anything to the idea of 'every man.'
- (b) 'Coming into the world' is nowhere used in John's Gospel with the meaning of a man being born into the world.
- (c) It may be urged that  $\tau\alpha\upsilon\tau\alpha\ \tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\ \epsilon\pi\chi\omicron\mu\epsilon\upsilon\omicron\upsilon\varsigma$  would be the more natural Greek if that significance were intended.

In favour of this rendering, it may be asserted that the

common Rabbinic periphrasis for 'all men' (i.e. 'every man coming into the world,' c.f. Schlatter, D.E.J., Strack-Billerbeck) underlies the usage here. "v.9 may be translated quite simply, 'there was the true light that lightens all men' " (Hoskyns, p.141). Further, this rendering would only be possible in connection with the interpretation of verse 5, in which the Logos is considered as the inner Revealer by whom the human conscience is illuminated.

In taking the  $\epsilon\rho\chi\acute{o}\mu\epsilon\nu\omicron\nu$  with  $\phi\acute{\omega}\varsigma$  (R.V.), there are still two possibilities:

- (i) "The true light, which lightens every man, was coming into the world."
- (ii) "There was the true light, even the light which lightens every man, coming into the world."

Both of these accord with the interpretation of verse 5, which we offer here, that the advent of the Incarnate Logos is intended. Granted that the use of the verb  $\epsilon\iota\upsilon\delta\iota$  with a participle is a form common in John to indicate the imperfect tense, this construction here lays too great an emphasis on the idea of 'coming', whereas it is the 'light' that is under special consideration.

Thus, by elimination, we reach the conclusion that the most suitable translation is the second. John uses the phrase "coming into the world" of the advent of Jesus a number of times (6:14; 11:27; 16:28; 18:37), and He is spoken of as a light "coming into the world" in 3:19 - "the light is come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the light": and in 12:46 - "I am come a light into the world." The illumination of 'all men' by the Logos is thus the universality of the preaching of the Gospel by the appearing of the Logos as Jesus Christ in this world of time and space. The eternal, invisible, Divine Word, the very Agent of Creation has invaded the darkened sphere of mankind as the true light which is able to lighten everyone by His coming.

The careful choice of the qualifying adjective with  $\phi\acute{\omega}\varsigma$  calls for comment.  $\acute{\alpha}\lambda\eta\theta\iota\nu\acute{o}\varsigma$  is related to  $\acute{\alpha}\lambda\eta\theta\eta\varsigma$  as 'genuine' is to 'true.' It corresponds to the Latin VERUS, and is illustrated in the Nicene Creed - "VERY God of VERY God." God is  $\acute{\alpha}\lambda\eta\theta\eta\varsigma$  in as much as He cannot lie: but He is  $\acute{\alpha}\lambda\eta\theta\iota\nu\acute{o}\varsigma$  in that He is distinguished from all other pretenders to the Divine Office. John the Baptist was no liar - he was  $\tau\acute{o}$   $\phi\acute{\omega}\varsigma$   $\tau\acute{o}$   $\acute{\alpha}\lambda\eta\theta\acute{\epsilon}\varsigma$  : but the Word was the perfect, final

light - THE light, par excellence, τὸ φῶς τὸ ἀληθινόν .

"So, too, when the Baptist announces, 'The law was given by Moses, but grace and TRUTH came by Jesus Christ' (Jn. 1:17), the antithesis cannot be between the false and the true, but only between the imperfect and the perfect, the shadowy and the substantial" (TRENCH, N.T. Synonyms, p.28).

Verse 9 continues, "He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not." Two very distinct interpretations may be offered, and it is admittedly not easy to make a final decision. Bernard is inclined to embrace the two and think that the Evangelist had both aspects in mind. Hengstenberg wanted to confine the significance of the text to the Incarnation, and insists that it is in keeping with the whole conception of the Evangelist that the light was not in the world before the advent of Christ. He cites a passage from Bengel in order to criticize it, "The Evangelist adds this that no one may so understand the coming mentioned in the verse preceding, as though the Light had not been previously in the world" (op.cit., p.37). Hengstenberg goes on, to quote his own words, "After it has been said just before, that the Light has come into the world, it cannot be said without further explanation, that it was already in the world" (p.37). The fact, however, that man sinned and

created a breach in the positive relation of active communion between himself and the Logos, and so with God, did not mean at all that the Logos deserted altogether the world and all that He had been instrumental in forming. Moreover, ἦν in the first phrase of verse 10 indicates continuous existence, as opposed to ἐρχόμενον (v.9) or βλάθεν (v.11) in respect of His appearance on earth, or ἐγένετο (v.10) in respect of the act of creation. We cannot go as far as Bernard when he says, "The Logos was immanent in the world before the Incarnation, which has not yet been mentioned in the hymn..." True the Incarnation as such is not mentioned, but under another figure it is signified in v.5; but Bernard does not consider this a direct reference to the Incarnation (it is rather, for him, "the spiritual interpretation of the Creation narrative"). We do agree with the first part of the statement, and see that the first phrase, "He was in the world," leads easily and naturally to the second, "and the world was made by him," if the first refers to the universal presence of the Word before His Incarnation.

"The world knew him not," i.e., the world did not recognize him - 'the world' being "the sum of created being, which belongs to the sphere of human life as an



ordered whole considered apart from God, and in its moral aspect represented by humanity (WESTCOTT, John, 1882, p.8). Even more crisply A.M.RAMSEY defines the term, "the world means the pattern of human life in rebellion against God" (The Glory of God and the Transfiguration of Christ, 1949, p.78). John describes concisely, yet pathetically, that He who was the Maker of the supreme species of Creation, and the evidence of whose Divine and infinite creative genius fills the world around, was undiscerned. Paul says the same thing using the same key-word, *ἐγὼ*, in I Corinth.1:21, "For seeing that in the wisdom of God, the world through its wisdom knew not God..." (cf.Rom.1:19-21). It is not at all certain that the visitation of the Logos in the Incarnation is covered by any part of verse 10. True that later in the Gospel and in the first Epistle John speaks of the failure of the 'world' to recognize the Christ in the flesh (14:7; 16:3; 17:25; I Jn.3:1). But verse 10 is a unit, and it is a strange leap of thought, from the idea of the blindness of the world to the inner revelation of the Logos prior to His advent, to the fact of the entrance of Logos as the man Christ Jesus on the stage of history. Furthermore, it takes from the full force of the next verse, in which there is no doubt as to the allusion ( *ἡλθεν* ). Bernard tries to blend

the two interpretations, and rather vaguely says, "the meaning of 'the world knew him not' cannot be confined to the Immanent Logos" (p.14). He quotes a saying about Wisdom which has, he thinks, a resemblance to this verse. We suggest that it approximates more to verse 11. The passage is from Enoch xlii.1, "Wisdom found no place where she might dwell; then a dwelling-place was assigned to her in the heavens. Wisdom came to make her dwelling among the children of men and found no dwelling-place; then Wisdom returned to her place and took her seat among the angels." There seems no need to find more in v.10 than reference to the tragedy of the darkness which covered the soul of mankind from the Fall to the Incarnation. But even then the Logos was very close to men, both in the impress upon his works and by His Spirit - the means by which the Logos could be present in the world in His non-incarnate state.

From the sad portrayal of verse 10 we pass to the worst of all situations, "He came unto his own, and they that were his own received him not." That is, He came unto His own property or home, and His own people refused to own Him. In time, in space, visible and tangible the Logos entered His own house - the house of Israel, in a special way the house of God, the natural home of the

true light, and the sphere of the Word's own ministry,  
Matt.15:24.

The universality of the mission of Jesus did not alter the fact that there was a special relationship between God and the nation of Israel. Christ Jesus was the 'universal man', but He was at the same time the fulfilment of a series of prophecies which had special significance in respect of Israel, even as His incarnate life had a unique relation to them. "Ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me from among all peoples" (Ex.19:5), is typical of many Divine declarations about Israel to be found scattered throughout the Old Testament. And there is no mistaking the words of Malachi 3:1, "The Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to His temple; behold, He shall come." In turning to Christ's own words about the affinity between the Messiah and Israel, we note some of His strongest language directed against those who were privileged to be husbandmen in Yahweh's vineyard, and yet, ignoring - indeed, rather deliberately refusing to recognize - the Heir, went to great lengths to destroy Him (cf.Mk.12:1ff.).

Not least is the Fourth Gospel itself a source of information regarding the standing of Israel. In 2:16,

Jesus calls the Temple "my Father's house;" in 4:22, "for salvation is from the Jews;" in 5:39 Jesus says of the Jewish Scriptures, "they bear witness of me", (cf. also 8:35, 56; 10:2; 12:41). Notwithstanding the fact that God "will give the vineyard unto others" (Mk. 12:9), Israel as a distinct people feature in New Testament Eschatology; Matthew (12:38ff.; and Revelation 21:12, 19:28, are two such examples. It is, therefore, unnecessary to go beyond the simple interpretation of "his own", i.e. Israel. It is not impossible that the thought is wider and that the rejection of Christ by the world of both Jew and Gentile is in view. But we think that Westcott has adequately summed up the significance: "The Incarnation is regarded in the two places (i.e., verses 11, 14) under different aspects. Here it is regarded in relation to the whole scheme of Redemption, as the crowning revelation to the ancient people of God; in verse 14, it is regarded in its distinctive character as affecting humanity. Here it is seen from the side of national failure, there of individual faith" (p.8). There is, however, no clue that the advent of the Word in this verse alludes to the theophanies and prophetic revelations of the Old Testament (as Lange thought).

It is another of the paradoxical tragedies of Israel that at the time when the people of God were apparently most ready for their Messiah, they not only failed to recognize Him, but crucified Him as a blasphemer and charlatan. Never in their whole history had the Israelites, in theory, been better prepared to revere the supreme self-manifestation of God in the Person of the Messiah. Their monotheistic enthusiasm had reached the point almost of fanaticism; they were thoroughly grounded in the Law and the Prophets and the Writings; their aversion to idolatry had risen to a new high-level. The Babylonian Captivity and the long period of oppression had had a salutary effect on the people, and Israel was a nation which had more manifestly approximated to a Messianic community in the first century A.D., full of Messianic expectation, than at any previous period. Thus, from the standpoint of the Jews, what Paul wrote in Galatians 4:4 ("But when the fulness of the time came, God sent forth his son,..."), John in his own phraseology repeats in verse 11 of the Prologue - 'his own' having the special significance just indicated.

It was, then, no chance that the Word came into the world when He did, and where He did. God had by no means forsaken His Covenant with Israel (cf. Rom. 3:1ff.), and in

appearing in Palestine the Word had come to His own home - at a time when, in theology and in religion if not in spirit - the nation was most prepared for the advent. In fact, as the Gospel continues to record, the 'house' of God did not receive (οὐ παρέλαβον) the Logos, as the Prologue has already hinted (v.5)- οὐ κατέλαβεν. One of the dominant themes of the Fourth Gospel is 'rejection', and, as in the case of so many other themes, it is found epitomized in the Prologue. Jesus declared to Nicodemus that "ye receive not our witness" (3:11); to the multitudes in Jerusalem, "I am come in my Father's name and ye receive me not" (5:43; and cf. the context of that verse). There is, too, that poignant and profoundly significant verse, 6:66, and its context (6:60-71) - "Upon this many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him."

"The God invoked by the nation appears in His temple, and is crucified by His own worshippers !" (GODET, op.cit., p.351).

In verses 12, 13, John passes from a consideration of the universal operation of the Logos and, in verse 11, a narrowing-down to the visitation among a particular nation, to the personal and individual activity of the Source of the new-birth.

"But as many as received Him, to them gave He the right to become children of God, even to them that believe on His name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."

If the Prologue were to finish at verse 11, having described the appearing of the Logos-creator and His inability to triumph over the resistance of Israel - God's specially chosen and prepared people - it would seem that the mission of the Word had been a failure. In actual fact it was not so, as John is about to show.

A wholly new principle of relationship between God and men is to be inaugurated. Not that it was entirely without anticipation in the Old Dispensation, for, we are told, "Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned unto him for righteousness" (Rom.4:3, cf. Gen.15:6). But this principle, understood by not

more than a few Old Testament worthies (Abraham, the author of Psalm 32:2, Jeremiah e.g. in 31:31ff., and Habakkuk in 2:4), was either buried under the vast legal system or undiscovered because of spiritual blindness and ignorance on the part of Israel. But now, the Old Covenant having become obsolete, a new one is to be established, and on an entirely new basis. God's relations with mankind become more intimate: the time has come for the fullest realization of the principle so clearly enunciated by Ezekiel (e.g. ch. 18) that no longer "shall the son bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son" (v. 20). A new humanity is to be born, begotten by direct operation of God through the agency of the Word on the grounds of faith. The OBJECT of this regenerating faith is the Logos as He would be known in His incarnate life and through His work as such. Israel as a nation did not welcome the Logos-Messiah, but certain individuals within Israel did believe. These spiritually-minded men and women accepted the claims of the Word and formed the nucleus of the NEW ISRAEL of the regenerated. Official Jewry disowned the Messiah of promise in the Person of the Word made flesh, and they suffered an irreparable loss. If salvation is of the Jews, it is for "whosoever".



The fate of those who welcomed not the Logos when He came is not disclosed in the Prologue, though it is mentioned in the body of the Gospel. The result of rejection of the light is continuance in darkness, and the nature of that darkness may be concluded from the contrasting blessedness of the soul which accepts the light. But verse 12 presents us with the privilege accruing to those who welcomed the Word into their lives. It is summed up by the term RIGHT (ἐξουσία), or new standing which the believer has in the sight of God and issuing in a unique relationship - CHILDREN BY DIVINE BEGETTING (τέκνα Θεοῦ). It is even more bold a statement than Paul's "children by adoption" (υἱοθεσία), and is characteristically Johannine - cf., 11:52; I Jn.3:1, 2, 10; 5:2). "The phrase implies a community of life between God the Father and His children, which is described in v.13 as due to the fact that they are begotten of God (cf.3:3f.)" (Bernard, p.16). υἱοί does not necessarily carry any meaning beyond that of 'adoption', as a civil transaction. But the life of the Father is transmitted to the ΤΕΚΝΟΥ.

Who, then, exactly are those who may claim to be the 'children of God'? Even those 'who believe on his name', i.e. those who believe in the Word and personally accept Him.

The idea, 'child of God', which is seen here in a concrete sense, does not occur in the Old Testament. In the few instances where the terms FATHER and CHILD are used, not only is the dominant thought that of affection or compassion, but the actual word *τέκνον* is not found, save in Hosea 11:1. Psalm 102:13 has *υἱός*, Jeremiah 38:20, *πατρίδιόν*. There is certainly no fully developed idea of a select body of individuals brought into a new relationship through a personal committal of themselves in an individual act of faith in Yahweh, least of all in a Divine Mediator: which relationship issues in the imparting of Divine life. The new sonship is the very crux of the New Age, whose basic distinction from any previous sonship is further confirmed by such declarations as Matthew 11:11, 12, John 1:17, and 7:39. We are not depreciating the lofty conception of the Fatherhood of God in the Old Testament, where He is Father of the Messianic King (Psalm 89:26), the "Father of the fatherless, and a judge of the widows" (Psalm 68:5), the Father of the nation Israel (Jer. 31:9). And truly it is a paternal idea which underlies the "lovingkindness" of Yahweh (e.g. Ex. 34:6,7). The conception of Divine Fatherhood is fundamental in the New Testament, but the pre-dominant usage is in connection with the Sonship of Jesus and the sonship of those who believe in God through

Jesus the Word of God. The expression "Father of lights" (i.e. Creator of the celestial luminaries) is found in James 1:17; and the "Father of spirits" in Hebrews 12:9. The implied Fatherhood of God in a similar usage occurs in Acts 17:28, 29, where 'offspring' is γένος. The exclusive character of the Fatherhood of God in the New Age, with its consequent division of mankind into two entirely separate groups, is the consistent teaching of the Fourth Gospel and is briefly summed up in 1:12.

The typically Johannine phrase ΠΙΣΤΕΥΕΙΝ Εἰς occurs 35 times in John, "always referring to God or Christ, except Εἰς τὴν μαρτυρίαν (I Jn.5:10). The phrase ΠΙΣΤΕΥΕΙΝ Εἰς τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ occurs again 2:23; 3:18 (cf. I Jn.5:13), but not in the speeches of Jesus Himself" (Bernard, p.17). What is it to 'receive' the Logos? It is to BELIEVE - and to go on believing on His name. And what is His 'name'? It is the essential being of the Word, as the 'name' of Yahweh was virtually His Person or Divine Character as He chose to reveal it to men in the age of the Old Testament (cf. II Sam.7:13; Isaiah 18:7). The 'name' of the Word was not the title men chose to apply to Him, but that inner being and true nature as the Saviour-Son of God, which was discerned - not by the physical eye - but with the eye of faith. Jesus was

under no illusion that there would be but few who would truly recognize His name. Having discerned, there must be a personal abandonment of oneself to the Word of God: this is both to 'believe' and to 'receive.'

In a threefold emphasis John makes it clear that the 'begetting' of the children of God is in contrast to the natural begetting of a human child, v.13. In the first expression, "not of blood", the author has in mind the purely physical process, for blood is the seat of natural life and - according to current thought - the substance from which life is generated. In the second, "nor of the will of the flesh", it is the motive underlying human begetting that is in mind: natural sexual desire. In the third, "nor of the will of man", the latter idea is narrowed down to the individual act of procreation. The pithy phrase,  $\acute{\epsilon}\kappa\ \Theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon$ , says all that needs to be said. Spiritual birth is the antithesis of human birth, and is wholly free from material elements and psychical motions. The creative power of God (i.e. the Spirit of God) encounters the faith projected by the individual believer in response to what he has seen in the revealed Word of God, and the result is New Birth.

T H E   I N C A R N A T I O N

14. And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us  
 (and we beheld his glory, glory as of the  
 only begotten from the Father),  
 full of grace and truth.

This is the climax for which we have been waiting. By implication it has been said earlier: but now it is explicit, and formally the resolving chord is struck -

"THE WORD BECAME FLESH."

A veiled allusion in verse 11 from the viewpoint of the relations of the Word to Israel (and that as the object of Israel's unbelief), gives place to the bare and bold declaration of the same fact, but from the point of view of the Word's relation to FAITH, and to all mankind.

This statement is not to be considered apart from the whole Gospel. It is not the springboard for philosophical speculation, nor may it be regarded as the point which marks the turn in John's thought from historical events to a subjective mystical event. The thought of the Prologue has been a movement from the celestial to the terrestrial, from God to man, from the 'beginning' when the 'Word was with God', to the moment when He enters history - 'unto his own.' As Hoskyns aptly writes, the Evangelist "moves to history, to Jesus the Son of God.

"He moves also from the law delivered to Moses, from the Word of God inscribed on two tables of stone, to the Word of God written in the flesh of Jesus" (p.144). The Prologue is a highly condensed introduction to the Fourth Gospel, yet not to the Fourth Gospel alone: for it is a Prologue to THE Gospel of Jesus Christ. The ideas compressed and implied in it, if shaped in Johannine phrases, are not Johannine copyright. They were the common property of the primitive Church: they have been the common inheritance of the Church down the ages. John has his own way of elaborating the theology, the concentrated doctrines, set forth in the Prologue. Paul had his particular way of developing the same truths, and few texts of Paul express one of the ideas latent in the fourteenth verse of the Prologue better than Romans 8:3, "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak, through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh." The Incarnation of the Word more than compensated for the impotence of the law.

"The Word became flesh", was John's most effective proposition of the truth he wanted to convey to a particular type of reader. There can be little doubt that the Evangelist would have been horrified if he had been able to foresee the subsequent treatment of his Prologue.

That it should have become the centre of debate by so many scholars, for so many years, resulting in the multitude of differing conclusions, and - above all - serving to detract from, rather than assist in the fuller comprehension of, the Gospel proper, would have been a grief indeed. For such contending serves all too often to frustrate the purpose of the whole Gospel (20:31). John had to make his readers see that Jesus Christ, the Author and Object of the Christians' faith, was a personal, Incarnate, revelation of God, who is at the same time one with the Almighty Father Himself. The eternity and identity with God are intended in naming Jesus the 'Word'. But the Word whom the first apostles saw was no phantom. The Docetic heresy was ever the subtle foe of that first century Church, and John seems to have kept the fact in mind (cf. I Jn.4:2; II Jn.7). Thus this logion has the further significance of being a doctrinal prophylactic. It is another feature of the Fourth Gospel that it allows the true humanity of Jesus to appear in the course of the narrative. At the well of Sychar He experiences fatigue and thirst (4:6,7). the death of a well beloved friend evokes genuine tears of sorrow (11:35). In anticipation of His passion He undergoes a troubling of spirit (12:27). John lays stress on

His flesh and blood (6:53), and no reader of the Gospel could question the author's belief in the humanity of the Person of Jesus Christ. In 'becoming' man the Word did not cease to be what He was 'with God'; nor, on the other hand, was His Incarnation the mere inhabiting of a human body by a Divine Spirit, as the Holy Spirit indwells the believer. Indeed, it may be said that in the progressive character of the treatment given to the exposition in the Prologue, John is covering the point that the whole personality who shared the Being of God at the first was to be found in the Word Incarnate. Lest there should be any doubt as to His full appropriation of human nature - and not only human body - John uses  $\sigma\alpha\rho\varsigma$  (without the article) to convey the idea of human nature as a whole, including the rational soul, cf. I Thess.5:23. To say that the Word became  $\alpha\lambda\theta\eta\upsilon\omega\tau\omicron\varsigma$  (though Jesus did use it of Himself) would have been to describe Him as a human personality, but it might have allowed some reservation which would have placed the Logos in an exceptional position. It is the COMPLETE oneness in every respect with human nature (save, of course, sin) that the author is at pains, both in the Prologue and in the Gospel, to exhibit. The two terms LOGOS and FLESH are mutually exclusive. There had been



for all time a great gulf fixed. Now the gulf has been bridged. The impossible and incredible has been achieved: the Word BECAME flesh - *Ἐγένετο* - change in the mode of existence without change in attributes (cf.2:9).

The whole verse falls into three parts: the Incarnation ("The Word became flesh and tabernacled among us"); the character of the Incarnate Word ("full of grace and truth"); and, parenthetically set between these two clauses, a personal testimony from an eye-witness ("and we beheld his glory, glory as of the only-begotten of the Father"). The significance of the first statement has been touched upon, and we pass on to its corollary, "and dwelt (tabernacled) among us." The verb *σκηνοῦν* would bring at once to mind the life of the nomad. For the Jew, of course, its associations would be of a particular kind. Anything to do with 'tabernacle' must take their minds along the line of Israelite tradition to the wilderness when Yahweh dwelt among His people in the Tabernacle. Many Gentiles would have heard of the Israelite tradition; and even for those who had not, the figure of 'tabernacling' would be suggestive of a temporary habitation, which is what John desires to convey by this symbol. The Word of God spent a brief period in the flesh among the sons of men.

"And we beheld his glory" - "and we CONTEMPLATED...."

John, together with other disciples, had actually seen, gazed upon (θεωροῦμεθα), this crowning Wonder, the God-man! The lasting impression of what he had seen is summed up in the term GLORY. They were memorable moments for the ancient Israelites when the invisible Yahweh gave some glimpses of His eternal majesty, reflected in a mighty act - at the giving of the law (EX.24:16, 17; Deut.5:24), or in a special appearance to Moses (Ex.33:18, 22) or to Ezekiel (Ezek.10:4, 18, 19). Yahweh's glory was demonstrated in the miracles of Egypt (Num.14:22), and for the Psalmist His glory enters through the gates of the Temple (Ps.24:7f.). But the Tabernacle was the centre of manifestation of the glory of the God of Israel to the people (Ex.40:34ff.). The glory is associated with the Shekinah, though not identified with it, cf. Targum on Isaiah 60:2, "In thee the Shekinah of Yahweh shall dwell, and His glory shall be revealed upon thee" (Bernard, p.22). When John uses τιμῶν and δόξα he is faithful to key Old Testament ideas, and, as a loyal Jew in former days, would remember that one aspect of the Israelite hope for the future was that the glory of Yahweh was to be held up for all nations to see (Isaiah 35:2; 66:18). No Jewish reader would miss the point.

"Glory as of the only-begotten of the Father" incorporates for the first time in the Prologue the concepts of the Father and the Son. The emphasis of 'only-begotten' lies on the first idea, 'only'. It is the personal being of the Son that is under observation here. The Word is unique, the only Son, distinguished in essence from all others who have the right to call God "Father". Other New Testament usages bear out this emphasis (Lk.7:12; 8:42; 9:38; Heb.11:17). Bernard calls attention to the alternative renderings of *παρὰ πατρός*. If the phrase is connected with *μονογενοῦς*, support is found in 6:46; 7:29; 16:27; 17:8; but he argues that John always uses *ἐκ Θεοῦ* when he wants to say "begotten of God" (cf. I Jn.2:29; 3:9; 4:7; 5:1, 4, 18) and never *παρὰ* with *γεννώσθαι*. On the other hand, connecting *δόξα* with *παρὰ πατρός* the meaning is "the glory such as the only Son receives from his Father." Bernard prefers the second, "The manifested glory of the Word was as it were the glory of the Eternal Father shared with His only Son" (p.23). However, the purpose of the clause is to explain what was the glory of the Word in His Incarnate life, not what He is in Himself eternally. It is a unique glory that has been manifested in the Word while He has been tabernacled among us, such as

could only be found in the Only-begotten of God, descending from the immediate presence (παρά ) of the Father. If it be alleged that παρά with γενναῖοι is an unusual combination, it may be replied that the Sonship of the Word was an unusual 'begetting', and in any case the meaning is clearly indicated by the context.

What is the glory, the real nature of the glory of the Word become flesh ? The Word who was rejected by a people who prided themselves that they had received revelations of the Divine glory in past ages, and looked for the fulfilment of a promise of even greater manifestations in the future. The glory of God and the glorification of Christ form one of the major themes of the Gospel: it would not be exaggerating to call it the Gospel of the Glory. We do not doubt that the grand Old Testament conceptions associated with the glory of Yahweh are in the author's mind. But we are not so sure that one "could hardly fail to draw the inference that here was the grand fulfilment of O.T. conceptions so familiar to him through the Aramaic paraphrase" (O.F.BURNEY, The Aramaic Origin of the Fourth Gospel, p.39). It is not certain that the idea of the Targumic YEKARA is more directly the underlying idea in John 1:14 than the Hebrew KABOD. At any rate, there is no mistaking the import of

the verse: the culmination of the creative activity of the Divine Logos is the manifestation of the Divine glory - to this end the Word became flesh. He who was in living communion with the Father before Creation, who was the Agent in Creation, and has been throughout the true Life-giver to Creation, He - and none other - is the supreme Revealer of God, of the glory of God.

Like so many other Christian truths, the Divine glory involves a paradox: in this instance, a twofold paradox. First, the Logos, like the Father, is SPIRIT, but mankind is FLESH. The Incarnation - whose specific purpose was the glorifying of God and of His beloved Son - was the assumption of human nature actually in the flesh by the Divine Logos-Son. This union of two contradistinctive constituents, *Λόγος* and *σάρξ*, was the miraculous condition under which the glory was both won and manifested. A.M.RAMSEY clinches the thought when he writes, "for it is in the drama of time and history that the eternal glory is made known" (The Glory of God and the Transfiguration of Christ, 1949, p.76). In sundry times and in divers manners the glory of God had been shown during the age of the Old Covenant, when Yahweh was temporarily tabernacled among the people of old Israel. But now the full epiphany to the New

Israel in the age of the New Covenant, when the Word was made in the likeness of men. The KABOD has come to stay.

In as much as we believe the Gospel to be the continuation and elaboration of the truths touched upon in the Prologue, it is natural to turn to the ensuing chapters in order to discover more fully the implications of v.14. Two Persons of the Godhead have been explicitly mentioned in the Proem. The third is here implied. For it is the Son who glorifies the Father (14:13), but the Holy Spirit who glorifies the Son (16:14). Again, there is a mutual glorification: an enabling of the Son on the part of the Father, that the Son may be able to fulfil His appointed mission, "Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son may glorify thee" (17:1).

Before passing to consider the second aspect of the paradox, we should mention the 'signs' through which, according to John, the Word particularly showed forth the glory of God. Six of these mighty works are described for us, and the emphasis is on the fact that the glory signified is that given by the Father with a view to the Father's own glory. The last, and greatest, of these signs is the raising of Lazarus (ch.11). It is placed

last deliberately, not only because it was the occasion which precipitated the final destruction of Jesus, but as leading up to the culmination of the whole process of the glorifying of the Son for the glory of the Father. The fourth verse plainly states, "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified thereby." This sign, notable by virtue of its omission from the Synoptic Gospels, is a dramatic parable of the pending glorifying of Jesus in His death and Resurrection.

From this point the second paradox becomes increasingly apparent. The meaning of the lowly ride into the Holy City did not dawn upon the disciples till after the glorifying of Jesus (12:16). The hour had come for the Son of God to be glorified: and the sinister import of that word 'hour' is illustrated in the figure of the 'death' of the grain of wheat. This is followed by the undisguised recoiling from the contemplation of the means by which Jesus is to achieve the glory of the Father's name: "Now is my soul troubled" (12:27, cf. 13:21). But a fortifying voice is heard, intelligibly at least to Jesus, "I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again" (12:28). Thus are the Passion and the glory being brought right together, so that - absurd as it

sounds at first - the crux of the process of the glorifying of Jesus lies in His Passion and Death. Moreover, this passion is no fortuitous calamity from which Jesus is going to emerge somehow, and make the best of it - so that the glory will be a kind of heroism in martyrdom. He had come IN ORDER TO be glorified in this way (12:27ff.). The account of the incident evidently intended to illustrate further this paradox - glory through humiliation, suffering and death with its apparent defeat as the gate to Divine glory. With the betrayal at hand, Judas having left to guide the armed band to Gethsemane, Jesus speaks again of the glorifying as present (13:31). Further references occur in the Discourses of chapters 14-16. In the first two chapters the emphasis is on the Father's glory (cf. 14:13; 15:8): in the third it is the Holy Spirit who is the appointed Agent of the Son's being glorified, cf. 16:14. Throughout, the Son is ever conscious of His dependence on, and obedience to, the Father as the absolutely essential condition for the realization of the Father's glory: while the Spirit is dependent on both.

The tempo of the Gospel heightens as we move into the seventeenth chapter. In His own words the Son expatiates on this idea of glory, praying for five things in particular. He pleads that the awful agony in which He is



about to engage may witness an enduement of Divine glory to enable Him, in turn, to glorify the Father (v.1). He asks that, having faithfully and successfully glorified the Father by accomplishing the (saving) work (through obedience even unto death) which the Father gave Him to do, He might again share the glory which He had with the Father before the world was (v.5, cf.1:1). In passing, we call attention to the fact that, in all his frank portrayal of the Incarnate Word as partaking fully of human life and experiences, John does not even hint that this glory was concealed or set aside: in fact, he and others had beheld it (1:14). Continuing the prayer, Jesus requests that those in whom He is glorified - those who have believed in Him and to whom He had delivered God's truth - might be kept both in unity of spirit and against adversities (vv.10-12). Further, Jesus intercedes for the fullest realization of God's purpose in their lives - perfection in unity, which presumably was to be an outcome of the glory bestowed on disciples (v.22). Finally, including within the sphere of His prayer those who should become disciples through the first believers, Jesus longs that they all might behold His own glory, a glory which the Father bestowed on the Son in love, cf.v.24.

The 'Consecration' Prayer is John's way of telling us that Jesus accepted the 'cup.' The actual struggle, with its full measure of agony, anguish and death, has still to be undergone: but the victory is assured. The tragedy has already been turned into triumph; the Father's name has been glorified, for Jesus has totally submitted to the bitterest end. The paradox symbolized in the common grain of wheat is seen enacted vividly in the Fourth Gospel, in the life of the Son of God - the eternal, Divine Logos made flesh. This should not surprize us as we recognize in  $\delta \lambda \acute{o} \gamma \omicron \varsigma \sigma \acute{\alpha} \rho \xi \acute{\epsilon} \nu \epsilon \tau \omicron$  the supreme paradox of the Christian faith.

"Full of grace and truth" offers us two key words, a full exposition of which must be sought in commentaries. It is tempting to enlarge on them here, but we shall confine ourselves to a minimum of exegesis. There is a divergence of opinion as to whether  $\pi \lambda \eta \rho \eta \varsigma$  should be connected with  $\delta \acute{o} \xi \alpha \nu$ , or  $\alpha \upsilon \tau \omicron \upsilon$ , or  $\mu \omicron \nu \omicron \chi \epsilon \nu \alpha \upsilon \varsigma$ . But, as Bernard points out, the problem is grammatical rather than exegetical, "for on any rendering GRACE and TRUTH are specified as characteristic attributes of the Incarnate Word, or of His manifestation of Himself in the world" (p.25). In keeping with Old Testament tradition, John's further definition of the glory of the Word

embraces a pair of terms which, significant as they are in their Old Testament usage, have been considerably enriched by Christian usage.  $\chi\alpha\rho\iota\varsigma$  is found in the Fourth Gospel only in the Prologue (vv. 14, 16, 17). Its usage in the rest of Johannine literature is no more frequent than once in II John, and twice in the Apocalypse—all three being the typical New Testament greeting formula. Thus, its threefold appearance in the Prologue is especially noticeable. It does not come at all in Mark and Matthew; and only as 'thanks' (3 times) and the special favour of God (3) in Luke. In none of the Gospels is it spoken by Jesus. It was Paul who promoted the use of the word, in its revised sense, into Christian vocabulary, so that its typical meaning is that of condescending and undeserved love of God towards men issuing in Salvation through faith, and it is therefore opposed to the legalism of Moses. The term  $\alpha\lambda\eta\theta\epsilon\iota\alpha$  is one of the foundation words of the Fourth Gospel. One view of the book sees it, in effect, as the answer to Pilate's question, "What is truth?" (18:38). The Word of God came to earth to bear witness to the truth (18:37); the very utterance of the Logos is Divine truth (17:8, 17); He is Truth itself, "I am the way, the truth and the life" (14:6). In numerous instances He seeks to emphasize the truth of

His message (cf. 8:40, 45). When He shall have departed, His Vice-gerent, the Paraclete or Holy Spirit, will be to the disciples the Spirit of Truth (14:17; 15:26), and His function will be to guide believers into all truth (16:13). Once known, that truth liberates (8:32), from darkness to light (3:21), and such are capable of discerning the voice of the Logos. (18:37).

The Old Testament formula is "mercy (ἐλεος) and truth." It is found in a passage where Moses asks Yahweh to show him the Divine glory (Ex. 33:17 - 34:6). One of the best known references (Ps. 85:9, 10) speaks of the Divine glory dwelling (κατασκηνώσαι) in the land, manifesting itself in "mercy and truth." The two are often set forth as attributes of Yahweh (cf. Ps. 40:11; 89:14) which, in turn, Yahweh expects to find in His people as evidence of righteousness (Hosea 4:1; cf. Prov. 14:22; 16:6). It is not quite accurate to say, with Hoskyns, "the two words are parallel to life and light in the earlier verses of the Prologue" (op.cit.p.147); rather are they explanatory. Light proceeded from life: but not truth from grace. However, truth issues in light (cf. Ps. 43:3). One form of manifestation of the glory of God in the Old Testament was in deliverance, an act of mercy. God's consistency, His faithfulness to His pledged word (in

contrast to heathen gods, whose chief characteristics seemed to be capriciousness and subjection to moods), these reveal His truth. With the new and fuller revelation of God through the Word, it is obvious that "grace and truth" mean a great deal more even than the "mercy and truth" of the former dispensation. Hoskyns pertinently observes, "Since he directs the attention of his readers to the gift of God rather than to the misery of men, the peculiarly Christian word GRACE is substituted for MERCY; and truth comes to mean far more than steadfastness" (p.147). The story which follows the Prologue is that of Divine MERCY/GRACE and TRUTH demonstrated for the benefit of those who have eyes to see and ears to hear. The signs, and the accompanying words, are part of this revelation of grace and truth in the mundane sphere. But is it not in the culminating act of His death that Jesus Christ, the Word of God, demonstrates the grace and truth of God ? Is it not in His Passion and Death for the sins of the world that He is GLORIFIED ?

We consider it essential to interpret the Prologue in the light of the Gospel which follows. When the Gospel fails to offer us a satisfactory explanation of the propositions made in the Prologue, then we should

seek for foreign sources to provide the key. The Prologue is, admittedly, something of a literary curio, and the introduction of the term LOGOS evokes questions beginning with Why- and Whence ? For a particular purpose John adopts this term with associations more agreeable to the thought of his readers than his own. But it is in order to make the clearest impression of the uniqueness, finality and all-sufficiency of a Divine self-authenticating revelation in the Person of Jesus Christ, that John called in the help of the LOGOS idea. We think that John was dominated by Jesus Christ, not a Jesus once known in the flesh and the impression of whom had passed through sixty years of meditation shaped by speculative categories, but by the historical Jesus whose works and words had come to life with ever-increasing intensity in the heart and mind of the Evangelist. If this Jesus were now ascended, it was the same Jesus that possessed - by the Paraclete - the soul of John. We decline, therefore, to interpret the Prologue other than, so far as it is reasonable, by the Gospel itself.

THE INCARNATION  
AND  
PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

"John beareth witness of him, and crieth, saying,

This was he of whom I said, He that cometh after me  
is become before me: for he was before me" - v.15.

The point of this sudden introduction of the Baptist, which (Hoskyns reminds us) Calmes considers a dislocation of the text and Bultmann a redaction, lies in the substance of what he said. In a quaint, paradoxical logion ("He that cometh after - ὀπίσω - me is become before - ἔμπροσθέν - me") John the Baptist proclaims Christ's priority in respect of dignity, not of time. Then follows the most important witness of all, that to the pre-mundane existence of the Word, "for he was before (πρῶτος) me." The declaration is repeated, practically word for word, in verse 30. The tense of "he WAS before me" strengthens the interpretation which acknowledges that the Baptist had an appreciation of the Person of Christ which the Church did not grasp till after the passing of many years.

"For of his fulness we all received, and grace for grace. For the law was given by Moses; grace and truth came by Jesus Christ" vv.16, 17.

The witness of the Baptist is corroborated by that of

the Apostles, and all believers who have not only seen, but received, the infathomable riches of Christ's grace and truth. The "fulness" of Christ occurs only here in John, but twice in Paul (Eph.4:13; Col.1:19, the former in a context similar to that of John 1:16). The Prologue has now become thoroughly personal and mystical, describing the practical beneficent result of the Word becoming flesh. The somewhat speculative atmosphere of the earlier verses is fading under the pressure of the reality of the Jesus whom John knew so deeply as the Source of Eternal Life, the Light of the world, indwelling - in Person - his own person. The Logos has now become Jesus Christ, with all the personal significance and redemptive implications of that blessed Name. Grace is at the heart of the New Order which, at so great a cost, the Saviour - Jesus - came to inaugurate. Whether we interpret "grace for grace" as meaning progress in spiritual experience, "each blessing appropriated became the foundation of a greater blessing" (Westcott); or, "that the gift in us may correspond with the source of the gift in Him" (J.A.Robinson, Ephesians, p.223) - the main thought is that grace is the foundation of the new economy and its spiritual abundance. The contrast between the system of law and that of grace is at the fore-front of Pauline doctrine, and it is explicit in John's Gospel only in 1:17.



Moses was but the mediator of the Israelite law; Christ was both the Author and Mediator of grace and truth. In the course of the Gospel John does contrast Jesus with Moses and with the Law (5:46; 6:32; 8:32-36; 9:28, 29) but not as sharply as in verse 17 of the Prologue.

"But Moses is not thereby altogether dispossessed. He remains, as Saint Paul had seen, a negative witness to Jesus" (Hoskyns).

"No man hath seen God at any time; the only-begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him" v.18.

In the grand finale to this Prologue, the Evangelist puts in a telling sentence what he considers to be the solution - all-sufficient and conclusive - of the age old problem of faith. God never has been seen by man on this earth, and He remains invisible. But One, who from eternity has engaged in the closest and purest relationship with Him ("in the bosom of the Father"), He has revealed Him: 'declared' being the word for Rabbinic interpretation of the law and for the exposition of Divine secrets. Whichever of the variant readings we choose ("one who is God only-begotten" or "the only-begotten Son"), no difference is made to the ultimate sense of the passage. It is pre-eminently as FATHER

that the Word reveals God (anarthrous, in v.18, suggesting Nature rather than Person: 'God as God'). He who in His eternal, absolute Being must defy any human comprehension, may be understood when declared in terms of the most personal of all human relationships - FATHER ! In the Person of Him who called God 'Father', we may see Him whom faith will want to call 'Father' too.

P A R T   I I .

S O U R C E S   O F   T H E  
J O H A N N I N E   L O G O S   D O C T R I N E

i. H e l l e n i s t i c   T h o u g h t .

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## c h a p t e r   t w o

THE LOGOS PRINCIPLE  
FROM HERACLEITUS TO THE STOICS.

"Alexandrian Judaism had already blended with Paulinism in Hebrews, which lies midway between Paul and the Fourth Gospel...

"The brooding fulness of thought and the inner unity of religious purpose which fill the book (i.e. the Fourth Gospel) demand for its interpretation a constant sensitiveness, especially to the deeper meaning which prompted the methods of contemporary religious speculation along the lines of the Alexandrian Jewish philosophy as represented by Philo...

"The differences between Philo and John only bring out the latter's familiarity with the Philonic methods and materials which he uses for higher ends...

"The Stoic ring of some sentences in the prologue is natural, in view of the fact that Ephesus had been the head-quarters of the Logos-idea as developed by the philosophy of Herakleitus, himself a well-known and revered author in Asiatic Christian circles (Justin, Apol. 1.64, cp. Orig. c. Cels. 1.5). Though the Logos-idea was mediated and moulded for the author by the speculations of Alexandrian Judaism, and though the fusion of Stoicism with the latter had blended several characteristic traits, there are elements in the Fourth Gospel which point to a fairly direct contact with the Stoic propaganda. Thus the sentence, IN THE BEGINNING WAS THE LOGOS, AND THE LOGOS WAS θεός, might have been written literally by a Stoic, as Norden argues; it was written by one acquainted with the writings of Herakleitus, though the un-Stoic sentence, AND THE LOGOS WAS WITH GOD, at once betrays a Jewish current."

"The Fourth Gospel sets out from a conception of the Logos which to all appearance is closely similar to that of Philo. In the Prologue the main features of the Philonic doctrine are reproduced one by one...The Evangelist assumes that the idea of the Logos is already a familiar one in Christian theology...We can thus infer that the conception of Philo had already naturalized itself in Christian thought, but there is reason to believe that the author of the Gospel was acquainted more or less directly with the Philonic writings and consciously derived from them."

E.F.SCOTT, Dic.of Christ & Gospels,ii,p.50.

Seeing that the viewpoint expressed in these extracts has had such considerable popularity, and that many scholars of such calibre as Drs.Moffatt and Scott have not only subscribed to it but sought to extend its wider acceptance by their persuasive writings, it is necessary to examine the claims made on behalf of the Hellenistic Logos. When did this term first appear with special significance on the stage of philosophy or religion? Who was this Heraclitus to whom so many writers refer (and few of whom give tangible evidence of his ideas)? What is the history of the term? And, most important of all for our purpose, who was Philo, and what was his doctrine - and is he really the key to the supposed 'riddle' of the Johannine Prologue?

## H e r a c l e i t u s .

HERACLEITUS OF EPHESUS lived in the sixth century before Christ\*, a philosopher of whose writings there are in existence but one hundred and thirty brief fragments - many little more than a phrase of a few words. He refers to Pythagoras and Xenophanes by name \*\* (in the past tense), and is in turn alluded to by Parmenides (Frag.6, Diels). This locates his place in the history of philosophy. If his work had a title we do not know it, and of his life practically nothing is told in extant writings. It is probable that he belonged to the ancient royal house and surrendered a nominal position of 'Basileus' to his brother (cf. Diog. ix.5). The same source informs us that Heracleitus' work was divided into three discourses - pertaining to the Universe, Politics and Theology. His style is obscure, hence his nickname ὁ σκωτεινός. The fragments (nos. 11, 12) relating to the Delphic god and the Sybil suggest that he consciously wrote in an oracular style.

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\* Said to have 'flourished' c.504-501.

\*\* "The learning of many things teacheth not understanding, else would it have taught Hesiod and Pythagoras, and again Xenophanes and Hekateios."

- Frag. 16. All fragment refs. of Heracleitus are according to Bywater.

It must be recognized that the meaning of *λόγος* in Heraclitus has been the subject of much debate. The ancients understood it to signify COSMIC REASON, universally diffused, being present in both nature and humans. It is to be identified with the ever-living and ever-thinking fire - *πῦρ φρόνιμον αἰζῶν*, the changeless yet always changing reality of everything. Moreover, this universal reason ( *κοινὸς λόγος* ) was considered to be synonymous with God. In other words, if the ancients are to be trusted, the Heraclitean concept of Logos does not really differ from the Stoic, except that on its material side, Logos is in Heraclitus fire, whereas, according to the strictest Stoic definition, it is aether" (J.ADAM, *The Vitality of Platonism*, 1911, p.77). This ancient interpretation has numerous modern protagonists, but it is opposed, among others, by J.BURNET who reckons that the Logos-doctrine is Stoic, and the term means only "discourse" in Heraclitus. Thus, "the *λόγος* is primarily the discourse of Herakleitos himself; though as he is a prophet, we may call it his 'Word'." (Early Greek Philosophy, 1930, p.133).

The term LOGOS occurs in six of the fragments, one of which (Fr.117) renders it in the ordinary way- discourse.

This fragment runs, "The fool is fluttered at every word" (tr. Burnet), βλάσσει ἄνθρωπος ἐπὶ παντὶ λόγῳ ἔκτοισθαί φιλέει.

A disputed fragment is no. 23: "The sea is poured out and measured ἔς τὸν αὐτὸν λόγον ὁκοῖος ἦν before it became earth" (Adam). Burnet renders the difficult phrase, "by the same tale as".

Frag. 1 suggests that Heraclitus is regarding himself in a prophetic capacity as the mouthpiece of the Logos: "having hearkened not to me, but to the Logos, it is wise to confess that all things are one" (Adam). It would be specially significant if, as Adam thinks, it were the first words of the book.

The longest fragment, which follows on the first, is the most important from the point of view of the Logos:

"This Logos is always existent, but men fail to understand it both before they have heard it, and when they have heard it for the first time. For, although all things happen according to (or rather by way of) this Logos, men seem as though they have no acquaintance with it when they make acquaintance with such works and words as I expound, dividing each thing according to its nature, and explaining how it really is. The rest of mankind are unconscious of what they do when they are awake, just as they forget what they do when asleep."

(Adam).

We think that Adam's argument, as against Burnet's, is more convincing, and hence we think that Heraclitus'



Logos is to be identified with the  $\pi\acute{\upsilon}\rho$   $\lambda\acute{\epsilon}\iota\beta\omega\omicron\nu$  of Fragment 20\*, and is ever-existent, uncreated and incorruptible. Admitting that authorities differ, at least there is the possibility that  $\gamma\iota\nu\omicron\mu\acute{\epsilon}\nu\omega\nu$   $\gamma\acute{\alpha}\rho$   $\pi\acute{\alpha}\nu\tau\omega\nu$   $\kappa\alpha\tau\grave{\alpha}$   $\tau\omicron\nu$   $\lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\nu$   $\tau\omicron\nu\delta\epsilon$  ("everything happens according to this Logos") implies that Logos has intelligence. Fragment 92 ("although the Logos is universal, many live as if they had a private intelligence of their own") seems to re\_inforce that possibility. The other surviving Logos-text\*\* is so controversial that we have opportunity only to quote it; it is found in Marcus Aurelius, whom some scholars allege to be responsible for the phrase  $\lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omega$   $\tau\acute{\omega}$   $\tau\grave{\alpha}$   $\acute{\omicron}$  $\lambda\lambda\alpha$   $\delta\iota\omicron\iota\kappa\omicron\upsilon\gamma\tau\iota$ .

To Heraclitus the whole of reality is like one constant stream of motion: nothing is ever still:

\* "This world, which is the same for all, no one of gods or men has made; but it was ever, is now, and ever shall be an ever-living fire, with measures of it kindling, and measures going out."

- Fr.20 (Burnet).

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\* Fr.20, "The word  $\kappa\acute{\omicron}\sigma\mu\omicron\varsigma$  must mean 'world' here, not merely 'order'; for only the world could be identified with fire"- Burnet, p.134.

\*\*  $\hat{\omega}$   $\mu\acute{\alpha}\lambda\iota\sigma\tau\alpha$   $\delta\iota\eta\nu\epsilon\kappa\acute{\omega}\varsigma$   $\acute{\omicron}\mu\iota\lambda\omicron\upsilon\sigma\iota$   $\lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omega$   $\tau\acute{\omega}$   
 $\tau\grave{\alpha}$   $\acute{\omicron}$  $\lambda\lambda\alpha$   $\delta\iota\omicron\iota\kappa\omicron\upsilon\gamma\tau\iota$   $\tau\omicron\upsilon\tau\omega$   $\delta\iota\alpha\phi\acute{\epsilon}\rho\omicron\nu\tau\alpha\iota$ .

"Fire lives the death of air, and air lives the death of fire; water lives the death of earth, earth that of water."

- Fr.25 (Burnet).

Any single thing one can think of is but a fraction of the process of flux and it is never the same for the briefest moment we can regard or contemplate it. Heraclitus (as we think) subordinated everything to the one abiding law of the universe, which has been conveniently epitomized in the phrase  $\pi\acute{\alpha}\nu\tau\alpha \delta\epsilon\acute{\iota}$  - though not an actual quotation from Heraclitus. He exalted universal, rational, divine, consciously-directing Logos above the restless flux of things as the one thing everlastingly the same. Even if we deny the Heraclitean Logos intelligence (and decide that the Stoics first ascribed the faculty to Logos) it is still the natural power which determines the orderly sequence of natural phenomena, the regularity of the course which it delegates to each individual phenomenon in the great unchanging course of nature. It is, surely, one with Wisdom, for "the wise is one only. It is unwilling and willing to be called by the name of Zeus" (Fr.65, Burnet). "There is but one wisdom, to know the knowledge by which all things are steered through all" (Fr.19, Adam). Heraclitus bequeathed to philosophy at least the omnipresence and unifying function, as attributes of the Logos.

## The Stoics.

The solitary couplet of Epicharmus \*, probably about the beginning of the fifth century B.C., represents "the most explicit statement of the Logos-doctrine to be found between the time of Heraclitus and that of the Stoics" (Adam, op.cit., p.95).

Briefly, Stoicism was an attempt - and a notable attempt - to bring about a synthesis of Greek and oriental thought. Zeno, who 'flourished' about 278 B.C., founded the school. He was a pupil of the Cynic Crates, and was succeeded by Cleanthes (c.263). The whole Stoic view of the world, was based on the conception of one God, the father of all, containing and sustaining all, governing all and everywhere present and manifest. He was the beginning and end of everything for the Stoic. Virtue consisted in doing to the best of one's ability the Divine will and law. The true philosopher is the self-sufficient man, who is the very master of his fate and captain of his soul, above his circumstances, and perfectly content in his own knowledge. All men are brothers, for

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\* ἔστιν ἀνθρώπῳ λογισμὸς, ἔστι καὶ θεῖος λόγος·  
ὁ δὲ γε ἀνθρώπου πέφυκεν ἀπὸ γε τοῦ θεοῦ λόγου.

all are in the same relationship to God.

The Heraclitean formula of the Logos was one of the chief points in his system which attracted the attention of Zeno. He took this doctrine and elaborated it further. "Just as Plato gave to the Socratic ὑπόθεσις or general conception a metaphysical existence in the form of an idea, so did Zeno elevate the λόγος of Antisthenes from its position as a criterion for thought and duty to that of the physical cause and of being and movement" (A.C. PEARSON, Fragments of Zeno and Cleanthes, 1891, pp.21-22). The Stoics developed a theory of a great κοινὸς λόγος which animated the world. True virtue was to follow this Logos consciously and devotedly, for it was the will of God. The vague and imperfect in Heraclitus became definite and complete in Stoicism. In respect of his physical teaching Zeno appropriated some important principles from Heraclitus, particularly in the realm of cosmogony. For Heraclitus the λόγος ξυνός is the expression of the truth that nothing can be known but the law of mutability, the harmony of difference, which he likens to the stretching of a bow-string (Frag.66). This law he calls γνῶμη,

δίκη, εἰμαρμένη, τὸ περιέχον, , ἡμᾶς λογικόν τε ὄν  
καὶ φρενήρες, and ὁ Ζεὺς.

From Lactantius we cull the fragment:

"...siquidem Zenon rerum naturae dispositorem  
atque opificem universitatis λόγος praedicat,  
quem et facum et necessitatem rerum et deum  
et animum Jovis nuncupat."

- Div.Inst.iv.9.

Tertullian (Apol.21) tells us that Zeno calls the maker and disposer of all things 'fate' and 'God' and 'the necessary origin of all things'.

In the famous Hymn of Cleanthes (the pupil and successor of Zeno as head of the Stoic school: born c.331 B.C. and head of the school from 264-232) there is reference to the universal Word that flows through all things:

".....the universal Word, that flows  
Through all, and in the light celestial glows  
Of stars both great and small. O King of Kings  
Through ceaseless ages, God, whose purpose brings  
To birth, whate'er on land and in the sea  
Is wrought, or in high heaven's immensity;  
Save what the sinner works infatuate.  
Nay, but thou knowest to make crooked straight:  
Chaos to thee is order: in thine eyes  
The unloved is lovely, who didst harmonize  
Things evil with things good, that there should be,  
One Word through all things everlastingly.

(trans. ADAM, op.cit.pp.105-107).

He continues, in praise of the Logos, that the wicked

spurn its voice and neither see nor hear this "God's universal law", which is revered by those who, in seeking true happiness, are guided by Reason.

"Words and thoughts are, according to their (the Stoic's) view, the very same thing regarded under different aspects. The same idea (λόγος), which is a thought as long as it resides within the breast, is a word as soon as it comes forth...This is the meaning of the Stoic distinction between λόγος ἐνδίαθετος and πρόφορικός, a distinction subsequently employed by Philo and the Fathers, and really identical with that of Aristotle."

- ZELLER, The Stoics, Epicureans & Sceptics, E.T., 1870, p.72.

The Stoics were materialists or pantheists, who conceived of a soul of the universe as well as of man; an active material pervades the vast mass of passive material, the former working upon the latter by a series of regular impulses. The great creative force in nature, universal Reason, is called λόγος σπερματικός. The words of the Epistle to the Hebrews 2:10 (δι' ὃν τὰ πάντα) are reminiscent of the Stoic explanation of the Being who is supreme and omnipresent\*. The celebrated dictum of Paul's speech on Mars Hill is an indirect quotation of ἐκ σοῦ γὰρ γενόμεθα (line 4, Hymn of Cleanthes) through the poet Aratus.

\* Δία μὲν γὰρ φασί, δι' ὃν τὰ πάντα.

But what of the period between Heraclitus and the Stoics ? After blossoming for a time in the sixth century, the doctrine of the Logos withered under the strong summer sun of Platonic dualism and transcendental theology for two centuries. In the fifth and fourth centuries, when the pre-Socratics and Plato reigned in the kingdom of philosophy, the place of Logos was taken by the Anaxagorean NOUS. The Heraclitean doctrine of the Logos was quite foreign to the writings of Plato and Aristotle. But with the rise of the school of Zeno there came a fresh revival of the Logos-idea in a reversion from the dualism of Plato, the philosophy which separated the changeless Idea from the changeful world of sense.

This sketch of the fundamental ideas in the Stoic doctrine indicates that the Logos is essentially a rational principle, notwithstanding the early attempts to interpret the ancient Hellenic legends in terms of this philosophy and to cover its metaphysical concepts with the prestige of the gods of Olympus. The Logos was apotheosized. Very early in its history the Stoic Logos had been identified with the supreme god, Zeus (cf. Pluto, De Stoic.repugn.,34), and the Stoic philosophers continued to accept this interpretation

(cf. Seneca, De benef., IV, 7). It is not to be found, however, in the 'Theology' of Cornutus (a fruitful source of data on the subject of the Stoic Logos), though this celebrated exponent of the Stoic philosophy multiplied the personifications of the Logos whom he discovered in Cronos, in Eros and Atlas, in Pan, in the Titans and in Herakles (cf. Theology, 25-31).

But this learned exegesis was to undergo a change and give place to a different interpretation which Stoicism had not created, but was willing to utilize. We have just noted the significant ascription of apotheosis to the Logos, and how the early identification of Logos and Zeus was maintained by the late Stoic philosophers. People had been accustomed to see in Hermes the god of reason and language; he was to become the personification of the Logos. The name Hermes is said to be derived from ἑρμῆν, 'to speak' (cf. Cornutus, op. cit., 61). The tongue, as an organ of speech, was consecrated to Hermes; he was called "son of Zeus and Maia", because speech is the daughter of study and research. Hermes had been worshipped as the god of speech long before Zeno, when no one would have thought of making Zeus the soul of the world. In this popular exegesis the Stoic con-



ception of the Logos was greatly compromised and partially disorganized. Hermes was a very inferior god to personify as that sovereign force: he was only the messenger of the high gods. He occupied in mythology a secondary rôle of intermediary and messenger, which the Logos was soon to adopt in the Alexandrian philosophy, and it is possible that the myth of Hermes showed its influence in this direction on philosophical thought. Thus, by a subtle movement, Zeus ceases to be simply the divine, immanent reason of the world - the Logos - and becomes a transcendent being, the Hermes-Logos now the intermediary and messenger. This transformation in the classical doctrine of the Logos made it possible for Philo, to whom God is the transcendent Divine Absolute, to adopt and import for his own synthesis a considerable element of Stoic philosophy and doctrine.

The identification of Hermes with the Logos was really inevitable, since already in the Heraclitean scheme there is a tendency to apply to the Divine Logos the different attributes which the Stoics, later on, reserved for human speech and reason. Once Hermes blends with Logos, it invests the latter with its own peculiar attributes, and as the whole is

developed in the sphere of popular mythology the Logos will tend to lose more and more of its ancient metaphysical connotations of rationality and philosophical immanence.

It should be mentioned that Cornutus, remaining faithful to the theory of his school, only identifies Hermes with the human Logos, which had, for a long time, been analysed by the Stoics into the interior-Logos and the manifested-Logos; the universal Logos continued to be, for Cornutus, the reason of the world, and personified in Herakles, Atlas, Cronos and other secondary deities. But his efforts were in vain. The distinction of the two Logoi and the ascription to them of different roles - yet all divine - never became popular, and Hermes remained the one and only personification of the Logos.

## c h a p t e r t h r e e

## A. Alexandrian Judaism:

THE BACKGROUND IN RESPECT  
OF THE LOGOS-IDEA.

IT was in Egypt that the rôle of Hermes was particularly developed. He became identified with THOTH, the ibis or baboon god of Hermopolis, who, according to legend, created the world by the sole virtue of his word. Certain myths, having their origin in Memphis in the ninth or eighth centuries B.C., were already celebrating in Horus and Thoth the omnipotence of the divine thought and word. These myths penetrated into Greece; Plato speaks of 'Theuth' (Phaedr., 274 c), and Cicero mentions two Egyptian Hermes. Under the Ptolemies this Thoth became popular with the Alexandrians as the celebrated Hermes Trismegistos, the revealing god, who of old had invented the alphabet and taught men letters; and who, in mysterious books, had unfolded to some priest or hero the hidden secret of the creation of the world and the formula of magic evocations. For the philosophers Thoth was a personification of the Logos,

like Hermes; and the Logos was also worshipped as Osiris, of which there are a very few traces in the Hermetic books.

But, rising above the cruder popular mythology, certain loftier ideas were taking shape in Alexandria; probably finding expression in a mass of literature of which the only considerable specimens now extant are the writings of Plutarch and Philo. There may or may not have been a borrowing of ideas, but the similarity between the two philosophers was due to their common sources - the Alexandrian religious philosophy, the syncretism that drew together Stoicism and the religious theories of Egypt at the beginning of the imperial epoch. The dualist and Platonizing Stoicism which we find in Philo, Plutarch and Marcus Aurelius is that which was launched originally by Posidonius. He introduced into Stoic physics Platonist exemplarism and Pythagorean arithmetic, combining the theory of numbers and ideas with the theory of the Logos.

Plutarch maintains the tradition of the Greek moralists, and his eclecticism is subject to all the great Platonist theses. His god is transcendent, and

his Logos is shaped accordingly. The Logos is the principle of determination and energy (as the Stoics'), but it is the model on which the world was made and the agent of its creation rather than the immanent force and law of the world. The treatise "on Isis and Osiris" expounds most fully Plutarch's theory of the Logos. In sections 54-56 we find the characteristic traits of the Platonist Logos: it is at once the idea and the instrument of God, the exemplar and the demiurge of the world. In section 62 we note the theory of the double state of the Logos, innate (ἐνδιάθετος) and uttered (προφορικός), analogous to what was later to be developed by the Apologists of the Christian Church. The principle of dualism is ingrained in Plutarch, and much more than in Philo do we find the belief in the perpetual and universal conflict between good and evil, spirit and matter, the law of individual nature and the supreme, integrating law of the Logos.

The most numerous and influential body of Jews (i.e. Hellenistic Jews) dwelt at Alexandria, that strategically situated metropolis, the commercial hub of the Roman Empire, where East met West and rubbed shoulders in a liberal atmosphere. Here were to be found (it is estimated) best part of a million Jews,

for the most part attached faithfully to their national religion, observing the Sabbath, frequenting the synagogue, yet in love with all that could be truly called Hellenic. It was to be expected that some attempts would be made to fuse Judaic theology with conceptions which were peculiarly Greek. Starting with the Bible as the true source of all philosophy and science, these Hellenistic Jews applied to it the same exegetical method as was applied by the Stoics to the poems of Homer, and they produced a synthesis which satisfied their natural, instinctive devotion to Judaism and their cultivated passion for Greek thought and life. The 'Wisdom of Solomon' (though there is great divergence of opinion as to its date) is a representative of the thought, feeling and expression of Alexandrian Judaism - its religion fundamentally Jewish, but its style and thought Hellenic. But the most substantial body of literature from that sphere are the surviving books of Philo's verbose and abstruse system, and constitute the largest and almost sole (certain) monument of what must have been a flourishing religion and religio-philosophical scheme in Alexandria and district, in the first century either side of the Birth of Christ.

B. Alexandrian Judaism:  
PHILO JUDAËUS.

I. PHILO AND HELLENISM.

OF PHILO'S life itself we know little; only a few biographical details are found in his own works. The one event that can be determined with any chronological accuracy is his journey to Rome as a member of the embassy which the Alexandrian Jews sent to the Emperor Caligula, seeking protection against the attacks of the Alexandrian Greeks (40 A.D.). His birth is generally given as about 20 B.C. Whether he ever came into contact with the ministry or message of Jesus Christ, his contemporary, we do not know.

If we are to understand the philosophy of this notable Hellenistic Jew, it is necessary, as BRÉHIER suggests, "étendre ses vues au delà de la colonie juive" ('Les Idées Philosophiques et Religieuses de Philon d'Alexandrie', 1908, Introduction.).

Philonism was born of a fusion between the spirit of Judaism and that of Hellenism. In the attempted synthesis, the agreement of two irreconcilable modes of thought appears to turn less on the classical Greek

philosophy itself (which Philo heartily accepts in its entirety), than on certain religious conceptions such as the POWERS, the LOGOS and WISDOM. This group of concepts, in part at any rate, has an Hellenistic origin, but underwent at Alexandria a development that renewed their original meaning. This fusion was realized rather more in the indeterminate and changing sphere of popular religion than in the precise and well-articulated categories of thought.

Philo himself was a Hellenistic Jew and was brought up to speak the vernacular, the so-called KOINE DIALEKTOS, and was well-read in the ancient classics so that his own works show resemblances to Plato and contain expressions from Aristotle, Attic orators and the Greek poets. Thus it is that Pythagorean, Platonic, Peripatetic and Stoical ideas all contribute to the shaping of his own particular doctrines. His dualistic contrast between God and the world is essentially Platonic; the influence of Stoicism may be noted in his doctrine of God as the only efficient cause, and that of the divine Reason immanent in the world, and in the powers emanating from God and suffusing the world. His ethics and allegories are based on the Stoic ethics and allegories. As a philosopher



he must be classed with the eclectics; and in his system there is an apparent lack of order, and nowhere is any great philosophical subject exhaustively discussed and brought to a definite conclusion. But these facts do not permit us to assign Philo forthwith to the category of a mere compiler nor exclude him from a place among the great philosophers of the world.

Notwithstanding his immersion, so far as his intellect was concerned, in the broad and deep sea of Hellenistic culture, Philo's natural Jewish education has also to be taken into account. He appears to have interested himself in the Hebrew Scriptures, though he used the Greek Old Testament primarily. He attaches equal importance to the Septuagint and to the Hebrew Old Testament, and bases all his arguments on the text of the LXX. He had thoroughgoing views on Biblical inspiration, believed in the communion of the human soul with its Creator-God, set Moses at the head of the prophets, and declared (in harmony with current rabbinical thought) that the Law is eternal. He was well acquainted with the Haggadah, if not so familiar with the Halakah.

Philo, therefore, was an earnest Jew, receiving with full sympathy all the traditional customs of his race and its religion. His philosophic activity is devoted

almost entirely to the exposition of the Mosaic Law. If we consider his work against the whole of Jewish literature, we find that it takes its place at the end of the creative period of Judaism - a remarkable coda to the vast body of exegetical literature of the rabbinical schools.

Philo's chief object was "to present an apologia for the teaching of Moses by showing that even where it appeared questionable or trifling, it was full of the highest philosophical truth" (J.DRUMMOND, Philo Judaeus, vol. I, 1888, p.1). His problem was to solve the tension between the inspired Hebrew Scriptures and the Greek philosophies (and more particularly the Platonic doctrine of ideas), which seemed incompatible. It is the doctrine of the LOGOS which constitutes the central and determining factor of his philosophy: and this will be demonstrated and illustrated below.

To us, in the twentieth century A.D., the method of allegorical interpretation excites little enthusiasm, or even interest. But Philo embraced it warmly as one of the principles of his philosophy in his attempt to justify the revelations of faith by speculative reasoning. It belonged essentially to the thought of the time in which he lived, though there is much original

application of it in his exegesis. Philo, as a fine representative of that school of thought, nevertheless occupies quite a unique position. He became a model for the early Church theologians, especially at Alexandria. His general methods, and some details, and the determining principles of his religious philosophy found their way into the Christian Church.

Philo was an "earnest, pure and balanced character,... richly endowed and highly cultured, capable of giving eloquent expression to the best tendencies of his age, but not inspired with the genius to step beyond his age, and through the force of his own personality impress upon the world the formative principles of a new and nobler era" (DRUMMOND, op.cit.,p.26).

## II. THE PROBLEM.

With a mind that was thoroughly imbued with Greek philosophy, and indeed owing to its authors his own learning, Philo evolved a system which shows throughout the influence of the basic Greek doctrines. It is the dualism (largely inherited from Plato) between an altogether transcendent God and a material world that causes Philo such difficulty. Language was totally

inadequate to describe God, and the ordinary terminology could scarcely avoid anthropomorphisms and anthropopathisms; but it was impious, to Philo, to speak in that manner. This problem is to some extent eased by philosophical reflection and the allegorical method. But the God of Philo's conception is bare of all qualities, for quality implies limitation. He is eternal, unchangeable, simple substance, free self-determining Mind, the Reason of the universe, the active Cause, "...the perfectly pure and unsullied Mind of the universe, transcending knowledge, transcending virtue, transcending the good itself and the beautiful itself" (Op.Mundi,2; Loeb, vol.1,p.11 \*).

It is God's absolute elevation above the world that is most characteristic of His Being: "that He is, not what He is." If we cannot know the essence of our own souls, how much less may we comprehend the essence of the Soul of the universe. "Who can assert of the First Cause either that It is without body, or that It is a body, that It is of such a kind or that It is of no kind ?" (Legum Allegoria,73, Loeb ibid.,p.441 \*).

This doctrine is illustrated in Philo by reference to the passage in Exodus 33:12 ff., where Moses, desiring

\* All Eng. trans. of Philo are from Loeb Class. Library edition, unless otherwise indicated.

to see the Divine Glory, is allowed to behold only the 'back parts.' "Nevertheless, (Moses) was disappointed of his purpose since a knowledge of the bodies and things which come after the Self-existent was considered an amply sufficient gift for the mortal race at its best; for it is said, 'Thou shalt see my back parts, but my face shall not be seen by thee' " (Mutat.Nom., cited in DRUMMOND, op.cit.,p.19).

"Philo's transcendental conception of the idea of God precluded the creation as well as any activity of God in the world; it entirely separated God from man, and it deprived ethics of all religious basis. But Philo, who was a pious Jew, could not accept the un-Jewish, pagan conception of the world and the irreligious attitude which would have been the logical result of his own system; so he accepted the Stoic doctrine of the immanence of God, which led him to statements opposed to those he had previously made. While he at first placed God entirely outside the world, he now regarded Him as the only actual being therein. God is the only real citizen of the world."

-Art.'Philo Judaeus', Jewish Encyclopedia.

'How is it possible for the Eternal Mind, which transcends both space and time, to act within them?' This is the age-old question which haunted Philo, as it had done to every thinker in every system of theism both within Alexandrian Judaism and without.

Matter is regarded as evil, in Philo, on the grounds

that no praise is ascribed to it in Genesis; "but with God no kind of material is held in honour, and therefore He bestowed upon them all the same art, and in equal measure. And so in the holy Scriptures we read, 'God saw all things which He had made and behold, they were very good' (Gen.1:31), and all things which receive the same praise must be of equal honour in the eyes of the praiser. Now God praised not the material which He had used for His work, material soul-less, discordant and dissoluble....irregular, unequal, but He praised the works of His own art, which were consummated through a single exercise of power equal and uniform..." (Quis Rer.Div.Heres, 32). How God, prevented by the utter incompatibility of His nature and the inherently evil matter, is yet present and operative in the universe Philo attempts to explain. And therein we are introduced to the curious and complex system of the Powers (δυνάμεις). The character of ancient thought, Philo's rhetorical and figurative style, the allegorical method, and inconsistencies in the exposition, all combine to render this scheme of the powers the most perplexing in the whole of Philo.

Certain functions of the Powers in Philo belong also to the Ideas of Plato, and both are identified with

oneanother, for example in Monarch.1.6 (cited in DRUMMOND, op.cit.,p.74):

"As among you, seals, whenever wax or any similar material is applied to them, make innumerable impressions, not suffering the loss of any part, but remaining as they were, such you must suppose the powers around me to be, applying qualities to things without quality, and forms to the formless, while they experience no change or diminution in their eternal nature. But some among you call them very appropriately ideas, since they give ideal form to each thing, arranging the unarranged, and communicating determinate limits and definition and shape to the indeterminate and indefinite and shapeless, and, in a word, altering the worst into the better."

### III. PHILO AND PLATO.

The ancient epigram, "either Philo platonizes or Plato philonizes" (Hieron.), if somewhat exaggerated, serves to remind us of the evident influence of that celebrated expositor of the doctrine of Ideas upon the later Alexandrian. We may not, however, suppose that the Philonian Logos doctrine is to be discerned in the philosophy of Plato: but certainly in the teaching of Plato there are elements similar to Philo's, and the one has imparted to the other some important aspects of his teaching.

Plato was but one of a large number of thinkers who

sought by means of reason to discover "the eternal ground of phenomenal existence, and to interpret the method by which the infinite Cause enters into relations with the finite material world and with the soul of man" (DRUMMOND, op.cit.,p.27). The doctrine of the Logos as one of the proposed solutions to the problem reached its fullest expression in the philosophy of Philo Judaeus. We cannot here assess the extent of Philo's dependence on Plato, but we are at liberty to remark that for the basic ideas of the Logos doctrine Plato had provided important contributions both of thought and terminology.

Plato, like many other Greek philosophers, recognized the presence of an all-pervading reason in the universe, for which he has the name  $\text{Νοῦς}$  ; Philo prefers  $\text{Λόγος}$  or  $\text{Σοφία}$  . With a Greek background, untempered by Hebrew tradition, Plato regarded the world as the body in which the soul dwelt, forming with it one living being. He then ascribes to the cosmos (or at least to its finest part, the heaven) expressions which in later times would be more reasonably confined to the rational soul itself. God, who begat the Philonian Logos, "begat this universe...whose creator am I and father of works" (Timaeus, 41 A). The all-embracing,



the eldest of all created things, Philo's Logos is reminiscent of Plato's Cosmos, "this universe one and only-begotten" (Tim.31 B). Like the Logos, moreover, it was a 'god' and an 'image' :

"Having received all mortal and immortal creatures and being therewithall replenished, this universe hath thus come into being, living and visible, containing all things that are visible, the image ( εἰκὼν ) of its maker."

- Timaeus 92 C (tr.Archer-Hind).

Drummond suggests that the general conception of the divine Powers is borrowed from the Timaeus (41 C and following) "where the subordinate divinities are called in to assist in the formation of mortal creatures" (DRUMMOND, op.cit.,vol.II, p.139).

"The Platonic doctrines and the Alexandrian doctrines originated, at least to some extent, in the same necessity of thought, the demand for some intermediate link of communication between the eternal and the phenomenal, between God and the world. The highest, it was supposed, could produce by his own immediate act only what was perfect; and as Plato delegates to the subordinate divinities the creation of the mortal part in man, so does Philo assign the same office to ministering powers inferior to God" (DRUMMOND, ibid.).

#### IV. THE DOCTRINE OF THE POWERS.

This doctrine of the Powers was not some merely fanciful speculation on the part of Philo. He derived it, as all his doctrines, from Scripture, and ascribes this particular one to Moses. Genesis 1:27 declares that God made man *κατ'εἰκόνα θεοῦ* - not simply like God, but like the image of God. Philo extends this principle to the universe, and submits that all other things "on which the senses pronounce judgment" possessed pre-existing forms... "Nevertheless what he does say gives us a few indications of universal nature, which brings forth no finished product in the world of sense without using an incorporeal pattern" (Op.Mundi,1). The function of the Powers is to impart to matter those forms which render it such as enables us to say that things exist. Far from being agencies which keep God apart from the world, they operate to make a transcendent God omnipresent in His creation. Nor, indeed, are the Powers a naïve expedient, creating substitutes to act in God's place. In Post.Cain, v, Philo writes, "Though transcending and being beyond what He has made, nonetheless has He filled the universe with Himself; for He has caused His Powers (δυνάμεις) to extend themselves throughout the universe to its utmost bounds,

and in accordance with the laws of harmony has knit each part together."

In themselves they are eternal forms of God's Thought, the active expressions in the created universe of the Mind of the Inscrutable One which make an impression on the whole of creation. These Powers are not of equal rank, but are in a logical hierarchy. Specific mention is made of the six senior Powers, but the innumerable multitude below have but cursory reference. In an allegorical exposition of the Israelite cities of refuge, Philo delineates the six chief Powers - the Divine Powers par excellence.

"It would seem, then, that the chiefest and surest and best mother-city, something more than just a city, is the Divine Word, and that to take refuge first in it is supremely advantageous. The other five, colonies as it were, are Powers (δυνάμεις) of Him who speaks that Word, their leader being creative power, in the exercise of which the Creator produced the universe by a word; second in order is the royal power, in virtue of which He that has made it governs that which has come into being; third stands the gracious power, in the exercise of which the Great Artificer takes pity and compassion on His own work; fourth (is the legislative power, by which He prescribes duties incumbent upon us; and fifth) that division of legislation, by which He prohibits those things which should not be done."

- Fug. et Invent., xviii.

It is goodness which governs the employment of the Powers.

Briefly we may mention that the Powers appear to be equivalent to the nature or essence of God. The parallelism in Vita Mos., 11, 12 ("being a copy of the powers of God, a manifest image of the invisible nature, a created image of the eternal" - tr. Drummond, op.cit. II, p. 98) confirms that the Powers of God are identical to the invisible, eternal nature. Similarly, in Monarch. 1, 6, where the Powers communicate qualities to things without qualities, experiencing no change or deterioration in the eternal nature; thus seeming to correspond with the Divine Nature.

An interesting predicate of the Powers is found in the use of  $\tau\acute{\epsilon}\iota\lambda\omega$  ('stretch'). In the paragraph (De Mutat. Nomin. iv) in which he is proclaiming the self-sufficiency of God, and His inability properly to be in personal relation to the world, Philo mentions that "the Potencies which He has projected into creation ( $\acute{\epsilon}\kappa\tau\acute{\epsilon}\iota\lambda\epsilon\upsilon\epsilon\upsilon\ \epsilon\iota\varsigma\ \gamma\acute{\epsilon}\nu\epsilon\sigma\iota\nu$ ) to benefit what He has framed are in some cases spoken of as in a sense relative..." (tr. Loeb). This declared quality of the Powers militates against the conception of

personality. But if they are a manifestation of Divine energies this idea interprets their functions admirably. In a passage (which, incidentally, exemplifies Philo's paradoxical thought) from De Conf. Linguarum, xxvii, we see the Alexandrian struggling with the twin doctrines - a transcendent, impassible God and an immanent Creator.

"The words 'the Lord came down to see the city and the tower' (Gen.11:5), must certainly be understood in a figurative sense. For to suppose that the Deity approaches or departs, goes down or goes up, or in general remains stationary or puts Himself in motion, as particular living creatures do, is an impiety which may be said to transcend the bounds of ocean or of the universe itself. No, as I have often said elsewhere, the lawgiver is applying human terms to the super-human God, to help us, His pupils, to learn our lesson. For we all know that when a person comes down he must leave one place and occupy another. But God fills all things; He contains but is not contained. To be everywhere and nowhere is His property and His alone. He is nowhere because He Himself created space and place coincidentally with material things, and it is against all right principle to say that the Maker is contained in anything that He has made. He is everywhere because He has made His Powers to extend (τείνωσιν) through earth and water, air and heaven, and left no part of the universe without His presence, and uniting all with all has bound them fast with invisible bonds, that should never be loosed...That aspect of Him which transcends His Potencies (ὑπερὰ τῶν δυναμῶν) cannot be conceived of at all in terms of place, but only as pure being", (Loeb).

Of the Powers' relation to the Logos itself we have already noted that, in the allegory of the cities of refuge, the Logos is recognized as the 'mother-city' and its superiority is affirmed in, e.g. Leg.Allegoria, III, lxi, "And the word of God is above all the world, and is the eldest and most all-embracing of created things." Again, the five Powers had their visible resemblances in the sanctuary, but the divine Logos - above the cherubim, the creative and regal Powers of God - was not brought into visible form, because it was like nothing perceptible, the eldest of all intelligible things. The announcement of Exodus 25:22, "I will speak to thee from above the propitiatory between the two cherubim," illustrates the exalted station of the Logos and shows that, "the Logos is the driver of the Powers, but he who speaks is the rider, giving to the driver the orders which tend to the correct driving of the universe" (De Prof. 18-19, cited in Drummond, II, p. 161).

The Logos, or Divine Thought, then, sums up and comprehends the whole intelligible universe, as it is expressed in De Opificio Mundi, vi (cited below). Moreover, the Word of God both contains and coincides with the intelligible cosmos, as may be inferred from the passage in De Somniis I, xi, where the word 'place'

in Scripture is represented as being sometimes an allegorical expression for the "Divine Word," which God Himself has completely filled throughout with incorporeal potencies (ἄσωματοις δυνάμεσιν)". Of this important reference Drummond says:

"This statement seems to imply that the powers or ideas collectively exhaust the Logos, and that therefore they and the Logos are convertible terms, and the divine Thought is neither more nor less than the sum total and logical equivalent of the divine thoughts. Since God is more generic than the Logos, he of course includes it and its contents, so that there is no inconsistency when, in a single passage, God, and not the Logos, is described as the 'immaterial place of immaterial ideas' (Cherub., 14)"

- op.cit., p. 162.

The Powers or divine 'Ideas', in a word, "are the active manifestations of the energy of God, which give to creation all the reality, as well as all the order and beauty, which it possesses".

- W.R. INGE, Enc. Rel. and Ethics, article on 'Alexandrian Theology', vol. I, p. 311 a.

## V. LOGOS - 'THE CUTTER'.

Philo introduces formally the idea of the Logos, in the sense of  $\xi\acute{\sigma}\iota\varsigma$  of the world, following exactly the rôle it assumes in Stoic philosophy. We know that for Heraclitus the harmony of the world is derived from a single, invisible law, one of whose names is the Logos: in the midst of opposing forces which threaten one another and tend towards self-destruction, the Logos maintains peace and equilibrium. From this Heraclitean doctrine more or less adapted by Stoicism, proceeds an element of the Philonian Logos, the  $\lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\varsigma\ \tau\omicron\mu\acute{\epsilon}\upsilon\varsigma$ . Thus we meet another of the paradoxes, the Logos transcendent when regarded as the Ideal Cosmos in the Supreme Mind \* ; and the Logos- $\tau\omicron\mu\acute{\epsilon}\upsilon\varsigma$ , co-extensive with the visible scene when impressed upon matter as the potent Thought of God, the Bond of all things, preventing them from dissolution.

\* "Should a man desire to use words in a more simple and direct way, he would say that the world discerned only by the intellect is nothing else than the Word of God ( $\theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon\ \lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\nu$ ) when he was already engaged in the act of creation. For...the city discernible by the intellect alone is nothing else than the reasoning faculty of the architect in the act of planning to found the city. The one who lays this down is Moses, not I. Witness his express acknowledgment in the sequel when setting on record the creation of man, that he was moulded after the image of God (Gen.1:27).



"Now if the part is an image of an image, it is manifest that the whole is so too, and if the whole creation, this entire world perceived by our senses (seeing that it is greater than any human image) is a copy of the Divine image, it is manifest that the archetypal seal also, which we aver to be the world described by the mind, would be the very Word of God (ὁ θεοῦ λόγος)"

- De Op. Mundi, vi, 24-25.

This novel conception of the 'cutter' (τομεύς) is elaborated in Quis Rerum Divinarum Heres, and is based upon the story of Abraham's offering of the animals (Gen.15:9 ff.) All were divided, save the two birds; these signify, according to Philo's allegory, the archetypal Reason immanent in the Divine, and its counterpart in us, and therefore were left unsevered. "...God has cut all the natures of things in accordance with pre-established ideas. We are carried only one step further back when it is alleged that the Divine Logos not only contained the ideal creation, but disposed it into a cosmos (cf.Op.Mundi, v)"

- DRUMMOND, op.cit.II,p.169.

"As, then, the city which was fashioned beforehand within the mind of the architect held no place in the outer world, but had been engraved in the soul of the artificer as by a seal; even so the universe that consisted of ideas would have no other location than the Divine Reason, which was the author of this ordered frame."

-Op.Mundi, v (Loeb).

"Then, he continues, 'he divided them in the middle,' but he does not add who this 'he' is. He wishes you to think of God who cannot be shewn, as severing through the Severer of all things, that is his Word (τῷ Τόμει τῶν Συνπάντων ἑαυτοῦ λόγῳ), the whole succession of things material and immaterial whose natures appear to us to be knitted together and united. That severing Word whetted to an edge of utmost sharpness never ceases to divide"

- Quis Rer.Div.Heres, xxvi.

"In its relation to the world the Logos appears as the universal substance on which all things depend; and from this point of view the manner (as ὑεγικωτάτοις) becomes a symbol for it. The Logos, however, is not only the archetype of things, but also the power that produces them, appearing as such especially under the name of the Logos τομεύς (the 'divider'). It separates the individual beings of nature from one another according to their characteristics; but, on the other hand, it constitutes the bond connecting the individual creatures, uniting their spiritual and physical attributes. It may be said to have invested itself with the whole world as an indestructible garment."

- Jewish Encyclopedia, art., "Philo Judaeus."

## VII. OTHER DESIGNATIONS OF LOGOS.

Among the many epithets applied to the Logos indicating its relation to God we find that of the 'Shepherd'. In the pastoral allegory, drawn from the story of Moses and Jethro's (properly Raguel's) flock, the seven bodily faculties, of those who belong to the flock of God have the Divine Logos as their Shepherd:

"For they have discarded their kinship and vanity, and become affiliated to the guidance and rule of law, resolved to become part of the holy herd which is led by God's Word as its name shews, For Raguel means 'the shepherding of God.' ....So then we shall not be surprised to find the mind which has the Divine Word for its shepherd."

- De Mutat.Nominum, xix, xx.

As the most generic thought, the Logos is regarded as the oldest of things - doubtless referring to its logical rather than chronological relations:

"We have a proof of this in His feeding us with His own most 'generic' word; for 'manna' means 'something', and this is the most generic of all terms. And the Word of God is above all the world, and is the eldest and most all-embracing of all created things."

- Leg.Alleg.,III,lxi.

As dependent on the self-existing Cause, and as thought, thereby produced, the Logos is represented as a Son; which, together with the previously described notion of 'oldest', results in its becoming the first-born Son: "For there are, as is evident, two temples of God; one of them this universe, in which there is also as High Priest His First-born, the divine Word, and the other the rational soul, whose priest is the real Man..."

- De Somniis, xxxvii.

Being more suitable than other terms to convey special ideas, and having Hebrew sanction, Wisdom finds a place in the Philonian system. Borrowed from Alexandrian theology, the idea of Wisdom confused rather than clarified the Logos doctrine. Wisdom, "God's archetypal luminary," (Migr.Abr., viii), is both co-ordinated with the Logos and also regarded as the higher principle from which the Divine Word proceeds. In the commentary on Deuteronomy 8:15 ff., to be found in Legum Allegoria II,xxi, Israel is exhorted not to forget the Lord who nourished them in the wilderness. Spiritually we thirst "until God send forth the stream from His strong wisdom to quench the thirst of the soul....For the flinty rock is the wisdom of God, which He marked off highest and chiefest of His powers."

Thus, Wisdom is set forth as the highest of the Divine Powers - presumably as operative in the world. But in the same paragraph we see an example of the problem of a coherent doctrine, for, when souls have drunk, "they are filled also with the manna", the most generic of substances....But the primal existence is God, and next to Him is the Word of God."

God, "the only wise", is the "fountain of wisdom," (SS. Ab. et Cain, xvii): and He is the "sovereign of wisdom," (Quod det. pot. ins., ix). Wisdom, like the other Divine Powers, is "older than the creation of the entire cosmos." Like the Logos, Wisdom was instrumental in the creation of the cosmos; God being the Father and Wisdom the Mother of the universe, "we should rightly say...that the architect who made this universe was at the same time the father of what was thus born, whilst its mother was the knowledge possessed by its Maker. With His knowledge God had union, not as men have it, and begat created things."

In apparent contradiction to the identification of Wisdom and the Logos, we note such references as, e.g., in De Fuga et Inventione, xviii, "The man who is capable of running swiftly it bids stay not to draw breath but

pass forward to the supreme Divine Word, who is the fountain of wisdom, in order that he may...gain life eternal as his prize."

Again, in the same book, section xx, "the Divine Word...his father being God, and his mother Wisdom, through whom the universe came into existence (δι' ἧς τὰ ὅλα ἦλθεν εἰς γένεσιν)."  
Further, "the Divine Word descends from the fountain of wisdom like a river to lave and water the heaven-sent celestial shoots and plants of virtue-loving souls which are as a garden" (De Somniis, xxxvii).

Probably Wisdom is used at all by Philo because of its more distinct personal associations, and is more definite than the term Logos. This latter, being more flexible and able to express both inward conception and the uttered or objective thought, is preferred.

The term "Divine Spirit" is used less frequently. Physically, it signifies the air; metaphysically, either the impress of the Logos, or the universal Wisdom, manifested in individuals. The Spirit is identified with Wisdom in its highest generic sense and is there ontologically the same as the Logos,

though in its higher sense it is used of the Logos only in connection with mankind (cf. De Gigant., v-vii).

The title "Second God" is employed only once (Fragments, II, 625):

"Why, as though speaking of another God, does he say, 'I made man in the image of God,' but not in his own image? The answer is that nothing mortal could be made like the supreme Father of all, but only like the second God, the Logos. For the rational impress in the soul of man must be stamped by divine Reason, and cannot have as its archetype God, who is above Reason."

"Here the application of the term 'God' to the Logos is rendered necessary by Philo's interpretation of the passage on which he is commenting. According to his own conception, as expressed in the words before us, the Logos is simply the archetype of the rational principle in man, and this archetype, as we have seen, is the immanent Thought of the universe"

- DRUMMOND, op.cit., II, pp.197-8.

Philo was in no way erring into polytheism: but in as much as the Logos was truly divine, the creative Thought of God, the cosmic principle in the material universe, and represented only the immanence but not the transcendence of God - to distinguish it from the One Supreme Being - it was termed, rather naturally, "Second God."

VII. THE PERSONALITY OF THE LOGOS.

The question of the personality of the Logos was not raised by Philo himself, whose inconsistencies in this respect present the student with one of the most tantalizing problems in this aspect of his teaching. The modern reader of Philo needs to be on his guard against judging the subject from the standpoint of the postulates of modern thought. The Hellenistic philosopher, Philo, had considerable fondness for personification, metaphor and the like, with the result that there is no paucity of nebulous speculations in parts of his allegorical and highly poetic exegesis.

In his system of allegorical interpretations, Philo takes certain historical personages of the Old Testament as symbols of abstract qualities. Abraham, for example, is first the representative of the wise man, and then he becomes the distinctive quality of the wise man, 'Divine Reason.'

"It ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women, and she...said, Not yet hath happiness befallen me till now, but my Lord (the Divine Word) is greater (Gen. 18:11 ff.)"

- Leg.Alleg. III,lxxvii.



Melchizedek also:

"For he is a priest, even Reason, having as his portion Him that IS, and all his thoughts of God are high....for he is a priest of the most high (Gen.14: 18 f.).

— *ibid.*,26.

"To entertain thoughts is characteristic of personality....The Logos is known to consciousness as the very essence of our personality; it is by participation in reason that we are persons, and not merely animals or things" (DRUMMOND, *op.cit.*,p.225-6).

Though Drummond goes on to elaborate and offer an explanation attempting to reconcile the inconsistencies constituting the problem of the Personality of the Logos.

It is legitimate and possible to deduce personality from the description of Logos as NOUS, as in Quis Rer. Div. Heres, 48, where it is further declared that, "the two natures, the reasoning power within us and the divine Word or Reason above us, are indivisible, yet...they divide (τέμνουσιν, cf. λόγος τομεύς) other things."

The application of the term 'mind', however, to the Logos is no guarantee of personality, and it may be

that the "Logos, conceived as mind, is simply the rational power of God, from which is copied the generic idea of human reason" (Drummond, *ibid.*, p.235).

There is a series of passages, in this connection, in which the term 'angel' is applied to either the Logos or the Logoi. They are based upon Scriptural references and are treated in contexts where Philo employs the allegorical method. This fact should prevent us from coming to any hasty conclusions as to the personality of the Logos or Logoi. Words are used in the description of the numerous cases of angelic appearances to Old Testament characters which at first sight are convincingly in favour of a personal Logos. In the appearance to Jacob in Genesis 31:13, "Accordingly, when He says 'I am the God who was seen of thee in the place of God', understand that He occupied the place of an angel only so far as appeared, without changing, with a view to the profit of him who was not yet capable of seeing the true God....so some regard the image of God, His angel the Word, as His very self. Do you not see how Hagar, who is the education of the schools, says to the angel, 'Thou art the God that didst look upon me' (Gen.16:13) ? For being an Egyptian by descent she was not qualified to see the supreme Cause." - *De.Somniis*, 41.

The language is, on the surface, indicative of the possible ascription of personality to the Logos. But the context seems to modify those rather bald assertions. Philo is teaching that the angels who appeared to Hagar and Jacob, whom they mistook for God Himself, are symbols of the Divine Thought. In His purpose of leading men to a full faith that can perceive Him as transcendent and infinite Cause, God directs their way from the crudest anthropomorphisms through the recognition of Himself as the immanent Reason.

The reference in De Somniis I, 127, gives weight to the positive point of view: "the holy land is full of incorporeal 'words'; and these words are immortal souls", which are later identified with angels (ibid., 22.141). Similarly, the description of the angel which appeared to Moses in the burning bush (Vita. Mos., I, 12) - though not actually identified with the Logos, but assumed to be so - manifests personal activity. Again, in writing of the pillar of cloud which stood between the Egyptians and the Israelites, Philo employs language which is strongly personal:

"To His Word, His chief messenger, highest in age and honour, the Father of all has given the special prerogative, to stand on the border and separate the creature from the Creator. This same

Word pleads with the immortal as suppliant for afflicted mortality and acts as ambassador of the ruler to the subject. He glories in this prerogative and proudly describes it in these words, 'and I stood between the Lord and you' (Deut.5:5), that is neither uncreated as God, nor created as you, but midway between the two extremes, a surety to both sides...I am the harbinger of peace to creation from that God whose will is to bring wars to an end, who is ever the guardian of peace.'

- Quis Rer. Div. Heres, 42.

There is evidently some inconsistency here, for it was Moses who actually spoke the words quoted: so that Moses would logically be the Logos. Philo had previously regarded the cloud as the visible covering of the unseen angel (Vita Mos., I, xxix).

We cannot press the personal and angelic character of the Logos or Logoi. The inconsistencies and symbolic language of the whole exposition permit only an allegorical identification of the Logoi with the angels.

We should not lose sight of the one dominating idea underlying the multitude of references to the Logos in Philo's system. It is pre-eminently the THOUGHT of God which dwells subjectively in the Infinite Mind:

"For if we have not yet become fit to be thought the sons of God yet we may be sons of His invisible image, the Most Holy Word. For the Word is the eldest-born image (εἰκὼν) of God."

- De Conf.Ling., 147.

And this Thought or Reason is made objective in the universe:

"...for by His own supremely manifest and far-shining Reason God makes both of them, both the original of the mind, which in symbolic language he calls 'heaven', and the original of sense-perception, to which by a figure He gave the name of 'earth' "

- Leg. Alleg., 21.

"The creative Thought which shaped the cosmos was the first messenger that issued from the solitude of God, bidding chaotic matter become clothed with ideal forms, and rational beings arise responsive to the infinite intelligence. Language of this kind does not imply individual personality" (DRUMMOND)

-op.cit., p.271.

#### VIII. LOGOS AND CONSCIENCE.

Philo recognizes that man is a being who continually seeks after God, yearning for the ultimate Reality, whether as expressed more abstractly in terms of the intellect or in a more personal fashion as the satisfaction of the whole nature. He discusses this theme from different standpoints. His treatment of the Conscience and its functions is inconsiderable, though this appears to be no indication of the importance he attaches to it. Conscience is one of the links between the natural and the super-natural, and Philo

plainly states that it is the Divine agent within the soul, illuminating its actions so that their real character is manifest. The irrational tendency of human nature to follow the worse, whilst all the time knowing better, renders necessary the intervention of Divine energy to support - to encourage - the moral aspirations of the human soul.

Philo identifies Conscience with the Logos, as for example, in *Quod Deus sit. Immut.*, 134 ff:

"So long as the Divine Logos has not come into our soul as into its abode, the deeds of the soul are blameless: for its guardian or father or teacher or whatever we ought to call that Priest by whom alone it can be warned and controlled remains far away from it: and those who sin through ignorance, without knowledge of what things they ought to do, receive pardon. For they do not even apprehend their actions as sins. Indeed they even suppose that they are acting rightly in cases where they commit great errors. But when the Priest who genuinely tests us enters into us like a perfectly pure ray of light, then we recognize the unrighteous designs harboured in our souls and our culpable deeds. All these the consecrated testing Power \*, having shown their defilement, bids us pack away and strip off, that he may behold the house of the soul clean, and if any diseases have arisen in it, may heal them."

- trans. in KENNEDY, *Philo's Contribution to Religion*, 1919, pp. 109 f.

\* <sup>31</sup>ελεγχος is for Philo an almost technical description of the Conscience. Thus in *De Fuga*, 131, he writes:

"These are the utterances of the genuine man, who is the testing power (ἐλεγχος) of the soul, who, when he sees the soul in perplexity making enquiry and search, takes care that she may not go astray and miss the right path."

- trans.Kennedy.

Later, in the same context, having compared the Logos to a prophet, Philo writes:

"For this inspired being, in the grasp of an Olympian love, and goaded by the irresistible stings of his Divine frenzy, entering into the soul, creates there the remembrance of her old wrong-doings and sins, not that she may again yield to them, but that with loud lamentations and weeping she may come back from her former wandering, hating its issue, and may follow the promptings of the Logos-prophet, who is the interpreter of God."

- trans.Kennedy.

To sum up: Philo regards Conscience as a manifestation of the Logos, a vital factor in awakening men's and women's aspirations after God. It is, therefore, essential for a man to be humble and estimate himself as in the Divine Presence if he would reach God Himself. This is made possible by the function of Conscience within the soul.

One of the most suggestive expositions of the Logos is that which is set forth as the Image of God. First, it is the all-comprehending Divine Thought, by means

of which God gave shape to the shapeless universe:

"...when (God) had perfected it, stamped the entire universe with His image and an ideal form, even His own Word."

- De Somniis, vi (Loeb).

Secondly, the mortal soul " was stamped according to the image of the self-existent; and thought, through which the whole cosmos was fabricated, is an image of God" (Monarch, 11, v; Loeb).

Philo infers from the statement of Genesis 1:27 his doctrine that man was formed according to the image of God (εἰκόνα θεοῦ), and he proposes that the human mind is a copy of the Logos. He concludes, therefore, a descending order of three terms:

God, the Logos and the human mind (or reason).

"...the mind in each of us, which in the true and full sense is the 'man', is an expression at third hand from the Maker, while between them is the Reason which serves as a model for our reason, but itself is the effigy or presentment of God."

- Quis Rer.Div.Heres, xlviil.



## IX. ECSTASY.

It is God's purpose, according to Philo, that men should attain to spiritual perfection. Life here on earth is a pilgrimage towards the realization of that full and uninterrupted communion with God which IS salvation, when (to use a New Testament dictum) "I shall know even as also I am known." For it is necessary to bear in mind that in the Greek tradition there is a constant emphasis on knowledge as salvation, quite different from the Hebrew doctrine of salvation. Philo bids the virtue-seeking soul, "Depart, therefore, out of the earthly matter that encompasses thee" - Migr.Abr., ii; that is, not to seek death, but "make thyself a stranger to them (worldly things) in judgment and purpose...they are thy subjects...evermore be coming to know thyself" (ibid.). And as long as he falls short of the final perfection, the aspirant "has the Divine Word as his leader" (Migr.Abr.,xxxi).

Communion with God in its highest form reaches the state which is called 'prophecy'. Only the wise and virtuous man is eligible for this state. Prophecy includes foresight into the future, but the higher function of the prophet is to interpret God. The

medium of prophecy is ecstasy, a condition of inspired frenzy in which the natural reason is suspended and the man himself becomes the passive instrument of God:

"Now with every good man it is the holy Word which assures him his gift of prophecy. For a prophet (being a spokesman) has no utterance of his own, but all his utterance comes from elsewhere, the echoes of another's voice. The wicked may never be the interpreter of God, so that no worthless person is 'god-inspired' in the proper sense...

"What of Moses ? Is he not everywhere celebrated as a prophet ? For it says, 'if a prophet of the Lord arise among you, I will be known to him in a vision, but to Moses in actual appearance and not through riddles' (Num. 12:6, 8), and again, 'there no more rose up a prophet like Moses whom the Lord knew face to face' (Deut. 34:10). Admirably then does he describe the inspired when he says 'about sunset there fell on him an ecstasy (ἑκστασις).' "

- Quis Rer.Div.Heres, lli.

The highest place, then, seems reserved for the calm, steadfast, peaceful mind of the wise man, represented by Moses as standing between the Lord and Israel. This blessed mind is superior to man but inferior to God:

"Thus (Moses) says, 'And I stood between the Lord and you' (Deut. 5:5), where he does not mean that he stood firm upon his feet, but wishes to indicate that the mind of the sage, released from storms and wars, with calm still weather and profound peace around it, is superior to men, but less than God" (De Somniis, xxxiv).

This corresponds with the Old Testament development, wherein the self-possessed, fully-conscious and, at the same time, fully-Spirit-possessed reforming prophets are considered superior figures to the ecstatic NeBHI'IM of earlier times.

#### X. THE IDEA OF EXTENSION.

When we have made the fullest attempt to reconcile the various, contradictory elements in the curious Logos doctrine of Philo, we are aware that there is something unsatisfactory in such a conclusion as may have been reached along the line of "personality" or "not personality". Indeed, we feel led to ask whether this is not rather too modern a category by which to interpret ancient thought and concepts. Philo is clearly not a reckless thinker and expositor, and his apparent indifference towards that which is so perplexing to us, two millenia afterwards, may find its explanation in a form of interpretation suggested by A.R. JOHNSON. In his thesis, "The One and the Many in the Israelite Conception of God" (Cardiff, Univ. Press, 1942), he develops the idea

of the 'extension of personality.' In Israelite thought, he proposes, man was conceived of, not in some analytical fashion (as is the modern, western habit), but synthetically - as a psychological whole (cf. p.5). In Genesis 2:7, for example, NEPHESH indicates not one (albeit the superior) part of man's being, "but the complete personality as a unified manifestation of vital power; it represents what Pedersen has called 'the grasping of a totality' " (ibid.,p.6). In the straightforward case of Isaac's blessing we have a notable example of the 'extension of personality'. His uttered word of benediction is such an extension. Blessings are part of the author, going forth with a kind of creative power. "Having once bestowed blessing upon Jacob, (he) is unable to retract his words... once uttered they act creatively in a quasi-material fashion" (ibid.,p.7). Similar to this are the examples cited of personality being extended through a man's household (e.g., Achan, in Joshua 7:24 ff.); through a man's 'messenger' (e.g., through the agency of his servant Joseph is considered present, Gen.44:4 f.); through a man's property (e.g., Elisha's staff, II Kings 4:29). "Accordingly, in Israelite thought the

individual, as a NEPHESH or centre of power capable of indefinite extension, is never a mere isolated unit; he lives in constant reaction towards others" (p.11).

To sum up: we may say of the Israelite conception of man that it was so diffuse that Heraclitus might well have been speaking in Hebrew rather than Greek terms when he said:

"Though thou shouldst traverse every path,  
thou couldst not discover the boundaries  
of 'soul'; it hath so deep a meaning"

- JOHNSON, p.17.

This idea is then applied to God, and numerous Old Testament examples are cited. The manifestations of exceptional power (cf. Gideon and Samson) or the infectious behaviour of the early, ecstatic prophets might be attributed to the RUAH, or Spirit of Yahweh, as the extension of His personality. "God is thought of in terms similar to those of man as possessing an indefinite extension of the personality which enables him to exercise a mysterious influence upon mankind. In its creative aspect this appears as 'blessing'; in its destructive aspect it makes itself felt as a 'curse' " (p.20).

Of more immediate concern for this study is the Old

Testament use of 'Word' (i.e., D'BHAR YHWH), which in certain instances may be regarded as a powerful 'extension' of Yahweh's personality. The very well-known and relevant passage in Isaiah 55:10 ff. reflects the idea. "The 'Word' (DABHAR) is one with the 'thing' (DABHAR) which is to be performed; it has objective reality, and thus forms a powerful 'Extension' of the Divine Personality" (Johnson, p.21).

There is, further, the Angel of Yahweh (e.g., in Judges 6:11 ff.) which is indistinguishable from Yahweh Himself, and of whom it may be said that he, too, is an extension of the same God.

If this really was the manner in which the ancient Semites conceived the media of Divine Self-manifestation (and among the Israelites, in particular, of the theophanies and the Word); if, too, something of the same idea was to be found in the Hellenistic world - it is not, then, unreasonable to submit that Philo (as a Jew by birth, instinct and religion) likewise conceived the Logos. The application of Johnson's argument to the Logos (as in the other instances of extension of Divine Personality) makes room for a theory whereby the Logos may be viewed as at once God Himself

and, at the same time, other than God. The Logos is an aspect of God, therefore, of whom it is but a complement (not a contradiction) to assert that he is an entity. Philo was a Jew seeking to demonstrate to the Greek world the superiority of the Hebrew revelation, and having a wide knowledge of the Old Testament, and (we may believe) with no slight appreciation of the Hebrew background and mind.

This Logos, which is the power most intimately bound to the Divine, Omnipotent Being, called 'Second God', 'Son of God', 'Divine Reason', 'invisible and eldest-born image of God', alone having access to the innermost Mind of the Absolute, is nevertheless quite clearly distinguished from Him. It has precisely defined functions within the cosmos, and has relations with men, yet without being hypostatized. Thus may the Divine Being, viewed as capable of indefinite extension, "though transcending and being beyond what He has made, nonetheless (fill) the universe with Himself; for He has caused His Powers to EXTEND themselves..." (Post.Cain, V).

## XI. PHILO'S LOGOS AND THE D'BHAR - YHWH.

One of the leading conceptions of the Old Testament is that of 'the Word of the Lord' (D'BHAR YHWH). It is to be found throughout the whole vast compass of that ancient library of sacred writings, with the first reference at Genesis 15:1, and the last at Malachi 1:1. In the Septuagint it is rendered by both  $\lambda\omicron\gamma\omicron\varsigma$  and  $\rho\acute{\eta}\mu\alpha$ . An obvious question presents itself when we come to consider Hebrew Scriptures in Greek language: How does the Philonian conception of the Word correspond with the D'BHAR YHWH of the Old Testament, and to what extent is the later a truly natural development of the earlier?

The Hebrew saw in DABHAR essentially the quality of action. The Word has an inherent potency to bring to pass what verbally it declares. As has already been intimated, the oriental idea of the dynamic word formed part of the every-day life and conversation, as for example in the matter of blessings and cursings. How much more so, then, this would be true of the Divine Word. In the Old Testament we have such explicit instances as that of Psalm 33:6 (LXX, 32:6) where it is declared, "By the word of Yahweh were the heavens made". Or,



in Isaiah 55:11 ff., where the Word of Yahweh accomplishes His will. Or again, Jeremiah 1:2 (and a multitude of similar usages) where the Word is the organ of communication with the prophets, and the agent of Divine illumination and self-revelation. It is creative, instructive (cf., Psalm 119:105), and - under God - sovereign in its inevitable self-realization.

In phraseology there is superficial resemblance between the Old Testament usage of the Word and the later Alexandrian doctrine: in both spheres the Word is the bridge between God and man in particular, and between Creator and creation more generally. Beneath this surface likeness there are basic differences. The Philonian conception of matter, and the need for the Logos in creation, are far removed from the Hebrew interpretation of the Biblical ideas of creation and mediation. With all his reverence for the Old Testament and his Hebrew ancestry, Philo was a Greek philosopher. One feels, in reading Philo's works, that the inconsistencies and oscillations of thought and doctrine are but a reflection of a tension between his nature and instinct, and the cultural passion for all that was Greek. The Hellenistic notion of God was

fundamentally different from that of the Old Testament revelation; and the Hebrew D'BHAR YHWH - with no tendency to be thought of as a distinct hypostasis, God's utterance to the human soul, with its objective being only found in the written prophets and the codified law - was far removed from the Alexandrian Reason pre-eminently the Thought of a transcendent, impassible, incognizable Deity, which dwells in the Infinite Mind, but made objective in the universe. The Greek tradition interprets the Logos as static; for Philo, it issues forth from God and operates in a subjective manner in man and the cosmos, and (at times) possessing properties which apparently bring it near, if not quite as far as, an hypostasis.

Philo's hope was to do the impossible. He sought to blend the Greek and Hebrew genius within the prescribed bounds of the Old Testament. How far he succeeded at all, it is scarcely possible to estimate in so slight a study as this brief section requires. One thing, however, strikes the most casual reader of Philo. This philosopher's cosmology, cosmogony, theology, metaphysics and doctrine of the Logos are viewed from a Greek point of view adjusted to, and modified by, the Hebrew, rather than vice-versa.

Philo represents a new approach, not a development. He is next in the line of Heracleitus, Plato and the Stoics, rather than the natural successor to Moses, Elijah and Jeremiah. The far-sighted, daring Evangelist who penned the Prologue to the Fourth Gospel might claim that place with greater right.

## XII. PHILO'S LOGOS AND THE FOURTH GOSPEL.

The all-important question of the Philonian Logos doctrine as a possible source for the Christology of John, Paul and the Epistle to the Hebrews gives great exercise to the mind of any student of the 'Word of God' in the New Testament. We are particularly concerned here with the Prologue to the Fourth Gospel and must confine ourselves to that Scripture. It is, of course, the chief 'Logos' passage in the New Testament. Philo and John lived in that age of religious syncretism, a period so fascinating to students. Certain basic metaphysical conceptions prevailed universally, constituting a background for the birth and development of religious ideas - common to them all. It is not necessary to assume any direct connection between John and Philo.

Whatever differences may be alleged between Philo and the Johannine Prologue, they have this in common, the attempt to interpret to a Hellenistic world a revelation of the God of Hebrew monotheism. The nature of that revelation, the method employed in its interpretation, the meaning attached by respective authors to certain leading terms and the purpose of their writings can be shown to be fundamentally different, if not, in some cases, opposed.

Philo stands out as the most notable thinker and voluminous author of a Greek world nourished by a Hellenistic philosophy similar to that exemplified in the 'Hermetica'. Philo endeavoured to interpret the Old Testament revelation through the medium of a Platonic-Stoic philosophy similar to the 'Hermetica' ; and it was this objective which led to his propounding the doctrine which is his peculiar contribution to Hellenistic theology - "Philo's Logos."

John takes the same term, Logos, and embraces it boldly for his Gospel; applying it without apology or explanation to the Jesus Christ whose 'signs' are recounted therein, that the reader might "believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing

(ye) might have life through his name" (Jn.20:30-31). The Philonian Logos bespeaks the philosophical yearning after a Saviour for which Logos the author of the Fourth Gospel substitutes Jesus Christ: we cannot, however, express the one in terms of the other.

Philo was a great thinker, but fails to find a place among the front-rank philosophers. It is mere, yet not worthless, speculation to wonder whether his very objective frustrated the production of a new system, "formative principles of a new and nobler era" (Drummond). Had he the genius but failed to do it justice because he attempted the impossible? Plato stood firmly in Greece and gave us an epoch-making scheme; Isaiah bequeathed to the world a monumental religio-philosophy of history as only a Hebrew could. The reading of Philo leaves the student with the irresistible impression that the Alexandrian with one foot on the Temple and the other in Athens, fell between two stools.

## XIII. PHILONISM AND CHRISTIANITY.

"Hellenistic Judaism culminated in Philo, and through him exerted a deep and lasting influence on Christianity also. For the Jews themselves it soon succumbed to Palestinian Judaism. The development that ended in the Talmud offered a surer guarantee for the continuance of Judaism, as opposed to paganism and rising Christianity, than Jewish Hellenism could promise, which, with all its loyalty to the laws of the Fathers, could not help it to an independent position. The cosmopolitanism of Christianity soon swept away Hellenistic Judaism, which could never go so far as to declare the Law superfluous, notwithstanding its philosophic liberality" (Art., 'Philo Judaeus', Jewish Encycl.).

The deposition of Philo from the ranks of recognized Jewish thinkers and, on the contrary, his place of influence granted in the developing Christian theology, constitute not the least among the curious phenomena associated with the name of Philo. Estimations of the extent of Philo's influence have been as diverse as, for example, the extreme view of Kirschbaum who saw between Philo and Christianity a bond so close that he made the works of Philo an apocryphal invention of the

Christians; and the thesis of Carpzov who declines to see in the Philonian Logos any feature of the Johannine Word.

Apart from the Johannine question, however, there are clear indications that Philo made a greater or lesser impression on the minds of the early Christian writers, and that not exclusively at Alexandria where we would rather naturally expect his doctrines to enjoy particular popularity. Barnabas appears to follow his method in allegorical interpretation. Justin Martyr presented a Logos doctrine which some claim to be nearer to Philo's than John's. In Origen there are certain similarities. Eusebius at least quotes Philo, and Ambrose conveys whole sentences from him. Jerome seems to be influenced by Philo's interpretation of the Old Testament.

But of all the Fathers, Clement of Alexandria, c.200 AD., predominates as the theologian most indebted to Philo. Clement makes the Logos doctrine the basis of his Christology, though it is a less metaphysical conception and more religious than Philo's. The latter's emphasis is cosmological and metaphysical, the former rather follows John in regarding the Logos essentially as the Revealer of God and the Teacher, Trainer and Saviour of men.

The pre-mundane personality of the Logos is affirmed in Clement, as is also His work in the gift of knowledge and immortality, the Greek conception of eternal life. As the Instrument in creation, Clement's Logos is the 'pilot' of the universe, introducing harmony; He created man in His own image and appears as the Divine Revealer in the Old Testament, taking various shapes according to the nature of the theophany. Little is said of the Third Person of the Godhead, for in Alexandrian thought, the functions of the Spirit were fulfilled by the Logos.

In 150 years, the interval between Philo and Clement, "the centre of gravity in philosophy had changed from metaphysics and cosmology to religion and ethics" (E.R.E, vol.1, p.314.).



C.           A l e x a n d r i a n   J u d a i s m :  
 C O N S I D E R E D   A S   A   P O S S I B L E  
 S O U R C E   O F   T H E   J O H A N N I N E  
 L O G O S - D O C T R I N E .

NOT so many decades ago it was widely held that the guiding influence in John's adoption of the term 'LOGOS' for his Prologue was Philo in particular, or at least Alexandrian Jewish philosophy more generally. E.F.SCOTT (The Fourth Gospel, its Purpose and Theology, 1908) was the most outstanding British exponent of this position, and for a long period held the ascendancy in the realm of Fourth Gospel studies. Whilst acknowledging that Philo's work "is a dreary chaos.... rambling allegory" (op.cit.,p.56), and that John has an order and a plan which is altogether intelligible, he believes that John borrowed freely from Philo and adapted freely. The intersection of Paulinism and Alexandrianism is clearly seen in the Epistle to the Hebrews, and to a lesser degree in Ephesians and Colossians. Scott thinks that the dependence of John on Philo is manifested in three directions:

- i.    In respect of the allegorical method, reflected in the teaching of the main body of the Gospel.

ii. In particular passages paralleled from the writings of Philo:

(a) Jn.5:17, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work", cf. Leg.Alleg.,III, where God is said never to cease the work of creation through the Logos.

(b) Jn.5:19, "The Son can do nothing of Himself", cf. Conf.Ling.,14, "The Father of the universe has brought him (Logos) into being" - but always with an essential difference.

(c) As Jesus Christ reveals Himself in the Gospel history and in Christian experience He is the 'Bread of Life'; cf., Philo's Logos as the Heavenly Manna.

iii. But the Alexandrian influence is most<sup>in</sup> evidence in the Logos doctrine as formulated in the Prologue and everywhere presupposed in the body of the Gospel. In speaking of Alexandrian 'influence' we are not to suppose that it was of the same kind as that of the Synoptics or Paul. There was a fundamental similarity of task confronting both Philo and John, namely, to transplant into the world of Hellenic thought and culture a revelation originally given through Judaism. Thus, up to a point John follows the path marked out by Philo.

Of course Scott recognizes profound modifications in the adaptation by John, and basic differences in the significance of the Logos figure. The ancient concept is endowed with an entirely new value as soon as it is identified with the historical Person of Jesus Christ. It is doubtful whether Philo's Logos may be regarded as a personality. The Philonian Logos is, moreover, fundamentally the Divine Reason and Activity, whereas John starts from the actual knowledge of the earthly life of Jesus - "the speculative view of Christ's Person merges itself at every point in the simple religious view" (op.cit.p.62).

W.BAUER thinks that the closest parallel to the Logos doctrine of the Johannine Prologue is to be found in Philo, though there is no evidence that John had read him. In this respect, neither is original and both breathe the same atmosphere of the age in which they lived. The Evangelist's interest in the idea is religious and not metaphysical. The Logos in John is definitely personal while it is not always so in Philo. "Ihm (Jo.) ist der Logos daher weniger Träger einer Einwirkung Gottes auf die Welt als Vermittler der Gemeinschaft zwischen Gott und der Menschheit, die so das Heil erlangt," (cf. Das Johannesevangelium, 1933;p.7f. and fuller extract at end of this section).

We may add further alleged resemblances to Philo's Logos before passing on to consider objections to the position which adduces Philo and Alexandrian Judaism as the source of John's conception of the Divine Word. Jesus Christ is set forth as a mediator between God and the world, and resemblance is seen to Philo's Logos-intermediary in respect of, (i) his being Son of God and image before creation; (ii) his reflecting the glory of the Father; (iii) his being the agent of Divine activity in creation and revelation. In both systems there is a dualism: for Philo it is metaphysical, for John it is practical between flesh and spirit. In both, true life is only created in men's souls by a Divine act.

There are certain echoes of Philo's language in John, to which R.G.BURY (The Fourth Gospel and the Logos-doctrine, 1940) attaches some importance:

PHILO	JOHN
1. Logos, "eternal".	so, "In the beginning was the Word."
2. - an essential part of God, Divine Reason.	- "in relation to God", PROS TON THEON.
3. - distinct from, and subordinate to, the Absolute.	- "my Father is greater than I."

## PHILO (cont'd)

6. - pluralizes itself in specific logoi.
7. - Theophanies of the O.T. as Logophanies.
8. - Logos is the life-principle, like the "everlasting fire" of Heracleitus.
9. -, Three functions of the Paraclete; Accuser; Judge; - assigned to the Logos
10. - Heracleitean and Stoic doctrine of 'Fire-logos'; light, an aspect of fire.

## JOHN (cont'd)

- so, the seven I AM's; not merely words, but living forces. Traces of the 'spermatic logos' of Stoicism, the rational seed force, "unless my words abide in you..." (3:9).
- , the whole life of Jesus as a Logophany. The Logos tabernacled amongst men. His body was the 'temple' of God.
  - , Logos also the life-principle. In both Philo and John the angels' food, "manna" - a symbol of the activity of the life-giving Word.
  - , assigned both to the Logos and the Spirit of Truth.
  - , the 'Light of the World' idea; an opposition of Light to the principle of Darkness.

It is noted by Bury that both Philo and John fail to state clearly the relation between the Spirit and the Logos - wavering between identification and discrimination. In Philo both terms are used to denote different aspects of the primal substance - pervasive Fire-vapour (PNEUMA) and rational Thought-stuff (LOGOS). In John,

however, the two powers are by no means identical. The work of the Spirit is not related to the pre-existent life of the Logos, nor does it have a cosmological significance. It seems to be an entirely new principle, whose chief purpose is to give permanence to the historical revelation of Christ, and having pre-eminently an ecclesiastical significance, i.e. manifesting itself within the Church. John "seeks to ensure that the power which will replace Jesus will represent his personal activity as it had been during his life on earth" (E.F. SCOTT, op.cit.p.344). Thus the Johannine conception of the Spirit has no place in a speculative, philosophical plan. The import of the Spirit's manifestation and presence is almost entirely connected with his knowledge of the life and work of the Incarnate Logos. He is a personal Paraclete abiding in the heart of the believer: his influence in the world is only indirectly through the Church.

Réville sees nothing but Alexandrianism in John; Harnack sees only the term 'Logos' in common, "The elements operative in the Johannine theology were not Greek theologoumena - even the Logos has little more in common with that of Philo than the name, and its mention at the beginning of the book is a mystery, not the solution of one" (Harnack, History of Dogma, trans. Buchanan, 1894, p.97).

The majority of critics take up an intermediary position, though with a bias towards the line adopted by Scott, Reville, etc. But the position represented by Scott dies hard. In recognizing the erudition and earnest contentions in favour of a Hellenistic origin of the Johannine Logos, we submit a number of fundamental differences between the two Figures - so nearly contemporaneous - which outweigh, in the opinion of the writer of this thesis, the more superficial resemblances.

i. The Logos doctrine is absent from those early Christian writings extant, which show a decided Jewish influence (e.g., Clement and Pastor of Hermas). As a Jew, nurtured in the DABHAR-TORAH tradition of Palestinian Judaism, John could only conceive of the Logos fundamentally as the WORD of God in line with the Biblical tradition. But Philo was an Alexandrian Jew, nurtured in all the wisdom of the Greeks. For him, breathing at first naturally, and then deliberately, the atmosphere of Hellenic culture, Logos could only represent speculation and signify Divine Reason.

ii. If we probe beneath the verbal coincidence of the term "Son of God", we find that, for Philo, God is Father in a cosmological sense only - the world is His

'Son'; as well as the Logos. But the Logos of the Fourth Gospel is the only Son, "the only-begotten who is in the bosom of the Father." God is not 'Father' because of creation, nor is the universe His 'Son'.

iii. Emphasis has been laid on the similarity in respect of revelation: that being one of the primary attributes of the Incarnate Word - "No man hath seen God at any time; the only-begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him" (Jn. 1:18). But we need to remark that Philo's 'Revealer' is merely an 'image', 'shadow', and an imperfect representation of God. The Word made flesh, however, is He who reveals God perfectly and sovereignly - "he that hath seen me hath seen the Father" - and is the final goal of religious contemplation.

iv. Philo's Logos is literally the instrument in creation, with notable employment of the instrumental dative. Far removed is the function of the Word in the Johannine Prologue: God and the Word, being one, have the same infinite power and both operate in the one act of creation.

v. Again, Philo's Logos is an intermediary, standing half-way between a metaphysically transcendent Absolute and the untouchable material universe. Jesus Christ,



the Logos, "full of grace and truth," is not an intermediary but a true MEDIATOR, reuniting a personal God with persons, not because of any intermediary position in a speculative arrangement, but because He is both God and man. The parallel drawn between Philo's figure as the "bond", which unites all beings, and the Johannine Word does not hold good. The former links together beings who remain separated among themselves: the latter unites them to Himself in one body. "It is the difference between juxtaposition and compenetration" (LEBRETON, op.cit., p.449). The one is a speculative Logos which, oddly enough, has no certain relation with the Godhead: the other is identified with the Father. Salvation, in the Fourth Gospel, is not an intellectual ascent for the few, led by the impersonal philosophical entity called Logos, but a spiritual, experimental union and communion with the personal Father-God bound mystically through the Living Word.

vi. Philo calls the Logos 'God' but threetimes.

The precise import of this usage is uncertain, and we cannot build very much on this flimsy data. In any case, if the Logos were God in the fullest sense there would be no need for his existence in the Philonian scheme of things. It makes nonsense of the rest of

his system. The Fourth Gospel was written with the express purpose of proving that the Logos IS God. There is an identity of knowledge, of holiness, of power and activity - in short, of nature. This idea of identity is no less vital to the theology of John than is the inequality of the Absolute and the Logos to Philo's speculation. The Fourth Evangelist goes so far as to demonstrate, in the course of the Gospel, that the unity of Son and Father is the very origin and pattern of the unity of Christians among themselves and with God.

vii. Without unduly repeating what has already been stated, we may justly emphasize that, as regards personality, the Philonian Logos is essentially a force, an idea, a metaphysical and mythological being. The Word that was God, however, IS Jesus Christ, the historical Person, "that which we have heard, that which we have seen with our eyes...and our hands handled, concerning the Word of life."

In fine, Philo's dominating interest is metaphysical, while John's is religious. The Alexandrian's Logos is an immanent power revealing a transcendent God; but John's Word mediates fellowship between a personal God

and persons, issuing in eternal life. Whatever case may be made out in favour of a rapport (be it greater or less) between the two, John's Logos exceeds Philo's range of thought in two fundamentally and finally differentiating respects, namely: in that a pure and unqualified PERSONALITY is ascribed to Him, and in that the WORD BECAME FLESH. "He borrowed the Logos, because it lent itself to the convenient and intelligible expression of this independent Christian conviction" (DENNEY, Jesus and the Gospel, p.91). Throughout the Gospel, the evangelist holds before his mind the Jesus of historical reality and ever-present indwelling experience. The writer of this thesis, after considering the case for an Alexandrian origin of the Johannine Logos, inclines to the opinion expressed so clearly by James Drummond:

"The picture of Jesus Himself has nothing in the least answering to it in Philo, and the very ideas which have most appearance of being derived have been brought under the transfiguring influence of an original and creative mind, and turned out stripped of their philosophical dress, and robed with a new spiritual beauty to captivate the world."

- Character and Authorship of the Fourth Gospel,

1903, p.24.

## ADDITIONAL NOTE:

The Johannine Logos considered as 'Thought.'

IN his earnest and cogent contention for the rendering "the Thought", F.R.HOARE (The Gospel according to St.John, arranged in its conjectured original order, and translated from the Greek into current English, 1949) attempts to interpret HO LOGOS of the Prologue with reference to the usages in the rest of the Gospel. The points of contact, he urges, preserved by adopting the rendering "the Thought" are the more significant and, moreover, the more easily missed by the reader if the verbal link is weakened. He claims that the commonest use of the term when it is used in the singular outside the Prologue is to signify, not the spoken word nor any particular saying, but the message or thought underlying the things said, as in - 5:24,38; 8:31,37,43,51; 8:52,55; 10:35; 12:48; 14:23,24b; 17:6,14,17.

Hoare invokes the names of Augustine and Thomas Aquinas, together with "the greatest Doctors of the Church", in support of the idea that the "Word" (*Λόγος* : Latin, verbum) is here a metaphor taken not so much from the spoken word as from what Augustine

calls the *verbum mentis* or "word in the mind", that is to say, the idea or concept formed by the thinking mind and signified by the spoken word. In respect of the name of the Second Person of the Trinity, LOGOS refers to the Thought or Idea proceeding from the Father whereby He knows Himself as in mental image. Concerning the Incarnation, the expression is applicable to the act whereby the invisible Son manifested Himself to human perceptions by partaking of flesh and blood. As we may say that a carpenter makes a table 'through' the image or idea or thought of it that he has previously formed in his mind, so in a similar sense does this metaphor serve to express the relationship of the Persons of the Godhead to the act of Creation. "Nor does the particular passage here translated, namely the Prologue to St. John's Gospel, contain any reference to creation in which the metaphor of creation through the thought is not at least as expressive as that of creation by the word" (Hoare, pp.4-5).

Furthermore, Hoare considers that there is "no comparison at all in appropriateness between the metaphor of the *verbum mentis*, or the Thought, and the metaphor of the sounded or spoken word" in respect of the

supremely important aspect of the relations of the three Divine Persons. Whilst it is quite in order to describe the Incarnation "in terms of the spoken word being made visible by being set down on paper, the allegory runs more smoothly and more consistently from end to end of the Prologue if the Logos remains the mental concept throughout and the Incarnation (like the creation of the world) is as the sounding of it in utterance" (p.5).

Thus he gives us the opening declaration:

"First there was the Thought,  
and the Thought was in God;  
the Thought was God."

Hoare reminds us that any rendering in another language which fails to cover both meanings implicit in the Greek, *λόγος*, must lose some element of the metaphor; it is open to question which element matters most. On the strength of this maxim he desires partly to justify (with professed respect) a departure from the traditional rendering.

This interpretation of Hoare seems open to criticism on a number of grounds. He is evidently arguing purely and simply from classical etymology; that is, on an

assumption that John took it as a classical Greek word and intended it to convey that significance. But this is a leap in the dark. He has no regard that the Fourth Gospel is pre-eminently the product of a Jew with a Hebrew mind (and all that that means); that the Old Testament with its DABHAR, RUAH, HOKMAH, or the Septuagint and allied writings with their LOGOS, PNEUMA, SOPHIA, may - if not, must - be taken into account; that the oriental and mystical elements of the prevailing syncretism in the Roman world could not have been unknown to the Evangelist - and the Logos-conception was part of that pagan syncretism; that, in any case, the term LOGOS was a universal category by this time, with no particularly Hellenic nuance, any more than the modern term 'evolution' is confined to a specialized sphere of a particular department in biological studies. In a word, Hoare fails to acknowledge that LOGOS was a verbal-bridge which John deliberately chose for a purpose: it was a convenient categorical framework which he charged with his own content. There was no reason why LOGOS should have an inflexible significance for John; in many respects the Logos of Plutarch was a very different conception from that of Heraclitus. Moreover, Hoare seeks to interpret the Figure in the Prologue by reference to the other uses of LOGOS in the body of the Gospel

rather than by reference to the living and over-powering Son of God portrayed therein. The Prologue is not a thing apart: it IS the Prologue. If the title 'Logos' does not occur again in reference to the Person of the Word made flesh, there is a continuity and elaboration of what has abruptly and unapologetically been introduced in the first chapter. Again, Hoare cannot escape from the cosmological emphasis; the emphasis is, surely, revelation and mediation for the sake of the human race needing salvation, of which the cosmological aspect is but a part.



D. WALTER BAUER, 'Das Johannesevangelium' (1925, Handbuch z. Neuen Testament, 6).

Wie nahe sich die Vorstellungen Philos, spez. bezüglich des Logos, mit der Gedankenwelt des 4. Evangeliums berühren, dafür wird die Einzelklärung die Belege beizubringen haben. Doch ist durch solchen Nachweis nur die Tatsache der Identität der geistigen Atmosphäre sicherzustellen. Aber diese Luft umweht natürlich nicht nur Philo und Johann. Jener ist uns überhaupt weit weniger als selbständiger Theologe interessant, wie als Zeuge einer eigenartig gefärbten Religiosität, als Fortpflanzer überkommener Vorstellungen und ihrer Ausdrucksformen. So ist auch mit keinerlei Gewissheit zu behaupten, dass unser Verfasser Schriften des Alexandriners gelesen habe. Den fort und fort sich aufdrängenden Parallelen, die ebensowohl die gesamte Weltanschauung, die Geschichtsbetrachtung und Schriftbenutzung wie Einzelheiten betreffen, stehen Differenzen gegenüber, die nicht zu übersehen sind. Jo zeigt sich durchaus vom religiösen, nicht vom metaphysischen Gesichtspunkt beherrscht. Ihm ist der Logos daher weniger Träger einer Einwirkung Gottes auf die Welt als Vermittler der Gemeinschaft zwischen Gott und der Menschheit, die so das Heil erlangt. Der johanneische Logos zeigt nichts von der schillernden Zweideutigkeit, die das Charakteristikum des philonischen ausmacht. Er ist durchaus Persönlichkeit und - für Philo ein unmöglicher Gedanke - innigste Verbindung mit der  $\sigma\alpha\pi\tilde{\xi}$ , dem widergöttlichen Prinzip, eingegangen. Dadurch, dass er den Logos unzweideutig als Person fasst und in der menschlichen Gestalt Jesu Christi wiederfindet, entfernt sich Jo wohl am weitesten von Philo. Daraus ergibt sich für die Gewinnung des richtigen Verständnisses der johanneischen Auffassung als unbedingtes Erfordernis, dass man den Hinweis auf den philonischen Logos ergänze durch einen Blick auf jene Faktoren, die auf die Verpersönlichung des Logos hintreiben, die schon bei Philo in dieser Richtung drängten.

(D. Walter Bauer, 'Das Johannesevangelium', cont'd)

"und deren Einfluss bei Jo noch klarer zutage tritt. Das sind nun aber neben jenen Bedürfnissen, die nach persönlicher Vermittlung zwischen den Menschen und der fernen Gottheit riefen, und vor ihnen gewisse Elemente der Mysterienfrömmigkeit und heidnischer Volksreligion. In jener Hinsicht ist an den *ἱερός λόγος* zu erinnern, die im Kult zum Vortrag kommende heilige und geheimnisvolle Offenbarung, die fast persönlich neben der Gottheit steht.

- pp.7 - 8.

( i. Hellenistic Thought:)

chapter four

MANDAEISM AND THE  
SYNCRETISTIC MYSTERY CULTS.

. . . .

I. MANDAEISM.

IT WILL BE most convenient to treat Mandaism at this point, though we recognize that it stands very much on its own as a possible source.

For many years the explanation of the Johannine Logos oscillated between Hellenism and Jewish sources. More recent research, however, set in motion by REITZENSTEIN and LIDZBARSKI, turned the eyes of scholars in the direction of quite another field and, in a hypothesis which brought Johannine thought into line with oriental Gnosticism, the two older alternatives were by-passed. Thus Johannine studies were pursued in the light of Mandaism in particular.

The Mandaeans are still found in Babylonia, and have been known in Europe since the end of the eighteenth century; but their writings remained more or less unknown.

Their religious literature, in Aramaic dialect, goes back to the eighth century, but their traditions are much earlier. Editions of their works published in 1915 and 1925 began to attract attention, and numerous scholars submitted them to a close examination. Mandaeism seems less a religion than a very complex syncretism; a gnosis of salvation characterized by a cosmic and anthropological dualism. Human souls fell from their original home - the heaven, light and life - on to the earth, into the hands of the powers of darkness. They were held captives in matter, longing for salvation. To save them the King of the Light sent a heavenly messenger (MANDA D'HAIYE), 'the Knowledge of the Light', who had for his mission the raising of souls from this material earth, after death, to their heavenly home; the messenger having first made a revelation of the higher world. Mandaeism has not strictly a redemption accomplished here and now; it is death alone which can deliver their souls. There are two sacraments: Baptism of initiation, and 'the first of the dead', a kind of unction to assure souls of a safe journey to the realm of Light and Life.

LIDZBARSKI (Ginza, 1925) considers Mandaeism a sect offshooting from heterodox Judaism in Palestine at the

beginning of the first century A.D. For him, Mandaeism is pre-Christian and he makes it an intermediary between Iranian thought concerning salvation, and Christianity. He infers the literary dependence of the evangelical tradition with regard to the most ancient sources of Mandaeism.

W.BAUER was the first to see in Mandaeen writings an oriental commentary on the Fourth Gospel. The striking parallels do not imply literary dependence, but they throw into relief the community of origin or the sphere of the two groups of writings:

"Anos, der grosse Uthra seine Verkündigung beginnt: 'Ich bin ein Wort, ein Sohn von Worten'. Auch Adakas trägt hier geradezu den Beinamen 'das Wort' ....und Jawar-Ziwa, der Sohn des Lebens WURDE DAS WORT DES LEBENS (vgl. I Jo. 1:1) GENNANT. Im Qolasta, der mandäischen Tauf liturgie, heisst Jokabar DAS WORT DES LEBENS, DAS ZU DEN GERECHTEN UND GLÄUBIGEN MÄNNERN AUS DEM HAUSE DES LEBENS GEKOMMEN IST .... oder es erscheint das personifizierte WORT DER WAHRHEIT bei den Gläubigen."

- Das Johannesevangelium, 1933, pp.8-9.

R.BULTMANN (1923) wrote that the thought of the Johannine Prologue came from oriental mythology, not from philosophical speculations of Hellenism: the baptist movement in Palestine was an intermediary influence.

If the evangelist is able to reduce to one mission (as Heavenly Envoy, Bearer of Revelation, Saviour of men) the ministry and teaching of Jesus, it is that he may refer his readers to a doctrine supposedly known - the doctrine of the mythical gnostic saviour, which we find otherwise in the Odes of Solomon, the apocryphal Acts of Thomas and John, and (above all) in the Mandaean writings. In his important commentary ( *Das Evangelium des Johannes*, 1925 ) he extended this interpretation to the whole Gospel. By employment of the didactic source ( *Offenbarungsreden* ), John was brought into direct contact with gnostic thought. John put the question of Salvation in the same terms as the Gnostic teaching, with two dominating ideas -

(i) two opposing worlds;

(ii) a revelation accorded to the lower world by the higher world.

Attention needs to be called to the basic differences between Mandaean teaching and the Johannine doctrine. In the first place, the origin of the world and man was due to a metaphysical struggle between the powers of light and the powers of darkness, according to the one theology: but in John the world and man are the creation of a God who is perfectly good and all-sovereign.

There is no eternal dualism of the gnostic kind, nor are there emanations or the idea of the pre-existence of souls in the Johannine teaching. Further, the world is opposed to God in virtue of its very origin, in the first, wherein man's separation from God is due to a fatality - the fall of souls into matter. For John, the world, qua world, is not anti-God: matter is not anti-Divine. The enemy of God is not man, but man in rebellion. Again, for the oriental Gnostic, Salvation is a cosmic drama realized perfectly after death. But in the Fourth Gospel, Redemption is present, when a man, by faith, receives the word of the Heavenly Messenger and turns from the world to the light. Moreover, Gnosticism renders a dualism of space, whereas the Christian Apostle expounds a 'dualism of decision.'

Thus, if the Fourth Gospel is to be explained in the light of Mandaean Gnosticism, John only takes the soteriological part to interpret his message, and that means abandoning vital and integral parts of the whole system. Revelation for John is not a history which unfolds and progresses towards a temporal TELOS: it is an actual encounter between the Revealer and men. A man responds with 'yes' or 'no', a verdict which determines his eternal destiny - salvation or loss. John does not

even employ the dramatic set-up of Jewish or early Christian apocalyptic; for the final drama he substitutes the existential decision of a man in the presence of the Revealer. Mandaean salvation is deliverance of the soul from a cosmological fatality. Nothing could be further from the Biblical doctrine of the Creation, man and the fall, which doctrine John pre-supposes.



I I.     T H E     S Y N C R E T I S T I C  
          M Y S T E R Y     O U L T S.

AT THE TIME when the Fourth Gospel was penned, the decay of the ancient 'state religions' of the Roman world had more than set in. Stoicism had failed to meet the situation, and we observe the recrudescence of mystery religions, on a scale worthy of note, as an expression of the cry for personal salvation. Neither the frigid philosophies on the one hand, nor the formal emperor-worship on the other, were able to bring the seeking soul into communion with the Deity - with any deity, for that matter, who was thought to be immortal. Where was the way of escape from the miseries and vicissitudes of this life? There was, in consequence, a distinct movement which brought together the cosmopolitan array of thought and faiths and gods, so that, whilst there were various forms of mystery religion, one object was common to all. The aim of the mystery-devotee was to induce a state of ecstasy or catalepsy in which the god appeared to him in a vision, and the mystical communion was experienced. It was achieved by numerous cult ceremonies, lustrations and secret rites, often accompanied by dramatic representations of scenes in the life of the god.

Another type of mystery-religion is represented by the Hermetic literature, a devotional literature of Egyptian mythological paganism. An experience of the Divine was sought through the use of these prayers and incantations. 'Poimandres' was the chief Hermetic document. To the whole, Judaism appears to have made some contribution. REITZENSTEIN is the name closely associated with the theory that the Fourth Gospel exemplifies the attempt of the Church to reach the pagan world by adjusting itself to this world-wide syncretism. This notable scholar urges that the Gnosticism of the second century was a developed form of something much older, and Iranian religion of redemption which had spread, from its place of origin in Iran, over the Graeco-Roman world by the beginning of the Christian era, and whose influence may be felt in the New Testament and in Christian worship - cf. particularly Reitzenstein's 'Poimandres', 1904. He asserts that the 'Shepherd' of Hermas has borrowed from Poimandres, both opening with the appearance of a man in the form of a shepherd who is subsequently transfigured into a super-natural being and, as such, gives instruction. This carries back the original form of Poimandres to the first century A.D. He then

argues that Philo's cosmology cannot be explained from the Old Testament, but pre-supposes a doctrine which he reads into it. Thus we arrive at a pre-Christian Logos-doctrine in Egypt. Then Reitzenstein appeals to something of which we have knowledge on other grounds: in the Greek period the old myth of Ptah who, as THOTH (i.e. 'tongue', 'word'), created the world. He was related to Hermes, thus yielding the figure of HERMES THE LOGOS. He then argues towards the existence of a religious community in Egypt before the Christian era, in which Hermes was revered as the Logos and the world-creator, and he thinks that the primitive form of Poimandres belongs to this circle of ideas. The conclusion is that there was a widespread syncretistic religion which knew of the Logos. Not only the Prologue, but the whole of the Fourth Gospel is influenced by this mysticism, which prescribes its forms of speech and its choice of themes (cf. op.cit., p.244 ff.). Thus John's Gospel was written when Christianity had finished with Judaism and could only reach the gentile world as it adjusted itself to the universal syncretism.

A.LOISY (in *Le Quatrième Evangile*, 1921), after acknowledging that the Johannine Logos has affinities with the Wisdom of the Old Testament, and has some literary dep-

dependence on Philo (though the point of view of the Gospel is not that of the philosophy of the Alexandrian), continues:

"La conception, religieuse et mystique, de notre Logos est bien plus étroitement et plus directement apparente à la théosophie égyptienne, qui, utilisant d'une part l'assimilation du Logos à Hermès dans la prédication stoïcienne, et identifiant d'autre part Hermès au dieu Thot, voyait dans Thot-Hermès non seulement le Logos organe de la création, mais le médiateur de la révélation divine et de la régénération pour l'immortalité, et opérait comme notre évangile avec les termes mystiques de 'vérité', 'lumière', 'vie'."

pp.88-89.

The Johannine conception, or theory of the Christian mystery, has some affinity with the Egyptian mystery-religion, though we cannot affirm that there is a direct dependence.

E. STAUFFER ( 'EGO' in T.W. zum N.T., 1935) suggests that John's style has a double origin: the ancient traditional style of the orient which flourished in the current syncretism, and the Word of God in the Old Testament. The two traditions were already united in Jewish apocalyptic. E. SCHWEITZER ( 'Ego Eimi....Die religionsgeschichtliche Herkunft,' 1939) thinks also that John borrowed his images from the Mandaean community, though with considerable adaptation in some cases.

They represent the elementary needs of the natural life of men (nourishment, security and protection), and they are the qualifications of the Saviour, typical in ancient oriental religions which aim at satisfying the religious needs of mankind.

KUNDSIN (of Riga) arrives at similar conclusions, though quite independently. H.ODEBERG is another scholar of northern Europe who has given much thought to the oriental background (as opposed to the Hellenistic) of the Fourth Gospel. He admits elements of terminology drawn from Rabbinism or Samaritan sources, and traces of ideas from Gnosticism, the mysteries and popular Hellenistic philosophy. But the essential originality of the evangelist dominates all, and, rather than seeking to bring the doctrine into line with the current religious thought, the author's object is to make the Person of Jesus Christ intelligible to the world of his day in a language that it can understand (cf. "Über das Johannes-evangelium, Z.Syst.Theol., 1939, pp. 173-188).

F.BUSCHEL (Theol. des N.T., 1935) and E.PERCY (Untersuchungen über den Ursprung der Joh.Theol.-1939) take a view diametrically opposed to that represented

by Bauer and Bultmann. Percy holds that Johannism exercised an influence on the Gnostics and Mandaëism, and tainted them with Christianity. In respect of dualism, the essential nature of John's 'Light-darkness', 'Truth-untruth', 'upper-world and lower-world', is not cosmological (as in Gnosticism), but essentially religious and personal; it is in the line of Judaism and the rising Church. As regards the Saviour, he submits that the elements of the portrait - celestial Being, Divine Envoy, living with God and coming to men of whom a few believe but a majority do not believe in Him - these flow so naturally from the fundamental ideas of the Personal Jesus Christ as John knew Him, that they could as easily have been formed independently. The Mandaëans also could have come to a similar conception. Again, the life which Jesus gives proceeds from communion with the Father. 'Knowledge' is always linked with 'faith', the whole experience being bound up with the revealed Truth - the Person of Jesus Himself. There is nothing of the 'göttliches, metaphysisches Leben' of Hermeticism and the Gnostics. So the shuttle flies back to Bultmann, who replies deploring the fact that for so long the Fourth Gospel was connected with Hellenism and Philo. Surely Bultmann is trying to bind the

Johannine Logos-doctrine to Mandaeism in the same thorough-going fashion, and is open to a similar criticism from another direction? Recent tendencies, however, are towards reducing the Mandaean factor. There are as great differences between the Mandaean doctrine and John's idea of redemption and the Logos, as between Philo and John. Indeed, the study of Mandaeism and the background afforded by current mystery-religions only serves to emphasize the fundamental originality of the author of the Prologue to the Fourth Gospel.

F.C.BURKITT and H.LIETZMANN "show that Mandaeism is a late development of Marcionite Gnosticism, mingled with the astrological theosophy of Bardaisan, with Christian elements mediated through Nestorian channels, and biblical allusions borrowed from the Peshitta" - cf. W.F.HOWARD, 'The Fourth Gospel in Recent Criticism and Interpretation', 1931, p.172. Again, Mandaeism is "the christianizing of an oriental gnosis, not the Gnostic background of early Christianity" (LIETZMANN, in Howard, op.cit.,p.172).

C.H.DODD takes a mediating view. He considers that Plato's influence, already congenial to Judaism, has entered deeply into the thought of the New Testament,

notably the Epistle to the Hebrews and the Fourth Gospel.

He continues!

"In the former, the philosophy of 'Ideas', or eternal Forms, of which all phenomena are copies, dominates the whole argument. In the Fourth Gospel the affinity is rather with that peculiar kind of Platonic thought, modified by oriental influences, which is otherwise best represented for us by the Hermetic literature of the second and third centuries. This Gospel is in fact one of the most remarkable examples, in all the literature of the period, of the profound inter-penetration of Greek and Semitic thought... Nowhere more evidently than here does early Christianity take its place as the natural leader in new ways of thought, yet exercising authority over them by virtue of the creative impulse proceeding from its founder".

- The Authority of the Bible, 1938, pp.200-201.

But we remain unconvinced that Mandaeism and the contemporary mystery-cults influenced the author of the Prologue to the Fourth Gospel whether in respect of the title or of the doctrine of the Logos.



c h a p t e r   f i v e  
T H E   P R I M A L   M A N   I D E A .

ATTENTION has been directed to the more widely accepted elements in the sphere of Hellenistic thought which constituted both the background against which the Fourth Gospel was written and the possible sources or influences of the Gospel's dominating themes and ideas. In particular we are seeking the source of the LOGOS doctrine upon which, as has already been made plain, the most divergent views are held. Not altogether irrelevant in our discussion is the conception which, having its origins in the East, left distinct traces in the West - namely, the ANTHROPOS, the 'heavenly Man' or 'primal man'.

The figure of the heavenly Man features in some of the Gnostic systems. In 'Poimandres', in the Naassene document, in Zosimus, the myth of a heavenly Man (who descends into the dark nether regions in order to unite with the forces of that realm and to bring forth man as we know him) is a basic idea. In 'Poimandres', for example, as known to Zosimus, there is a clear exposition of the descent and redemption of the heavenly Man (sections 11-26; cf. BERTHOLET, *Les* /Alchimistes

Alchemistes greca, p.201). Mind, the Father of all, created or begat Man, who in turn desires to create. He entered the sphere of creation, passing through the seven planetary circles, being loved by the διοικήτορες of the seven spheres and receiving part of their nature. Then Nature loved this heavenly bisexual Man and brought into being seven men corresponding to the seven rulers of the planetary spheres. These were bisexual. In time God loosed the bond uniting male and female, and gave the command "Increase and multiply !" Men and animals are released and increase after their kind. The man who comes to learn that he owes his origin to God the Father-Light and -Life progresses and arrives at the supreme good. The man who loves his body declines in vice and falls into the hands of death and the avenging demon. The heavenly Man passes through a metamorphosis, the physical body and senses being dissolved into their elements, and he ascends through the ἁρμονία of the spheres until he arrives at the φύσις ὀυδοατική and draws near to the Father.

In the systems of the Barbelo Gnostics, where the highest god was called Πρωτάνθρωπος, and in the various Valentinian systems (where the 'Man' varies

as regards his position), the heavenly Man is not an essential element in the doctrine of redemption. The Naassenes, according to Hippolytus (Refut.v.6), claimed that their teaching was given by James the brother of Jesus to Mariamne. The 'Man' (whom they call Adamas) is the basis of their doctrine, and is to be distinguished from the first historical man who was only an image of Adamas.

It is generally agreed that the Gnostic teachings in respect of their world view were drawn chiefly from Babylonian astrology blended with Persian dualism. And we are probably right in concluding that Persian religious literature was their source of the idea of the heavenly Man. There is nothing in the existing Avesta which implies a myth of the primal Man: there being but occasional references to Gaya Maretan, the first man (cf. WINDISCHMANN, Abh.f.d.Kunde Morgenlandes Bd.i p.73 f.). There is, however, a doctrine of Gayomart in the 'Bundahis', the Pahlavi work (probably not earlier than the Mohammedan conquests of Persia, mid-seventh century A.D.) in its present form), where this Primal Man falls a victim to the powers of evil and becomes the originator of the human race. In the ancient Iranian

cosmogony Gayomart, or 'the righteous man', was a quasi-divine being and part of the pre-existent creation of Ahura Mazda. This Gayomart ("mortal-life") - a mythical figure, originally without a proper name and to whom ideas of bisexuality adhered - was the prototype of humanity who, together with the quaint figure of the 'labouring ox', played a prominent part in the fatal primordial battle with the evil forces of Ahriman. The Evil One launched his attack upon Ahura Mazda's creation; the ox was killed, and before Gayomart died he was covered with a sweat that Ahura Mazda formed into a radiant youth of fifteen years. We do not know how Gayomart died; but before his departure he declared that mankind would be of his race.

Moving westwards the myth of Gayomart found a place in Babylonian cosmogony, probably in pre-Parthian days. On account of his rôle in the primordial conflict he was identified with Marduk and thus transformed into a man-like deity and a primordial champion. In subsequent stages of the development of the conception, Gayomart was regarded as both a defeated and a victorious champion, according to whether the Iranian or Babylonian elements predominated.

There is a 'heavenly Man' in the teaching of Philo Judaeus, and this figure may be contrasted with the ANTHROPOS of Apocalyptic thought. The double narrative of the creation of man in Genesis is treated as the beginning of a distinction between the heavenly and the earthly man (cf. De op. mundi, 134 f.; Leg.All., 134 f.). "Let us make man in our image" (Gen.1:26) means that there is an ideal, non-material man, who is sexless and immortal. The Logos is the εἰκὼν, the pattern of the heavenly Man. De Confus.Ling., 146 ascribes to the Logos the significant title ὁ κατ'εἰκόνα ἀνθρώπου. "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul" (Gen.2:7) is a reference to the first historical man. Philo did not distinguish between λόγος and πνεῦμα, and therefore the spirit which God breathed into the body of the earthly man was the Logos, the very image according to which the heavenly Man was shaped. It is along this line that the early Greek theologians of the Church developed their Christology. The rational soul indwelling every man is a manifestation of the universal Logos, who, for those theologians, was the true archetype of the human soul and who in due season was incarnate in Jesus Christ. But this is far removed

from the Iranian conception.

C.H.KRAELING (Anthropos and Son of Man, 1927), under the influence of Reitzenstein, develops the study of this oriental, mythical-primordial being, and he has some suggestive things to say in respect of the Anthropos and Bar Nasha of Daniel, Enoch and IV Ezra. Kraeling thinks that Anthropos was received into Judaism in the second century B.C. as a victorious primordial champion and man-like deity. It was Anthropos who "furnished the inspiration for the properly nameless 'man-like one' of Daniel, and for the Messianic interpretation which the figure received in the Book of Enoch" (p.187 f.). Moreover, the humanity of Anthropos aided "the transformation of the Hebrew conception of the protoplast, the common origin of Bar Nasha and celestial Adam giving rise to the co-ordination of Adam and Christ" (p.188). In pre-exilic Israel there is no idea of a primal Man in this sense. In the period of the Exile, Ezekiel 28:12 ff. is supposed by some to embrace the divine primal Man idea, which figure (it is alleged) is compared by the prophet with the ruler in question. The post-exilic writings yield the following passages where the Anthropos idea may have found lodgment:

The priestly account of Creation in Genesis 1, where man is created in the image of God, has

power over living creatures and lives in a garden which is God's own dwelling place;

Job 15:7 ("Art thou the first man that was born?

Or wast thou brought forth before the hills?"),

in a context concerning the frailty and helplessness of human existence, there is an indication

that even to the author of Job the idea of an

'all-wise' protoplast was known;

Psalms 8, modelled on Genesis 1, contains two distinct elements - that man is but a little lower than Elohim, and then is crowned with honour, perfection and dominion.

Kraeling adds, "Should the character of the Celestiah Adam have truly been moulded...by the figure of Gayomart, as it was carried westwards in the form of the Anthropos, a number of phenomena in Jewish, Christian and Gnostic traditions would become intelligible" (p.160).

Dr.E.L.ALLEN has a line of thought concerning the Anthropos conception which extends well beyond the cautious and conservative conclusions of Kraeling, as far as the N.T. writings are concerned. The most considerable passage in which the ancient concept of the primal Man probably occurs is Hebrews 1-2, which he takes as a unity. Here the figure of the now

exalted Christ is identified with the primal Man.  
The features of the portrait in Hebrews, which are to be referred to the primal Man, are as follows:

1:2, "...Son, appointed heir of all things."

1:3a, The derivative being of the Son - *ἰσχυράσμα  
τῆς δόξης καὶ χαρακτῆρ τῆς ὑποστάσεως.*

1:3b, His elevation after death.

1:4, In His elevation, placed above angels and given a more excellent name ('Son' - 'God' - 'Lord'), cf. Philippians 2.

1:6 ff. The Son is the primal Man before the Incarnation. His exalted position and names are the reward of obedience.

In chapter 2 the theme is further developed. The humiliation is for a time; lower than the angels for a brief period, He is to be exalted to a permanent place of honour and authority and supremacy. "What is man" is taken as referring to the primal Man by the author of the Epistle. In 2:9 the construction *διὰ* with accusative suggests that, in the act of dying, Jesus is crowned with glory and honour because His death avails for all men.

W. BAUER, in his note on John 1:51, puts forward the idea that the Johannine Son of Man reflects the heavenly Man as Redeemer, as seen in the Gnostics,



## Hermetic mystics, Mandaeans and Manichaeans:

"Der Jo. Christus heisst so als der vom Himmel Herabgekommene (3:13), der dohin auch wieder erhoht werden soll (3:14; 6:62; 8:28; 12:34), um der Verherrlichung teilhaftig zu werden (12:23; 13:31). Als solches Himmelswesen steht er auch auf Erden dauernd mit dem Jenseits in Verbindung (1:51), kann die Seinen im Sakrament mit Himmelskost nähren (6:27; 53) und ist zum Weltrichter berufen (5:27). Demgemäss findet der Glaube der christlichen Gemeinde in dem Bekenntnis zu Jesus als dem Menschensohn seinen Ausdruck (9:35). Hier haben wir deutlich die, auch von Plsverwertete (s. den Exkurs zu I Cor. 15:45-49), Vorstellung von dem himmlischen Menschen als dem Erlöser, eine Idee, die zur Zeit des Jo eine erhebliche Verbreitung gehabt haben muss, und die uns, von anderen Spuren abgesehen, bei 'Gnostikern', Hermesvereherrern, Mandäern und Manichäern noch sichtbar wird."

- BAUER, Das Johannesevangelium, Handbuch zum NT., vol.6, p.40.

But Kraeling disagrees. He considers that the ideas associated with the Son of Man are simultaneously employed in connection with 'Son of God', 'only-begotten', 'Logos', 'Christ' and 'Son'. He accedes that the comparison between the Fourth Gospel, the Odes of Solomon and the Mandaean Liturgies is a specially helpful step in the right direction, but he repudiates the theory which assumes that the element which connects the three is the Anthropotheology. In Mandaean theology there are three

essential elements: Jewish speculation, Anthropos-theology and Life-theology. It is the third, Life-theology, that binds the Mandaean documents to the Odes and St. John's Gospel (Kraeling, p.169). His conclusion with regard to the Prologue of the Fourth Gospel is definite:

"The main theme of the hymn of the Prologue is not essentially Mandaic. The Logos played no important part in Mandaic theology. True Anosh is given the cognomen MALALA, Word, but..... this signifies little more than that he was one of the powers connected with the revelation of truth" (p.173). He has nothing to say, under the heading of the Pauline writings, in respect of Philippians 2, or Colossians 1:15-17. He sums up, to the effect that if Paul were acquainted with the Anthropos, it was of little importance in the development of his thought. No reference is made to Hebrews chapters 1 and 2.

J.HERING (Die biblischen Grundlagen des christlichen Humanismus, 1946) considers that John 6 is governed by the thought of Christ as the heavenly Man who comes to earth for our salvation, and who thereafter returns to God, cf.6:62., so 3:13.

Hering considers that for Johannine Christianity generally it is the primal Man from heaven who redeems humanity (p.9 ff.), and further states that this explains why the Prologue does not say that the Word became man, but that he became flesh. He was man from the first, but in a heavenly and divine form, so could only become flesh, i.e. man in a frail and creaturely condition. Dr. Allen is inclined to think that the figure of the primal Man is of the utmost importance for New Testament Christology, and he thus places emphasis on three key passages: Philipians 2, Hebrews 1 & 2, Colossians 1:15-17. Further, going rather beyond Kraeling, he is prepared to see in the 'Son of Man' of the Fourth Gospel (as also in Dan.7:13) an allusion to this figure. He is not, however, clear as to the relation between the mythological primordial protoplast and the Logos of the Prologue. Perhaps John takes over the primal Man Christology from his Christian predecessors and keeps it quite apart from the use he makes of the Logos concept. At any rate, as regards the divine figure in Hebrews, if the primal Man (having taken over the functions of Wisdom) be identified with Jesus, then the way is prepared and the process facilitated for the identification of the Logos with Jesus.

Passing reference should be made to an important work by E. LOHMEYER ('Kurios Jesus', 1928). He is discussing the crucial passage, Philippians 2:5-11, and shows it to be a pre-Pauline hymn quoted by Paul in this epistle. It is the work of a Jewish Christian who wrote in Greek, but whose native tongue was Aramaic. The hymn tells of a divine being who did not aspire to equality with God, but became man to fulfil the divine purpose and in the end was given that equality with God which he had not sought for himself. The divine being is not named, but he resembles the Son of Man of Jewish tradition, who in turn goes back to the Iranian primal Man. This Christology is pre-Pauline but is on the way to the Johannine. We notice especially that, as for John, exaltation is the reverse side of humiliation and the Resurrection is passed over. A pre-existent being is thought of who was in the image of God and who is destined to exercise cosmic functions. The Logos is not named in this hymn but the idea is there and derived from the Son of Man. In John's Prologue the Logos is named, but gives place to the formula 'Son of Man' in the body of the Gospel. In early Christianity there were three titles for Jesus: Son of Man, the Lord and the Word. John keeps 'Son of Man' and 'Word'; Paul drops these two for 'Lord', (pp.75 f.).

In the concluding paragraph of his valuable survey,  
 "The Heavenly Man" (J.T.S., Jan.1925), J.M.CREDE writes:

"The heavenly Man is no master-key to the mysteries of the history of religion. Historical affiliation between various presentations of the idea can be maintained with varying probability, but the idea itself was vague and lent itself to widely differing schemes of thought. The fundamental Gnostic doctrine of the redemption of a divine element from the hostile world of matter was, in some circles, elaborated in terms of the descent of the heavenly Man into matter and his subsequent redemption. More often, however, the same doctrine was presented in other ways. Usually it is not the Man but Sophia who falls from the heavenly state. Yet even then the conception of the heavenly Man is frequently retained. It was a given element in religious tradition and had to be worked in. Sometimes 'the Man' is the title of the supreme God, sometimes of a subordinate aeon, sometimes of both."

Of the four evangelists it is the fourth who emphasizes the pre-mundane existence of the Christ, the Son of Man (cf. Jn. 3:13; 9:39). Was John, like Philo, attempting to identify a heavenly Man with the Logos, and even to suggest that the Logos was the archetypal Man? We should understand that in Apocalyptic the humanity of the 'Son of Man' is not the significant aspect. In actual fact the Heavenly Man is NOT human - he is a divine or quasi-divine being. Whatever may have been the original application

of the title 'Son of Man' to Jesus in an apocalyptic sense, it certainly came to be used with an emphasis on the Incarnation in contra-distinction from the emphasis on the divine Sonship with its associate idea of pre-temporal existence. It is not at all clear that any attempt was made to fuse the conception of the Son of Man (in an apocalyptic sense) with the Logos Christology, and to develop such a blend of thought.

"For this reason, he calls himself Son of Man, because he sums up in himself that original man, from whom is made that creation which is born of woman, in order that, as through the defeat of a man our race went down to death, so again through the victory of a man we might ascend up to life" (IRENAEUS, Adv. Haer. v. 21.1, -Harvey. )

Irenaeus is here reproducing, in effect, the Pauline doctrine of the Second Adam. But this is something basically different from the apocalyptic and Philonian 'heavenly Man' idea.

The heavenly Man idea is no key to the source of the Johannine Logos any more than it is the key to the 'mysteries of the history of religion.' The whole Johannine portrayal of Jesus (and in particular the unique Prologue outline) is so radically different from anything that is essential to the ancient, oriental

mythical, Gayomart; from anything that is fundamental to the mysterious Πρωτόνθρωπος (whatever form he may take or name he may bear); and from anything that is basic to the Philonian ὁ κατ' εἰκόνα ἄνθρωπος.

The Logos of John is much too Divine to be the heavenly Man divinely considered: He is much too human (for ὁ Λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο) to be mere Πρωτόνθρωπος.

P A R T   I I I .

S O U R C E S   O F   T H E  
J O H A N N I N E   L O G O S   D O C T R I N E

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## c h a p t e r            s i x

A.    T H E    J E W I S H    S O P H I A - C O N C E P T :  
       - t h e    T h e o r y    o f    D r . R e n d e l   H a r r i s .

IN 'The Origin of the Prologue to St. John's Gospel' (1917)

Dr. RENDEL HARRIS re-opened from yet another angle the question of "the real meaning and actual genesis of the Prologue to the Fourth Gospel," and finds himself in revolt against the view which found the solution in Hellenistic culture. He begins by noting that occasionally another significant title is applied to Jesus Christ. He both calls Himself, and is called, 'WISDOM'. Dr. Harris submits, at the outset, the hypothesis which he goes on to attempt to prove that "the way to Logos is through Sophia and that the latter is the ancestress of the former" (p.4). The famous passage in Proverbs 8:22-30 is cited:

"The Lord possessed me (Sophia) IN THE BEGINNING of his way,  
       before his works of old.

I was set up from everlasting, FROM THE BEGINNING. . . . .  
       when he prepared the heavens I WAS THERE;

When he set a compass upon the face of the deep . . .  
then I WAS BY HIM."

Here Harris thinks we have the stratum of the Old Testament upon which the Prologue of the Fourth Gospel rests, and he sees the principal thus:

ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ λόγος,  
JN. 1:1

πρὸ τοῦ αἰῶνος ἐθεμελίωσέ  
μέ ἐν ἀρχῇ, PROV. 8:22

ὁ λόγος ἦν πρὸς τὸν θεόν,  
JN. 1:1

ἦμην παρ' αὐτῷ, PROV. 8:30

οὗτος ἦν ἐν ἀρχῇ  
πρὸς τὸν θεόν, JN. 1:2

ἦνίκα ἠτοίμαζε τὸν οὐρανὸν  
συμπληρῆσθαι αὐτῷ, PROV. 8:27

ἐν αὐτῷ ζωὴ ἦν,  
JN. 1:4

αἱ γὰρ ἔξοδοί μου, ἔξοδοι  
ζωῆς, PROV. 8:35

He recapitulates his hypothesis, "that the Logos in the Prologue to John is a substitute for Sophia in a previously existing composition, and the language of the Prologue to the Gospel depends ultimately upon the eighth chapter of the Book of Proverbs" (p.6).

This hypothesis "that the Logos of the Fourth Gospel is a substitute for a previously existing Sophia, involves the consequence that the Prologue is a hymn in honour of

Sophia, and that it need not be in that sense due to the same authorship as the Gospel itself."

There is a whole series of Sapiental books whose chief representatives ('The Wisdom of Solomon' and 'The Wisdom of Jesus the son of Sirach') are seen to be pendants of the great hymn in Proverbs 8. The Wisdom of Solomon ch.9 is a pendant to Proverbs 8, and occupies an intermediate position between Proverbs and John. Moreover, it furnishes the transition from Logos to Sophia, by using parallel language for the two personifications.

The chapter opens:

"O God of our fathers and Lord of Thy mercy,  
Who hast made all things BY THY WORD,  
And hast ordained man BY THY WISDOM."

- Wis.Sol., 9:1.

By means of the bridge afforded by Wisdom of Solomon ch.9 the praises of Sophia become the praises of the Logos. Harris further shows the dependence of Sirach on Proverbs, setting Proverbs 8:22; 9:10; 8:17; 8:36, respectively, over against Sirach 1:4; 1:14; 4:11; 4:12. He thinks that the Prologue evolved quite easily out of Proverbs 8, via the Sapiental books, and that "the substitution of Logos for Sophia in the primitive Christology was little more than the replacing of a feminine expression by a

masculine one in Greek-speaking circles" (pp.12-13). The great Christological utterances of Hebrews 1 can be deduced from the Sapiential books - Wisdom made the worlds, is the Radiance (ἀκρόγλωσσα) of God, is the Imprint (ἄραγμα) of God, (in Hebrews χαρακτήρ, and in Wisdom of Solomon εἰκών and εἶσοπτρον). The Prologue to the Fourth Gospel is composed out of the material provided by the 'Praises of Wisdom' (Sirach 24), and the same material underlies the notable Christological passage in Colossians ch. 1. We have to discern in the language of both John and Paul in these instances an earlier and intermediate form.

Harris then examines the books of 'Testimonies against the Jews', seeking the corroboration of early Christian extra-biblical evidence. He finds it; and is strengthened in his conviction about the ultimate dependence of Colossians 1 upon Proverbs 8. Further, he presents us with a telling array of Patristic evidence supporting his thesis. He cites Alford as being the commentator who most nearly approaches his own position: "...how it came that St. John found this word LOGOS so ready made to his hands, as to require no explanation. The answer to this will be found by tracing the gradual personification of the Word or Wisdom of God in the

Old Testament....As the Word of God was the constant idea for his revelations relatively to man, so was the Wisdom of God for those which related to his own essence and attributes" (pp.28-29). Alford, however, is in error (according to Harris) in the assumption that the Sophia of the Old Testament is a later development of the Logos. Again, there is a Sophia-Christ-Ode in the 'Odes of Solomon', approximately contemporary with the Fourth Gospel, which may also be related to Proverbs.

In drawing his study to a close, Dr.Harris has no doubt that in the primitive 'Testimony Book' Christ was equated with Sophia, and if we can demonstrate that John's Gospel is directly dependent upon the apostolic collection of 'Testimonies' we may then affirm that, being acquainted with the Sophia-Christ equation the Evangelist modified it and produced the Logos-Christ. On the strength of a fragment of evidence, then, which to Harris seems altogether adequate, he assumes that the 'Testimony Book' antedates the Pauline epistles (and therefore the Fourth Gospel), is apostolic in origin and the common property of all schools of thought (p.64). He is satisfied from the cumulative evidence that "the first and foremost article of Christian belief is that Jesus is the Wisdom of God, personified and

equated with every form of personification of Wisdom that could be derived from or suggested by the Scriptures of the Old Testament" (pp.64-65).

This much must be conceded, in criticizing Harris's theory, that the parallels of ideas, as well as actual verbal correspondence, between the Johannine Prologue and the Sapiential literature are notable if not significant. There seems to be strong weight of evidence in favour of an original Logos-hymn around which the final Prologue was shaped. There is, therefore, no reason to reject off-hand the possibility of a Sophia-hymn. Harris, of course, bases a great deal on a very meagre foundation of evidence to 'prove' the current Sophia-Christ conception and its ready evolution into the Logos-Christ. If we grant that John did derive his ideas, figures of speech and even expressions themselves from the Old Testament Sapiential literature, it still seems that the vital question remains unanswered - What is the origin of Logos in the Prologue, and what is its essential significance and content so far as the author is concerned ?

C.SPICQ ('Le Siracide et la structure littéraire du prologue de saint Jean, 1940, pp.183-195) compares John

and Sirach: what one says of Wisdom or the Law, the other says of the Logos. Of special note is the manner in which the parallelism in ideas is consistently followed by John in the same order as that of Sirach. But, adds Spicq, this dependence of the Evangelist in regard to a traditional theme does not prejudge the solution to another problem: the origin of the Johannine Logos. And so we are virtually back where we started. For, are we persuaded that the poetical personifications of Proverbs 8, and certain dependent passages, express the prodigious truths that John believes about Jesus Christ? If the pendulum swung too far in the line of thought represented by Scott, then R.Harris goes too far in the other direction by giving no recognition to the likelihood that John was at least acquainted with Hellenistic thought and terminology, and that (if only in part) he was writing to persuade the Greek, as well as the oriental and the Jew, that "this Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye may have life in His name."

We conclude by asking, Can the connotation of Sophia in Proverbs ch.8 suffice to suggest the tremendous Person who is portrayed in the whole of the Fourth Gospel? Did the hypothetical Sophia-Christ concept of the first century Church embrace the ideas of revelation, mediation,

incarnation, illumination and vitalization, as we find these basic elements in the Figure of the Prologue ? One is bound to answer these questions in the negative. There is an inadequacy about this line of explanation, even as there is in referring the elusive Johannine Logos to the Hellenic sphere or the oriental mystic religions.

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Among scholarly opinions which are opposed to the idea of seeking the origins of the Johannine Logos in the world of Greek ideas and expression, is that given in a single sentence of a footnote by J.BURNET (Early Greek Philosophy, 1930, p.133):

"In any case, the Johannine doctrine of the LOGOS has nothing to do with Herakleitos or with anything at all in Greek philosophy, but comes from the Hebrew Wisdom literature."



## B. THE THEORY OF A LOGOS - HYMN.

WHATEVER views may be held concerning the relations between the Prologue and the rest of the Gospel in respect of theology, there is general agreement that the Prologue was added subsequently to the production of the Prologue itself. LEBRETON thinks that "the Prologue was only written at the moment of publication, and we can understand that the author may have used <sup>in</sup> this introduction alone a philosophic expression which he had not employed in his catechesis" (Hist. of the Dogma of the Trinity, E.T., p.372). There is, on the other hand, much to be said in favour of the view that the Prologue embodies a hymn or poem on the Logos, which John took and adopted for his own purpose. C.CRYER (1921) analyzed it from this point of view. C.F.BURNEY (1922) suggested that it was a hymn originally composed in Aramaic. Reference has already been made to the views of R.HARRIS.

An examination of the Prologue will recall a characteristic Hebraic style. The idea of emphasizing a word in the second line in order to amplify the meaning of the first line ('climactic parallelism') is evident in vv.4,5,7,9,10;

the threefold repetition in the first three lines of v.14 serves to illustrate, from its distinctive character, that the Prologue is not shaped on Greek but on Hebrew poetry. "This kind of rhythm is all but peculiar to the most elevated poetry", writes S.R.DRIVER (Intro. to Lit. of O.T., 1894, p.341). He cites as examples, Psalms 29:5; 92:2; 93:3; 94:3; 96:13; 113:1, and continues, "there is something analogous to it, though much less forcible and distinct, in some of the 'Songs of Ascents' (Pss. 121-134), where a somewhat emphatic word is repeated from one verse (or line) in the next, as Ps.121:1b, 2a; 3b, 4; 4b, 5a; 7, 8a; &c." Moreover, climactic parallelism is characteristic of the Song of Deborah. The couplets of verses 1, 2 and 8 are 'synonymous', while verses 3, 6 and 11 are antithetical. The couplets appear also to be rhythmical, each line containing three stresses. C.F.Burney considers the Prologue to be a hymn written in the form of traditional Hebrew poetry, consisting of eleven parallel couplets, with comments introduced here and there by the writer:

1. In the beginning was the Word,  
And the Word was with God.
2. And God was the Word;  
He was in the beginning with God.
3. All things by Him were made;  
And without Him was made nought;

4. Because in Him was life,  
And the life was the light of mankind.
5. And the light in darkness was shining,  
And the darkness obscured it not.

"There was a man sent from God, his name, John. That one came for a witness, that he might bear witness of the light, that all might believe in it. That one was not the light, but one who should bear witness of the light. It was the true light that lighteth every man coming into the world. He was in the world,

- "6. And the world by Him was made,  
And the world knew Him not.
7. Unto His own He came,  
And His own received Him not.

"As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God - to those that believe in His name; because He was born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

- "8. And the Word was made flesh,  
And set His SHEKINTA among us.
9. And we beheld His glory,  
Glory as of the only-begotten of the Father.
10. He was full of grace and truth,  
Of whose fulness we all have received.

And grace for grace.

11. For the law was given through Moses,  
Grace and truth through the Messiah.

"No man hath ever seen God; the only-begotten of God, Who is in the bosom of the Father - He hath revealed."

- C.F.BURNEY, The Aramaic Origin of the Fourth Gospel,

1922, pp.41 - 42.

It was not a novel excursion into the realms of religious literature to pen a poem on a Heavenly Being, for there is ample precedent in the Sapiential books where the praises of Wisdom are expressed in rhythmic form. The Hymn on Sophia in 'Wisdom' 7:22 ff. points back to that of Proverbs 8. Allusions to it are probably to be seen in Hebrews 1:3 and 4:12. The celebrated Wisdom Hymn of Ecclesiasticus 24:3-22 culls some fragments of thought from the two earlier poems, and perhaps influences the language of John 1:3, 14 (cf. Ecclus. 24:8, 9 and 12). The precedent thus set by the Old Testament treatment of Sophia and other profound themes permits us to expect that the Christian Church, in its turn, would use the form of an ode to express its beliefs and ideas.

"The hymn is a philosophical RATIONALE of the main thesis of the Gospel. It begins with the proclamation of the Word as Pre-existent and Divine (vv. 1, 2). Then appear the O.T. thoughts of the Word as creative of all (v. 3), life-giving (v. 4), light-giving (v. 5). But the whole universe (v. 10), including man (v. 11), was unconscious of His omnipresent energy. He became Incarnate, not as a momentary Epiphany of the Divine Glory, even as the Sun exhibits the Father (v. 14). Thus does the Word as Incarnate reveal the Invisible God (v. 18)."

- BERNARD, John, ICC, 1928, vol. I, p. cxlv.

If the two sections concerning the witness of John the Baptist to the coming Light (vv.6-9), and His pre-existence, be removed, the form of the hymn is more plainly seen. Verses 12, 13 are two exegetical comments by the evangelist, as also vv.16, 17. Thus Bernard conjectures the original Logos-hymn, in the following arrangement:

vv. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 10, 11, 14.

It will be noticed that the hymn moves in abstract regions of thought. The historical names - John, Moses, Jesus Christ - are no part of it: they are added in the explanatory notes of the evangelist.

The first two centuries A.D. bear witness to a number of poetic compositions within the sphere of Christian literature. Eusebius (H.E., v, 28:5) cites a writer who comments on the number of Christian psalms and odes which sang of Christ as the Word ( τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ τὸν Χριστὸν ὑμνοῦσι θεολογοῦντες). These beautiful poems were known as the 'Odes of Solomon' (first published from the Syriac by R.Harris in 1909). They are dated by Harris as of the first century, but Bernard places them 160-170 A.D. They are composed in a cryptic fashion and contain no direct quotations from the Old or New Testaments. The

presentation of the Logos-doctrine in these Odes is reminiscent of John. The Word is the Thought of God (  $\acute{\epsilon}\nu\lambda\omicron\iota\alpha$  ), and this Thought is Life and Light. The pre-existence of the Word is indicated: He is the Agent of creation. "The dwelling place of the Word is man" (12:11) speaks of the Incarnation. The echoes of Johannine tones demonstrates how deep-rooted was the doctrine of the Living Divine Word in Christian devotion. The Odes of Solomon cannot, of course, be submitted as a source of the Johannine doctrine, but they "provide a welcome illustration of that mystical aspect of Christian teaching which has sometimes been erroneously ascribed to Hellenic rather than Hebrew influences" (Bernard, *op.cit.*, p.cxlvii).

## C. THE THEORY OF DR. C. F. BURNEY.

IT was not a little curious that C.F.BURNEY produced his erudite thesis ('The Aramaic Origin of the Fourth Gospel') in 1922, while in the following year a noted scholar, C.C.TORREY, published a similar work on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean, and entitled 'The Aramaic Origin of the Gospel of John'. Neither was aware of the other's researches. Moreover, Burney confesses that he wrote the chapter on the Prologue before noticing "that the facts that here (i.e. verse 3)  $\pi\rho\omicron\varsigma$  = Aram.  $\pi\bar{\iota}\bar{\iota}$ , and that the other Gospel occurrences emanate from the Marcan source with its Aramaic background, had been anticipated by Dr.Rendel Harris..." (op.cit.,p.29). It is interesting to note the similar lines of thought which were pursued by three able English-speaking scholars in the late 'tens and early 'twenties. Torrey dates the three translated Gospels as follows: Mark was written in Aramaic in 40 A.D.; Matthew, a short time after; John, about 60 A.D. - all of them being translated into Greek by A.D. 70. From the point of view of general recognition, these fine, scholarly attempts,

with their deep bearing and cogent arguments, have proved abortive. P.MENOUD thinks they have not received the interest they deserve, and cites E.F.Scott as a fair example of the bulk of scholarly opinions: "All of his (Torrey's) proposed emendations are ingenious, and some of them exceedingly happy. Yet one is left almost always with the feeling that the text is at least equally intelligible as it stands" (MENOUD, L'Évangile de Jean, d'après les recherches récentes, 1947, p.27).

In chapter 1 Burney marshals an abundance of alleged Aramaisms, in the Prologue to the Fourth Gospel, in the face of which he cannot resist the conclusion that it was originally written in that oriental tongue and then translated into Greek which obviously betrays its real character. It requires an Aramaic student to pass sound judgment on this hypothesis: but the inexperienced eye fails to observe much by way of objective criteria. It does not claim to be more than a hypothesis. The author is at pains to elaborate the Hebrew and Aramaic significance underlying the verb ἔσκηνωσεν (Heb. SHEKINA; Aram., SHEKINTA). "The choice of the verb σκηνοῦν was doubtless dictated by its close resemblance to the Semitic root S-K-N" (p.36). Similarly in respect of δόξα, after quoting Isaiah 6:3 ('For mine eye hath seen the



YeKARA of the SHEKINTA of the King of the ages' - TARGUM), he continues, "This last passage, from Isaiah's vision, leads us to a point which proves beyond the shadow of a doubt that when John describes our Lord's self-manifestation as  $\delta\acute{o}\xi\alpha$  he has in mind the YeKARA of the Targums" (p.37), cf. also John 12:40-41.

This is crowned by the assertion that we are in a position to maintain that the Logos-conception of the Prologue must undoubtedly be derived from the third and most frequent Targumic conception which represents God in manifestation - that of the  $\text{דְּבַר הַיְהוָה}$  'the Word of the Lord'. He then makes the astonishing statement that we should no doubt trace the origin of the conception of the MEMRA to the O.T. passages in which the Hebrew DABHAR 'Word' is employed in a connection which almost suggests hypostatization, e.g. Ps.107:20 ("He sent forth His Word and healed them"); Psalm 33:6 ("By the Word of the Lord were the heavens made")." The latter is reckoned by Burney, because of its reference to the Word in action at creation, to recall the repeated  $\text{וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים}$ , 'And God said', in Genesis 1, where the Hebrew verb AMAR is identical with the Aramaic root from which MEMRA is derived. He makes the further observation that in John 1:14 the writer ("no doubt with intention") embraces

the three Targumic conceptions. There is MEMRA in  $\delta$  λόγος  
 ἄρξ ἐγένετο ; SHEKINPA in ἐσκήνωσεν ἐν ἡμῖν ;  
 YeKARA in ἐθεασάμεθα τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ . "This is evidence  
 that, so far from owing his LOGOS-doctrine to an Alex-  
 andrian source, he is soaked through and through with  
 Palestinian Jewish thought which is represented by the  
 Targums. Nor would the Prologue need time for its dev-  
 elopment " (p.39).

If the bare fact is that MEMRA is never used in the  
 Targums to render D'BHAR YHWH (according to the authori-  
 tative statements of G.F.MOORE, art., 'Intermediaries in  
 Jewish Theology,' Harvard Theol.Review, 1922, pp.54-55),  
 it is quite <sup>im</sup>possible to subscribe to Burney's contra-  
 dictory proposition. Either he was aware of the facts  
 and was so full of his theory that he flies in the face  
 of those facts, or he was not aware of them - which is  
 scarcely likely. Moreover, the cosmogonical reference  
 is quite erroneous, for (with the possible exception of  
 Isaiah 45:12) the Targums do not represent the creative  
 activity of God as mediated by the Memra (cf.MOORE, loc.  
 cit.). It may be added that MEMRA is not the term used  
 when D'BHAR YHWH is the medium of revelation. Seeing  
 that MEMRA is always a verbal-buffer, and nowhere approx-  
 imates to a personification in the least degree, it is

pointless for Burney to introduce the quasi-personifications of the D'BHAR YHWH in the Psalms.

Even without an Aramaic specialist's knowledge one can clearly recognize three things. First, the whole scheme of Burney's line is hypothetical: there is no tangible evidence of an Aramaic Logos-hymn which became the Prologue to the Fourth Gospel as we have it now. Again, there is as much to be said in favour of other positions, and E.F.Scott's succinct conclusion, quoted above, is probably the most we can concede. Finally, if John's Gospel be proved an Aramaic work, most of what has been said for Hellenistic influences collapses finally and utterly. That mortification may yet have to be under-gone; but it must do so at the hands of more shattering evidence than has been evinced up to the present.

There is a discussion of Burney's and Schlatter's \* works by G.KITTEL, in 'Die Probleme des palästinischen Spätjudentums und das Urchristentum' (1926). His conclusion is that John writes in Greek, but that unconsciously he assimilates his Greek to his native language. This is shown, not by his having made mistakes, but by expressing himself in Greek otherwise than a Greek would have done, the

\* see footnote over.

difference being that he thinks, speaks and constructs his sentences as a Palestinian." That is a reasonable opinion, and at the present state of research seems as far as we may go. There is still insufficient evidence to prove an Aramaic original: the Hellenistic factor then remains a possibility.

\* A.SCHLATTER, 'Die Sprache und Heimat des vierten Evangelisten', 1902.

This work is cited by Burney, op.cit.,p.3.

"Schlatter has demonstrated the Palestinian origin of the diction of the Fourth Gospel in the fullest possible manner by citing Rabbinic parallels to its phraseology verse by verse....He chose these Rabbinic Hebrew parallels rather than the Aramaic material which we possess e.g. in the Palestinian Talmud, because the former are nearer in date to the Fourth Gospel and better illustrate the religious thought of Palestinian Judaism in the first century....Schlatter's conclusion is that the writer of the Gospel was a Palestinian who thought and spoke in Aramaic, and only acquired his Greek in the course of his missionary work".

C.SALMASIUS, in 1645, suggested that the Gospel was originally in Aramaic, though he did not work out the theory.

Numerous scholars from Grotius (1641) have emphasized the Semitic character of the diction of the Fourth Gospel.

P A R T I V.

SOURCES OF THE  
JOHANNINE LOGOS DOCTRINE

iii. Hebrew Thought:  
the D'BHAR YHWH of the Old Testament.

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## c h a p t e r                    s e v e n

## S O M E   G E N E R A L   C O N S I D E R A T I O N S

## I   S t a t i s t i c a l   S u r v e y .

D'BHAR YHWH, "the Word of the Lord", status constructus, occurs 237 times in the Old Testament. The books in which the majority of usages occur are:

I KINGS	33	times
II KINGS	16	"
Jeremiah	52	"
Ezekiel	60	"

and by way of contrast, there are only eight usages in Isaiah.

There are seven examples of the form D'BHAR ELOHIM in the O.T.

Five-eighths of the total number of D'BHAR YHWH usages are in the later prophets (152 out of 237). We also find

We also find that in 214 passages D'BHAR YHWH is God's Word comitted to, or spoken by, a prophet. An examination of the contexts further establishes the fact that D'BHAR YHWH is, in the vast majority of cases, a terminus technicus for revelation in the prophetic Word.

To cite one or two examples which will serve as illustrations of this point:

In the two books of Samuel (save for the use in 1 Samuel 3:1) all references to the D'BHAR YHWH are of Divine communications to prophetic personages, Samuel, Nathan and Gad. The Word of the Lord is clearly regarded as something revealed from without, a message from Yahweh to the person of the prophet. Generally this oracle had to be passed on to another who had not gift or vocation of receiving these Divine intimations. Of the infant Samuel, evidently, it was expected (at any rate from the author's point of view) that he would become one of the privileged company of recipients of the Divine Word. 1 Samuel 3:21 reads that "the Lord revealed Himself to Samuel in Shiloh by the word of the Lord" - but H.P.SMITH (I.C.C.) thinks there is reason to suspect the text of this verse.

In the case of some particular and special communication, even to so exalted and divinely-favoured a character as David, the agent was the prophet Nathan, "...the word of the Lord came unto Nathan, saying, Go and tell my servant David..." (II Sam.7:4,5)

The curious narrative of I Kings 13, in which the phrase D'BHAR YHWH occurs nine times (out of a total of 33 in the book), illustrates the awful nature of the Word of the Lord. The 'man of God out of Judah' observes carefully his instructions which came 'in the word of the Lord,' both in the message he delivered against the altar at Bethel, and in pursuing his own way once the errand has been performed. The lying prophet of Bethel invokes the D'BHAR YHWH to guarantee the attention and obedience of the other prophet, and the latter accepts the oracle given through "an angel...by the word of the Lord" (I Kings 13:18). Then, while they were together at table, the lying prophet himself receives the Divine Word to proclaim judgment on the men of God out of Judah for disobeying his original commission.

In I and II Kings the great majority of references are prophetic, both in the sense of being uttered by a prophet, and (in a number of cases) announcing judgment



or disaster or blessing in the future. Elijah is essentially an agent of the Word, as is also his disciple, Elisha.

The D'BHAR YHWH has an unquestioned authority and its realization is inevitable. The prophet is prepared to stake his life on the authenticity of the Word that has come to him, Micaiah, for example, does so when he declares, standing alone before two kings and four hundred professing prophets, "If thou return at all in peace the Lord hath not spoken by me" (I Kings 22:28). Ahab met his miserable death according to Micaiah's intimation and to the Word that came previously to Elijah, "and the dogs licked up his blood...according unto the word of the Lord which he spake" (I Kings 22:38; cf. 21:19).

The majority of usages of the phrase are to be found in the prophetic books themselves, 186 times.

The prophetic period in the life of Israel was essentially creative, whether we regard it, with some, as THE creative period in Israel's life; or, whether, with others, we consider it to be one phase in a history which was ever renewing itself in creative activity, its dynamic quality must be regarded as basic. As far

as the reforming prophet is concerned, the effective means by which Yahweh revealed His will and brought to pass His purposes is the self-authenticating DABHAR. The prophet was an ISH ELOHIM charged with the D'BHAR YHWH. To him one thing alone mattered - the D'BHAR YHWH itself, for in it lay the KOAH (power) of Yahweh. Wherever or whenever the prophets worked in the Name of God, there God Himself was working in creation or redemption. Thus the graphic words of Jeremiah 23:28f., "He that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully... is not my word like as a fire? saith the Lord; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?"

To appreciate the full significance of the D'BHAR YHWH through the prophet, three facts must be held in view. The first, that the Hebrew conceived of God personally and locally, though not necessarily localized. If he were regarded in human terms as to His form, He was not so in respect of substance. He moved freely in and out of the world of men, and had no need of mediators unless He so chose. The second, that the prophet - and indeed any Israelite - could move in and out of God's presence provided only that He was not, for some reason, hiding Himself. But lest men should presume on this liberty, custom began to limit the communion between man and God

to dream and vision. The prophet, however, stood outside custom, and to such chosen vehicles communion with God was a direct and real experience. Jeremiah boldly claims that the true prophet, as against the false, is one who has "stood in the council of Yahweh, that he should perceive and hear his word" (23:18). The third, that the spoken word has a concrete and dynamic significance for the Hebrew. For us it is the written word which is all important, because it perpetuates what is thought and said and can be used in evidence. For the Hebrew it was the SPOKEN word which counted because it was charged with the personal power of the speaker: it was dynamic and was carried forward to self-realization by the personal strength which lay behind it. The greater the personality, the greater was the power of the word. The word of the prophet - even his own word - was dynamic and was carried forward to fulfilment by means of the power of a more-than-ordinarily endowed person. How much more, then, was the Word of the Lord dynamic ?

The plural form, DIBHRE YHWH, is infrequent: we find only 17 instances. DIBHRE ELOHIM appears but thrice. Most of the usages have a meaning similar to the singular, D'BHAR YHWH, and are in a prophetic context. For example, in Jeremiah 43:1 we note, "...when Jeremiah had made an end of speaking unto all the people all the words of the Lord their God, wherewith the Lord their God had sent him to them.." Similarly in I Samuel 8:10, when Samuel reports to the people the mind of God concerning their ambition to have a king, "And Samuel told all the words of the Lord unto the people that asked of him a king."

There are four uses in the Pentateuch: two concerning the Covenant Code. In Exodus 24:3, 4, "And Moses came and told the people all the words of the Lord....And Moses wrote all the words of the Lord.." Further, concerning the instructions Moses received in preparation for the encounter with Pharaoh, "And Moses told Aaron all the words of the Lord" (Exodus 4:28); and very similar phraseology in Numbers 11:24 where Moses recounts Yahweh's promise of meat to eat which would become loathsome. In Joshua 3:9 the words of Yahweh are instructions for the immediate crossing of Jordan. The other non-prophetic reference under this head is Ezra 9:4, which has at any rate the same sort

of authority as the characteristic word of the prophet in denouncing the sins of the people.

Outside the status constructus, DABHAR occurs over 300 times, and approximately three-quarters of this number are in prophetic contexts. In the older strata of the Pentateuch, J and E, DABHAR is more especially used of the Decalogue - the ASARETH HADD'BHARIM -, and in the early documents generally this plural form is employed for the Law of the Lord. It is the term for the Law of God in the pre-Deuteronomic period. It stands over against such terms as TORAH or B'RITH, but there seems no reason why DABHAR should have been used rather than one of these other revelation words. By way of example we may refer to a typical pre-Deuteronomic text, Exodus 24:3, 4: "And Moses came and told the people all the words of the Lord (DIBHRE), and all the judgments (MISHPATIM): and all the people answered with one voice, and said, All the words (D'BHARIM) which the Lord hath said we will do. And Moses wrote all the words (DIBHRE) of the Lord..." or in Numbers 15:31, "Because he hath despised the word (D'BHAR) of the Lord, and hath broken his commandment (MITSWAH)..." Or again Exodus 34:27, "And the Lord said unto Moses, Write

thou these words..." In the legal sense, DABHAR is used exclusively for that supreme act of law-giving which was associated with the deliverance from Egypt and the institution of the Covenant between the self-revealed 'I AM THAT I AM' and the people He has claimed for Himself. "And Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant (B'RITH), which the Lord hath made with you concerning all these words (D'BHARIM)." The term TORAH is used of the Sinaitic Law only in a later period. In the age before Deuteronomy it is used of the priestly decision given as the answer to specific questions (cf. Numbers 5:30). Occasionally it is found in prophetic utterances also, with a notable example in Jeremiah 31:31ff.\* Other terms such as MISHPAT, MITSWAH, HOQ, HUQQA, which give scope for varied expression to the author of Psalm 119, are applied to the Sinaitic Law only in later usage. Before the Deuteronomic period DABHAR is the only such term applied to the Law given on the Mount of God: and DABHAR in its legal sense is used only of the Sinaitic legislation.

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\* "To the prophets and the 'Deuteronomist', the history of Israel is the story of the people's constant forsaking of this covenant, their disobedience to the will of their master,

The use of the two Greek words which the translators employed to render the Hebrew DABHAR calls for comment. The most important and obvious remark is the manner in which the LXX translates the status constructus, D'BHAR YHWH. The following is a summary:

Five of the six Pentateuch references have RHEMA KURIOU;

But, Genesis 15:4 has PHONE KURIOU.

Joshua 8:8 and 8:27 employ a periphrasis, the former with RHEMA, the latter without RHEMA.

I KINGS:	RHEMA KURIOU, 6;	LOGOS KURIOU, 2;	periphr. 1,
			omit 1.
II KINGS:	" " , 1;	" " , 2.	
III & KINGS:	" " , 17;	" " , 10;	one variant, Cod.A- LOGOS. periphr. 4.

with national catastrophe as the inevitable punishment. And after the failure of the Sinai covenant, when Yahweh is to create a new and surer basis for his relationship to Israel, it is done in the form of a new covenant (  $\eta\psi\chi\eta$  ברית Jer.31:31ff., cf. 32:38ff., Ezek.11:19ff., 36:25f.), where Yahweh writes in the hearts of his people his  $\eta\psi\chi\eta$  with all the obligations it involves...what is new is that Yahweh's  $\eta\psi\chi\eta$  is now a spiritual possession of the people."

IV KINGS:	RHEMA	KURIOU,	10;	LOGOS	KURIOU,	6.	
I CHRON:	"	"	, -;	"	"	, 5.	
II CHRON:	"	"	, 1;	"	"	, 8,	omit 1.
EZRA:	"	"	, -;	"	"	, 1.	
PSALMS:	"	"	, -;	"	"	, 2.	
MINOR PROPHETS:	"	"	, -;	"	"	, 30;	omit 1.
ISAIAH :	"	"	, 1;	"	"	, 6;	LOGION, 1.
JEREMIAH:	"	"	, 1;	"	"	, 49;	periphrasis, 1; omit, 1.
EZEKIEL:	"	"	, -;	"	"	, 60.	

It seems that in the prophetic literature the phrase LOGOS KURIOU settles down to be the accepted rendering (with few exceptions) for the Hebrew D'BHAR YHWH. In the books of Chronicles LOGOS predominates in contexts both prophetic and legal. The historical books, chiefly with prophetic references, give an apparently indiscriminate use of LOGOS and RHEMA, with a mixture even in the same particular narrative, e.g. in III KINGS chapter 13. I KINGS prefers RHEMA. The six texts in the Pentateuch have omitted LOGOS altogether.

The plural form, DIBHRE YHWH, follows much the same course. RHEMATA does not appear in II CHRON., AMOS, JEREMIAH and EZEKIEL; it occurs twice in EXODUS; and once only in NUMBERS, in JOSHUA, in I KINGS. LOGOI



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does not occur in NUMBERS and JOSHUA; it is found five times in JEREMIAH; and once in each of the following - EXOD US, I KINGS, II CHRON., EZEKIEL, and AMOS. There is one periphrasis in II CHRON., and the term is omitted from the LXX once in JEREMIAH.

#### THE USE OF LOGOS GENERALLY IN THE LXX.

The actual occurrence of LOGOS in the LXX, as against RHEMA, is in the ratio (approximately) of 2:1. If the Apocryphal books are included, the proportion is greater still, roughly 38:17.

Apart from use in rendering D'BHAR YHWH, and excluding the Apocrypha, a survey of the contents leads to the following conclusions:

In the PENTATEUCH, whilst there are numerous colourless usages, LOGOS frequently refers to a Divine command, or a divinely authorized injunction, particularly in Deuteronomy. There is but one occurrence in LEVITIOUS (Divine command): and five in NUMBERS, two with a Divine reference.

JOSHUA and JUDGES present mostly colourless usages.

In I KINGS they are divided between prophetic and

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non-descript references. II, III and IV KINGS yield almost entirely colourless usages. Similarly, in the case of the two books of CHRONICLES, only there are a few prophetic references interspersed throughout; and LOGOS is used of the Law Book in II CHRONICLES 34.

EZRA and NEHEMIAH have one or two legal references, but the rest are colourless. All examples in JOB are of human words. More than half of PSALMS' uses are in 119, of which all save one are 'the LORD'S word.' A few of the remainder, outside Psalm 119, are of the Divine Word; and the rest neutral. Four in PROVERBS have a Divine significance, the others (some 53) are expressions of human thought or wisdom. An allusion to the 'oath of God' is the only exception to the several neutral references in ECCLESIASTES.

By contrast, very few colourless examples are to be found in the books of the PROPHETS. Of those not employed in the formula LOGOS KURIOU (= D'BHAR YHWH), many are in an allied expression or circumlocution, and almost all have a prophetic context. There is a block of purely human references in the Rabshakeh incident in ISAIAH 36-37.

In certain LOGOS usages the nearest English translation is "thing", "matter", "affair". But we observe that this significance is much more frequent in the use of RHEMA. If LOGOS may be termed 'colourless' in many texts (i.e. it has no special force in reference to the Divine Word, prophecy, the Law, the Decalogue, commandments or authoritative utterances), it is more often than not, in these instances, at least human speech. The contexts of many usages of RHEMA, however, suggest that we interpret the term as "matter", "thing", etc. The large number of usages of RHEMA in the Pentateuch, as contrasted with the rather smaller number of references to LOGOS, are divided in a ratio of (approximately) 3 "thing" or neutral, to 1 Divine Word or commandment. A similar proportion is found in JOSHUA-JUDGES and RUTH.

I & II KINGS present us with an overwhelming number of nondescript or "thing" usages. In III KINGS the earlier chapters have a number of neutral RHEMA usages; but in the later chapters of this book and its complement, where the prophetic element is all-important, RHEMA has a definitely Divine or prophetic significance.

Neither EZRA nor NEHEMIAH gives us other than a human RHEMA, or "thing".

Of the fifty examples in JOB, three are God's words, the rest merely human utterances. Twelve colourless or human RHEMA in PSALMS, but two instances of a Divine RHEMA in addition. The few examples in PROVERBS and ECCLESIASTES are neutral.

One is struck by the paucity of the term in the PROPHEETS. ISAIAH heads the list with but fifteen divinely authorized uses, and one of human speech. Of JEREMIAH'S twelve references, eight are prophetic, and four are the words of men. EZEKIEL has two prophetic, and one neutral. All six cases in DANIEL are human words with no special significance.

It is impossible to draw and hard and fast lines of definition concerning the usages of these two important words of the LXX vocabulary. They are both used to translate the same Hebrew term DABHAR, as well as others. There are occasions when both LOGOS and RHEMA sit together in the same text and are apparently synonymous, e.g. Psalm 55:10, and Isaiah 66:5, Exodus 4:28 and 24:3, III KINGS 13:20-21. There is an interesting example in Jeremiah 5:14, in

which RHEMA is the human, prophetic word, and LOGOS is the Divine Word. RHEMA is more widely used in the PENTATEUCH, where it is frequently the colourless term. But we must not generalize and say that RHEMA tends towards this nondescript usage, while LOGOS is consistently richer in significance. Only in the books of the Prophets and in the prophetic contexts of the historical books may this be suggested.

In turning to that section of the Old Testament which is nearest in time to the Greek literature (PROVERBS and ECCLESIASTES), we are impressed by the considerable use made of LOGOS rather to the exclusion of RHEMA. Since those books have other Greek affinities (and in the Apocryphal books there is an instance of the Greek language being employed - the Wisdom of Solomon), there can be little doubt that the authors' conception of LOGOS was coloured accordingly. The Greeks of that period understood LOGOS in the sense of 'reason' or 'thought', as well as the actual verbal expression of thought. It is noteworthy that the phrase LOGOS (or RHEMA) KURIOU, as representing the Hebrew D'BHAR YHWH, does not occur in PROVERBS or ECCLESIASTES: nor, indeed, are LOGOS and RHEMA there a Divine Word in any form.

I I . T h e O r i e n t a l R e l i g i o u s  
B a c k g r o u n d o f t h e  
O l d T e s t a m e n t .

OUR first discovery in pursuing this subject of the Word of the Lord in the Old Testament is that of the definite conception of the DYNAMIC word. But on further research we discover that this idea was not confined to the Old Testament. There is evidence that the active power of the spoken word was a conception extending far back to very primitive periods of the human race. Speech springs out of action, and words become the instruments of action. The dynamic view of speech may be considered as primary: but in process of time man worked out abstract language by means of which he could communicate thoughts and wishes. As soon as man began to communicate his wishes to others of his society, he also found that by means of speech he could bring his will to bear on them, so that mere words could move matter as they intruded into the understanding of the hearer. From this it was but a little step to the supposition that certain consecrated men had the power to command the obedience of natural phenomena. Such is a reasonable conjecture

for an age when all moving things were thought to live. As, and if, man thought at all of the creation of the heavens and the earth, it was most natural for him to conceive of the process whereby the supreme deity created it by a word of his mouth.

The Hebrew or Christian is familiar with this conception of the Divine Word, it is second nature for him to reflect on creation in this way. But he is not alone in this. For more than six thousand years ago, as far back as Sumerian literature can be traced, men believed in a divine word which, by its own inherent power, achieved its own fulfilment. It is likely that the Sumerians were not the only possessors of a doctrine of the Divine Word, and certainly what was a prominent feature of their theology has been a persistent element in other theologies down the ages.

Because a word was so closely identified with the thing itself, the ancients could only conceive that not to have a name was as though a thing did not exist. The author of the Babylonian Creation Epic speaks of that which took place before the creation of the heaven and the earth as happening before the heaven and the earth had been named. But this was not simply the language of the visionary or

preacher or poet; for "the magic of words could be felt by all who lived in a world of metaphysical innocence."

"Words which could procure the fulfilment of one's desires must soon have taken on a sinister connotation, for the Sumerian term for 'word' was also used in the sense of 'incantation': the exercise of the magician's mysterious power was a 'word.' In social usage such a word could be a solemn promise, an undertaking whose performance was assured, an oath. The word of a god took effect as magic; if it was a curse it wrought ruin and destruction. A god could speak only through his mouthpiece, the priest, and so a terrible power was vested in the priesthood; ordinary human beings possessed this magical power in lesser degrees when they spoke on formal occasions. But the divine word was not confined to cursing and destruction. This is abundantly clear from the fact that the Sumerians regarded the word of the gods as a divine entity; it hovered between personality and a personified attribute in much the same way as did the Memra (Logos) of the post-exilic Jews. As a divine entity it was the personal agent of the will of the gods. The word of a god could be kind and gracious when the gods were pleased with men; and such personal names as 'His word is true' (Sumerian), and 'His word has no evil' (Babylonian), show that the word of God was the god in active being, a beneficent power in human life and affairs."

(GUILLAUME, Prophecy and Divination, 1938, p.21)

The Old Testament quite abounds in examples of the Divine Word as a vital force and in the form of personalizations. Psalm 147:15 is a good specimen:

"He sendeth his commandment upon earth;  
His word runneth very swiftly."



It may be mentioned here that the connection between WORD and SPIRIT goes back to very early times. The Spirit and breath of God were personified together as agents in the Creation, and in the process of the preservation and destruction of life.

Belief in the power of the spoken word was intimately linked with magic. It is thought by some that without this encouragement on the part of magic and religion the belief would have died out. Magic needed the belief: religion embraced it in theology, though otherwise it was not a necessity since the gods could be worshipped without personifying their words.

Guillaume asserts that the power of the spoken word as a factitive agent has always been more or less magical, save in that form of belief which is rather philosophical and mystical. "Among the Hebrew prophets it hovers uneasily between the two worlds of magic and religion. Among the Accadians, Arabs and other Semites it is frank and unashamed magic, owing its power to a fear that curses have an objective power, and that a solemn curse can continue to work evil from generation to generation" (op.cit.,p.24). It should be noted that this particular Sumerian conception of the word is quite different from the common view of Semitic heathendom,

whose logical consequence was a blind fatalism. The phase of religious development in which the word is divine activity resulting in the ordering and disposing of the forces of this world, is far removed from a conception which favoured the continuance of magic by which "the decrees of destiny could be evaded."

In viewing broadly the Semitic world, the extensive background to the religion of the Hebrews, we observe that it was widely held that words were the effective symbols of things and events. Thus, the persons invested with special authority - priests, prophets, diviners, magicians and so on - exercised power not only over the minds of men, but over the course of events to come. Their authority lay not only in their specialized knowledge as against the prevailing ignorance of the masses of the people, but in the fact that they spoke with authority, and in the name, of a divine power.

In the Sumerian-Babylonian sphere the effective words were but part of the whole incantation ritual, and the signs guaranteed the result of the incantation which would be regarded as a kind of prophecy.

The difference between the magician and the prophet centres in the matter of the underlying authority.

Where belief in a personal god who had revealed himself to the patriarchs was established, the prophet would be accepted as the mouthpiece of the god: but if there were no such fundamental belief, enchantment and divination would be given unquestioned acceptance. For this reason, then, as early as the sixth century B.C., the prophets of the Hebrews resort to the argument of spiritual experience in their contests with false prophets and diviners. Their personal experience of God, and a knowledge of His will revealed thereby, were valid arguments to vindicate their claim to know the Word of God.

One of the salient characteristics of the divine Word in the Old Testament is its immutability. The well-known passage in Isaiah 55:11ff. is an illustration. But in the Babylonian religion a similar ascription is made to the 'word of Marduk', whose thoughts are unsearchable, whose word is true, against whose command there is no turning back, and whose utterance is unalterable. It is likely that a Babylonian influence was felt by those Hebrew prophets who were acquainted with local religion during the Exile.

The Psalmist has aptly illustrated the ancient Sumerian conception of the Word in its relation to God when he writes:

"By the word of the Lord were the heavens made;  
And all the host of them by the breath (RUAH)  
of his mouth" - Ps.33:6

The subject - or perhaps one might say, problem - of the hypostatization of divine functions has been exhaustively treated by H.RINGGREN in his study, "Word and Wisdom" (1947). By way of definition, he accepts that of Oesterley and Box, that a hypostasis is a "quasi-personification of certain attributes proper to God, occupying an intermediate position between personalities and abstract beings" (Religion and Worship of the Synagogue, p.169). Research indicates that the ancient world was thoroughly familiar with the conception of hypostatized divine qualities. There are evidently varying degrees, and the result of a personification is not always a hypostasis, but an allegory or poetical metaphor.

In EGYPTIAN religion, the most important of the deities with abstract names which we may expect to be classified in the category of hypostatized qualities are HU and SIA. HW means 'words' or 'commands': and

SJE is 'intelligence.' "HU and SIA are the creative word and the understanding of the high gods RE - ATUM, personified and separated from their originator. In mythological language this is expressed thus: they are the first-begotten children of Re-Atum and his assistants in the creation of the world. They follow him as the ruler of the world, thus personifying his intelligence and his command. Later on, they attained so high a degree of independence, that they can be associated with any other god" (Ringgren, p.27).

In SUMERO-ACCADIAN religion, the Babylonian pantheon contains several deities whose names consist of abstract nouns. DÜRR has shown that in the court of some gods there are beings representing the god's word or its qualities; e.g., His word is life, His word is peace, His word is abundance, His word is faithful, The exalted command of heaven (Ishtar), (cf. 'Wertung des Wortes' p.91). RINGGREN says, "Dürr is perfectly right in connecting these names with the predilection of the Babylonians for making the qualities and functions of their gods, their weapons and emblems, and even their intellectual powers, independent, after which they could be placed on the list of gods," (op.cit., p.66). Dürr further shows that the hypostatization of the word proceeds

via its character of 'breath' or 'wind' (saru). In this we have an example of a divine function on the point of setting itself free from its originator and reaching an independent existence, (cf. Ringgren, p.67-8).

In WESTERN SEMITIC religion there are certain, though less well defined, hypostases. In the Ras Shamra texts connections exist between Wisdom and El and his word.

In his conclusion, Ringgren says, "We may recall the hypostatization of the divine word, resulting from the fact that the word is conceived as an almost substantial reality since it goes forth from the mouth of the deity. A word of blessing or malediction is an independent power that cannot be hindered in its course of action. A blessing or a curse cannot be annulled; it must realize its effect. It is not astonishing then that the curse is also personified in Akkadian religion as Dimetu" (p.191).

In SEMITIC RELIGION, generally, it seems that the characteristic conception of the spoken word was its dynamic objectivity. Many signs may indicate one's personal presence, but the most intimate and personal and significant is to SPEAK. Through the spoken word personality is expressed, and influence and authority

are exercised over others. The dynamic quality attributed to speech by the Semites is well illustrated by the incident of the Arab who threw his son to the ground that the words of his enemy's curse might pass over his head without harming him (cited by H.W.ROBINSON, 'Inspiration and Revelation,' 1946, p.170). The utterance of words, is not the only means of conveying power and influence. But, first spoken, and then written, the word was far greater in its effect than any other. It is not surprising that the Hebrews, with their characteristic realism, expected to hear their Yahweh giving effective utterance to His will.

We are now approaching the subject of the actual Biblical use of the WORD. Before entering the realm of the Old Testament proper, we may make one or two general remarks; though to generalize about the various ancient people of the Near- and Middle-East has its dangers because our evidence is fragmentary and there is no body of religious writings comparable to the Bible.

That intimacy with Yahweh and His ways, which is characteristic of the prophet in Israel, and which assumes

a daring aspect at times, was unknown to the Accadian.

We may conjecture that the ecstatic type was more frequent than the existing cuneiform records indicate - but more than this we cannot presume. There is, moreover, a spontaneity about the Hebrew prophet and his method, which is absent from Accadian prophecy.

Absorbed in the complex social and religious system of his times the Accadian priest had little mind for anything outside his ritual, sacrificial performances, hepatoscopy, liturgical offices, incantations and other operations designed to bestow peace upon the troubled hearts of his congregation. To such there came no 'word of the Lord', no revelation of divine mercy and justice, no gracious declaration of loving purposefulness in the mysterious and inexorable ways of his god. The Hebrew prophet, however, was a man sent from Yahweh, the jealous and righteous God, to lift His people from a depth of sin, lethargy, injustice, perversity and spiritual retrogression, to a new height of righteousness, zeal for Yahweh, justice and spiritual enrichment.

Hebrew religion and revelation were progressive, and were continually seeking to raise and inspire a wayward and easy-going people who dragged heavily along.

"Pessimism and fatalism inevitably followed the belief



"that man was imprisoned in a pre-determined scheme of things which the divining priests could lay bare" (Guillaume, p.59). Furthermore, the gods of the old gentile world were at best creatures of human passions and super-human power. If they spoke by a word, what sort of word would it be in comparison with that of the God Whose first word is a demand for implicit obedience, followed by a protevangelium of hope for a fallen mankind ?

Few texts in the Old Testament illustrate the nature, operation and lofty purpose of the dynamic Word of Yahweh more plainly than Isaiah 55:10, 11, and the sublime context in which it is set. The whole chapter is, as G.A.Smith says, "pure gospel and clear music." Good-news of far-reaching significance, Isaiah 55 comes as near the New Testament in spirit and message as any O.T. passage. The Word of God, a Divine revelation declaring these blessed truths, goes forth through the mouth of a divinely chosen and commissioned servant who recognizes that he is but the humble bearer of something which has entirely a Divine origin. The message conveyed by the prophet and forming the content of the Divine Word is intensely personal, having for its object the hearts of men - in this particular instance (Is.55) the exiles

of the Babylonian captivity. "God had created the heart of this people to hunger for His word, and in His word they could alone find the fatness of their soul" (G.A.SMITH, Isaiah vol.II, p.403).

Prophecy is pre-eminently a Divine revelation, the self-manifestation of God to His people through the medium of DABHAR, declaring things which would not (and could not) otherwise be known. Person to person, it is the voice of a personal Being to the intelligent hearing of persons. Furthermore, it is always purposeful, never capricious, and has for its end the blessing of the people. The D'BHAR YHWH is an expression of HESED, hands stretched out all day long unto a disobedient people. It is associated again and again with the idea of Divine B'RITH, of which God was chiefly the Giver and man chiefly the receiver. The D'BHAR YHWH is in a sense the Divine messenger itself. From that standpoint it is viewed in Isaiah 9:8 (E.V.), and thus the Psalmist speaks of it in 107:20:

"He sendeth his word, and healeth them,  
and delivereth them from their destructions."

Here, again, the thought is of the Divine Word revealed for the purpose of salvation of men.

"So shall my word be that GOETH FORTH out of  
my mouth:" (Is.55:11).

The Hebrew verb is  $\text{לָקַח}$ , not  $\text{לָקַח}$ , "because it is viewed as presently happening in prophetic preaching" (Delitzsch, Isaiah, II, E.T., p.330). The Word is going forth, and is accomplishing the purpose for which it is sent. The D'BHAR YHWH is irresistible, and is accomplishing the Divine will. But not only the Word on this occasion: whenever such a Divine utterance was made it pursued a like course. This will be clearly demonstrated in the fuller consideration of the subject below.

A divinely sent medium of revelation; purposeful unto the blessing of men; ultimately irresistible though men refuse to hear it and acknowledge it; designed to meet the immediate needs of those to whom it was sent; the vehicle of a God of grace manifesting Himself; the instrument of God's GOSPEL in the age of the Old Covenant. The attributes of the DABHAR so closely resemble those of the LOGOS of God in the age of the New Covenant.

I I I . T o r a h , M e m r a a n d W i s d o m .

i. T O R A H .

THE term TORAH has a somewhat obscure etymology. A fresh examination by ÖSTBORN ('Torah in the O.T. - a semantic study') suggests that it denotes the idea of 'showing the way', or perhaps 'indication with the finger.' But he also finds a connection between this word and the Accadian WA'ARU = 'go', 'send', and ARU = 'go', 'lead', ('instruct.'). However, he is inclined to favour the first ('to show the way') as being most characteristic of the usage in the Old Testament, i.e. 'instruction.' Östborn discards the theory which combines the term with the action of drawing lots: as also that of the Torah being a loan-word in Hebrew, the Accadian TERTU.

Torah has some connection with the cultic functions and with the priests as imparters of ritual 'instruction' and of the inculcation of Yahweh's Law. There is evidence of a firm link between law and cult. Other juridical words like MITSWAH - 'command', or MISHPAT - 'judgment', may be understood against a religious background.

Both MISHPAT and TORAH were regarded in old Israel as being the definite Word of God. A cult-official, priest or cult-prophet, would be asked for a ruling on a matter of faith or conduct, and the answer which he gave would therefore become the command of God on that particular point. If the question were new, a problem which had never before been raised officially, then the cult priest would consult the Divine oracle by sacrifice or lot. If the cult-prophet were engaged, then the Word of Yahweh would be disclosed by means of dream, ecstasy or vision. The result in both cases was a definite instruction from God. It was called TORAH. For the future, then, a precedent had been established. MISHPAT and TORAH are synonymous to the extent that they are both declared Words of Yahweh: MISHPAT meant a decision according to precedent, TORAH being the precedent itself - the original pronouncement.

In later times TORAH was used by the Jews as the comprehensive name for the Divine revelation, written and oral, in which they preserved the sole standard and norm of their religion. Some misunderstanding has occurred (not unnaturally) on account of the difficulty of rendering the word TORAH into English. 'Law' is unsatisfactory, yet there seems to be no obvious substitute.

Torah was not the mere legislation, but the whole of revelation, i.e. all that God has made known of His nature and of what He would have men to do and to be. The prophets call their own utterance TORAH; no less are the Psalms worthy of that title. To the unwritten law the religious and moral teachings of the Haggadah belong no less than the juristically formulated rules of the Halakah. Briefly, then, TORAH is the vehicle of revelation; but, from another standpoint, it is the whole content of revelation.

Not least among the various aspects of the Torah, in the larger sense, is that wherein it was at an early stage identified with WISDOM. The Mosaic Law, the distinctive Wisdom of Israel, was revealed by God Himself. Thus, it was God's Wisdom (not man's) concerning which we find a great deal in the proverbs and works of other Jewish H'KHAMIM. In Deut.4:6 it is pressed upon the Israelites as a motive for keeping the statutes and ordinances which Yahweh enjoined upon them, "for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples, which shall hear all these statutes, and say, Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people."

The crucial passage identifying Divine revelation (TORAH) and Divine Wisdom (HOKHMAH) is Proverbs 8:22 ff. In a majestic passage in Eccclus.24:3 ff. Wisdom describes her twin function in the universe and humanity:

I came forth from the mouth of the Most High,  
 And covered the earth as a mist.  
 I dwelt in high places,  
 And my throne is in a pillar of cloud.  
 Alone I compassed the circuit of heaven,  
 And walked in the depth of the abyss.  
 In the waves of the sea, and in all the earth,  
 And in every people and nation I got a possession.

Then her Creator gave her a commandment, "Let thy tabernacle be in Jacob" (v.8). Thus she came to minister in the Tabernacle and was (so to speak) enlettered in the Law - "All these things are the Book of the Covenant of the Most High God" (v.23). It was possibly under the influence of Persia or Greece that the conception of an ideal Torah, pre-existent in the mind of God before the Creation, developed in Israel.

As far back as Sirah, then, this identification of TORAH and HOKHMAH seems to have become a commonplace - at a time when the study of the Law and the

cultivation of wisdom went hand in hand.

No less definite is the place of this doctrine in Rabbinical works, with the added inference that it was universally acknowledged. Apart from Proverbs 8:22 ff., other Scriptures are cited as identifying Wisdom and the Law. Bar-Kappara thus interprets Prov.9:1 - 3 (combined with Prov.2:6; 8:22) and, by reckoning Numbers 10:35 ff. as a book by itself, finds seven books of the Law corresponding to the seven pillars with which Wisdom built her house, Prov.9:1. Once granted this equivalence, the rest is but a logical sequence. All that Scripture says about the nature, fruits and worth of Wisdom are applied to the Law, whether in the broader sense of revelation, or the more particular Law of Moses. Similarly, too, the Law is presented in colourful, poetical personification, such as we find in the graphic delineations of the Sapiential books.

The most important consequence of this application to the Law of the properties of the Divine Wisdom is that the Law is older than the world. "The Lord created me as the beginning of His way, the first of His ways of old. I was installed ages ago, from the



"beginning, before the earth was . . ." (Prov.8:22 ff.), says Wisdom of herself. Thus in Sifre, on Deut.11:10, to prove that, in God's way of doing, what is most highly prized by Him precedes what is less prized: "the Law, because it is more highly prized (lit., 'dearer'), than everything, was created before everything, as it is said, The Lord created me as the beginning of His way." The Law stands first among the seven things which were created before the world, and repentance is next to it. Then there are enumerated - the Garden of Eden, Gehenna, the Throne of Glory, the Sanctuary and the Name of Messiah."

"The Torah was created 974 generations or 2,000 years before the world, (based on Psalm 105:8). God intended to create the world immediately after He had created the Torah and then to give it the Torah after a thousand generations. But, since He knew that it would be too wicked to endure so long without guidance, He gave it at the Exodus to the 26th generation and with this in view post-poned the creation of the world for 974 generations (based on Prov.8:30, and Psalm 90:4)."

"The Torah was written with black fire upon white fire, and it lay on God's knee, while God sat on the throne of His glory."

"The Torah is frequently called by rabbis 'the daughter of God,' in parables especially"

(cf. Strack-Billerbeck: Komm. zum N.T. aus Talmud und Midrash (1924); Zweiter Band, pp. 353-5).

"If therefore ye have respect to the Law, and are intent upon wisdom, a lamp will not be wanting"

- Apoc. Baruch lxxvii.

"At that time the lamp of the eternal Law shone on all those who sat in darkness"

- op. cit. lix. cf. II Esdras, xiv. 20f.

Wisdom was present at the creation of the world as an active partaker in the work (Prov. 8:30 ff.): she was as a skilled craftsman at the side of God. Thus the identification of Wisdom and the Law led to a connection of the Law with creation as well as giving it an ante-mundane existence. Genesis Rabbah (1:1) presents an informative development, "Amon (Prov. 8:30) is equivalent to Pmen ('artificer', 'architect'). The Law says, I was an architect's apparatus for God. As a rule an earthly king who is building a palace does not build it according to his own ideas, but to those of an architect; and the architect does not build out of his head, but has parchments or tablets

to know how he shall make the rooms and openings; so God looked into the Law and created the world." In passing, we are reminded of a passage in Philo's De Opificio Mundi (c.4); when God proposed to create this visible world, He made first the intelligible world (KOSMON NOËTON), the universe of ideas as a model, in order that, employing an immaterial pattern, He might produce the material world, a younger copy of the elder. In the sequel Philo uses an illustration of a king who proposes to found a new city, and uses a plan for its construction.

Elsewhere the perpetuity of the Law is asserted: in Baruch 4:1, "the book of the commandments of God and the Law that exists to eternity." In Eccles.24:9, with verse 23, the Wisdom that says of herself, "before time from the beginning He created me, and unto the end of time I shall not cease," is "the Law that God commanded Moses." In Enoch 99:2, it is the "eternal Law."

The Rabbinical doctrine is adequately illustrated in Matthew 5:18, "Until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter, not the apex of a letter, shall pass away from the Law till it all be done."

A similar idea is found in Luke 16:17, "But it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away, than for one tittle of the law to fall." A parallel occurs in Genesis Rabbah (10:1) on Genesis 2:1, whence, by combination with Psalm 119:96 and Job 11:9, it is concluded that heaven and earth have measure (limit) but the Law has none. That is, heaven and earth will have an end (Isaiah 51:6), but the Law will not.

## ii. M E M R A.

ONE of the initial difficulties which besets the western interpreter of oriental thought, and in particular with reference to the Old Testament, is the natural inability to conceive of the DABHAR as essentially DYNAMIC and EFFECTUAL. God's will is made known in the world not only by personal agents such as angels, or by the Spirit of God or some other theophany, but by His spoken WORD. To the orientals, and especially the Semites, the utterance of a blessing or curse was not simply the expression of a benevolent or malevolent wish, but was itself the blessing or curse. Once framed and exclaimed it could not be revoked, not even by the author. God touched Jeremiah's mouth and bade him, "Lo...plant" (Jer.1:9 f.). The oracles of doom or of restoration which he will pronounce in God's name are real forces operating for destruction or construction. Jacob could on no account escape the fateful blessing, for the word had proceeded from the lips of his father never to be withdrawn - hence Isaac's dismay, hence Esau's passionate wrath.

If such were true of human utterances, how much more true of Divine Words ? But in this conception and in colourful, poetical quasi-personifications, we are not to regard the Divine Word as a personalization. The D'BHAR YHWH is not a personal agent, nor in process of becoming one. If the Jews identified Torah with Wisdom, attributing to it a form of personification, making it something more than a mere name or concept, giving it the full value of the reality which it was to the Israelite - they never ascribe to it personal existence.

The Christian interpretation of the Old Testament was early set upon finding in it some figure corresponding to the Son of God or the Word (LOGOS) in the New Testament. That is to say, some Divine Being who was a unique intermediary between God the Father and the world in respect of creation, revelation and redemption. The assumptions of Christian theology, and in particular that which declared the Father to be a supreme, supra-mundane Being who has revealed Himself visibly and audibly to men, demanded that there be some agent by means of which the transcendent God could intervene in mundane affairs. The early Church Fathers saw in Philo a precursor

to their particular interpretations; and one of the chief ends of their apologetic was to demonstrate to Jews (or against them) that their own Scriptures made the existence of such a Being essential, and also that the Christians' Jesus, incarnate, crucified, risen, glorified and coming again, was none other than the Messiah for whom the Jews waited.

When argument with the Jews was revived in the thirteenth century it was assumed that ancient and unprejudiced Jewish students of the Scriptures must have understood them in the same way. On this assumption the Christian scholars searched the earlier Jewish literature, the Targums, Talmud and Midraah, for Christian doctrine, or at least fore-shadowings of it. Thus in the MEMRA of the Targums they discerned the WORD: the Shekinah was sometimes taken for the second person of the Trinity - sometimes for the third; and after the renewed interest in the cabalistic literature, the mysterious Metatron was ranked among the intermediaries.

Jewish discussion of the subject of intermediaries has normally been pursued in relation to the general problem of anthropomorphism in Scripture. Maimonides'

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Arab-Aristotelian metaphysic gave him so thoroughgoing an idea of God as a simple unity, as to exclude all likeness to man and all attributes which, to him, were a subtle way of introducing anthropomorphism. Onkelos shares this conception, for, e.g., he regularly paraphrases passages in which God is said to go or come, sometimes by the introduction of Memra, or Yekara, or most frequently Shekinta. The Glory, or Presence, of God was not a circumlocution for God, but a created light by which God's invisible presence was manifested to men. Similarly, the Voice, or Word, of God was a created sound. Nevertheless it must be said that Onkelos and others do not systematically eliminate or neutralize the anthropomorphism of the original. Glaring inconsistencies may occur, such as in the Targums on Genesis 2-3, or 18; while paraphrases are applied with consistency in places which seem quite insignificant. This is particularly true of the uses of MEMRA, generally rendered 'word', and frequently printed with the question-begging capital 'the Word'.

MEMAR (definite, MEMRA) is the Aramaic counterpart of the late Hebrew MA'AMAR, from AMAR - 'to say.' The nouns signify something that is said: dictum in



the widest sense. But in order to convey the clearest idea of its meaning we might first eliminate the contexts in which it is NOT found.

First, "the MEMRA of the Lord" is never used to render D'BHAR YHWH. The Aramaic equivalent of the Hebrew DABHAR, in all its senses and usages, is most usually rendered in the Targums by PITGAMA, ("the Word of the Lord" = PITGAMA DE-YHWH). The Word of the Lord to the prophet is PITGAMA NEBU'A, 'a word of prophecy' (cf. Hosea 1:2). Only rarely is the common MILLA used. Further, MEMRA is not employed as a standing circumlocution for "God said"-the Targums have no scruples about translating these terms literally. Thus, wherever 'the Word of the Lord' is the instrument or medium of revelation, or of a communication to men (in Greek, LOGOS or RHEMA) the term in the Targums is not MEMRA, but PITGAMA or MILLA. G.F. MOORE (Judaism, vol. i, p. 418) writes, "This is really the most important thing to be said about MEMRA in the Targums - it is NOT the equivalent of the 'word of God' in the O.T., corresponding to *λόγος* or *ῥῆμα* in the Greek versions; and in so far as Philo's Logos is an intermediary in creation and revelation, it is in contrast instead of correspondence

with the MEMRA of the Targums." Again, where the creative activity of God is referred to in the Scriptures, the Targums do not represent this activity as mediated by the Memra: Isaiah 45:12 is the exception.

Now by way of positive consideration of MEMRA, we note that it is frequently used in contexts of command, where the term is an AUTHORITY EDICT OF GOD, for example the Ten Words of Exodus 32:28; or in SECULAR COMMANDS, Genesis 45:21, where "according to the command of Pharaoh" = (Targum) AL MEMRA DE-PAR'OH. When men disobey the command of God, the Targum renders it MEMRA, e.g., Deut. 1:26. Further, it is used in certain cases where the best English translation is 'oracle' - though not in the sense of the prophetic oracle. In the Balaam story, Numbers 23:3, 4, Onkelos gives, "Perhaps an oracle from before Yahweh (MEMAR MIN QADAM YHWH) will come to meet me."

In many instances Memra is introduced as a VERBAL-BUFFER, typical of the Targums, to keep God from approaching too close to the world. But it is "always a buffer-word, not a buffer-idea; still less a buffer-person" (MOORE).

Nowhere is Memra a being of any kind, conceived personally, or as a heavenly creature, or even as a philosophically created, impersonal potency as in Maimonides' theory; nor is it God Himself in a certain mode of self-revelation.

The appearance of personality adhering to the Memra is due to the fact that it is used in just those places where God is active in the affairs of men in a personal way, and this personal aspect is reflected in the reverent application of the characteristic paraphrase, MEMRA, which is only to be found in the Targums: not even in such Aramaic texts as are found in the Midrashim, nor even the voluminous Aramaic parts of the Talmud. "It is a phenomenon of translation, not a creature of speculation" (MOORE).

"The error is magnified to immensity when Memra is connected with the Logos of Philo, whether it be supposed, as by Gfroerer, that the Palestinian mystical theology represented in the Targums borrowed its intermediary being, Memra, from the Logos of Alexandrian 'theosophy', or, contrariwise, that the Logos was derived from the Palestinian Memra, and developed by the Alexandrians. The former theory involves a complete misunderstanding of the Targums as well as a misrepresentation of the Memra in them; the latter involves a fundamental misunderstanding of what the Logos is in Philo, and what it is for.

"... It is an error of equal dimensions, when, by association with the Christian doctrine of the Logos and by abuse of a technical term of Christian theology, the Memra is described as an 'hypostasis'."

- G.F.MOORE, Intermediaries in Jewish Theology,  
Harvard Theological Review, 1922, pp.54-55.

Passing reference may be made to SHEKINAH, properly a Hebrew term, but used in the Aramaic of the Targums as a borrowed word with Aramaic endings - from SHAKAN, 'to dwell.' Thus in Exodus 25:8, the Targum has, "I will cause my presence (SHEKENTI) to abide among them." MEMRA is only found in the Targums, but SHEKINAH is common in the Talmuds and Midrash also. It is not something that takes the place of God, but simply another and more reverent way of saying God. Like Memra, too, Shekinah acquires what semblance of personality it has solely by being a circumlocution for Yahweh where personal states or attributes or actions are described.

## i i i. W I S D O M.

THE introduction of MEMRA into religious thought and expression was a Jewish off-shoot of a desire to explain the active operation of God in the ordering of the world, and in the affairs of men, without involving Him in too direct a contact with the mundane sphere. Another branch from the same stem led to the introduction of another figure with a mediatory function, namely WISDOM.

In the books of Proverbs, Job and Ecclesiasticus, as also in the 'Wisdom of Solomon', there is to be found a personified Wisdom (Hebrew. חֵכֶם : Gk. σοφία ) which approaches an hypostatization. In Job, Wisdom is the possession of God and becomes the moral constitution of the world, comprising both physical phenomena and the life and destinies of men. In Proverbs, there is a personification of certain Divine principles, manifesting themselves in the world, the expression of the mind of God, of independent existence, with a consciousness whose function is mainly humanitarian. Here Wisdom is the organizing energy of the universe, the intellectual principle of the visible world. She is that unseen

adhesive of the entire social order and the indwelling faculty by means of which kings reign and princes decree justice. She is portrayed rather as the impersonation of the Divine Purpose. She stands at the entrance of the city and pleads with those who pass by to let her become their very own. She has built her seven-pillared house and sends out her maidens to invite way-farers into the sumptuous banquet which is prepared, cf. Prov. 8, 9:1-12. How she contrasts with the spare figure of her counterpart, Folly ! (cf. 9:13-18).

As the Wisdom literature became more extensive the personification becomes more elaborate. In Ecclesiastical, the figure of Wisdom is very similar to that in Proverbs, being a personification but not a person. The most complete development of this doctrine is to be seen in the 'Wisdom of Solomon.'

This notable, pseudonymous product of the post-O.T. period was regarded in the early Christian Church as one of the most important - if not THE most important - of all the books comprising the medley known as the Apocrypha. The date of 'Wisdom' is the centre of controversy, with contestants ranging from the early

commentators who judged its origin to be prior to the first century B.C., to modern scholars who place it in the first century A.D. (Wicks). Gregg suggests that the author lived about the beginning of the first century B.C., while Oesterley holds that the book was written about 40 A.D. Be this as it may, there is no reasonable doubt that it was the product of the same atmosphere as that which received the greater, though in some ways similar, writings of Philo Judaeus.

The literary device whereby an anonymous author wrote under the pseudonym of some great figure of the past was a feature of that period, and this book purports to have been written by Solomon the wise man of Hebrew history. The most superficial study will show the real author to have been one of an entirely different age and outlook. Very likely 'Wisdom' was a product of Hellenistic Judaism in Egypt, probably Alexandria. The author appears to have been an ardent Jew, but with a strong sympathy for Hellenistic thought and an acquaintance with Greek poetry and philosophy.

His doctrine of God is that of one who is essentially transcendent. He is supreme, distant from the world, yet not detached from it. He appears to be more an

organizer than a Creator, with His creative action mediated through Wisdom. He is omnipotent but not capricious: He is good, having created the world out of a motive of love, and showing continual patience towards sinners. God is moral, a Father of the Jewish people, and is revealed to the soul that waits for Him. There is the oscillation between the two lines of thought - Alexandrian transcendence and the Divine omnipresence and relationship with the world.

There is a deal of vague and indeterminate exposition, with an imperfect harmonization of Greek and Hebrew conceptions. The numerous synonyms for Wisdom help to elucidate the author's ideas. It is identified with the Spirit of the Lord, filling all things in the world: "For Wisdom is more mobile than any motion. Yea, she pervadeth and penetrateth all things by reason of her pureness. For she is a breath of the power of God, and a clear effluence of the glory of the Almighty. Therefore can nothing defiled find entrance in her. For she is an effulgence from everlasting light" (7:24 -26). In chapters 7 - 9, Wisdom seems to share the same functions as the Spirit. Wisdom is Logos in the Old Testament sense. What the Word of the Lord does, Wisdom does. As the instrument in creation, by Wisdom



God formed man (9:1, 2); the remedy against evil (16:12); and the all-powerful-one who sits on God's throne (18:15). Wisdom is Power of God: "And the supreme Power, when it is brought to the proof, putteth to confusion the foolish: Because Wisdom will not enter the soul that deviseth evil" (1:3 - 4). There is Providence in Wisdom: "For that vessel....even Wisdom built it, and thy providence, O Father, guideth it along" (14:2 - 3); the Hand of God (14:6), and Justice (1:8). In 10:17 Wisdom controls the pillar of cloud, being thus identified with the 'angel of God' in Exodus 14:19: "Wisdom delivered a holy people....from a nation of oppressors... She guided them along a marvellous way, and became unto them a covering in the day-time, and a flame of stars through the night." Thus Wisdom unites herself with a number of floating conceptions. Chapter 7, especially verses 22-24, is rich in its description of the attributes of Wisdom. Intelligence, beneficence, holiness, omnipotence, infinite mobility, beauty and indefeasible security belong to her nature:

"Alone in kind, manifold,  
 Subtle, freely moving,  
 Clear in utterance, unpolluted,  
 Distinct, unharmed,  
 Loving what is good, keen, unhindered,  
 Beneficent, loving toward man,  
 Steadfast, sure, free from care,  
 All-powerful, all-surveying,  
 And penetrating through all spirits  
 That are quick of understanding, pure, most subtle:  
 For Wisdom is more mobile than any motion...." 7:22 ff.

Being a cosmic figure, Wisdom is particularly related to two great departments of creation, nature and man: but, as in Proverbs, her primary concern is man. In respect of nature, she fills the world and binds all things together, and "she, being one, hath power to do all things; and remaining in herself, reneweth all things" (7:27). Wisdom "ordereth all things graciously", and (in addressing the God of the Fathers) the author affirms, "by Thy Wisdom thou formedst man...wisdom...was present with Thee when Thou wast making the world" (9:2, 9).

Wisdom's various and extensive ministry among men is given due consideration in the book. She convicts of unrighteous words (1:8); and "she forestalleth them that desire to know her, making herself first known" (6:13). She promotes to a kingdom (6:20), is the mother of all good things (7:11, 12). Of special interest to our study (in which we note the profound connection of the prophets with the Word of God) is the doctrine that "she maketh men friends of God and prophets" (7:27). Wisdom, further, teaches the sciences (7:16-22), virtues (8:7), and gives man counsel and encouragement (8:9), glory and honours (8:10), immortality (8:13), knowledge of divine counsel (9:17),

and through Wisdom men are saved (9:18).

The author emphasizes clearly that Wisdom is essentially one with God. She sits by God on His throne (9:4), is initiated into the knowledge of God (8:3,4). She is with God, and was present with Him when making the world (9:9), and yet she is wholly His servant as He guides her and sends her from on high (7:15; 9:4; 9:17). Withal, Wisdom is not hypostatized. Drummond (Philo Judaeus, I, p.226) says that she is personal but not a person; which serves to express the nature of a being who possesses all the moral qualities of God without His self-determination. She is more than a literary personification, for she is introduced as an element in the solution of the old problem - how to bring a transcendent God into relation with a phenomenal world. Wisdom is not the sum of the attributes of God, but a conscious, holy, intelligent emanation. She is other than God in self-revelation, yet not a Being personal and distinct from God. "Wisdom is a self-adaptation of the inviolable spirituality of God to material conditions, an assumption of the necessary community of nature, in order to bring the infinite and eternal into those relations of space and time which are implied in the

"creation and government of the world of sense"

- DRUMMOND, op.cit., p.225.

To what extent did this later Jewish figure, which developed from a mere poetical personification to "a conscious, holy, intelligent emanation," influence the author of the Johannine Prologue ? There have been scholars who have put forward theories which seek in Wisdom an answer to the question, "What was the source of the Johannine Logos ?" Some account of the most notable attempt to prove that "the way to Logos is through Sophia and that the latter is the ancestress of the former" (RENDEL HARRIS), has already been given in a previous section. If it has not found general acceptance among scholars, it has this value, that it reminds us of the fact that the Hellenistic-Logos theory of the origin of the 'Word' in the Johannine Prologue is not the last word on the matter.

The view that the source of the Johannine Logos - doctrine is to be found in the Hellenistic Logos conception, most probably of Alexandrian blend, of which "the most noticeable channel for this Alexandrian influence on the Fourth Gospel, however, is

"Philonism", captured the imagination of very many scholars in the earlier part of this century. Two of the most influential protagonists of this theory were E.F.Scott and J.Moffatt (from whose Introduction to the Literature of the N.T. the above quotation is extracted). It became the interpretation of the Johannine Logos, so that "the differences between Philo and John only bring out the latter's familiarity with the Philonic methods and materials which he uses for higher ends" (Moffatt, op.cit.,p.523). Not only does the assertion that John drew his ideas from the Logos of Philo introduce a proposition which turns out to be ambiguous and leads rather to confusion than real illumination of the significance of the Prologue, but its acceptance reduces (as we see it) the importance of O.T. evidence. A Jewish author of the study of the life of One who was regarded as the culmination of the many lines of Old Testament anticipation and preparation would most naturally turn to the Old Testament in considering terms and categories of interpretation. If the Prologue were without any strong associations with the Old Testament, we might then turn elsewhere for the ultimate source of the terms and ideas in the Prologue of the Fourth Gospel. But we think the O.T. furnishes ample evidence, though we do not confine ourselves to Wisdom.

## c h a p t e r e i g h t

D ' B H A R Y A H W E H A N D T H E  
O L D T E S T A M E N T P R O P H E T S .

ATTENTION has already been called to the conception of the DYNAMIC WORD prevalent in the ancient East. Certain Sumerian and Babylonian hymns are addressed to 'word' of God. Ellil, a god of Nippur, is entitled 'the Lord of the true word.' We meet the 'word of god' as a creative force in Egypt, where Ptah creates the world through his word. In Akkadian hymns the divine utterance produces and sustains life: hence the prayer, 'Let life go forth from thy mouth.' In the Babylonian Creation Epic, Marduk shows himself to possess full divine power by speaking and a cloak is rent; he speaks again and it is restored whole (cf. DÜRR, Die Wertung des Gott. Wortes in A.T., 1938, pp.6-36). We have now come to the point where examination is required of the particular relation of the D'BHAR YHWH to the Old Testament prophets, all the time bearing in mind that this idea of the dynamism of the Divine Word is the natural religious background of a Jew in the first century A.D. As an

oriental he would think according to the mode of the ancient near-East: as an Israelite, the Old Testament, in which the D'BHAR YHWH features so considerably, would have been his spiritual meat since childhood.

"The central place in the field of Old Testament religion is undoubtedly occupied by the prophets" (HERTZBERG, in a paper read to the Oxford Society of Historical Theology, Jan. 1943). Even a cursory survey of the recorded utterances of the prophets will reveal the vitally important place occupied by the D'BHAR YHWH. The statistical lists also show that a great majority of the total number of usages of this peculiar expression lie either in the prophetic books themselves or in prophetic contexts in the historical books.

The prophets themselves did not in any sense originate this particular formula: but, appearing on the scene of Israel's history, they found ready to hand a term in the tradition of their own people which conveyed directly a communication of the will of God. For the understanding of the prophets' inspiration and ministry DABHAR is the key term. They are commonly thought of as men of RUAH (spirit),

no doubt because of the popular inclination to regard the great period of the canonical prophets as a kind of Old Testament 'Pentecost.' The prophets were pre-eminently men of the D'BHAR YHWH, and reference to the relative paucity of allusions to the RUAH of God will be made below. The prophet was not a founder of a new religion, and it is presumed that the audiences of the divinely authorized messengers were acquainted with certain principles to which they appeal in the course of their ministry. Part of their task lay in re-affirming the revealed will of the Lord, and re-interpreting what had already been declared to a people once nomadic, but now partly agricultural and partly commercial and urban.

#### I. NEBHI'IM AND THE REFORMING PROPHETS.

Both Abraham and Moses are regarded as prophets in Scripture; but it is in connection with the NEBHI'IM that we first observe the peculiar and consistent employment of this term - D'BHAR YHWH. These ecstatic patriots, who appear on the scene of Israel's history just prior to the monarchy (c. mid-11th cent. B.C.),



and are a conspicuous feature right through to the period of the canonical prophets, present numerous problems for the student of Old Testament prophecy, and in the treatment of our study of the Word of God in the O.T. we shall be bound to touch upon some aspects of the difficulties.

H.H. ROWLEY (in the Harvard Theological Review, Jan. 1945) suggests that the original root from which NABHI is derived does not occur in the Old Testament: NIBBA and HITHNABBE commonly meaning 'to behave in an uncontrolled manner.' Thus, these Niph'al and Hithpa'el forms may have indicated simply 'to play the nabhi.' NABHI, as against other current terms denoting seer and diviner (ROEH, HOZEH and KOSEM), was the word that became accepted as the official designation of the recognized prophet. However, the 'ecstatic' connotation of the verb may well be quite secondary, writes Dr. Rowley, and due to the fact that the early prophets were of the frenzied type. Moreover, it cannot be proved from historical usage that a NABHI belonged to one class or other of the seers or diviners, nor does such usage indicate whether he was ecstatic or non-ecstatic. In the classic instance of I Samuel 9:9, 'prophet'=NABHI,

and 'seer'=ROEH. In II Kings 17:13, HOZEH and not ROEH is used for 'seer.' It is improbable that any distinction can be drawn between HOZEH and ROEH. Further, there are cases where the same person is called NABHI and HOZEH, e.g. Gad, I Samuel 22:5, and II Samuel 24:11. Still less does it seem possible to assert that the various terms reflect various modes in which God revealed Himself. In fact, a survey of the wholly diverse situations of the prophets will indicate their variety, and that it is not possible to be content with just two groups, 'seer' and 'nabhi.'

W.F.ALBRIGHT submits that the current explanation of NABHI as 'speaker', 'announcer', is almost certainly false. The root of the Niph'al and Hithpa'el forms signifies a man who felt himself to be called by God for a special mission in which his will was subordinated to the will of God, which was communicated to him by direct inspiration. The verb NABŪ ('to call') had this sense in Akkadian. The king is 'one whom the great gods have called.' The verbal adjective NABHI means 'called' in the code of Hammurabi, (cf. From Stone Age to Christianity, 1946, pp.231-2).

We observe the seer attached to a shrine where he

may be consulted, for a fee, about private problems: e.g. Samuel at Ramah (I Sam.9:6 ff.), or Ahijah at Shiloh (I Kings 14:1 ff.). Gad is David's seer at court (II Sam.24:11). Elisha is consulted at his own home on private matters (II Kings 5:9). An unknown BEN-NEBHI'IM waylays Ahab (I Kings 20:38), and Elijah encounters the same monarch with the Word of the Lord (I Kings 21:17 ff.). A band of prophets meets Saul near Gibeah (I Sam.10:5, 10), and a similar corps is found with Samuel at Ramah (I Sam.19:18 ff.); similarly at Beth-el, Jericho and Gilgal (II Kings 2:3, 5; and 4:38). NEBHI'IM of Baal are maintained at the court of Ahab, at Jezebel's expense (I Kings 18:19). There are the four hundred who urge Ahab to go up to Ramoth - Gilead (I Kings 22:6). Also, in quite another setting, a company is attached to the Temple (Jeremiah 23:11). At one time the oracles are provided by order; at another, the initiative lies with the prophet. The Word may rest on a dream (Numbers 12:6; Jeremiah 23:28), or be induced by music (II Kings 3:15) and wine (Isa.28:7).

## E C S T A S Y.

Ecstasy is plainly a characteristic of a large number of Old Testament prophets, who, both individually and corporately, are subject to psychopathic and cataleptic states. This is particularly evident in the early monarchy of Israel. Attention was drawn more especially to this feature by HÖLSCHER (Die Profeten, 1914) who, analyzing abnormal factors in the prophetic consciousness, found ecstasy to be characteristic from first to last. He maintains that ecstatic prophecy was not a native product of the religion of Israel, but that it was an element of that Canaanite culture that profoundly modified Israel's outlook (op.cit.p.140)\*. From the Biblical accounts of Israel's history it appears that only from the days of the early monarchy is the phenomenon of the corybantic demonstration of the NEBHI'IM in evidence. These NEBHI'IM assume a place of considerable authority in the sociological structure of Israel, conscious of their power, and exercising it in anointing and deposing kings (cf. Samuel and Saul, I Sam. chs. 8-10, 13 and 15; Elisha and Jehu, II Kings 9), rebuking those in high offices and swaying national policy. This authority invested in the prophets was based on the fact that they

\* see also note at end of this section.

claimed to be the mouthpieces of Yahweh, for "the essence of prophecy lay in the inspired communication of the will of the gods concerning some concrete situation in human life" (H.KNIGHT, The Hebrew Prophetic Consciousness, 1947, p.24). Whatever may be the etymology of NABHI, in actual fact and practice the ecstasy was no mere end in itself, but was a condition in which a divine message was given to the frenzied prophet for further communication to the people. There was keen expectation on the part of the supporters of the Baal prophets on Mount Carmel as they looked for a divine response to the blood-letting ecstasy (I Kings 18).

In his pregnant thesis, H.KNIGHT begins by asking, "Was this ecstasy an exotic phenomenon in Israel, and is it the sole root from which the prophetic consciousness springs?" (p.25). He accepts Hölscher's view (cf. Die Profeten, p.140) that ecstatic prophecy was not a native product of the religion of Israel, that it was an element of Canaanite culture which radically modified Israel's religious outlook. Then he draws out the deeper characteristics and presuppositions of this type of religious experience in order to demonstrate that the ecstatic phenomena are foreign to the true religion of Israel:

"The psychological factors that determine ecstasy are clear. It is a type of religion that arises out of the soul's need to overcome the limitations involved in its separate existence, to escape from the insipidity of the everyday world and to merge itself for a brief space in the all-embracing One whose divine life, imparted to each individual soul, is obscured and cramped by the fetters of the flesh"

(Knight, op.cit.,p.27).

In attempting to understand the Hebrew conception of revelation we need to bear in mind the Hebrew conception of God, as opposed to the contemporary gentile ideas. "In Hebrew religion, it is the fear of the numinous which is the predominant factor" (loc.cit.). The daring soul of the ecstatic non-Israelite soars upwards to apprehend the Divine. The goal of human yearnings is reached - if only for a fleeting hour - in this liberation of the spirit from the flesh, and a revelation is granted. He then experiences an absorption of spirit and a kind of dissolution of personality in the great Divine. But fundamentally the Hebrew prophetic experience and ministry are directly opposed to pagan ecstasy and the purpose it serves. One fact stands out boldly in the Old Testament, namely, that in all revelation Yahweh is the Initiator. No man has the spiritual capacity to know God entirely of himself. It is God's

self-revelation which is paramount throughout, and is achieved through the media of concrete events and circumstances. The religion of those men-of-the-word was not that of mystical aspiration and communion or introspective rumination yielding an inner enlightenment. Rather was it conscious, volitional submission to the Divine Word which came to them from without, bearing the self-evident weight of authority of the Divine command. Thus the D'BHAR YHWH is not a secret, mystical oracle, the result of subjective and rapturous experience. Whether it comes to NABHI, ROEH or HOZEH, - the attempts to differentiate which may only serve to confuse the real issue - if it IS the Word of the Lord, it will be rational, intelligible, compelling, and essentially communicable Divine Word, appointed for certain particular circumstances of the national or individual life.

"The primary factor in the religious consciousness of the great prophets, however, from Moses to Deutero-Isaiah, is their experience of the Word, the call to the fulfilment of a momentous mission, and the initiation into a deeper and closer fellowship with God than was common among their fellows"

(Knight, op.cit., pp.32-33).

There is a distinction drawn by the editors of the Book of Numbers in the case of Moses' historic intercourse with God and the privileged experience of the seventy elders on whom the Spirit descended. The result of this anointing by the Spirit was prophesying (WAY-YITHNABBU) at one explosive, transient, and, we presume, isolated occasion. But "the Lord spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend" (Numbers 11:23ff; cf. Exodus 33:11). There is no indication in the account of any mantic form, no dream or vision, through which the revelation was made. God took the initiative and communed with the spirit of Moses directly. If ever a man possessed the Word of the Lord, certainly it was Moses. It does not appear, then, that ecstatic manifestations, which are so marked a feature of Israelite prophecy after the settlement in Canaan, were the natural concomitant of prophetic experience beforehand. We have good reason to think that the external displays which did so much to impress the audiences of the prophets were part of an element in the religious element which the Israelites met in the Promised Land and absorbed into their own religious experience.

Developing his thesis, H. Knight traces the complex



Hebrew consciousness to two types of prophecy recognized in the ancient world - divinatory and and ecstatic prophecy. He claims that the former was native to the Israelites as being essentially part of the traditional Semite magical or quasi-magical and divinatory practice (p.35 ff.). Samuel is like the heathen sooth-sayer, Balaam, who was a SEER and whose characteristic method was not ecstasy but night vision. In Elijah, the rain-maker who strikes a glaring contrast to the contemporary Baal-ecstatics, is to be seen the primitive tradition of magic and divination becoming associated with ecstatic prophecy, and preparing us for the complex structure of the Hebrew prophetic consciousness.

" As regards the writing prophets themselves, it is their understanding of the word, and the symbolic action, which proves that their consciousness can be traced back to its primitive roots in Semitic divination and magic. Nevertheless, an impassable gulf separates the Hebrew prophet from the Semitic diviner. The diviner acts on his own personal initiative; the prophet, in response to the initiative of God. The prophets' religious transformation of divination is reached, historically, through vitalizing contact with Canaanite ecstasy."

(Knight, op.cit., p.13.)

## II. THE PROPHET - THE MAN OF THE WORD.

The prophet is primarily the man of the Word.

"Torah will not perish from the priest, nor counsel from the wise, nor the word from the prophet

(DABHAR MINNABHI)" - Jeremiah 18:18. That signifies,

we must remember, the Word of the Lord in all its ancient HEBREW fulness. Behind that Word - whether

or not its enunciation indicates the nature of that experience through which the prophet has passed in

order to receive it - lies a Divine operation within the mind and spirit of the recipient. From the

point of view of the people, what mattered more

was the Word itself that Yahweh had revealed to

the prophet for them, not the subjective motions

which gave birth to the utterance. Isaiah said

that among the pillars sustaining the kingdom were

NABHI (the prophet) and the KOSEM (soothsayer),

as well as the LAHASH (exorcist) - Isa.3:2 f.

It is likely that there was little difference

between the Nabhi and the Kosem, for KESEM indic-

ated a strong word (cf. Prov. 16:10, "A KESEM is on

the lips of the king"); and a typical man of God

like Balaam is called a KOSEM (Joshua 13:22). The

term is used several times in connection with HOZER (seer).

KESEM is occasionally regarded as an abominable practice and put on a level with magic (Deut. 18:10).

In the early days of the monarchy the 'sons of the prophets', prophetic guilds or 'schools', were a feature in numerous places throughout the land. Of their organization we have little information. They seem to have lived together in a kind of seminary, with an outstanding member of their calling as head (cf. II Kings 6:1 ff.). Or, perhaps they lived privately, in some instances in their own homes (II Kings 5:9; cf. 4:1-7). PEDERSEN (Israel, vol. III-IV, 1947, E.T.) claims that the whole institution belonged to Canaan and was closely connected with Canaanite culture. The peculiarly Israelitish type of prophecy was the result of the friction between the two cultures (p. 111). It is scarcely within the scope of this section to analyze the elements in detail - those diverse elements which blended or articulated, providing Israel with that older type of BeNE-NAN-NeBHI'IM. One fact is evident, that in the time of Ahab (if not before) a positive effort was made to force the greatest possible measure of the essentially Canaanite element

into Hebrew prophecy. This provoked a reaction, represented by Elijah and a line of faithful prophets, who fought against this anti-Israelitish movement, and in doing so they upheld the Word of Yahweh.

" It is clear that this must bring about a considerable change in the nature of prophetism. The ecstatic state with its holy power, its experiences and visions, no longer became the only or the essential thing. The background acquires much more importance. It must be purely Israelite in the sense of the prophets of the reaction. To maintain it must come before anything else, for a word which does not accord with Israelite mishpat cannot be a word from Yahweh. . . The rise of this transformed type does not mean a complete rupture with the character of traditional prophetism. We know traits of the life of Elijah which tell us that he knew the ecstatic state like other prophets. . . "

- PEDERSEN, op.cit.,p.132.

The reactionary type of prophet, which first appears on the scene during the reign of Ahab, continues through the succeeding centuries. It is, indeed, the type with which we are most familiar, for most of the prophets whose utterances have been preserved belong to it. The most considerable body of prophetic teaching is thus to be found in the recorded words of the great reforming prophets. Beginning with Amos, in the middle of the eighth century B.C., these exceptional men manifested a

strong desire - implied, if not expressed in so many words - to be dissociated from the popular NEBHI'IM. Amos, apparently, goes so far as to repudiate the idea that he is a NABHI, as though it were almost a derogatory title: "I was no prophet, neither was I a prophet's son; but I was an herdman, and a gatherer of sycamore fruit" (7:14). If he is here emphasizing an economic independence, too, it might be concluded that the NEBHI'IM had to live on the scanty remuneration for their prophetic counsel. Hosea's unmitigated polemic against the ritual system involves both priest and prophet (4:4 ff.). Jeremiah is unsparing in his denunciation. The Word is not in the popular prophets: they deal corruptly: their activity is a grief to the sensitive Jeremiah: the people are not to give ear to their lying oracles (2:30; 5:13; 6:13; 14:18; 18:18; 23:9; 27:9). Micah is quite as bitter in his castigation of the NEBHI'IM (2:11; 3:5 ff.). Isaiah also has criticisms to make concerning them (3:2; 28:7-10). Zechariah, scorning the senseless self-torture to which the NABHI subjects himself, declares that the spirit of prophecy is as execrable as the RUAH HATTUMAH (spirit of uncleanness).

Notwithstanding, there is a curious paradox in that

the reforming prophets, whilst inveighing against their professional confrères, are bound to describe their own inspired activity as "prophesying". Amos, for example, immediately he has repudiated the notion that he is a BEN-NABHI, goes on to affirm that the Lord has called him to prophesy (HINNABE), 7:15.

As clear as the earnest protestations against the "false" prophets are the expressions of burning conviction in respect of their own call and message.

Few declarations surpass Jeremiah's powerful metaphor in 20:9, which serves to exemplify the characteristic attitude of the reforming prophets in this matter of their certainty and unshakable confidence in the absolute superiority of their word as the Divine Word:

"But his word was in mine heart, as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay." There is an illuminating reference

in Amos 3:7, 8, which implies an order of prophets - standing in contrast to the regular NEBHI'IM - to whom the true Word of Yahweh is secretly disclosed.

It appears that the very raison d'être of the prophesying of Amos is that he considers himself a member of this exclusive order, and that he is constrained (much in the same way as Jeremiah) to utter what has been made known to him: it is enough that Yahweh has spoken.

Furthermore, in certain places, Yahweh expostulates with His people because they have rejected the succession of (faithful) prophets whom He has sent to them as divinely commissioned messengers (cf. Jer. 29:19; Amos 2:11).

The question that naturally arises at this juncture is, 'Why do the canonical prophets consistently repudiate the official representatives of prophecy?' Jepsen has proposed that the writing prophets repudiate the spirit possession of the NEBHI'IM (their distinctive feature), and thus he denies the likelihood of any connection between the two types. But the problem may not be so readily solved. Ezekiel, at least, seems to be an exception to so exclusive a judgment. However, the whole situation is more subtle than Jepsen indicates, and we can find no better summary of the most reasonable answer to the question than that of H. KNIGHT:

" The distinction between the writing prophets and their predecessors is that between higher and lower levels of spiritual consciousness. In the case of the charismatic NABI, attention is focussed on the unusual psychological form which his experience takes; but, with the writing prophet, the psychological accompaniments are incidental rather than essential. The writing prophet is the fine flower of the NABI movement. The conflict between the canonical prophets and the official NEBIIM of their day can only be understood on the

"hypothesis that in Judah the NEBIIM evince a gradual approximation to the priest-prophets of the Canaanite sanctuaries. As Jeremiah came gradually to realize, the ultimate test of the genuineness of the inspiration is to be sought, not in the technical forms which mediate it, but in the reality of the religious communion which underlies it and the spiritual fruit it produces."

- KNIGHT, op.cit., pp.14-15.

There is one aspect that can scarcely be over-emphasized, namely, that the prophetic word is inseparable from the prophet. The speaker of the D'BHAR YHWH is no mere vehicle, for his whole person belongs to his speech: his whole human body is his mouth. In the Timaeus (72 B) Plato distinguishes between the MANTEIS - raving, MANENTES, receiving from the deities in mysterious sounds that which they divine; and the PROPHETAI - who interpret mystery and translate it into human speech. Thus in the Greek sphere there are two separate orders: the mantis - simply a possessed being pronouncing nothing of his own person; and the prophet - the interpreter of a word with which he has nothing to do. The Greek prophet takes the unfinished speech and comprehends it, and then forms it into logos.



If the two functions should be united in one person, he acts first as mantis and then as prophet. The nature of the Hebrew NABHISM is well illustrated in Exodus 7:1, "See, I give you to pharaoh for an elohim, and Aaron your brother shall be your nabhi."

"The simile here lets both of them, elohim, the inspiring power, and nabhi, the expressing being, appear unmistakably in their mutual relationship....To be the nabhi of an elohim means then to be his 'mouth.' His mouth, not his megaphone. The nabhi does not convey a finished speech, which has already been made articulate, he shapes to sound a hidden, soundless speech, the speech which in the human sense is pre-verbal, and in the divine sense primarily verbal, as a mouth of a person shapes to sound the secret, soundless speech of his innermost being."

- M.BUBER, Hasidism, 1948, p.120.

We should like to emphasize this idea that the Hebrew prophet was the MOUTH of Yahweh and not His megaphone. Thus the Delphic oracle and the Biblical DABHAR are fundamentally different. Both the Greek word of the oracle and the word of the Hebrew NABHI are bound to the particular situation in which they arise. Apart from the notable fact that the Biblical DABHAR is never used in a purely secular sense, the oracle gives the answers to situations which are brought before it (rather in the manner of the pre-

Deuteronomic Torah), whereas the Nabhi, commissioned directly by God, and uninvited, proclaims a word related to the historical situation.

### III. THE AUTHENTICITY OF THE D'BHAR YHWH IN THE REFORMING PROPHETS.

The pertinent question is now raised, 'How did the reforming prophets know that what came to them was the Word of Yahweh?' The experience of the reforming prophets does not admit of a simple explanation; and we may not pursue the problem of ecstasy in greater detail, save to suggest that the attitude of these prophets may find explanation partly in the associations of the extreme ecstatic manifestations and also in that the great prophets themselves possessed a much modified ecstatic element.

MOWINCKEL makes a fair suggestion:

"In them the ecstatic substratum, i.e. the mental concentration upon a single idea, a single passion, has assumed more tranquil forms. On the whole little remains of the ecstatic element, apart from that which is the sound psychological substratum and core of religious ecstasy; the all-predominating, all-exclusive consciousness of having been called by Yahweh to deliver a religious and moral message"

(J.B.L., vol. 53, p. 207).

They have rejected external stimuli; clear, logical argument plays a considerable part in their 'word', which is characterized by spiritual clarity.

"Altogether, it is chiefly in the visions of the prophets that the ecstatic element makes its appearance as an outward phenomenon" (MOWINCKEL, op.cit., p.209).

Not a little significant is the form in which the various canonical prophets declare the revealed Word as it has been made known to them. Whereas the ecstatic NABHI would have said, "The Spirit of Yahweh came upon me," the former say, "Thus the Lord God showed me" (Amos 7:1); "I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne..." (Isa.6:1); "And I heard the voice of the Lord, saying ..." (Isa.6:8); or, frequently, "The word of the Lord came unto me, saying..." (Jer.1:4). Mowinckel, in order to draw out this significance, paraphrases the opening formula of so many prophetic books: "The Word of the Lord became an active reality for, or in the case of, so-and-so." It is not to be thought of as necessarily an auditory experience. In fact audition is comparatively rare. Rather is the Word that "came to" the prophet an inner process, a spiritual act of discernment, a soul realization which

fills the consciousness. It seems that the DABHAR suddenly comes to the prophet, in a flash of overwhelming inspiration. This is not to deny that the final and dynamic crystallizing of the message was often the culmination of a process of thought and long meditation. But certainly the impression gained is that, for the most part, there is an inner crisis, when the idea and image precipitated in the prophet's soul involuntarily becomes rhythmic speech, and he is compelled to utter what has been imparted by Yahweh, and not words that issue from the human ruah. The prophet, moreover, is disinclined to connect the D'BHAR YHWH with Yahweh's RUAH, but rather emphatically affirms that the Word has come direct from Yahweh Himself.

The irresistibility of the Word is the dominant experience of the prophet. The compulsion of this self-authenticating Word is illustrated in the graphic figure of Jeremiah, "fire shut up in my bones" (20:9). Equally telling is the simile of the hammer, Jeremiah 23:29, which also echoes that of the fire, "Is not my word like as a fire? saith the Lord; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?" The Divine Word is something torturing, unbearable, till it finds

an outlet. The main thing, then, for the prophet was that sudden impulse which filled his whole person, and, for the time, ejected every other consideration, so that he delivered that which Yahweh had given to him with a characteristic zeal oftentimes manifest in a ferocity which withstood all opposition. Amos was violently thrust out of Beth-el, but the result was a yet more severe pronouncement of Divine wrath - a terrible prediction upon the house of Amaziah. We may, then, describe one criterion of prophetic assurance, so far as the supremacy of his message is concerned, as that of positive and compelling content.

These mighty figures who descended upon Israel and Judah, propelled by the explosive force of the dynamic D'BHAR YHWH that had first burst within their own souls, were not only unrelenting critics (as it often appears) of all and sundry - though much of what they had to say was directed against a variety of disobedient and rebellious sons of Israel, as well as certain guilty gentiles. They were to become, positively, some of the greatest exponents of the doctrine of God both to Israel and subsequently to the world. Indeed, the chief criterion of these reformers' knowledge and conviction, concerning the word which was committed

to them, lies in their recognition of the holy Person and just demands of a righteous God, and the sinful nature of their own people. To them has been granted the new and fuller penetration into the nature of their God, and that becomes the foundation of their BABHAR and the plumbline to be held beside the life of the Chosen People. Therefore the Word must accord with what they know of Yahweh Himself. It is an essential, if formal, requirement that the Word should not be something purely arbitrary and incomprehensible; it must have a clear, rational content and purport. The prophets often give the name TORAH (literally, the priests' "instruction") to the Word of Yahweh. The implication in this usage of TORAH is that the message they preach is plainly conceived of as possessing a pressing and precise significance for the immediate body of hearers, indicating a proper course of conduct in a certain situation: for a 'direction' or 'guide' must be easy to understand. The prophet may - indeed, he must - test for himself the truth of the Word that has invaded his consciousness, and see whether it is in true correspondence with the moral character of Yahweh. It is on account of the inability of the so-called 'false' prophets (whom the

reforming prophets denounce with such vehemence) to test their message by a rational and objective criterion, that the reformers so earnestly dissociate themselves from the idea of the RUAH.

This view of the objective criterion of the Word of the Lord is wholly in keeping with the canonical prophets' attitude towards Yahweh's law. Their contemporaries regarded TOROTH as including the accepted rites, usages and customs, as well as the special priestly tradition of cult ritual, canon law and civil law. The great prophets considered it a sin that the people scorned the true law of Yahweh. They particularly mention individual points, justice (MISHPAT), righteousness (TSEDHAQAH) and fraternity (HESED) and walking humbly before God, as the proper substitute for the cult (cf. Micah 6:7, 8), and thereby they indicate that they recognize Yahweh's law by the criterion of its CONTENT. In short, they set it side by side with their own religious and moral consciousness, and their apprehension of Yahweh as a moral God Who demands pureness of religion and piety of heart: thus do they test it. D'BHAR YHWH resembles TORATH YHWH in being recognizable by its content rather than by its form. Not the ecstatic RUAH, nor the

mystical absorption into the Divine: but the test is religious and moral, a conscious and intelligible apprehension or knowledge of God.

Jeremiah has some strong words to say on this matter in the section of his book entitled, "concerning the prophets" (23:15 ff.). His chief argument is that he regards the form through which the message is mediated as no positive criterion of the nature of the contents. The audition may be just as false as the vision and dream. "Behold I am against the prophets, saith the Lord, that steal my words every one from his neighbour...the prophets... that use their tongues, and say, He saith" (23:30-31). The false prophets are not false simply because they are skilled and enthusiastic in the use of the professional manticism which typified them, but because they clearly lack the vital and central elements in the consciousness of the true prophet, namely, moral fellowship with God. Inseparable from this are the absence of the true hearing of D'BHAR YHWH and the non-existence of an authoritative commission to prophesy. The tree is known by its fruit both in the Old Testament and in the New: the false prophets may dream the most graphic dreams and undergo the most



impassioned of corybantic states, but time proves that in the calamitous effects on the spiritual and moral life of the people their 'word' is vitiated. It was Jeremiah par excellence who, among the great prophets, came to the tremendous and fundamental realization that form must be distinguished from content. Mystico-ecstatic audition had misled and bewitched a credulous mass of people, grasping at any and every oracle of the professing prophet who cried, Peace, Peace; but that experience of doubtful worth was far removed from the truly awful experience of the true prophet who had "stood in the counsel of the Lord, and perceived and heard his word" (Jer.23:18, cf.v.22). In accordance with the Divine requirements, such an incommunicable experience (unyielding to objective analysis) can alone come to the humble spirit which has attained to a lofty moral purity in his personal life.

The true prophet was profoundly conscious that his experience was something that had originated from a source beyond and above his own being. It all lay in the initiative of God, an act (in New Testament language) of GRACE. It was pre-eminently God revealing Himself, as He willed, for His own inscrutable purposes. The prophet does not pretend to understand

the ways of God nor the mystery of revelation through the D'BHAR YHWH, for the sake of which he had been sanctified from the womb (cf. Jer. 1:5). It was necessary, therefore, for him to make a personal act of faith in response to his call and commission. In the last resort he had no external or formal guarantee of the ultimate truth of the Word: he knew, at any rate, that no frenzied transport could assure its validity. That dynamic utterance which he goes forth to proclaim - in many instances to a hostile people, and jeopardizing his very life - must stand or fall by its intrinsic authority. The history of those men of faith and daring originality is the story of valiant souls who went out to prove and vindicate their convictions in the teeth of opposition and the temporary contradiction of current events and organized religion. In the end, of course, men were forced by circumstances to acknowledge, if not bow to, the Word of the Lord through the lips of the Divine and despised messengers. Such was the nature of their spirit that the earlier men rose to reject the Word, so much earlier did those courageous and devoted servants of Yahweh rise (Jer. 7:13, 25; 25:4). Undaunted, they take their place among the faithful who are honoured in the memorial-tablet of the

eleventh chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews.

In reply to the threats of Amaziah, Amos declares:

"Now therefore hear thou the Word of the Lord: Thou sayest, Prophecy not against Israel.... thus saith the Lord: Thy wife shall be an harlot in the city, and thy sons and thy daughters shall fall by the sword, and thy land shall be divided by line; and thou thyself shalt die in a land that is unclean, and Israel shall surely be led away captive out of his land"

- Amos 7:16-17.

The mind of these mighty, reforming prophets was well epitomized in their spiritual forebear, Micaiah ben Imlah, when his faith in the D'BHAR YHWH entrusted to him was sorely tried. Unmoved by all Zedekiah's impressive ritual and invective, and standing alone before the massed body of false prophets, Micaiah pronounces the message he has received, and concludes: "If thou return at all in peace, the Lord hath not spoken by me" (I Kings 22:28).

Because of the Divine principle of operating through frail, human instruments without violating their individual characters, it is necessary to distinguish between the occasion of inspiration and its source. It was the same true Word of the Lord, however it may have come to the prophet. A message often came via some odd sight or sound, or arose from a quite ordinary

experience. Amos saw a basket of summer fruit, and his thought passed from  $\zeta \rho$  (summer) to  $\zeta \rho$  (end); and so crystallized the oracle that he had to deliver to Israel, the dread dissolution towards which the nation was heading rapidly and inevitably (Amos 8:1 ff.).

In a similar manner, Jeremiah beheld an almond tree,

$\tau \rho \psi$ , and then formed his message on the awakening ( $\tau \rho \psi$ ) of God to intervene in the course of current world events (Jer.1:11 ff.). A potter in a familiar and homely setting provides the occasion of a moving Word declaring a gracious act of God (Jer.18:1 ff.).

Cledonomaney has been for centuries a relatively common feature in the near- and middle-East, and Guillaume has gathered examples from Arab sources which are similar to these prophetic instances, (cf. Prophecy and Divination, pp.118 ff., and 142 ff.). But it seems that in the case of the prophets there is a much greater spontaneity, and certainly an infinitely loftier content to their message resulting from this type of occasion. Rather than seeking an omen when asked for, the prophet was prompted to an immediate utterance of the Word by the sight of some suggestive object. Further, sometimes the message came through a prolonged experience, as, for example, in Hosea's

domestic sorrows or Jeremiah's painful periods of isolation in which he learned that true religion was far, far deeper than a shallow cultus and richer than the noblest code of laws. Thus the prophet becomes the responsive, sympathetic instrument of an essentially God-given experience and knowledge, issuing in a D'BHAR YHWH which he cannot resist. This is no manipulation of some mantic formality and formula by an initiated-one. The elements of a Divine revelation may be set in motion by a casual glimpse of a common object or human experience, and the Divine Word is precipitated, and it presses upwards till it demands recognition as a religious certainty. It is characteristic of the Hebrew prophet that the Word he receives is always in relation to his time and personal characteristics. There is no magic nor anything of the inherently impossible about the prophetic D'BHAR YHWH. It is never, as Mowinckel rightly says, "a dateless abstract, but always a word for a concrete situation; the 'word has never come otherwise than as 'flesh', and further, 'in the shape of sinful flesh', in Paul's words" (J.B.L., 56, p. 264).

"If we go on to say that in this and through this consciousness, by some leap of 'sympathetic' faith on the prophet's part, God was enabled in fulfillment of His purpose to enter human history, then the statement constitutes a leap of faith akin to that made by the prophet himself. We can never eliminate that personal factor, in regard to either the outer or inner event."

## IV. THE IDEA OF THE DIVINE PATHOS.

For the most part we are dependent on the remarks and criticisms of the canonical prophets for information concerning the nature of their professional, 'false' confrères. How far these objects of the reformers' scorn and execration, these "prophets of Israel that prophesy out of their own heart" (Ez.13:2f.), were spiritually sensitive or possessed of a prophetic consciousness of the kind which constitutes the dominating characteristic of the former, we cannot say with any certainty. But in respect of the consciousness of the classical prophets themselves, we have adequate data, reflected in the content and expression of their recorded oracles. They were men of exceptional spiritual sensibility: this is patent in their own confessions. Jeremiah, one of the most highly tempered of them all, cried, "Woe is me, my mother, that thou hast borne me a man of strife and a man of contention to the whole earth!" (Jer.15:10). The result of this is that such men are peculiarly suited to the mission and message entrusted to them. They recognize that they have no axe to grind: they dare not be disreputable time-servers: they must not seek popularity as many of their adversaries did: they know that when

they have done their work it is unlikely that they will receive any reward save that of winning a small remnant - some did not even have that, and were satisfied with the knowledge that they had done faithfully the will of Yahweh. The Word that they must declare is the fruit of a profound communion with God, a further revelation of His holy Nature and Being. It may have a direct and present bearing upon the lives of the audience which hears the prophetic pronouncement, but when that time passes the Word will abide to have meaning for succeeding generations. It is the product of a soul-agony, an inward tension, of a man who must never cease to be at one and the same time both the representative of his people before God, and the messenger of God to His people. Whence, then, comes this kind of prophetic consciousness?

HESCHEL (Das profetische Bewusstsein) has submitted that the prophetic sympathy with the Divine "pathos" is the very ground of Hebrew prophecy. The prophet is able to view the conduct of his own nation, Israel, in the light of the mind of God, and to share in fullest measure the passion in the heart of God which this conduct evokes. It is claimed, therefore, that the passibility of God is a vital element contributing

to the whole, complex and altogether marvellous prophetic consciousness. To the mind trained in Greek modes of thought, or reared in the atmosphere of classical Christian theology, this notion is repugnant. For western philosophy passibility involves imperfection; and its low estimation of man's emotional aspect at once rejects the the idea of ascribing emotion in any form to God. But this was not so for the ancient Hebrew, who had not the least faculty for reasoning in terms of independent categories of the mind or psychical departments, and for whom a man is a psycho-physical individual - a unity. It cannot be too carefully remembered that the Hebrew insisted on the absolute separation of man from God, the futility of human efforts to discover the Almighty, and the very presumption (knowing that He is so high and righteous) of expecting to find the Holy One of Israel. Least of all would the Israelite conceive of the reasoning faculty in pursuit of God. "Verily thou art a God that hidest thyself," said the Second Isaiah (45:15); while Job expresses the Hebrew way of thinking about God in the celebrated question, "Canst thou by searching find out God?" (Job 11:7). If this is so, then



it is by an act of self-revelation that man shall have knowledge of God, and to the prophetic consciousness this gracious revelation was made. The prophet, however, was no mere machine. The prophecy which was uttered through his lips was the inspired proclamation born of the profound participation in the Divine pathos. He has entered into a unique relationship and seen God, not impassibly detached from feeling man, not in transcendent isolation: but, albeit omnipotent, reacting emotionally in respect of the world - and in respect of Israel, in particular, His chosen people.

This expression of the Divine pathos is most clearly exemplified in Deutero-Isaiah, and "it can be no accident that the prophet who developed the monotheistic doctrine to its fullest extent should also have realized the philosophical implications of the divine pathos" (KNIGHT, op.cit., p.139). Yahweh is portrayed as the tender and almighty Bearer of Israel's burdens:

"Harken unto me, O house of Jacob, and all the remnant of the house of Israel, which are borne by me from the belly, which are carried from the womb;

And even to your old age I am he; and even to hoar hairs will I carry you; I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry, and I will deliver you."

- Isaiah 46:3, 4.

Such is the emotional solidarity that integrates the prophet and Yahweh, that the former feels a keen spiritual isolation from his fellow-countrymen. In Jeremiah 15:16 ff. we have a poignant cry, "Thy words were found and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by thy name, O Lord God of hosts. I sat not in the assembly of the mockers, nor rejoiced; I sat alone because of thine hand: for thou hast filled me with indignation." No prophetic experience was more vivid than that of Hosea, the story of whose marriage derives its significance from this prophetic solidarity with the Divine pathos. The manner of entering into this sacred experience of sympathy with the Divine pathos, we may believe, was adapted to each individual temperament, so that no two prophets need have undergone identical experiences nor suffered the same conditions. The rugged, austere Amos is no less a recipient than the more romantic Hosea; though it is in the latter that we may perceive the working of the Divine emotion more plainly. Yahweh is represented as recoiling from the necessity of breaking out as a consuming fire, "How shall I give thee up, Ephraim?" (Hos. 11:8). His righteousness must prevail, "Therefore I will be unto them as a lion; as a leopard by the way will I observe

them" (13:7). And yet he continues to plead, "It is thy destruction, O Israel, that thou art against me, against thy help" (13:9).

#### V. RUAH AND DABHAR.

An examination of the use of the Hebrew conception of the *Ruah* of Yahweh leads to the conclusion that the later prophets avoided the term which was most characteristic of the earlier *NEBHI'IM*. Though we may not travel all the way with *MOWINCKEL*, who contends that the pre-exilic reforming prophets rejected the idea of spirit-possession, and writes that "their own prophetic vocation and their possession of Yahweh's wondrous word come of their having Yahweh's spirit in them is never by so much as a syllable suggested" (*J.B.L.*, vol.53, p.201), yet it is plain that there is very little to suggest that they regarded their prophetic endowment and powers as due to the action of Yahweh's *Ruah*. The association of the older type of *Nabhi* and the *Ruah* of Yahweh is obviously very close in the mind of the canonical prophets, who, as noted above, could hardly find words strong enough to express the odium in which they held the popular exponents of prophecy. The *Nabhi* is

a deceiver and a cheat, a person of low moral character and, at best, a self-deceiver. It added to their indignation that the men who led Israel astray were gladly received by the masses of the people on account of soft words supported by, and proceeding from, their transports of frenzy (together with other demonstrative acts and tricks) in order to gain popular acclamation as the instruments of Yahweh - as proof of the Spirit of the Lord manifesting itself in their ecstatic experience. Mowinckel claims that "the idea of Yahweh's spirit in the older nabhi'ism refers almost exclusively to the ECSTATIC behaviour and activities of the nabhi... The spirit made him lose control of himself and behave differently from normal people" (ibid.). On the other hand, rarely is the actual utterance of the prophet ascribed to the Spirit, as the words of the Spirit. The only certain case where this obtains, and is the exception, is in the story of Micaiah ben Imlah, where the Spirit becomes "a lying spirit in the mouth" of the prophets of Ahab, so that the words of the Nabhi'im (to their own confusion) are withdrawn from their own conscious, rational control (I Kings 22:23).

Several of the earlier reforming prophets definitely reject personal possession by the Spirit of Yahweh as

though it were something to avoid as undesirable, and they speak in a controversial manner of those who take pride in this pneumatic experience. The prophetic consciousness of the classical prophets rests on quite a different religious conception, which endowment they contrast with that of the 'false' prophets and from which their prophetic message and ministry spring, namely, the D'BEAR YHWH. The only passage where Hosea speaks of the inspiring RUAH of the NABHI is in contrast, and in a context wherein he repudiates the common Nabhi and his works with bitter scorn, "the prophet is a fool ('EWIL), the man that hath the spirit is mad (MeSHUGGA'" - 9:7. There is a play on the word RUAH and a contrast made between the two concepts, WORD and SPIRIT, in Jeremiah 5:13, "And the prophets shall become wind, and the word is not in them." There is no mention of Yahweh's Ruah in Amos, Nahum or Habakkuk. Micah makes a solitary allusion to his possession by the Spirit (3:8), but Mowinckel sifts this out as a gloss. Proto-Isaiah embraces the traditional idea of RUAH as the eternal, living force of the Almighty as contrasted with the weakness of men; but not as the source of prophetic inspiration. Isaiah 11:2 is representative of this kind of usage, though in a Messianic context,

"And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord." Here RUAH is the Divine Spirit as the bearer of the whole fulness of Divine powers. Similarly, neither Haggai nor Zechariah nor Malachi use Ruah in a prophetic sense. Deutero-Isaiah has the traditional use, "Behold my servant... I have put my spirit upon him" (42:1). Also in Isaiah 61:1, the Divine servant receives the Ruah of Yahweh in order to bring good news (BISSER) to a needy people.

In Ezekiel, according to Mowinckel, there is a return to the thought of the Spirit as the medium of revelation, "And the spirit of the Lord fell upon me, and said to me, Speak, Thus saith the Lord..." (11:5). But usually it is employed as a "motive principle, closely akin to the 'wind', and the word is used to explain the ecstatic sensation of being transported from one place to another" (Mowinckel, *ibid.*). For further instances of Ezekiel's conception of the Spirit, cf., 1:12, 20, 21; 2:2; 3:12; 3:14, 24; 8:3; 11:1, 24; 37:1; 43:5.

"Ezekiel, unlike the older reforming prophets, is a true ecstatic of the ancient type, although he shares the reforming prophet's moral and religious ideas."

"In the later prophets the spirit appears. This is connected with their ideological 'throw-back' to the older nebhi'ism of the national religious type; in relation to the reforming prophets they are merely epigoni, and were probably not aware of the gulf between the reformers and the old nebhi'im."

And of the difference between the later prophets and the nebhi'im:

"In the former the Spirit is no longer an ecstatically experienced power but a traditional formula. The main thing is their consciousness of a call and of the special endowment received with it. The assertion that they have Yahweh's Spirit is a comprehensive expression meaning that they have to deliver a moral and religious message from Yahweh."

- MOWINCKEL, op.cit., p.226.

Finally, we need but mention that the thought of the Spirit as the medium of revelation is to be found occasionally in the later prophets, e.g. in Isaiah 48:16, "And now the Lord God hath sent me, and his spirit", and Joel 2:28, "I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy."

## VI. THE SYMBOLIC ACT.

It must be admitted that even in those prophets who made (and substantiated) the loftiest claims to Divine revelation, and taught Israel some of its deepest moral truths, there is an element of abnormality. There is to be seen the apparent inconsistency of the men who so rigorously denounced their fanatical opponents, exhibiting themselves some of the ecstasies' very characteristics. There were crudities even in the greatest of the true prophets of Yahweh, and we must not allow these facts to detract from the real place of the reforming prophets in Hebrew religion, nor mislead us in interpreting their message. Isaiah the statesman, for example, paraded the streets of Jerusalem for three years without clothes or shoes (Isa.20:2). Jeremiah went about with a wooden yoke on his shoulders (Jer.chs.27-28); and both Isaiah and Hosea inflicted curious symbolic names on their children (Isa.7:3; 8:1; Hosea 1:4,6,9). But these were more than eccentric acts; they were potent symbols in themselves. To the Hebrew the act was as effective as the DABHAR; both could, by their intrinsic dynamic, release power for the blessing or the cursing of men and peoples. In view of the modern



way of conceiving of words and their function, in contrast to the ancient oriental conception, it is necessary to keep before us in this study the ability of the word (or the act) to accomplish its own fulfilment. Symbolic acts released divine power to effect the thing symbolized. Lest this should be regarded as mere magic, it is to be noted that "magic is the attempt to control events by a technique which constrains the spiritual powers, whereas prophetic symbolism is the control of events through the technique by the God whose constraint is the source of the symbol" (H.H.ROWLEY, Harvard Theol. Review, vol.38, 1945, p.29).

There is clearly, however, behind these symbolic acts the principle of what has been called homeopathic or imitative magic. When Ahab sought the D'BHAR YHWH in connection with his proposed expedition against Ramoth-Gilead (I Kings 22), he solicited the aid of the four hundred prophets. Their leader, Zedekiah, "made him horns of iron: and he said, Thus saith the Lord, With these shalt thou push the Syrians until thou have consumed them" (v.11). This was an attempt to create a victory for the king on the principle of imitative magic - something of quite a different order from dramatic expression of hope or wish. Similarly, when

Joash visited the ailing Elisha, the prophet placed his hands upon the king's hands, and commanded him to shoot an arrow through the window on the east side of the room, and added by way of explanation and re-inforcement of the act, "The arrow of the Lord's deliverance, and the arrow of the deliverance from Syria: for thou shalt smite the Syrians in Aphek, till thou have consumed them" (II Kings 13:17). Then Joash evokes Elisha's wrath because he strikes the earth no more than three times with the arrows. Had he persisted to five or six times he would have guaranteed the complete overthrow of the enemy (vv.18,19).

A.R.JOHNSON (The Cultic Prophet in Ancient Israel, 1944) thinks that there is reason to believe that in Israel an acted spell of this kind was once known as MASHAL. The basic idea beneath the verb is "to make like", with a background of magical ideas. In referring to the difficult verse, Hosea 12:11 (E.V.,12:10), Johnson argues that the Pi'el of DAMAH is not a corruption, for the root significance belongs to the same class as that originally covered by the term MASHAL. Fundamentally it is the idea of the acted 'picture' or 'sign' and associated with homeopathic magic - the influence of like upon like. Concerning the meaning

of Hosea 12:11, Johnson continues:

" It emphasizes the fact (and this is the actual testimony of Hosea) that the prophets are Yahweh's instruments in fashioning the future; their actions and words have creative (or destructive) power. Moreover, this interpretation finds confirmation in the fact that the term under discussion is used more or less as a parallel to the terminology of the DABHAR/HAZON (or 'word'/'observation'); and it has already been shown that this conception is rooted in the soil of magical ideas."

- The Cultic Prophet in Ancient Israel, p.40.

The symbolic acts of the prophets are, like the revelation through DABHAR, part of the Divine activity. They form, together with the complementary Word, a distinct contribution to the development of Hebrew religion through the agency of the prophets. Apart from their subordination to the Divine Will and divinely permitted method of revelation, we must admit, these enacted signs would appear little more than examples of the sympathetic magic widespread in the contemporary pagan world of that era, and the prophets would have condemned them and their use. But instead the prophets incorporated the principle into their pure religion, consecrated it to the ministry of the Word of God and used it as an important element in that ministry till it could no longer be thought of as magic but as an awful act

of Yahweh the Holy One.

The symbolic act was characteristic in the ministry of Jeremiah even more than in that of Isaiah. Not only are there more references to individual acts of this prophetic symbolism in the book of Jeremiah, but we see the conception of the symbolic act extended to embrace the very person of the prophet himself. This man of sorrows was a perpetual sign, living and walking daily among the wayward citizens of Jerusalem. The lonely prophet, enjoying none of the common pleasures of life, without wife or family or any home-comforts, out of sympathy with all men, sharing none of their social intercourse, segregated by his experience and knowledge of God from his community and never being understood by them - he WAS Yahweh's chosen sign to His people. "Day by day he would be haunted by the knowledge that all this was meant to symbolize before his people their coming woes...As Jeremiah went about among his fellows...he would be a living threat of doom, warning men to expect before long the breakdown of the social order in some vast and terrible calamity" (E.L.ALLEN, Prophet and Nation, 1947,p.84).

Other symbolic acts are probably to be seen in the marring of the buried girdle, Jer.13:1 ff.;

the shattered bottle (Jer.19:1 ff.); the great stones hidden in mortar (Jer.43:9 ff.); the book cast into the Euphrates (Jer.51:63-64); the city portrayed on a tile (Ezek.4:1 ff.).

#### VII THE IDEA OF THE 'EXTENSION' OF DIVINE PERSONALITY.

The authority and conviction with which the reforming prophets proclaimed their message proceeded from a consciousness that they were in a state of profound union with God. HÖLSCHER submitted the idea of the prophet's conception of himself as the extension of the Divine Personality. He wrote in 'Die Profeten',

"Die Profeten reden nicht nur im Auftrage und nach dem Geheisse Jahwes, wiederholen nicht nur Worte und Offenbarungen, die der Gott ihnen zugerant oder in der Vision gezeigt hat, sondern sie reden als Gott selbst und identifizieren sich, solange sie ekstatisch sprechen, durchaus mit ihm.

- Die Profeten, 1914, p.25.

The manner in which the prophet conceived of his union with God has been further elaborated in more recent years by two English scholars, H.WHEELER ROBINSON, and A.R.JOHNSON. A useful extract from the former's

'Redemption and Revelation' may be quoted at this point:

"The prophet was one able to identify himself with both man and God, being the eye of Israel turned to God \*, and the mouth of Yahweh turned to Israel \*\*. It is the effective union with both which makes him the focus of revelation and discovery (the two being one). The man who cries 'For the hurt of the daughter of my people am I hurt' (Jer.8:21), stands in Israel's place as her representative; the man who chants the 'Song of the vineyard' (Isa.5) stands in God's as His. The closeness of this double identification is explained only when we remember such things as the story of Achan and of the slain descendants of Saul, the doom of toil and suffering which came upon the race because of the sin of Adam, the Levirate marriage law, and the songs of the Servant of Yahweh - all of them examples of the group, instead of the individual, as the unit...."

(pp.149-150)

\* Isaiah 29:10

\*\* Jeremiah 15:19

"Corporate personality is also the psychological root of the particular form taken by the prophetic teaching - the emphasis on social morality" (p.150).

In "The One and the Many in the Israelite Conception of God" (1942), A.R.Johnson suggests that the prophets were commonly thought of as 'messengers' (MAL'AK) of Yahweh par excellence; and in certain circumstances they might be indistinguishable from God. "The background to this is furnished by Jeremiah in his polemic against the cultic prophets of his day; for, speaking in the name of Yahweh, he says:

I have not sent the prophets;

Yet they ran.

I have not spoken unto them;

Yet they have prophesied.

If they had really stood in My intimate Council,

And had declared My 'Words' to My folk,

They would have turned them back from their evil way,

And from their evil practices." (Jeremiah 23:21 ff.)"

It was a far-reaching claim to assert that one was the MAL'AK of Yahweh, and to venture the declaration that he was a member of the intimate Council of God. The status of such a prophet was not regarded merely as representative. "For the time being he was an active 'Extension' of Yahweh's Personality and, as such, WAS Yahweh - 'in Person', " (op.cit., pp.36-37).

The oscillation between the first and third persons of speech is a strong argument in favour of Johnson's proposition, and he refers to a number of passages, of which Jeremiah 9:2 is the most suggestive. The prophet begins in his own person, but concludes the passage speaking in the Person of Yahweh, which illogical form is designed to emphasize that it is Yahweh Himself speaking urgently and earnestly to His people:

"Oh that I had in the wilderness  
 A wayfarer's lodge,  
 That I might leave my people,  
 That I might go from them !  
 For they are all adulterers,  
 A company of traitors !  
 Yea, they have bent their tongue  
 (Their bow) deceitfully,  
 And 'tis not through fidelity  
 That they are strong in the land;  
 Nay, 'tis from evil to evil that they proceed,  
 And me they know not - Oracle of Yahweh ! "

(Trans. from JOHNSON, op.cit.,p.40).

This application of the idea of corporate personality is a much more adequate hypothesis, by way of an attempted solution to the problem of the prophetic union with God, than that of the mystic's absorption in God. Moreover, the prophet - pre-eminently the man with the D'BHAR YHWH - shares the same relation to God as that particular vehicle of Divine revelation. The prophet is one with the God who called him and gave him the irresistible vocation and compelling vision; the Word is one with the thing to be performed \* . "Because of his entire

\* see next page



"submission to the will of God his acts are fully taken up into the divine purpose and become part of the creative process."

- L.H.BROCKINGTON, Studies in History & Revelation, Ed. Payne, 1942, p.41.

\* "I will speak, and the word that I shall speak shall be performed; it shall be no more deferred: for in your days, O rebellious house, will I speak the word, and will perform it, saith the Lord God....Therefore say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God: There shall none of my words be deferred any more, but the word which I shall speak shall be performed" saith the Lord God."

(Ezekiel 12:25-28).

#### VIII. THE SUBSTANCE OF THE PROPHETIC WORD AND ITS CHALLENGE.

In the ninth century B.C., notably in the persons of the outstanding figures of Elijah and Elisha, we see the fore-runners of the canonical prophets who were to make their appearance in the succeeding centuries. Amos and Hosea, the two prophets of considerable stature in the eighth century, exemplify to an intensified degree that reactionary character which marked the earlier prophets of Yahweh in the critical period during the reign of Ahab and Jezebel. Their words manifest their utter resentment to the

whole life of the Israelite community. Amos, in particular, coming from the pure, rugged, natural atmosphere of the Tekoan hills, was struck by the sordid and, in every way, unnatural condition of commercialized Israel; to say nothing of the spiritual diagnosis in that evil nation tottering to its doom on the verge of national calamity. As the poor Wahhabi were astonished at the luxurious living in the cities of Islam, so Amos and others beheld the glaring contrasts in Israel, and, what is of far greater importance, they discerned the inner significance. Their denunciations of these prevailing conditions constitute no small part of their message, the DABHAR from Yahweh for that particular generation. "And I will smite the winter house with the summer house; and the houses of ivory will perish...saith the Lord (Amos 3:15). "Forasmuch therefore as ye trample upon the poor and take exactions from him of wheat: ye have built houses of hewn stone, but ye shall not dwell in them; ye have planted vineyards, but ye shall not drink the wine thereof" (Amos 5:11). It was the re-instatement of the old way of life that the prophets demanded for God's chosen people. "The old social spirit with its

"truth and love ('EMETH and HESEDH) Hosea 4:1, was to reign once more, Israelite MISHPAT, Yahweh's old law, was to prevail, foreign customs obtruding themselves were to be abhorred" (PEDERSEN, Israel,iii-iv, 1947,p.134).

The element of woe in the great prophets was a conspicuous feature; and the popular present-day association of gloomy prediction with the name of Jeremiah (though a thorough distortion of his real ministry and message) is not without some grounds. It does not appear, however, that woe was of necessity an essential element of the prophetic Word, qua D<sup>e</sup>BHAR YHWH. On the other hand, we cannot fail to notice how often the solemn note of warning and Divine displeasure is struck. "The prophets that have been before me and before thee of old prophesied against many countries, and against great kingdoms, of war, and of evil, and of pestilence. The prophet which prophesieth of peace, when the word of the prophet shall come to pass, then shall the prophet be known, that the Lord hath truly sent him" (Jer.28:8,9). CHARLES (in the Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Daniel, 1929,p.26) writes, "Prophecy is a declaration, a forth-telling of the will of God -

"not a fore-telling. Prediction is not in any sense an essential element of prophecy, though it may intervene as an accident - whether it be a justifiable accident is another question." But this is hardly in accord with the plain facts of Biblical data. Isaiah appeals to fulfilled prediction as the vindication of prophecy: "Remember the former things of old: for I am God...Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things that are not yet done: saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure" (Is.46:9 f.). This is not by any means to say that prophetic prediction should be ranked with other forms of prognostication, the semi-magical response to the idle curiosity of such as resort to crystal-gazers and the like. For one thing, the reforming prophets' predictions arose, for the most part, out of the immediate situation and its significance IN GOD'S SIGHT: for another, true prophecy is more than any other consideration a spiritual phenomenon.

In the political sphere, Israel never achieved any prominence among the nations. Similarly, in the world of material and intellectual advance she had little to contribute. It was in quite another department of

life that she made her vital and enduring contribution - in the great search for truth and the knowledge of God. Indeed, Israel became the pathfinder, and herein gave to the whole world, for all time, the fruit of her religious genius, a revelation supreme and unique. Not least among the wonders connected with this gift of Israel to the world's knowledge of God, is that its fullest realization took place through the instrumentality of a body - or rather a succession - of prophetic individualists living at a time when her national life was at its lowest ebb, and even threatened with extinction. Beginning with Amos in the middle of the eighth century, this line of seers continued for three centuries or more, before, during and after the Exile.

"A unique and imposing spectacle is this procession of prophets, appearing as they did under untoward circumstances, transcending material conditions, towering over their contemporaries, preaching by divine compulsion a doctrine which for their age had neither material basis nor historical warrant, bearing testimony in their words and in their lives to the truth expressed by Zachariah, 'Not by virtue of material strength and political power shall ye prevail, but by my spirit, saith the Lord.' For mark...although they came apparently to predict doom, they were essentially the apostles of faith and hope."

-M. BUTTENWIESER, The Prophets of Israel, 1914, p.5.

That the prophetic Word was a revelation, and, for

those who had ears to hear, an unfolding of Divine truth, is both clear and fundamental. But what needs to be held in mind is that the D'BHAR YHWH was not simply the impartation of information about God and His will - a kind of pre-determined dogmatic theology ! It was the result of a soul-agony of a man of God, an oracle prompted by a given situation and directed towards that situation. For the most part, the words of the prophets were a summons and a challenge to PERSONS, through a PERSONAL agent, by a PERSONAL GOD Who was intimately and vitally concerned with the condition of those persons. The prophets were men of faith addressing a people without faith. They dominate the landscape of Israel's history because they were spiritually-minded men seeking to stir a people to a realization of the significance of the policy they were pursuing, and of the inevitable judgment their sinful, wayward and faithless career must bring upon their heads. The Divine Word was not to be received passively and merely approved of by the hearers. It must stir them to the depths of their soul and evoke repentance and dedication.

Isaiah knew at the very outset of his ministry as a prophet what sort of response his Word was going

to call forth:

"Then said I, Lord, how long ? And he answered,  
Until cities fall into ruin without inhabitant,  
And houses without a man,  
And the land be left desolately waste,  
And Jehovah have removed man far away,  
And great be the desert in the midst of the land;  
And still if there be a tenth in it,  
Even it shall be again for consuming.  
Like the terebinth, and like the oak,  
Whose stock when they are felled remaineth in them,  
The holy seed shall be its stock."

- Isaiah 6:11-13, tr.G.A.SMITH, The Book of Isaiah, 1910.

Frequently the only response was anger and a further stiffening of the neck towards the one true message of hope in a time of dire peril when the professional nebhi'im cried, "Peace, peace," but there was no peace (Cf. Jer. 8:11). It was in the nature of things that Israel should find it hard to receive the Word of the Lord, for had He not said Himself, "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways" (Isa. 55:8). But the dynamic Word shall not rebound without justifying itself and its birth in the soul of

the prophet, and its inspired proclamation - "it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereunto I sent it" (Isa.55:11).

. . . . .

#### IX. THE COMPLEX CHARACTER OF THE PROPHETIC CONSCIOUSNESS.

In this close, analytical study of the phenomena which constitute both the prophetic consciousness and the methods of the various types who are broadly classed as 'prophets', one has come to appreciate the complex character of the subject. The ascription 'prophet' embraces men as far removed, both in respect of time and of type, as Moses (the man who spoke with God 'face to face'), and Samuel (so reminiscent of the Arabian KAHIN or the Babylonian BARU), and Amos (the rugged rustic, possessing the D'BHAR YHWH through a compelling vision in his soul of the nature of God and the heart of Israel's condition, and yet at the same time rejecting any idea of connection with the popular contemporary B'NE' HANN'BHI'IM.) If not the full solution to the problem, certainly H.KNIGHT'S hypothesis seems to fit the facts more adequately than the lines



adopted by, say, BUTTENWIESER \*, or JEPSEN \*\*.

Knight examines the problem from the psychological standpoint, and sees in the Hebrew prophetic consciousness a "complex product which may be traced back to the two types of prophecy recognized in the ancient world - divinatory prophecy and ecstatic prophecy" (op.cit., p.13). The ecstatic element was foreign to the religious tradition of Israel, belonging essentially to the Canaanite people. It was gradually received into the truly Hebrew religious tradition which itself is traced back to ancient divination and magic. The Hebrew prophetic consciousness, embracing both elements, is entirely subject to Yahweh and responsive to the Divine initiative. It is raised from the plane of crude, heathenish (and probably immoral) Canaanite fanaticism, and superstitious manticism, to the lofty level of a morality corresponding with the revealed nature of the righteous Yahweh.

\*"Nor are the visions of the literary prophets in any way akin to the ecstatic visions and dreams of the diviner" - Prophets of Israel, p.138.

\*\* "...the challenging and clear cut hypotheses thrown out by Jepsen, who declares that there is an absolute solution of continuity between the official NEBIIM and the great writing prophets" - H.KNIGHT,

The Hebrew Prophetic Consciousness, p.72.

Between Samuel the seer and the first of the reforming prophets in the eighth century, there appear two mighty figures, the salient features of whose ministry require examination. For it is suggested that in them we see particularly the continuing activity apparently in the line of ancient Semitic tradition, a formative element in those prophets themselves, and one to be further observed in the later writing prophets also.

In the person of Elijah, the first of the two, a remarkable contrast is struck with the primitive, professional, ecstatic priest-prophets of the Canaanite Baal. In the well-known scene of the contest on Mount Carmel (I Kings 18:17 ff.) we have a valuable record of the ecstatic prophets in action. What, then, was the essential element in the dynamic ministry exercised by Elijah on that occasion, that which was definitely non-Canaanite? Elijah does not manifest the symptoms of the ecstatic, but rather the elements of thaumaturgy and magic. He would have been looked upon as a rain-maker, whose person was impregnated with wonderful holiness and closely resembled the Semitic KAHIN. His mantle, moreover, was more than a symbol of his awful power, it was the

repository of his spiritual strength.

Something similar appears in Elisha, who gives the impression of having more of the ecstatic about him than Elijah. Thus he is of particular interest and significance, being on the one hand a 'wonder-worker', raising the dead (II Kings 4:18 ff.), feeding a multitude (4:42 ff.), making iron to swim (6:1 ff.), and recommending symbolic actions suggestive of imitative magic (13:14 f.), or using clerodomanancy, (ch.7). On the other hand, such practices as divining what takes place at a distance (6:32), and using music to induce the prophetic mood, reflect those elements which we associate with the ecstatic. In Elisha, according to H.KNIGHT, the primitive tradition of magic and divination becomes associated with the psychic phenomena of ecstasy and so issues in the complex character of the Hebrew prophetic consciousness (cf.KNIGHT, op.cit.,p.48).

Together with the spoken word, uttered by the prophet and fraught with tremendous power to bring to pass that which is described, there is an allied conception - the acted sign. Something has been said of this above - in reference to the ninth century prophets: a conclu-

ding note may now be added with reference to the canonical prophets. Symbolic action was regarded as possessing the same kind of inherent power as the DABHAR, and thus we are not surprized to find it a feature in the ministry of those who are the exponents of the Word of God in the period of the high watermark of prophecy. The incident of the shattering of the pot as Jeremiah makes a solemn proclamation concerning the nature of the destruction which is coming upon Judah (Jer. 19:10 ff.), is not a dramatic act to impress the hearers so much as an EFFECTUAL sign assisting in the fulfilment of the judgment. The quaint act of Ezekiel, portraying the siege of Jerusalem on a tile, is seen in a new light when we recognize the current Hebrew conception of the potential of the symbolic act (Ezekiel 4:1 ff.). In these and similar instances the prophet is seen hastening forward the process whereby the will and purpose of God is fulfilled. If the methods are those of the typical oriental magician, the whole symbolic act is transformed to become a fundamentally different agent - the agent of the religious consciousness of the prophet of Yahweh, with all that that implies.

## X. AUDITION.

The prophets were the recipients of the Word of God, and we may refer now to their reception of the 'voice' which they heard and which conveyed the Divine message. The term AUDITION, is applied to the hearing of that 'voice', and to the appreciation of any sound which mediated the awareness of God. On examination, we notice that audition occurs more frequently than vision in the Old Testament, and that, in fact, the latter is distinctly rare. In a helpful article (J.T.S., Jan.-Apr. 1948) L.H.BROCKINGTON submits the following figures in respect of the Word of God and His speaking with men:

DABHAR - 646 times, with MEN as subject;  
 443 times, with God as subject;  
 37 times, with ANGEL or SPIRIT  
 as subject.

He goes on to suggest three reasons why audition was the sensory channel more frequently used than any other in making known the Word of God. First, Hebrew anthropomorphism tended to emphasize the idea of sense perception in general; though to ascribe properties to God on the analogy of human beings did not, for the

Hebrew, limit His true nature as God. "Physical reference, for genuine Hebrew psychology, does not exclude reference to the psychical or spiritual qualities" (H.WHEELER ROBINSON, Inspiration and Revelation in the OT, 1946, p.19). The body was the basis of personality, though the FORM of God was never intruded, but tended to fade, while other things such as speech and action remained in the fore-front. Secondly, there was a prevalent belief that to hear God was fraught with less danger than to see Him. The sight of God, therefore, was a special and exceptional privilege. This is not, of course, to diminish the sense of privilege in audition. Thirdly, there is a characteristic Semitic conception - the dynamic objectivity of the spoken word. Speech is the most intimate and arresting of the many sounds that may betray one's presence. Personality is expressed through it in a distinct manner, and by it there is exercised an influence over other persons (and, to the Semite, things).

It is difficult to say how far this hearing of the Word of the Lord is to be regarded as the audition of an external voice; how far, that is, the Biblical accounts reflect (in their picturesque narration)

a definite moment of spiritual experience when a special and peculiar revelation came to them in a manner which could only be described as "hearing". Or, are we to say that the so-called audition was an intuitive perception of the will and nature of God? What exactly did Jeremiah mean when he said, "For who hath stood in the counsel of the Lord, and hath perceived and heard His word? Who hath marked His word, and heard it?"

The earlier prophetic references exhibit a pronounced auditory element, and in the Elijah narratives there is a physical as well as a spiritual experience, cf. I Kings 17-19. Whilst in the canonical prophets we find less of the physical element, there are some plain statements about a very objective kind of perception. In Amos 3:7, 8, there occurs a blending of the physical and the spiritual, "Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets. The lion hath roared, who will not fear? The Lord God hath spoken, who can but prophesy?" Isaiah heard the unmistakable and compelling voice of Yahweh after the extraordinary vision of the heavenly throne-room, "And I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go

for us? Then I said, Here am I; send me" (Isa.6:8, 9). Similarly, in the commissioning of Ezekiel, after the vision of the roll of a book, signifying the Divine message for Israel, "And he said unto me, Son of man, eat that thou findest; eat this roll, and go, speak unto the house of Israel" (Ezek.3:1). The prophetic tradition is carried back and idealized in Numbers 12:8, "With (Moses) will I speak mouth to mouth....and not in dark speeches; and the form of the Lord shall he behold." The same tendency to emphasize audition is found in Deuteronomy 4:12, "And the Lord spake unto you out of the midst of the fire; ye heard the voice of words, but ye saw no form; only ye heard a voice."

The prophet is the instrument through which the Lord directs His powerful, creative Word; the Lord speaks to the prophet, and the prophet speaks to the people. The prophet dare not impede the movement of the Word which is passing through him: "...all the words that I command thee to speak unto them; keep not back a word" (Jer.26:2). "...whatsoever thing the Lord shall answer you, I will declare it unto you; I will keep nothing back from you" (Jer.42:4). The significance of this key-function of the prophet has been summed up by H.WHEELER ROBINSON: an "important aspect of the



prophet's function consists in the liberation of the Word of God, which becomes objectively powerful beyond the range of the prophet's activity" (Inspiration and Revelation, 1946, p.170). An illustration of the dynamic quality attributed by the Semites to speech is to be found in the incident of the Arab who threw his son to the ground that the words of his enemies' curse might pass over his head and be harmless to him, (WELLHAUSEN, Reste Arabischen Heidentums, p.139, cited by H.W.Robinson, loc.cit.).

Jepsen and Johnson regard the auditory element as so pre-dominant that they propose that the verb H-Z-H, when it occurs in a prophetic context, notwithstanding that it is generally a synonym of RA'AH, denotes auditory rather than visionary experience (cf. Jepsen, Nabi, p.43; A.R.Johnson, The Cultic Prophet in Ancient Israel, 1944, pp.14 ff.).

Figurative and symbolic uses of the terms denoting speech and hearing followed, once the anthropomorphic approach had attributed to God those means of communication with men which men were accustomed to use between themselves. In Numbers 7:89 we can see the metaphorical usage, "And when Moses went into the tent

of meeting to speak with him, then he heard the Voice speaking unto him from above the mercy-seat that was upon the ark of the testimony, from between the two cherubim; and he spake unto him. And the Lord, spake unto Moses...."

"It is tempting to see the transition from actual to metaphorical taking place by noting that when Deutero-Isaiah wished to convey the sense of actual audition and external origin for his message he would say, 'a voice crying' (or, 'hark, one crying') instead of 'thus saith the Lord' which, by this time, had been reduced to a formula. The transition was made within the realm of the personal so that we may say with Edwyn Bevan that 'the voice from heaven became, not a sound carried through space, but the speaking of Spirit to spirit within a man's heart.'"

- L.H.BROCKINGTON, op.cit., quoting  
E.Bevan, 'Sibyls and Seers', 1928, p.102.

Additional Note:

EZEKIEL'S INAUGURAL VISION.

In Ezekiel's inaugural vision, however, we have - in contrast to other prophets' experiences - an interesting case which presents a problem to the expositor. There is, apart from anything else, a textual difficulty, Bertholet suggesting that Ezekiel had two inaugural

visions (Hesekiel, 1936, in Eissfeldt's 'Handbuch  
zun A.T. '), while Hertrich regards only the first  
(i.e. ch. 2) as genuine. A document full of threats  
and forebodings is presented to Ezekiel. He is bidden  
to eat this distasteful book as a preparation for his  
mission to his people. "And he said unto me, Son of  
man, eat that thou findest; eat this roll, and go,  
speak unto the house of Israel" (3:1). On obeying the  
Divine command he finds that the contents are not so  
bitter as at first: "Then did I eat it; and it was  
in my mouth as honey for sweetness" (3:3). The inter-  
pretation which identifies the roll with the prophecies  
(which Ezekiel has to proclaim) must face the problem  
of having to ascribe to the prophet pleasure in his  
message of doom. But if, with E.L.ALLEN (Prophet &  
Nation, p.101), we reckon the roll as standing for  
the work of his predecessors, we not only solve the moral  
difficulty, but we find an experience of the Word of God  
(albeit a rather novel experience) in keeping with the  
man commissioned to deliver it. "In other words, what  
brings him satisfaction is the prophetic office as such  
and not the particular oracles of doom which he must  
utter in due course" (loc.cit.). The more important  
matter lies in the nature of the object which confronts

Ezekiel. It is not a natural one as, for example, the cooking-pot of Jeremiah, Amos' basket of figs, or Joel's swarm of locusts. It is a BOOK.

"It is as literature rather than as the living word that prophecy commends itself to him, and he becomes a prophet by being first a student... He is a man of dogma more than of inspiration, with a thesis to defend rather than a people to save. One cannot imagine that there was any community of spirit between him and Jeremiah during those last days in the beleaguered capital."

- E.L.ALLEN, loc.cit.

## XI. POST - EXILIC PROPHECY.

First, the calamity of 722 B.C., when the Northern Kingdom was swept away by the Assyrians: then, the great captivity of Judah by the Babylonians a little over a hundred years later - these fulfilled what had been consistently foretold by many of the reforming prophets. In the face of countless D'BHARIM YHWH - pleading, warning or judging - the people of God had 'sown the wind' and had reaped 'the whirlwind.'

During and after the Exile prophets continued to appear, seeking to influence the political situation by their oracles. The importance attaching to their conduct is demonstrated by the fact that Jews in Babylonia sent accusations to Jerusalem against Jeremiah, who, in turn, denounced those who proclaimed deliverance in Babylonia (Jer.29:24 ff.). Ezekiel continued his earlier prophecies of doom, addressing himself both to the exiles and to those at home. Deutero-Isaiah prophesied the return of the people and the regeneration of the nation. Haggai and Zechariah were largely responsible for the restitution of the Temple. We note that Nehemiah had to encounter prophets who supported his personal adversaries. The ancient institutions of prophetism survived all the painful,

prolonged and bitter vicissitudes; and, when the chief pillars of the common life of the people - the monarchy and the priesthood of Jerusalem - had been shattered, the prophet remained.

Prophecy continued to exert an influence for a number of centuries, and as late as the Maccabaeans (2nd century B.C.) the absence of a prophet presented the problem of what was to be done with the altar stones desecrated and lying in the court of the Temple, for there was no voice of authority to guide the people. The decision was post-poned until there arose a prophet to pronounce on the situation (I Macc.4:46). Gradually, however, prophetism lost its spontaneity. From the time of Ezekiel and Zechariah prophecy showed a tendency to pass over into an acquaintance with Scripture, and the figure of the prophet slowly disappears from view. Even in the Persian period the beginning of decay in prophecy may be seen, and thereafter it is the SOPHER, or scribe, who largely occupies the place of the prophet. The tendency in post-exilic times is for a dependence on what had been written before by prophetic authority, and in this way does true prophecy exercise an influence in those somewhat obscure times. In ages when the yoke of foreign overlordship hung heavier on Israel's

/shoulders

there was a naturally hopeful looking-forward to the time when God would vindicate His people and establish His kingdom and destroy their enemies. Largely from the past-prophecies were visions of the future extracted, their nature being eschatological, and in this way did the Danielic type of apocalypse supplant the original D'BHAR YHWH of the classical prophets and their fore-runners.

The term D'BHAR YHWH, in the absence of those burning, compelling Words of God which forced the bearers to utter them, now settles on a fixed Scripture. The place of Ezra in this transformation is noteworthy. The Word of the Lord has become static, having a sense akin to the old idea of Torah. Of the Spirit of Yahweh, a category which some of the reforming prophets seem to reject (and certainly avoid) but whose activity and presence may be discerned, MOWINCKEL says:

"But the connecting link (ie. between the pre- and post-exilic prophecy) here is the purely conventional and dilute sense of the word 'Spirit', even in the latest prophets and still more in the Deuteronomical, canonical conception of prophecy, according to which the prophets and the Spirit are no longer living realities\*, but blessings once enjoyed in classical history, which will only be accorded again to mankind in the eschatological epoch \*\*."

— J.B.L., vol.53, 1934, p.227.

\* Zechariah 1:5 f.

\*\* Joel 2:28 ff.

G.HÖLSCHER, "Die Profeten":

"Die Vergleichung des israelitischen Ekstatikertums der Nebi'im mit den verwandten Erscheinungen der Nachbarreligionen zeigt, dass eine Parallele zu denselben nur auf syrisch-kleinasiatischem Gebiete zu finden ist. Während es auf dem Boden des reinen Semitentums, in der Wüste, nicht heimisch ist, blüht es in solchen Gebieten, deren Kultur und wahrscheinlich auch Rasse teils nicht rein semitisch, teils völlig unsemitisch ist. Die Erscheinung stellt sich damit in Zusammenhang mit all den anderen religiösen und kulturellen Beziehungen, welche Syrien mit Kleinasien seit alters verbinden.

- pp.141-2.



## C O N C L U S I O N

IN SUMMING UP this dissertation, and seeking to draw out the main conclusion to which the study has led, the writer is conscious that a great deal of ground has been covered. On reviewing the thesis he is aware that much more could have been said in some of the chapters; and there will be, perhaps, readers who think that full justice has not been done to the views of some scholars and that due consideration has not been given to certain evidence. But our general impression - having amassed the considerable amount of material, and sorted it out, and examined the various possible sources of the Johannine Logos-doctrine - is that there are two major claimants: (i) Alexandrian Judaism, of which Philo is the chief representative and positive influence; and (ii) the Old Testament. These two, we think, merit our attention far more than any of the other possibilities. But since we have already shown that we consider the proposed Alexandrian Jewish source to have no slight objections, it leaves us with the Old Testament. Thus, we are now happy to record our

reasons for believing that, in shaping the Logos-doctrine in the Prologue to the Fourth Gospel, John was drawing his main concept and (to a large extent) his concomitant ideas and terms from the Old Testament.

After a long and circuitous, exploratory journey we return to echo the words of the Introduction, which anticipated the thesis: "We think the underlying significance of the LOGOS in the Prologue to have its roots in Hebrew thought, as opposed to Hellenistic. The answer to the riddle of John's Logos-hymn is not to be found in the realm of classical philosophy, Hellenistic lexicology or comparative religions." It is to be found in the living drama of a Divine, redemptive purpose, gradually unfolded as age succeeded age, of which some record is preserved in the Old Testament." The religion of the Israelites was an experimental one; as G.W.ANDERSON says, tersely but truly, "...for the Old Testament does not contain a speculative religion, but bears witness to the acts of the living God." \* It was a dynamic religion, and the record of it in the O.T. has not concealed its dynamism. Indeed, the fact that we can feel the dynamism (in spite of the limitations circumscribed by the medium of cold print) is not least

\* in Art., 'Hebrew Religion', The O.T. and Modern Study, ed., H.H. Rowley, 1951.

among the wonders of the Old Testament. We believe that one who had so profound an appreciation of the dynamic character of Jesus Christ - His Person, His Message and His Religion - would also have a true appreciation of the vitality of the O.T. religion. What was more natural than that he should portray the Figure of the Prologue according to concepts and themes dominant in the Old Testament? It is not as though he were obliged to burrow and strain his sight; and that we are ascribing a method which would have been improbable, when we visualize the author of the Fourth Gospel linking his mental picture of Christ with the thought-forms and fundamental ideas of the Old Testament. They are mighty, basic-spiritual truths and Divine principles of the Sacred Scriptures which constitute the idea-strata of the Johannine Prologue.

John is not, we affirm, stretching the legitimate application of the Old Testament when, and as, he describes the Person of Christ in the Prologue. He is doing what would have come most naturally to any devout Jew who had been enlightened through Christian experience. Jesus Christ is the culmination of all that had gone before. Of Him the prophets spoke, though they realized not the Divine Fulness of the Subject of their

prophecies. He was the Inaugurator of the New Covenant, whereby the Law of God was to be written in the human heart and men would know God, for their sins would be remembered no more. He was the Perfecter of all that was partial and incomplete in the former age. Everything was moving towards Him, until in "the fulness of the times God sent forth His Son, made of a woman" - for what purpose? In order to achieve that for which Israel had waited so long, "to redeem them that were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption of sons" (Gal.4:4, 5). Nowhere is the significance of F.D.Maurice's dictum more relevant than in the Prologue, "The Old Testament is the dictionary of the New."

"The living drama of a Divine, redemptive purpose, gradually unfolded...." Dynamic creativity, personal mediation, Divine revelation, purposeful redemption - these are THE themes of the Old Testament; themes to which all others are subordinate. No less are they the themes of the Johannine Prologue.

The consideration given to the numerous, diverse and exhaustive studies, by some of the ablest scholars of modern times (each with an admittedly well-attested and cogent argument), leaves one with the irresistible

impression that they have not afforded adequate recognition to one essential element, that John not only knew the Old Testament but lived in its atmosphere even as his Master had done. Creation, Mediation, Revelation, Redemption (qualified by such epithets as dynamic, personal, Divine, purposeful) are all linked with that rich concept - and more than a concept, a self-authenticating and effectual agent - the D'BHAR YHWH, which occupies so large a place of influence in the life of Israel, both nationally and individually. We have sought to indicate how deeply-rooted was the whole conception of the Word of God in the tradition and religion of Israel; how distinctive was the content and nature of that WORD; and, if we may so speak of it, how thoroughly Israelitish is its theology. True, it owed a certain debt to the non-Israelite peoples with whom the Israelites came into contact in Canaan, and to the whole western Semitic idea of the dynamic word. But, chiefly at the hands of the long line of prophets, it was forged into a unique conception by their experience of its Divine Source, of its character as both 'tremendum' and 'fascinans', and of its terrible inexorability in judgment and gracious efficacy in blessing. There are phases of its operation which some writers consider best expressed in a mild poetical personification. John was

sensible of all this, we suppose, and would have been under the influence of this age-old Hebrew conception.

בְּרֵאשִׁית בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים... וַיִּבְרָא אֱלֹהִים... אֶת-הַשָּׁמַיִם... וְאֶת-הָאָרֶץ...  
 When John made the great opening declaration, Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ Λόγος, and further enlarged on it in the words of verse 3 of the Prologue, πάντα διὰ αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο, καὶ χωρὶς αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο οὐδὲ ἓν..., we do not doubt that he was echoing directly the thought of the opening verses of the first Book of Moses. The Almighty SPOKE, in the beginning, and IT WAS DONE. The idea of the creativity of the Divine Word occurs in numerous places in the Scriptures. "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made...for He spake, and it was done; He commanded and it stood fast" (Ps.33:6-9) - this is a clear reference to the creation of the heavens and the earth according to the Genesis tradition. The Word of the Lord is not capricious in its working, for we read, "For ever, o Lord, thy word is settled in heaven" (Ps.119:89); and it is immutable, "The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever" (Isa.40:8). Moreover, the Divine Word has the guarantee of the Divine Being attaching to it, for it is the "word of His holiness", and He is faithful in remembering it (Ps.105:42). Much the same idea underlies the words of Joel 2:11 ("for He

"is strong that executeth His word"). Yahweh commands the elements and makes them servants of His Word: "Fire and hail, snow and vapour; stormy wind, fulfilling His word" (Ps.148:8). Even the angels are the ministers of the Divine Word (Ps.103:20). For guidance, the Word of God is a lamp unto the feet, and a light unto the path, of God's people (Ps.119:105). The Almighty commissions His Word, "He sendeth out His commandment upon earth; His word runneth very swiftly"; it can make the ice to melt, "He sendeth out His word, and melteth them" (Ps.147:15, 18). Again, when "they cry unto the Lord in their trouble...He sendeth His word, and healeth them, and delivereth them from their destructions" (Ps.107:19, 20).

The noblest statement of this belief in the beneficent, effectual Word of the Lord, this restless, creative agent of the Divine Will, is found in Isaiah 55, the miniature Gospel which wants but the name of Jesus Christ. This sublime proclamation of good-news tells of a heavenly bread (and drink) which satisfies (vv.1,2; cf. Jn.ch.6); of a new life and an everlasting covenant (v.3; cf. Jn.ch.3); a leader who shall gather men unto himself from among the gentiles (cf. Jn.4:21 ff.; 12:20 ff. & 32); a gracious invitation (vv.6, 7; cf. Jn.12:35, 36),

and a warning that the Mind of God is not the mind of men (vv.8, 9; cf. Jn.3:31 ff.). The proclamation culminates with the full description of the nature, mode of operation, and benevolent purpose, of the D'BHAR YHWH:

"...So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereunto I sent it."

- v.11.

Do not the great themes of Isaiah's "little gospel", which feature (albeit on an even higher plane) in the body of the Fourth Gospel, appear in the Prologue? The spoken Word and the Incarnate Word have both proceeded directly from God Almighty. Both are creative-for good and blessedness - towards a needy mankind. In both cases it is God Who takes the initiative, and if the term 'grace' is not found in Isaiah 55, certainly the idea is there. There is the same kind of antithesis between the Mind of God and the mind of man to be found in the Prologue. Humanity's profound spiritual need features in both, though one calls it hunger and the other speaks of darkness. The tremendous words of John 1:12 tell of the everlasting Covenant. Underlying both is the thought of mediation, and that by means of a mediator which (or Who) has a Divine origin.



The Old Testament is the account of a God Who is supreme, invisible, all-powerful, holy, and utterly spiritual and moral, making Himself known - πολυμερῶς καὶ πολυτρόπως - to mankind, which would otherwise have remained in darkness and in ignorance of His Nature, His Being and His Will. Dr. T. H. ROBINSON has recently written that in the O. T., "men recognize a unique revelation of God, an expression of His nature, His will, and His methods of dealing with men" \*. He adds, in the next paragraph, "For the Christian, the supreme importance of the Old Testament lies in the fact that it prepares for, and in a large measure explains, the New Testament." According to the Old Testament, God began to break the silence in the very earliest times and spoke to certain individuals. It was not the speculations of the human intellect which penetrated the darkness; it was God Himself, taking the initiative, Who approached man. Familiarity with the prodigious fact of Divine self-manifestation tends to blunt our appreciation of its wonder. Sometimes through a natural phenomenon, or again, through a super-natural phenomenon; othertimes through dream and vision, or again, in theophany - whatever the form, it was the same God speaking to the same human race. Not in abstractions and under

\* The O. T. and Modern Study, 1951, p. 347.

elusive categories, but through the concrete and tangible, through the comprehensible (if unusual or super-natural), God made Himself known to men. Not through magic or the ridiculous, but through media which, for the most part, formed the familiar constituents of human experience God communicated Himself to man. "Revelation is not the communication of a system of future events, or of a system of moral or religious requirements, but the making known of God's will which is to be performed in the particular and concrete situation, and of threats and promises of divine activity which will also be realized in the particular and concrete situation" (HEMPEL, in 'Record and Revelation', 1938, p.67). In a word, there WAS such a thing - and a tremendous thing indeed - as Divine revelation; it was a self-revelation, graciously made with no artful, ulterior motive; and it was made along the line of personal experience and was intensely real. The acts of Divine self-manifestation recounted for us in the Old Testament contrast most sharply with typical oriental magic, divination and soothsaying, in which it is man all the time groping after the divine being and trying to wring out of him some manifestation by all means. We have noted, in the study, how lower forms of mediation were gathered up into the higher, till the PROPHETIC becomes the predominating type of mediation for Divine revelation.

It is not necessary to recapitulate extensively the points discussed in the fourth part of this thesis; we need only remind ourselves of the chief properties and functions of the Word of the Lord as the agent, par excellence, of the prophetic inspiration and proclamation. The act of revelation of the D'BHAR YHWH to the prophet was not an end in itself - it was pre-eminently a revelation for a people in their need, and that primarily spiritual. The Word of God was purposeful, entirely lacking in capriciousness and irrationality. As the true oracle of the Almighty it was rational, compelling and essentially communicable, appointed for certain particular circumstances of the national or individual life. One of the criteria which differentiated the Divine Word from clever and persuasive counterfeits was the kind of fruit it produced in human lives. Spurious D'BHARIM inevitably yielded corrupt conduct; DIBHRE YHWH bore spiritual fruit. Again, the Word of the Lord was wholly in keeping with all that had been revealed of the moral character of Yahweh. Moreover, one of the things that made the D'BHAR YHWH so real was that it both reflected the 'Divine pathos' and that it passed through the crucible of profound personal experience of the soul of the

prophet. Without pressing the thought too far, we may suggest that there was a sense in which the D'BHAR YHWH was a Divine-human word.

What of the LOGOS THEOU, Jesus Christ ? Through His mediation there came a revelation from God, a pure and holy and dynamic revelation, designed for the spiritual needs of mankind. There was nothing irrational about the LOGOS, nothing capricious, for in becoming flesh He appeared among men in a wholly communicable form, and His Message was compelling and self-authenticating. His life, His words and works, were entirely congruous with all that had been made known of the nature of God; they were the complement and consummation of pre-Christian revelation. In the heart of Jesus the Divine and the human met on a plane infinitely higher than any prophetic experience, and out of that heart went words and acts immeasurably more dynamic than anything witnessed in the previous Age. Nevertheless, the LOGOS THEOU is comparable and consonant with the D'BHAR YHWH. Figuratively we may say that the LOGOS THEOU is the D'BHAR YHWH 'in a higher key.'

There is a historical significance of the Word of the Lord. The DABHAR came with self-authenticating force to challenge and demand a response. Men either responded

or refused to respond - in either case history was forged, for Israel was the people of Yahweh and His sovereign Hand directed the course of their career. The direction which their history took was governed by the nature of their reaction to the revelation - the self-revelation of God, pre-eminently through the D'BHAR YHWH. So with the LOGOS (Jn.1:12); the response of a man to the supreme self-declaration of God in the Logos made flesh turned the course of that man's life - for him it made history. The prophetic principle which is to be seen in, for example, the call of Abraham in its elementary application, is also to be seen - but at its highest level and most significantly - in the advent of the Incarnate Word....."The Light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not...He came unto His own, and His own received Him not. BUT as many as received Him, to them gave He authority to become the sons of God" (Jn.1:5, 11, 12).

We have shown in chapter three (c) why we reject Alexandrian Judaism as a possible source of the Logos-doctrine of the Johannine Prologue. It is not necessary to re-state what was said in that section. This, however, we may add. We cannot deny that, with all his devotion to Judaism, Philo embraced within his

system certain ideas and doctrines which were basically pagan. However they may have been regarded as highly respectable and worthy concepts coming from a noble philosophy, they were pagan, with all their pagan associations, pantheistic origin and essentially non-Jewish properties. In none of Philo's figures or concepts is this more in evidence than in the all-important Logos-doctrine and the doctrine of the Powers. We do not consider it likely that John, an apostle of Jesus Christ and a pillar of the Church, would have consciously allowed his Logos-doctrine to be coloured by such pagan notions and associations. Certainly outside the sphere of Alexandrian Judaism the Logos (used philosophically) could have suggested nothing but the traditional pantheistic, pagan ideas of ancient and respected classical speculation. It is one thing to say that John borrowed a term in common usage and used it as a vehicle for the transmission of his own doctrine; it is quite another thing to say that the technical term, as used by a certain religion or philosophical scheme, influenced John's usage and was the 'source' of that lofty doctrine or of elements within it.

We cannot escape the basic idea of 'rational principle'

which haunts the term LOGOS, however much Philo (and others) may have tried to conjure with it, and try to make something of a personality out of it. It is very uncertain, in any case, whether Philo really did have any definite conception of a personal Logos beyond that of a poetical personification. John's Logos, on the other hand is essentially and primarily personal. So personal was it, that it did that from which any Hellenistic thinker would recoil - THE WORD BECAME FLESH. The most that can be said of the Hellenic and Hellenistic Logos is that it was a rational principle which was (by some) unsatisfactorily apotheosized in a speculative manner and mythologically conceived. The least that can be said of the Johannine Logos is that He was the Eternal Son of God, Who was gloriously incarnate, and in so doing brought life and immortality to light through His Gospel, and gives the right of Sonship to those who personally receive Him. Dynamic Creator, personal Mediator, Divine Revealer, gracious Redeemer - these are the attributes of the Logos made flesh. On examination, in the light of the great themes associated with the Divine Word of the Old Testament, we find that the 'riddle' of the Johannine Prologue is no more. It was John's point of contact with the non-Jewish world

around him, from which point he hopes to lead them to believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing, they might have LIFE through His Name.





## B I B L I O G R A P H Y

The following are a selection from the books consulted in the preparation of this thesis, and which have been found particularly helpful. Reference has been made continually to standard commentaries, concordances, Bible dictionaries, encyclopedias, and the citation notes will indicate these sources. The threefold classification is necessarily broad and general.

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H.D.B.	=	Hasting's Dictionary of the Bible.
D.C.G.	=	" Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels.
I.C.C.	=	International Critical Commentary.
J.B.L.	=	Journal of Biblical Literature.
J.T.S.	=	Journal of Theological Studies.