

The Bible in the Light of Recent Archeological Findings
(1925-1935), with Special Reference to the
Folk Religion of the People of Israel

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To My Parents

My dear Mother and Father,

I am writing you this letter

to tell you how much I love you

and how much I appreciate you

and how much I miss you

and how much I hope to see you soon

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INTRODUCTIONPurpose.

The last ten years of archeological research have yielded many objects believed to have been used by the ancient Hebrews in their religious ceremonies or thought to have possessed some magical significance for them. The purpose of this thesis was to single out these objects and to show what part they played in the folk religion of the people, by correlating these finds with Biblical passages that dealt with the objects themselves or with ceremonies in which these objects were used. Thus, when the evidence is presented before us, the archeological discoveries stand out as physical manifestations of what before were only vague literary expressions. Or, conversely stated, our archeological materials are clarified ~~and substantiated~~ by the Biblical references to them, which often explain how they were used by the ancient Hebrews. Thus they mutually benefit by their association.

It was indeed difficult to determine which finds reflected folk-religion, and which ones, the more spiritual religion; and even more difficult was the task of differentiating between expressions of folk-religion and those of any other type of religion. The author admits that no specific norm was set up for measuring purposes, because it was impossible to find a standard by which all the finds could be so positively identified. How-

ever, in the back of the author's mind there was often this question: what was the motive behind the use of this or that object? When it was that of homeopathic magic, of warding off evil spirits, of causing the crops to grow and to produce or the cattle to multiply, or to elicit favorable influences for the individual's welfare -- when the object served just such a purpose, the author considered it an expression of folk-religion.

Method.

In each section, first the archeological material is arranged, classified, described, and dated, as far as the author's limitations permit him to do so. Then, whenever possible, the motive behind the use of the object and its prevalence among surrounding nations are discussed. Finally, the author tries to show how these finds are to be correlated with the relevant Biblical material, and then, cautiously, he draws conclusions.

May it be pointed out that inevitably there must be relevant discoveries not included and significant Bible verses not mentioned, simply because they were overlooked in the mass of evidence with which the author had to deal. ?/

Note.

The reader will note that the typist has spelled "Tell" as "Tel" consistently. Also "Tell-Beit-Mirsim" has been wrongly spelled "Tel-Beth-Mirsim" throughout. Due to the innumerable times these misspellings occur it was impossible to make corrections after the typing had been completed.

ABBREVIATIONS

- A.J.A. - American Journal of Archaeology.
 Annual A.S.O.R. - Annual of the American Schools of Oriental Research.
 A.P.B. - Albright, The Archaeology of Palestine and the Bible.
 Bulletin - Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research.
 D.B. - Dictionary of the Bible.
 E.B. - Encyclopaedia Biblica.
 EB - Early Bronze.
 EI - Early Iron.
 F.O.T. - Frazer, Folklore in the Old Testament.
 G.B. - Frazer, Golden Bough.
 I.L.N. - Illustrated London News.
 J.E. - Jewish Encyclopaedia.
 J.A.O.S. - Journal of the American Oriental Society.
 J.B.L. - Journal of Biblical Literature.
 J.P.O.S. - Journal of the Palestine Oriental Society.
 Kuenen: Kuenen, A., The Religion of Israel.
 LB - Late Bronze
 MB - Middle Bronze
 P.E.F.Q.S. - Palestine Exploration Fund Quarterly Statement.
 R.A.S. - Grant, Rumeileh Ain Shems Excavations.
 R.S. - Smith, Religion of the Semites.
 S.B.A. - Proceedings of the Society of Biblical Archaeology.
 S.H.O. - Barton, Semitic and Hamitic Origins.
 S.O. - Barton, Sketch of Semitic Origins.

CHRONOLOGY I

Date of Strata

Early Bronze - Third Millenium.

Middle Bronze - 2000-1600.

Late Bronze - 1600-1200.

Early Iron I - 1200-900.

Early Iron II - 900-600.

Early Iron III- 600-300.

CHRONOLOGY IIEgyptian Kings

Amenophis III	1415-1380.
Amenophis IV	1380-1362.
Weak Rulers	1362-1347.
Harmhab	1347-1320.
Ramses I	1320-1319.
Seti I	1319-1301.
Ramses II	1301-1235.
Menephtes	1235-1227.
Weak Rulers	1227-1210.
Anarchy	1210-1195.
Ramses III	1195-1164.
Ramses IV	1164-1158.

I

Ashtoroth

The casual student of the Bible may be skeptical when he reads that the Israelites worshipped Astarte, whom he knows to be the goddess generally worshipped by the peoples of the ancient Near East in Mesopotamia, Syria, and Palestine, but his doubts are transformed into positive beliefs ^{if} ~~when~~ he considers the archeological findings of ^{only} the past ten years. Yet, after studying the evidence, there may be some who would be chary about believing that the Israelites actually manufactured some of these Astarte Goddesses for worship. Most of us would like to be generous enough to believe that, at least, the figurines in substance were imported into Palestine, and then their presence precipitated their worship. However, visual proof dictates us to believe otherwise.

In the study of the Ashtoroth^e cult among the Hebrews, it is interesting to note, first of all, that the Hebrews themselves produced their own figurines as evidenced by the moulds which have been discovered. At Beth Shemesh, a fragment of a clay mould, dated Late Bronze, was unearthed, showing a male and female divinity, fully costumed. The goddess wore a heavy skirt, and the god a kilt, girdle, sword, and dagger. The head of this mould was missing.^{1.} A similar mould for fashioning figurines was found at Beth Shan,^{2.} which Rowe dates the same as the Beth Shemesh find, Late Bronze. The objection, of course, may be raised that

Late Bronze does not necessarily imply a Hebrew origin for the

1. Bulletin #52, p. 4.

2. P.E.F.Q.S., 1928, p. 82.

They did furnish the originals² which the Tarsalites copied in due course.
moulds. However, this argument cannot apply in the case of the head moulds which have been discovered in the level of Early Iron II. At Tel Beth Mirsim EI I and II figurines were found indicating direct connection between Bronze Age and Iron Age figurines. At this level at Beth Shemesh there has been unearthed a clay mould for making Astarte heads, of such a type that they were to be attached by a clay peg to the pillar type bodies of Astarte figurines.³ At this same site and from the same level Grant discovered another head mould, which he describes⁴ as being delicately featured.

The actual figurines have been uncovered in great numbers, some fragmentary and therefore not especially helpful, many in good shape and consequently of great assistance. As for the fragmentary remains, it will suffice to say that at Beth-Shan from the Seti I level (1319-1301) there was brought to light a head of a limestone figurine⁵ and a torso overlaid with gold,⁶ from the Mekal Temple an Ashtoreth figurine showing the goddess wearing a scalloped head-dress and having two bracelets on either wrist but with feet missing,⁷ and from the Amenophis II (1415-1390) Temple a cylindrical stand having represented on it in bas-relief the head of Ashtoreth, wearing fine plumes.⁸ From Beth Shemesh we have a figurine head with a

3. cf. Note 1.

4. Grant, E. Rumeileh-Ain Shems, Part III, p. 67.

5. P.E.F.Q.S. 1928, p. 86.

6. P.E.F.Q.S. 1927, p. 73.

7. P.E.F.Q.S. 1929, p. 81.

8. P.E.F.Q.S. 1928, p. 85.

In writing, but examples of Bronze-Age figurines in notes, then only briefly in text as precursors of Iron Age models

9
 peg for joining on to the body, an Astarte plaque belonging to the
 Late Bronze Age,¹⁰ two early iron II heads -- one of which was found
 in a Canaanite sanctuary¹¹ and the other distinguished by its beauti-
 ful coloring and its delicately moulded features¹², and an Astarte
 fragment found in a Temple that so far has been unidentified.¹³ Ex-
 cavations in Moab yielded a fragment of a figurine¹⁴ of the Early Iron Age,
 indicating that the folk-religion in Moab was the same as that in Palestine
 and other related parts of the ancient Near East, and those in
 Gaza produced an Astarte plaque of the Late Bronze period.¹⁵ In-
 12. Interesting were the Astarte heads stamped upon coins of EI II, among
 the Beth-Zur findings,¹⁶ and the Astarte head carved out of bone
 which served as a handle for a sistrum, found in Beth-El among
 Middle Bronze sherds.¹⁷ Though Albright dates this sistrum at the
 fifteenth century B. C. E., he insists that the workmanship is
 unmistakably Palestinian,¹⁸ which should remove any doubt from our
 minds as to the extent the Astarte cult had penetrated into Pales-
 tine. An EI II fragment of a terra-cotta figurine was found at the
 wall in Jerusalem,¹⁹ and three similarly dated fragments were dis-
 covered at Tel Beth Mirsim.²⁰

9. Note 4, p. 67.
10. Bulletin #31, p. 15.
11. P.E.F.Q.S. 1928, p. 180.
12. Annual A.S.O.R. vol. IX, p. 4.
13. Grant, E. Beth Shemesh, 1929, p. 51.
14. Annual A.S.O.R. vol. XIV, p. 27.
15. A.J.A. vol. 39, p. 140.
16. Sellers, O.R. The Citadel of Beth-Zur, 1933, p. 63.
17. Bulletin #56, p. 8.
18. ibid. Illustration, p. 10.
19. P.E.F.Q.S. 1925, p. 19.
20. Bulletin #23, p. 7.

The above treatment is confused. Mixing up Astarte figurines of different periods blurs the picture you are trying to paint of the Iron Age!

You must understand this reference. It is a reference to the Early Iron Age. It has never been found on coins of the Early Iron Age.

Of the better preserved figurines there have been unearthed a great many. As to their appearance, they can be classified into four major types: the dea nuda, the dea nutrix, the parturition goddess, and the dove-goddess.²¹ Let us now see, in detail, just what comprises each of these divisions.

At Tel Beth Mirsim, in the C city,²² which can be dated about the same time as the latest possible date for the invasion of Canaan by the Israelites, there were discovered several figurines of the dea nuda type. One represents the goddess with her arms hanging by her side and her hair gathered into two heavy masses which hang down on the shoulders. Around the navel is a circle of about ten round marks which may portray tattoo marks in imitation of an actual custom among women. Another is represented with two spirally curled locks of hair on either side of her head, the body undraped, while her upraised hands hold flowers with long stems.²³ This particular type of figurine is common in the late Bronze Age. From Beth Shan, and of the Mekal Temple courtyard, comes a flat pendant with a tang at the top twisted over so as to form a loop for suspension. On the pendant is incised the figure of a woman who is nude except for a head-dress of Egyptian type. She holds²⁴ the was-sceptre in her left hand and has her right hand outstretched.²⁵ Rowe identifies this goddess with Astarte by the fact that she holds a sceptre.²⁶ Both Lachish and Beth Shemesh yielded a goddess of the dea nuda type.²⁷

21. The first two divisions are Albright's; the latter two, the writer's.

22. Believed by most scholars to be Kiriath-Sefer.

23. Bulletin #31, p. 8.

24. P.E.F.Q.S. 1929, p. 81ff.

25. *ibid.* 26. P.E.F.Q.S. 1933, p. 195. 27. Note 11.

28.

It is not clear from text that C city is a C city.

The unusual figurines were those which the writer has chosen to call parturition goddesses. The most perfect examples were unearthed at Tel Beth Mirsim, in the B level, which should date them EI I,²⁸ placing the finds definitely in the range of Biblical history. All these figurines represented a naked woman, palpably Astoreth, in the process of accouchement. One was complete; another nearly so.²⁹ Albright is of the opinion that this type has never been found before, or at least no examples have been published, and no archeologists to whom Albright showed these finds were acquainted with parallels. "Examination by gynaecologists has yielded a number of varying explanations in matter of detail. The figure has a distended abdomen, but small breasts. Her hands are clasped firmly, almost convulsively, below her abdomen. The navel projects abnormally for a primipara, and suggests that the figure may represent a woman who has borne children. There is an exaggerated protrusion of the vulvar region, which cannot denote a pathological condition, but must be an attempt to suggest the descent of the child's head and the imminence of delivery. The smallness of the breast is evidently intended to accentuate the distention of the womb. It is most likely that our figure represents the dea Syria."³⁰

Tel Beth Mirsim has also supplied numerous specimens of the dea nutrix type of Astarte figurines. In the A level of the excavation, which should place these finds in the city built about 900 B.C.³¹ the dea nutrix goddesses were unearthed. This type is often

28. Bulletin #39, p. 8.

29. The Archeology of Palestine and the Bible, 1935, p. 109 ff.

30. *ibid.*

31. Bulletin #31, p. 10. *op. cit.*, note 23.

called the pillar goddess, and represents a woman's head, bust, and arms, the lower part of the figurine being a simple column, spreading at the base, so that it might stand erect. The breasts are always very large and prominent, and the woman places her hands under them, as if presenting them to a nursing infant. This type of Astarte figurine does portray the goddess, Ashtoreth, as the dea³² nutrix, the protectress of nursing mothers. Beth Shemesh yielded a pillar-type of Astarte figurine with hands supporting the prominent breasts and also a plaque upon which had been moulded a dea³³ nutrix.³⁴ From the Thothmes III level at Beth Shan came two unusual specimens of the dea nutrix. One was made of opaque-green glass³⁵ covered with white glaze and the other one was holding a child in her arms in nursing position.³⁶ Sellin found three such figurines at³⁷ Shechem and Glueck unearthed an EI II specimen at El-Medeiyineh³⁸ in Moab and one in Edom.^{38a}

The last division the writer has called dove-goddesses. Not in all cases is the dove an integral part of the figurines, but in many instances the figure of a dove was found in the same locality as the figurines themselves, often in an Astarte sanctuary, sometimes at the base by a figure. At Tel-en Nasbeh Badé discovered the³⁹ dove and the Astarte goddess together in the same sanctuary and he⁴⁰ does not hesitate to connect the two in ideology. At Beth-Shan, in

32. Albright, W.F., The Archeology of Palestine and the Bible, 1935, p. 21.

33. cf. note 4.

34. Note 12, p. 3.

35. Note 7, p. 90.

36. Note 7, p. 91.

37. P.E.F.Q.S. 1926, p. 206.

38. Note 14.

38a. Annual, A.S.O.R., vol. XV, p. 121

39. Bulletin #37, p. 8.

40. P.E.F.Q.S. 1930, p. 12 ff.

a temple dating about 1000 B.C.E., was found a cylindrical seal upon which both the dove and the goddess were depicted,⁴¹ and from the Amenophis III level came a cult object in the form of a dove.⁴² This association was also known to have existed in the sanctuary at Lachish.⁴³ However, at Tel Beth Mirsim the connection becomes more than spatial association. In a silo of the Philistine period, belonging probably to the eleventh century B.C.E., we find the torso of a hollow figurine, representing a nude figure with prominent breasts, and pressing a dove with outstretched wings to her bosom. A Bronze Age figurine was also found pressing a dove between her breasts,⁴⁴ again showing the direct connection between B and EI cult objects. ?!

Of particular interest to our problem is the Ashtoreth goddess which was discovered in the Northern Temple of Rameses II (1301-1235) in the Beth Shan site. There upon a monument the great goddess is depicted in the form of Antit, the warrior goddess, and underneath is an inscription which, when translated, reads: "Queen of heaven, mistress of all the gods."⁴⁵

The goddess whom we call Astarte, or Ahstoreth, as she is known in the Old Testament, was the great mother goddess Ishtar, who held a conspicuous place in the parthenon of Assyrian mythology.⁴⁶

41. Note 37, p. 211.

42. Note 2, p. 85.

43. cf. note 26.

44. A.P.B. p. 110.

45. P.E.F.Q.S. 1927, p. 76.

46. Jastrow, in the Journal of Biblical Literature, XIII:28, suggests that "Ashtoreth" is a distortion of Ashtart, made after the analogy of "Bosheth."

Through the evidence of prayers left by Assurnazipal and Shalmanezar II, we know Ishtar variously as the "mistress of heaven and earth," the goddess of war, and the goddess identified with the planet Venus.⁴⁷ However, she is better known as the goddess of generation and productivity. According to myth, Tammuz, the young and beautiful sun god, was believed to die, passing away from the cheerful earth to the gloomy subterranean world, and that every year, Ishtar, his divine mistress, journeyed to the nether-worlds in search of him. During Ishtar's absence the passion of love ceased to operate; men and beasts alike forgot how to reproduce their kind; all life was threatened with extinction. So intimately bound up with the goddess were the sexual functions of the whole animal kingdom that without her presence they could not be discharged. A messenger of the great god Ea was accordingly dispatched to rescue the goddess upon whom so much depended. Allat, the stern queen of the underworlds, allowed Ishtar to be sprinkled with the Water of Life and to depart in company with her lover, Tammuz, that the two might return together to the upper world, and that with their return all nature might revive.⁴⁸ Thus Ishtar, conceived as the goddess of fertility and productiveness, symbolizes the life-giving earth which loses its adornments as it passes into the dark prison house of winter, to have them restored to it at springtime, as nature awakens with the returning love of the youthful sun god.⁴⁹

47. Hebraica, vol. 9, p. 133-165; vol. 10, p. 1-74.

48. Frazer, J.G., The Golden Bough, 1935. vol. V, p. 8 ff.

49. A Dictionary of the Bible, vol. I, p. 167-171.

At Cyprus, where the cult reached its highest expression, we learn of the technique that was employed in the worship of the Astarte goddess. According to Herodotus,⁵⁰ before a marriage all women were obliged to prostitute themselves to strangers at the sanctuary of the goddess. Whatever the motive was, the practice was never regarded as an orgy of lust, but as a solemn religious duty performed in the service of the great Mother Goddess of Western Asia, whose name varied from place to place, while her type remained constant. So at Babylon every woman, whether rich or poor, once in her life, had to submit to the embraces of ministers in the Temple of Ishtar, and to dedicate to the goddess the wages earned by their sanctimonious harlotry. The place was crowded with women waiting to observe the custom.⁵¹ At Byblos the people shaved their heads in the annual mourning for Adonis. Women who refused to sacrifice their hair had to give themselves up to strangers on a certain day of the festival, and the money which they thus earned⁵² was devoted to the goddess.

Of the existence of similar rites in North Africa, in connection with the cult,⁵³ Saint Augustine gives evidence.⁵⁴ And Efrem Syrus⁵⁵ gives us reason to believe that among the Arabians similar obscene rites were practised to the goddess who represented⁵⁶ Ashtoreth.

50. I:199 cited, Hebraica, vol. 10, p. 58.

51. Jastrow, M., The Religion of Babylonia and Assyria, p. 475 ff.

52. Hebraica, X:31. cf. Lucien's de Syria Dea, paragraph 6.

53. De Civitate Dei, II:4.

54. Hebraica, X:50 ff.

55. G.B. II, p. 457.

56. Hebraica, X:58 ff.

Thus, by way of summary of the evidence on this subject, we may conclude that a great Mother Goddess, the personification of all the reproductive energies of nature, was worshipped under different names, but with a substantial similarity of myth and ritual. We must conclude that associated with her was a lover, divine yet mortal, with whom she mated year by year, their intercourse being essential to the propagation of animals and plants; and also that the union of the divine pair was simulated by the real union of the human sexes at the sanctuary of the goddess for the sake of ensuring the fruitfulness of the ground and the increase of man and beast.⁵⁷

Thus we are acquainted with the ideology and the type of worship that accompanied the Astarte goddess. The presence of these figurines upon Israelitish soil, and even in Israelitish sanctuaries, should provoke the question of whether or not we have any evidence in the Bible that such a goddess was worshipped, or at least held in high esteem. However, as far as it is possible, we shall concern ourselves with the Astarte cult in the Bible as correlated with, or evidenced by, the Astarte finds which archeology of the past ten years has made available to us.

That the Astarte goddess was worshipped by the Israelites is evidenced in the characteristic passage of II Kings:⁵⁸ "And the High Places that were before Jerusalem, which were on the right hand of the mount of corruption, which Solomon the king of Israel had builded for Ashtoreth, the detestation of the Zidonians....did the

57. G.B., p. 31-41. For further treatment of subject of "sacred harlots," see p. 70-78.
58. 23:12, 13.

king defile." I Kings 11:5 attests to the fact that Solomon was kindly disposed to the worship of ~~the~~ Ashtorath. However, this does not mean that the goddess was acceptable for worship, simply because Solomon ^{accepted} ~~precipitated~~ her worship, for we notice that Ash-toreth is contemporaneously mentioned along with "Chemosh, the de-testation of Moab, and Milcom, the abomination of the children of Ammon," the derogatory attitude to be ascribed to Deuteronomic editors. Further evidence of the protest against the worship of Ashtoreth is found in I Samuel 7:3 and I Kings 11:33. An exceedingly illuminating passage is found in I Samuel in the chapter that deals with the death of Saul; it reads: "And they [the Philistines] put his [Saul's] armor in the house of the Ashtoroth." Are we not to infer from this that there was actually a sanctuary where the goddess was housed and to which the people could come to worship her?

Numerous passages would lead us to believe that connected with the worship of Astarte was a licentious ritual, such as was practised at Byblos and Cyprus, that was carried on through the agency

-
59. "For Solomon went after Ashtoreth, the goddess of the Zidonians."
60. II K. 23:12, 13 and I K. 11:15.
61. "And Samuel spoke unto all the house of Israel, saying: 'If ye do not return unto the Lord with all your heart, then put away the foreign gods and the Ashtoroth from among you, and direct your hearts unto the Lord, and serve Him only; then He will deliver you out of the hands of the Philistines.'"
62. "Because they have forsaken Me, and have worshipped Ashtoreth, the goddess of the Zidonians.....and they have not walked in My ways, to do that which is right in Mine eyes, and to keep My statutes, and Mine ordinances, as did David his father."
63. 31:10.

of Kedashim and Kedashoth. Whether the motive was that of ensuring fruitfulness and fructification of man and beast, or whether it was a degenerate practice that seeped into Canaan and perpetuated there because of its natural appeal to the masses, we are not directly informed through the passages themselves.^{63a} However, we do know that there were certain men, called Kedashim, and certain women, called Kedashoth, who were held in light esteem by the Biblical writers. In I Kings 14:24 we read: "And there were also ~~Sodomites~~^{male devotes} [Kedashim] in the land; they did according to all the abominations of nations which the Lord drove out before the children of Israel." In other places we find that the Kedashim are put out of the land by the kings themselves: I Kings 15:12⁶⁴ refers to the reforms of Asa, and I Kings 22:47⁶⁵, the reforms of Jehoshaphat. When we come to the Josianic reformation, we find that the "houses of the Kedashim that were in the houses of the Lord"⁶⁶ were torn down, according to the injunction in the Deuteronomic code "that there shall be no harlots of the daughters of Israel, neither shall there be a sodomite of the sons of Israel."⁶⁷ That this practice was prevalent is evidenced by the prophetic outburst of Jeremiah who said that "upon every high hill and under every leafy tree, thou didst recline, playing the harlot,"⁶⁸

63a. Dr. Glueck is of the opinion that the motive was essentially religious.

64. "And he put the sodomites out of the land."

65. "And the remnant of the Kedashim that remained in the days of his father Asa, he put out of the land."

66. II K. 23:7.

67. Deut. 23:18

68. Jeremiah 2:20.

and doubtlessly Jeremiah has reference to the sensuous worship of Astarte. And even Hosea protests when he declares: "I will not punish your daughters when they commit harlotry, nor your daughters-in-law when they commit adultery; for they themselves consort with lewd women and they sacrifice with harlots."⁶⁹ It is not too much to construe from these passages that sacred prostitution was sanctioned by the people during the early period of Israel's history, and that sacred prostitution, with its Kedashim and Kedashoth, was connected with the worship of Astarte. Of course, the main burden of our proof lies in the fact that Astarte was worshipped in a similar fashion in countries surrounding Palestine and by peoples who influenced greatly Israel's religious history. However, the writer believes that we have among the figurines an indication of the fact that sacred prostitution among the Israelites had some connection with the Astarte cult, and proof of the prevalence of the Astarte cult in general.

We take as our starting point the "parturition goddesses" that⁷⁰ have been discovered during the past ten years. By their very nature and size, it is quite improbable that these were set up in the Temples and worshipped, but it is likely that they served as potent amulets or icons, assisting, so to speak, the woman who is⁷¹ with child. This image of a goddess in the process of accouchement symbolized the major function of Astarte, namely, as a goddess of

69. Hosea 4:14, Lev. 19:29.

70. supra, p. 5.

71. A.P.B. p. 109 ff.

fertility and productiveness. From the Biblical evidence we have every reason to believe that the sexual activity of Astarte and Tammuz, her lover, was imitated at the sanctuaries by the Kedashim and Kedashoth. In fact, from the constant repetition and warnings, as well as from the contemporaneous words of Jeremiah and Hosea and the editors of the historical books, we may conjecture that it was customary among the women to give themselves up to strangers in the name of the goddess of love, as was the practice among the ancient women of Cyprus, Babylon, and Byblos.⁷² It is quite possible that these parturition goddesses represent a sublimation of the actual sexual relationship to which the women had formerly subjected themselves in order to ensure themselves of fertility and productivity. Now, instead of sacrificing her chastity to the goddess, it was perhaps sufficient to show proper reverence to these icons, accompanied by a monetary gift for the support of the cult at some main sanctuary.

Interesting to our subject are the "dove-goddesses," the figurines⁷³ of Astarte which were found clasping doves to their bosom. According⁷⁴ William Robertson Smith⁷⁵ and James G. Frazer, the dove was a⁷⁶ sacred bird to the goddess. Frazer, quoting Disgenianus Praefatio, points to the custom prevalent among the Cyprians that after the death of Adonis, in the name of Astarte, his loved one, live doves

72. supra, p. 9.

73. supra, p. 6 ff.

74. R.S., p. 355 ff.

75. G.B. vol. V, p. 147.

76. Edited by E.L. Leutsch and F.G. Schneideurin, Göttingen, 1851.

It is said you are preserving the form, as a part of the fertility goddess, as a part of the fertility goddess, as a part of the fertility goddess.

were cast upon an altar to him, and the birds, flying away from the flames, fell into another pyre and were consumed. According to the testimony of Lucian,⁷⁷ at the Syrian Hieropolis, one of the chief seats of Astarte's worship, doves were so holy that they might not be touched, and if a man inadvertently touched a dove, he was unclean, or taboo, for the rest of the day. Further evidence of the fact that the dove was sacred to Astarte can be found upon cairns of the Imperial Age which represent Astarte's sanctuary as surrounded⁷⁸ by pairs of doves.

It is not mere coincidence that the dove is imparted a sacrosanct character in the Biblical literature, just as it was considered sacred among the devotees of Astarte. Positive, conclusive evidence in support of this view is lacking, but it is remarkable that the dove, although a "clean" bird, is never mentioned in the Old Testament as an article of diet.⁷⁹ Its sacredness is further attested^{to} by the fact that the Tor and Gazal are used in an old covenant ceremony.⁸⁰ In the priestly legislation, "turtle-doves" and "young pigeons" are employed as sacrificial victims in ceremonies which do⁸¹ not involve a sacrificial meal. This exceptive treatment of the dove would seem to suggest that originally the Hebrews were wont to ascribe to the bird a certain sacredness; similar to that which it received in the Astarte cult, proof of which we have from the excavated figurines holding the doves to their breast.

77. *Opera - De Dea Syria*. Ed. C. Jacobitz, Leipzig, 1881. Paragraph 54.

78. *G.B.* vol. 5, p. 33.

79. In I K. 5:2 ff., a list of Solomon's provisions is made, and among them there is not mentioned the dove. W.R. Smith, p. 219, considers the dove a sacred bird among the Semites, since it is never mentioned as an edible fowl in O.T., yet today it is one of the commonest table-birds all over the East.

80. Gen. 15:9.

81. Lev. 5:8; 12:6, 8; 14:5, 22; 15:14, 29.

According to the Beth-Shan inscription upon one of the figurines, where Astarte is called "queen of heaven, mistress of all the gods,"⁸² we might expect to find her so called in Biblical literature. Twice does Jeremiah use the phrase as opprobrium. In one place he says: "The children gather wood, and the fathers kindle fire, and the women knead the dough to make cakes to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto other gods, that they may provoke Me."⁸³ In another place he speaks in the name of the people, saying: "But we will certainly perform every word that is given forth out of our mouth, to offer unto the queen of heaven.... for then we had plenty of food, and were well, and saw no evil. But since we left off to offer to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings to her, we have wanted all things, and have been consumed by the sword and by the famine."⁸⁴ Thus we have definite proof from archeological remains that the term "queen of heaven" was not an expression coined by Jeremiah, but was an actual appellation by which⁸⁵ the people knew and worshipped the goddess Astarte.

⁸⁶
The passage in Jeremiah where it speaks of the women kneading dough to make cakes for the queen of heaven, has been clarified by some recent finds upon the Beth-Shan site. From the Pre-Amenophis level (1446-1412) there were excavated a quantity of mud models of

82. supra, p. 7.

83. Jeremiah 7:18.

84. *ibid*, 44:17 ff.

85. Compare Jeremiah 19:13; 8:2A; II K. 21:3-5; Zephaniah 1:5, where the people are remonstrated for their worship of the "host of heaven." Though we have no archeological proof of the last ten years to prove that the "host of heaven" refers to Astarte, we may infer this from the fact that she was so called among the devotees in countries surrounding Palestine. [J.B.L., vol. X, p. 75-77].

86. 7:18.

cake offerings, some cylindrical and some like a thick disk with a hole in the middle.⁸⁷ Similar models, cigar-shaped and about three and one-half inches in length, were taken from temples of the Amenophis III level.⁸⁸ In a Seti I temple, a baking tray was found,⁸⁹ which was used to make cakes to be offered to Ashtoreth. It is the suggestion of Rowe, and not the writer's, that these mud models of bread cakes have something to do with the cakes Jeremiah mentions as being offered to the queen of heaven. In the opinion of the writer, the one thing that seems to militate against the suggestion of Rowe is the fact that these finds belong to a period some seven hundred years before the time of Jeremiah. Of course, it is tempting to make the association, especially since there has been found a nigh unbroken chain of Astarte figurines dating as far back as the Middle Bronze and as recent as the Early Iron II. Perhaps Rowe took the inductive leap without too much evidence,-- namely, since there were Astarte figurines over a period of seven hundred years, ergo, there must have been these cakes offered to her at all times, though he (Rowe) found them only in the LB and EI I. But Jeremiah must have witnessed the presence of these figurines because EI II abounds in Astarte goddesses and cult objects and, therefore, he must have known the methods of worship employed. If so, then Rowe has not been fallacious in his deductions.

In our discussion of the Ashtoreth cult, we cannot overlook the combination of Baal and Astarte, holding a sort of dual sovereignty

87. P.E.F.Q.S. 1928, p. 83.

88. *ibid.*, p. 85.

89. P.E.F.Q.S. 1927, p. 73.

over the affairs of mankind. One of the most important objects found at the Bethel site belonging to Late Bronze was discovered in an ancient dump inside of the city wall. The context was Middle Bronze II, Late Bronze, Early Iron I, allowing a scope of several centuries.⁹⁰ The find is a seal cylinder made of frit, which Albright⁹² believes was fashioned either in Egypt for Asiatic consumption, or, more likely, manufactured at Gaza or another town under strong Egyptian influence. Facing one another are two deities, each holding a spear, the two of which serve as a frame for the hieroglyphic inscription which means Astarte. The female goddess, or Astarte, is here represented as wearing the high Egyptian tiara with the feathers of the "two truths" on each side of it; from her tiara stream down two ribbons "which indicate royalty in Canaan." She wears a long robe, and holds the ankh sign Egyptian cross in her right hand. Opposite her stands the male deity, Baal, wearing a waist-cloth, and brandishing the Egyptian scimitar in his right⁹³ hand.

It is not a surprise to find these two deities associated together. To the agricultural Semites, Baal was the source of fertility of the land; it was he who produced the corn, the vine, the figs, the oil and the flax, by means of his quickening waters. Further, the life-giving power of the god was not limited to vegetative nature, but he also was responsible for the increase of animal life, multiplication of the flocks and herds, and, of course, the increase of the human inhabitants of the land.⁹⁴

90. A.J.A., vol. 39, p. 141.

91. Illustration, Bulletin #56, p. 1.

92. *ibid.*, p. 7.

93. *ibid.*

94. R.S., p. 95-107.

However, when Baal changed from an impersonal, vague spirit to a personal god, he, like the other gods of the pantheon, acquired a female counterpart, known as Baalah.⁹⁵ Baalah had practically the same functions to perform as her consort Baal. But at this point a noteworthy change took place. When Bel-Marduk came over from the East and became Baal, it was quite natural that his female counterpart, Ishtar, should come too. "When Baal acquired his consort like the gods proper, she also became Baalah, a goddess. That is to say, not only from an impersonal being to a personal being was developed, but at the same time a generic title became a proper name. From Baal in general, regarded as an undefined being, grew 'the Baal' as a definite individual who represented the genus. And correspondingly, it was not long before the Baalah acquired an independent proper name, Ashtart. The name became so familiar that, except in Byblos and Sinai, the Baalah falls almost entirely into the background and in her place the Baal, who remained firmly rooted from of yore, frequently had Ashtart at his side."⁹⁶

This not only helps us understand the cylinder unearthed at Bethel, but it, with the cylinder, sheds light upon certain passages in the Bible. In several places Baal and Ashtaroth are mentioned together. In Judges 2:13 we read: "and they forsook the Lord and served Baal and Ashtaroth." Farther along we have the following: "And the children of Israel again did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord and served Him not."⁹⁷ A similar

95. G.B. vol. V, p. 27.

96. Kittel, R., The Religion of the People of Israel, 1925, p. 24 ff.

97. Judges 10:6.

expression is found in I Samuel 12:10: "And they cried out unto the Lord and said: 'We have sinned, because we have forsaken the Lord, and have served Baalim and Ashtoroth,'" A further expression of the people's guilt reads: "Then the children of Israel did put away the Baalim and Ashtoroth, and served the Lord only."⁹⁸

The writer is of the opinion that the mentioning of these two deities together refers to the common sovereignty which they held, as we found graphically illustrated on the Bethel stall. The objection might be raised, and perhaps rightly so, that their proximity is merely coincidental, rising from the fact that they both are categorized as abominations, and hence are mentioned together. Yet our evidence serves to point to the fact that the two deities were worshipped together, and that there existed between them a functional relationship. The fact that we find them mentioned together in the Bible should strengthen our suspicion that they were associated in the service rendered them by their followers.

From the evidence that has been uncovered, we may conclude that the worship of Astarte was a common practice among the Hebrews from the time they entered the land of Canaan and adopted the agricultural techniques of the inhabitants until the day they were dispersed by the Babylonian conquests. We reason from the following facts -- namely, that figurines were discovered as early as the Middle Bronze and continue to be found in all successive levels of operation: Late Bronze, Early Iron I, and Early Iron II. The presence of these figurines plus the Biblical injunction against their worship strongly suggest that the cult was prevalent among the majority of the people.

98. I Sam. 7:4.

Secondly, from the material at hand, we were able to deduce the type of Astarte goddesses that were worshipped: a) the dea nuda b) the dea nutrix c) the parturition goddesses d) the dove goddess. Of two of the four types we were able to find some Biblical correlation. We ~~connected~~ ^{showed the relationship of} the parturition goddesses with the Kedashoth of the Bible, and the dove-goddesses with the sacrosanct character of the dove, as expressed in the book of Leviticus. The other two types seemed to fall naturally also under the category of Ashtoroth, which are prohibited and spoken of innumerable times throughout the books of the Old Testament.

Thirdly, we may infer from the moulds which were found that the figurines were not imported but were fashioned by the people themselves who worshipped them.

II.

Adonis and Tammuz Cult

With the Adonis or Tammuz cult so closely allied in ideology with the Astarte cult, it is not with surprise that we find archeological remains of cult objects used in connection with the worship of Adonis or Tammuz. In fact, the discovery of Astarte remains precluded the unearthing of cult objects pertaining to Adonis, because both sprang from a common background and homage to them both was necessary for the well-being of an agricultural people.

Naturally enough, the past ten years of archeological research have furnished us with sufficient evidence to indicate that the worship of Adonis was prevalent in Palestine. At the outset, though, let it be called to the attention of the reader that the evidence for our proof is not nearly as overwhelming as it was in the case of the Astarte figurines.

At modern Hama, the ancient site of Hamoth, the Danish expedition, under the direction of Professor Harold Ingholt⁹⁹ of the American University of Beirut, uncovered several cult-stands of the Middle Bronze Age. Albright, in reviewing the work of the Danish expedition, suggests that these were stands in which flowers were planted,¹⁰⁰ devoted to Adonis.

At Beth-Zur, Sellers discovered similar flower-stands taken from¹⁰¹ the same stratum as those at Hamoth.

99. A.J.A. vol. 38, p. 198.

100. *ibid.*

101. Bulletin #43, p. 6.

At Beth-Shan, in a Temple belonging to the Seti I level (1319-1301), was found a cylindrical, sacred flower stand adorned with figures of birds.¹⁰² Also at Beth-Shan, there was uncovered a temple belonging to the Ramses II level (1301-1235), in which were found more cylindrical flower-stands, many of which were decorated with figures of serpents, doves, and deities.¹⁰³ The temples of Ramses II were dedicated to the war-god Reshep and the war-goddess Antit. However, these deities were later supplanted by Dagon and Astarte, and these Canaanitish deities persist until the shrines were destroyed.¹⁰⁴ Rowe is of the opinion that King David drove out the Philistines cir. 1000 B.C.E., at which time he practically demolished the "Houses of Ashtoroth" and the "Temple of Dagon." However, in the new temple, which David built upon the debris of the old, there were found small stands which served as vases for sacred flowers or plants.¹⁰⁵

These flower stands seem naturally to provoke the thought that the worship of Adonis was accompanied by some magical or imitative rites which employed flowers or some forms of vegetative growth.¹⁰⁶ Frazer points to the "gardens of Adonis" which were tended by the devotees of that cult. He pictures these "gardens" as baskets or pots, filled with earth, in which wheat, barley, lettuce, fennel, and various kinds of flowers were sown and cultivated for

102. New Discoveries at Beth-Shan, P.E.F.Q.S. 1927, p. 73.

103. *Ibid.*, p. 74-76.

104. P.E.F.Q.S. 1926, p. 210 ff.

105. P.E.F.Q.S. 1927, p. 78.

106. G.B. vol. V, p. 236.

eight days. Fostered by the sun's heat, the plants shot up rapidly, but, having no roots, they withered as rapidly, and at the end of eight days they were carried out and flung into the sea or springs.¹⁰⁷ These "gardens of Adonis" were interpreted as representatives of Adonis or manifestations of his power. These ceremonies, to which Frazer points above, were intended originally as charms to promote the growth or revival of vegetation; and the principle by which they are supposed to produce this effect was "homeopathic" or imitative magic. For the masses supposed that by mimicking the effect which they desired to produce they actually helped to produce it; thus, by sprinkling water, they made rain; by waving a torch or a lighted brand, they made sunshine; likewise, by imitating the growth of crops in these gardens they hoped to ensure a good harvest. The rapid growth of the plants was intended to make the crops shoot up, and the throwing of the dead plants into the water was a charm to¹⁰⁸ secure an abundant supply of needed rain.

But a moment's thought is sufficient to draw the implied analogy between the "gardens of Adonis" and the flower-stands which were discovered in the sanctuaries of Beth-Zur, Hamoth, and Beth-Shan, as described above.¹⁰⁹ If these flower-stands were the only cult objects in the sanctuary which suggested a connection with agricultural rites and ceremonies, then perhaps we would be forcing the issue by making an analogy between these flower-stands and the "gardens of

107. *ibid.*, quoting Raoul Rochette, "Memoire sur les jardins d'Adonis," *Revue Archeologique*, VIII, p. 97-123.

108. *ibid.*, p. 237 ff.

109. *supra*, p. 22 ff.

Adonis." However, in the same sanctuaries were found the Astarte
110
figurines, which served the same magical purpose as the flowers
which were planted in the sacred stands. Hence, the writer feels
more than safe in associating the "gardens of Adonis" with the
sacred flower-stands of the sanctuaries.

Granting this premise, we must take the logical step and
concede the possibility that other rites, such as characterized
Adonis' worship in other countries, may have been introduced into
the Israelitish sanctuaries, along with the gardens. To know what
these rites were necessitates an inquiry into the legends concerning
Adonis, and the method of his worship in those countries where he
held sway.

The tragic story of Adonis is better known to us through de-
scriptions by Greek writers, rather than from the fragmentary
references in Babylonian literature. In Greek mythology, the deity
appears as a youth beloved by Aphrodite. In his infancy the goddess
hid him in a chest, which she gave to Persephone, queen of the
nether-world. When Persephone opened the chest and saw the beauty
of the child, she refused to return him to Aphrodite, though the
goddess of love went down herself to ransom Adonis from the power
of the grave. The dispute between the goddess of love and the god-
dess of Death was settled by Zeus, who decreed that Adonis should
abide with Persephone in the under-world for one part of the year
(winter) and with Aphrodite, the other part (summer). Adonis, at
last, is killed by a wild boar, and bitterly does Aphrodite bewail

110. supra, p. 1, 2, 6.

Relate this paragraph to a note. It would perhaps be well to put pages 25-28 in a note or

the loss of her lover. The contest between Aphrodite and Persephone for the possession of Adonis reflects the struggle between Ishtar and Allatu in the land of the dead, while the decision of Zeus that Adonis is to spend one part of the year underground and one part of the year above ground, represents the Greek version of the annual disappearance and reappearance of Tammuz.¹¹¹

The study of the Adonis legend and his worship among the peoples of Byblos and Paphos has led Frazer to the conclusion that among Semitic peoples in early times, Adonis, "the divine lord of the city," was often impersonated by priestly kings and members of the royal family, and that these, Adonis' human representatives, were put to death in their divine character. This same point of view is advanced by William Robertson Smith who is of the opinion "that the wailing for Adonis first began as a mourning for the death of a [human] sacrificial victim."¹¹³ But as time went on, this cruel custom was mitigated in various ways; for example, by substituting an effigy or an animal for the man, and by allowing the destined victim to escape with a make-believe sacrifice. This evidence, Frazer admits, is drawn from ambiguous and fragmentary sources, and it is not until Hellenic times that we get a clear picture of the Adonis cult. In Western Asia and in Greek lands the death of Adonis was annually mourned by wailing and laments, the main feature of which ceremony was the dead image of Adonis being carried to the sea and

111. Frazer, p. 10-12, quoting W. Baudissin, Adonis und Esmun, p. 152 ff.

112. G.B. vol. V, p. 223.

113. R.S. p. 411.

and committed to the waves, and then songs were rendered to the effect that the lost one would return again.¹¹⁴

The worship of Adonis is not indigenous to Greece. The roots of the cult find their anchorage in the Babylonian religion. It seems that the Greeks borrowed this worship from the Babylonians as early as 700 hundred years before the common era, because the mourning for Adonis is mentioned first by Sappho, who flourished about 600 B.C.E.¹¹⁵ The original name of the deity was Tammuz, or, as he is called in Babylonian literature, "Dummuzi."¹¹⁶ The appellation "Adonis" is an adaptation of the Semitic "Adon," "lord," a title of honor by which his worshippers addressed him.¹¹⁷ In religious literature, Tammuz was originally the sun-god, the son of Ea and the goddess Sirdu, and the bridegroom of the goddess Ishtar. The legendary poems of Babylonia describe him as a shepherd, cut off in the beauty of youth, or slain by the bear's tusk of winter, for whom the goddess Ishtar mourned long and vainly.¹¹⁸ She even descended into Hades in the hope of restoring him to life, and the hymn which described her descent through the seven gates of the infernal world was recited at the annual commemoration of the death of the god¹¹⁹

114. See note 112.

115. G.B. vol. V, p.7, quoting, Th. Bergk's Poetae Lyrici Graeci III, p. 897.

116. Barton, A Sketch of Semitic Origins, p. 85, citing: Lucian, De Syria Dea, paragraph 6.

117. G.B. vol. V, p. 7.

118. *supra*, p. 8.

119. Fully quoted in the Hebraica, vol. IX, p. 151 ff.

along with laments and loud wailings by the men and the women, -- especially the latter took a prominent part in the recitation of the dirge. This took place in Babylon on the second day of the fourth month which bore the name of Tammuz. Ishtar was believed to have mourned her lover with the words, "O my brother, the only son!" and to these the mourners rejoined with the chorus "Ah me! Ah me!"¹²⁰ When Tammuz entered Canaan and became Adonai, he ceased to be the young, beautiful sun-god, but changed into an agricultural deity to become lord of vegetation.¹²¹

As for the lament which was recited over the lost deity, W. R. Smith has an interesting commentary: "When an act of Semitic worship began with sorrow and lamentation -- as in the mourning for Adonis -- a swift revulsion of feeling followed and the gloomy part of the service was presently succeeded by a burst of hilarious revelry which was not a purely spontaneous expression of the conviction that man is reconciled with the powers that govern his life and rule the universe, but in great measure a mere orgiastic excitement. The nerves were strung to the utmost tension during the sombre part of the ceremony, and the natural reaction was fed by the physical stimulus and the revelry that followed."¹²² This particular interpretation should be kept in mind when we come to the discussion of the influence of the Tammuz cult upon the Israelitish festivals.

There are definite passages in the Bible which seem to indicate positively, that the Adonis cult, with its "plantings" and its

120. Sayce, A.H., Religion of the Ancient Babylonians, ch. IV.

121. Jastrow, M., Religion of Babylonia and Assyria, p. 482, 564 ff.
Barton, Sketch of Semitic Origins. p. 211 ff.

122. R.S., p. 262.

"gardens" was prevalent among the Israelites. The burden of our proof rests primarily upon an illuminating passage in Isaiah, 17: 10 ff.: "Though thou plantest (little gardens with) shoots of Adonis, and stockest them with scions (dedicated) to a foreign god, the harvest shall vanish in a day of sickness and desperate pain."¹²³ The phrase "shoots of Adonis"¹²⁴ undoubtedly refers to the "gardens of Adonis" -- baskets or flower-stands containing earth sown with various plants, which quickly sprang up and as quickly withered. That Adonis-worship flourished in Palestine when Isaiah wrote can be easily believed, because northern Israel, at this time, was especially susceptible to foreign influences. Israel turned to these foreign cults and practices because they believed Yahve was no longer powerful enough to protect them. This plus the fact that Israel had changed from a pastoral to an agricultural people, and with this change came a new emphasis upon the elements which control agricultural life, would seem to indicate that the cult was quite common throughout Israel. In another place does Isaiah admonish the people for these "gardens" in which they place their trust:¹²⁵ "And ye shall be confounded for the gardens that ye have chosen."¹²⁵ During the Josianid reformation, one of the abominable cult objects that was destroyed was the "altars that were on the roof of the upper chamber of Ahaz, which the kings of Judah had made."¹²⁶ ¹²⁷ Kittel

123. In justification of rendering, see T.K.Cheyne, Isaiah, I, p.108.

124. פ'גנאדא 'ר(ג)

125. 1:29b.

126. II K. 23:12.

127. Religion of the People of Israel, p. 149.

interprets this "altar" upon the roof of Ahaz's chamber to be an "arbor" devoted to the worship of Adonis.

Though not explicitly stated, the spirit of Adonis worship seems to have found its way into the prophecies of Hosea. It seems that Hosea is excoriating the people for their false worship of Yahve; they worship Yahve by the use of the Baal rites.¹²⁸ Then in a succeeding chapter he pictures the people trying to find their way back to Yahve, in which he says, as though speaking for the people:¹²⁹ "Come, and let us return unto the Lord; for He hath torn, and He will heal us, He hath smitten, and He will bind us up. After two days will He revive us; on the third day He will raise us up, that we may live in His presence." Hosea is really mocking the people for thinking that the good favor of the Lord can be so easily regained. Especially significant seems to be the second verse that "after two days will He revive us; on the third day He will raise us up, that we may live in His presence." In these few phrases Hosea seems to have caught the spirit of the people in their planting gardens to Adonis. The people believed that Yahve would restore them in two or three days just as they believed that the plantings and shoots dedicated to Adonis, which through tender care sprouted up in a few days, would ensure a good harvest. Hosea seems to be telling the people that they are so permeated with the religious idea underlying the Adonis worship that they can think of Yahve in no other terms. This is the writer's interpretation of the verse, which may be rejected if the reader feels that there has been anything of exaggeration.

128. 2:18 ff.

129. 6:1B.

130

As we stated above, though we found through archeological investigation evidences of Adonis worship in the sacred flower-stands, we must not neglect the thought that the presence of these flower-stands must also imply the worship of Tammuz, since both Adonis and Tammuz are so closely allied.

Of the worship of Tammuz the Bible seems to have preserved some evidence, especially that which is pertinent to the wailings and laments characteristic of the cult. The most obvious verse for our purpose is the one pertaining to one of the numerous visions of Ezekiel in which he is brought "to the door of the gates of the Lord's house which was toward the north; and behold, there sat the

women weeping for Tammuz." ¹³¹ Similarly interpreted is the passage that "it was a custom in Israel that the daughters of Israel went yearly to lament the daughter of Jephthah the Gileadite four days ¹³² in a year." ¹³³ It seems that a number of scholars recognize in the wailing for Jephthah's daughter a survival of the Tammuz wailing.

¹³⁴ As we noticed above, Ishtar was believed to have mourned her lover with the words, "O my brother, the only son!" It seems that Amos recalls a similar, if not the same, lament when he says: "And I will turn your feasts into mourning, and all your songs into lamentations; and I will bring up sackcloth upon all loins, and baldness upon every head; and I will make it as the mourning for an

130. supra, p. 22 ff.

131. 8:14.

132. Judges 11:40.

133. Smith, W.R., R.S., p. 415, 490. Moore, G.F. International Critical Commentary, on Judges, p. 305.

134. supra, p. 8 ff.

only son, and the end thereof as a bitter day.¹³⁵ The expression of lamentation for "an only son" is strongly reminiscent of the same idea in the Babylonian lament of Ishtar for Tammuz. Compare the mourner's chorus -- "Ah me! Ah me!" -- from the Babylonian lament with the following excerpt from Jeremiah: "They shall not lament for him: 'Ah my brother' or 'Ah sister!'" They shall not lament for him: 'Ah lord!' or 'Ah his glory!'"¹³⁶ There appears to be a definite correlation between the two.

The connection between the Adonis and Tammuz cults and the Israelitish agricultural festivals can be made clear with a little intensive investigation of the necessary Biblical verses. Judges¹³⁷ 21:19 and 21 state rather explicitly that the dances which were held in the vineyards were part of the celebration of an annual festival. According to Dr. Julian Morgenstern, quoting Josephus,¹³⁹ these dances were celebrated thrice annually, that is, presumably at the three annual harvest festivals. That these dances of the maidens in the vineyards were a regular and integral part of the celebration of the hag, and particularly of the Succoth-festival in pre-exilic times, is made clear from the picture in Jeremiah of the¹⁴⁰ maidens of Israel, "adorned with timbrels, going forth to the dances of the merry-makers," apparently at a time related to the sacred¹⁴¹

135. 8:10.

136. 22:18.

137. "And they said: 'Behold, there is the feast of the Lord from year to year in Shiloh.'"

138. "See and behold, if the daughters of Shiloh come out to dance in the dances, and then ye come out of the vineyards, and catch you every man his wife of the daughters of Shiloh."

139. J.A.O.S. XXXVI, p. 226

140. Antiquities, 5:2, 12.

141. 31:4-6, 12.

pilgrimage to Jerusalem and to the beginning of the planting season.¹⁴²
Dr. Morgenstern points out the fact that the fifteenth day of Ab,¹⁴³
the first day upon which, the Mishna states, the vineyard dances
were held, marked the close of an ancient, seven day festival, be-
ginning on the ninth of Ab, as usual with mourning, fasting, and
bemoaning the dead Adonis, and then culminating in rejoicing, merry-
making, feasting, dancing in the vineyards, sacred sexual inter-
course, and marriage of the participating youths and maidens on the
fifteenth day of the month.¹⁴⁴¹⁴⁵ Dr. Morgenstern is of the opinion that
these dances were celebrated in the earliest ritual in the honor of
the father-god Baal, the mother-goddess Astarte, and the divine
child, Tammuz. The more important festivals, such as Succoth and
Pesach, were celebrated for seven days. They began with a period of
fasting, mourning, and bodily affliction, for the dead god of vege-
tation, Tammuz. Day by day they became more and more joyous in the
thought that the dead deity had been, or soon would be, restored to
life with the crop of the new year. This increasing joyousness cul-
minated in the sacred dances upon the seventh day, characterized by¹⁴⁶
merry-making and unbridled license. Compare this latter with the
interpretation that William R. Smith puts upon the laments for¹⁴⁷
Adonis.

142. Morgenstern, J., J.Q.R., Two Ancient Israelite Agricultural Festivals. Reprint, p. 46 ff.

143. Taanith 418.

144. Note 139, op. cit., p. 321-332.

145. American Journal of Theology, vol. XXI, p. 283.

146. *ibid.*

147. *supra*, p. 31.

The Mazzoth-festival Dr. Morgenstern interprets in terms of the ancient Tammuz festival.¹⁴⁸ If the mazzoth-festival has its origin in the Tammuz cult, it should begin, as did all other such festivals, with a period of fasting and mourning for the dead and about-to-be revived god. Of actual mourning rites only a few traces remain; but there is definite evidence of the ceremony of fasting as preparatory to the celebrating of the mazzoth-festival. In ancient times it seems to have been the regular practice that all people fast on the day before the beginning of the festival, so that they might enjoy the opening feast and thereby perform the duty of eating mazzoth,¹⁴⁹ with the prescribed zeal. Such a fast one would expect as part of the celebration of an ancient Tammuz-festival.

There is also the custom observed by orthodox Jews of carefully searching out and destroying all leaven, so that there may not be¹⁵⁰ any possibility of its being eaten during the festival. Dr. Morgenstern interprets this custom, and also that of fasting as preparatory to the main celebration of the festival, in the light of similar customs, observed under practically parallel conditions, by primitive agricultural peoples. To quote him: "The entire Massoth-festival, we have shown, originally preceded the commencement of the harvest. The new crop could not be eaten until after its regular taboo sacrifice of the Omer, or first sheaf, had been properly offered on the day after the close of the Massoth-festival. The eating of the new

148. Note 145, op. cit., p. 284-291.

149. *ibid.*, p. 285, quoting Pesachim 108 a.

150. *ibid.*, p. 285, quoting Schulchan Aruk, 431-39.

crop is among primitive agricultural peoples a ceremony of deep religious significance, for which careful preparation must be made, since the entire life of the people is bound up with the new crop. Before the first mouthful of the new crop may be taken, the old crop must be completely destroyed, put out of the way completely. Under no condition may it be mixed with the new crop, even in the bodies of the eaters. They must fast for a definite period, and very often use strong purgatives and emetics in order that absolutely not one grain of the old crop may remain in their bodies at the time when the new crop is first eaten. Otherwise the two crops would be commingled, and the new crop, the food supply for the coming year, would be contaminated and rendered unfit for use.¹⁵¹

With this understood, the connection between the Israelitish festival and Tammuz is clear. Since Tammuz was the crop, and represented all types of grains and products made therefrom, the burning of the remains of the old crop and the eating of the Mazzoth, as a religious rite, were naught but the "expression and practical realization" of the well-known idea that the old Tammuz must be put out of the way completely before the new Tammuz -- the new crop -- can be actually born or reborn.¹⁵²

We have thus seen, with the discovery of the sacred flower-stands, how the worship of Adonis was conducted in the Israelitish sanctuaries, and how that worship compared with similar rites con-

151. *ibid.*, p. 285, 286.

152. *ibid.*, p. 291.

ducted in surrounding countries, both before and after Israel's settlement in Canaan. We further showed how the sacred flower-stands gave us a clue to the Tammuz cult, and how the Tammuz cult affected the very festivals of Israel, which we today celebrate.

III.

Hand This ch. with Asheras ^{oth} "Ashera". The plural can be either more or less.

Probably as important and as prominent among the sacred cult objects of the people of Israel as the Ashtoroth and Adonis-flower-stands, were the Asher~~oth~~. The expression of doubt is not altogether uncalled-for, because, as we shall see, the finds of the last ten years in archeology have yielded but scant evidence of the fact that the Asheras were an outstanding feature of Israelitish worship. Perhaps we shall be able to offer some solution to this problem -- namely, the paucity of archeological material as contrasted with the superfluity of Biblical evidence -- once we have concluded our study of this particular cult object.

In 1929 at Tel-en-Nasbeh, ¹⁵³ Bade excavated a building of four rooms, similar in plan to the Israelitish sanctuary uncovered in ¹⁵⁴ 1927. In one of these rooms was found a stand or post, the top of which was fashioned like a three-pronged branch of a tree. ¹⁵⁵ Bade has dated the objects in this room LB.

At Beth-Shan in the Temple of Thothmes III ¹⁵⁶ Rowe has uncovered several cylinders upon which were moulded the figures of sacred trees or Asheras. One was Syro-Hittite blue frit cylinder-seal ¹⁵⁷ showing a god holding a sacred tree in his left hand. From certain

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153. Bulletin #37, p. 8.
154. Bulletin #26
155. Note 153.
156. 1501-1447 B.C.E.
157. P.E.F.Q.S. 1929, p. 91.

small rooms to the east of the Temple proper came three faience
cylinder-seals showing what Rowe believes to be sacred trees. In
the Mekal Temple courtyard there was found two seals, one green-
glazed upon which was a single sacred tree, and the other white-
glazed, showing a sacred tree along with a divine figure in human
form.

At Gezer, upon a Canaanitish high-place, there was unearthed
great numbers of stone objects, each one fashioned as to represent
an exaggeration of the male sex organs. The writer has included
this find under Ashera, because one scholar has advanced the theory
that the Ashera represented the phallic symbol. E. Masterman has
dated these objects LB.

There have been many theories advanced as to the origin of the
Ashera, as to exactly what it represented when used in the cultus
and what it developed into through diffusion into other cultures and
religions. G. A. Barton believes that the limits of the primitive
Semitic sanctuary were marked by wooden posts, and that in the course
of time the name of the post was changed in certain localities, as
in South Arabia and in the Lebanon region of Syria, to apply to a
goddess. Barton derives the evidence for this statement from the

158. P.E.F.Q.S. 1929, p. 76.
159. Flourished 1460-1225 B.C.E.
160. Note 157, p. 82.
161. P.E.F.Q.S. 1934, p. 140.
162. See below, p. 39 ff.
163. Note 161.
164. S.O., p. 106.

This is a theory, not a fact: definitely established.
no means

fact that Ashera means "sanctuary" in the Phoenician inscription from Masub, and its philological equivalent, Ashirtu, is used in Assyrian for sanctuary.¹⁶⁵

S. A. Cook more or less bears out Barton, in his discussion of the origin of the Ashera. He points to the fact that the sacred tree or tree-trunk is quite common throughout South Western Asia. Sometimes a tree is shorn of branches and lopped off short,¹⁶⁶ and among the Kissil Bashi of the upper Tigris a trimmed oak-trunk stands under another tree at the eastern end of the village within a railed-off space into which only the "father-priest" may enter.¹⁶⁷ This latter fact seems to agree with Barton's theory that the posts or sacred trees marked off the boundaries of the sanctuary.

On the other hand, Cook offers evidence which seems to prove that the Ashera was originally the name of a goddess. In a dedication on behalf of Hammurabi, Ashera is called "bride of the king of heaven." In a cuneiform tablet found at Taanach reference is made to an omen "by the finger of the deity Ashirat;" and in the Amarna letters her name occurs in that of the great anti-Egyptian Amorite chief, Abd-Ashirtu.¹⁶⁸

Reverend G. W. Collins suggests that in the name Ashera we have the Assyrian, "isaru," which denotes the phallus, and, further, that

165. S.O., citing Hommel in Expository Times, Jan., 1900, p. 190.

166. Cook, S.A., Notes to Third Edition, Religion of Semites, p. 561 citing Vincent, Canaan, p. 144 ff.

167. Note 166, op. cit., *ibid.*, quoting Standard, Sept. 19, 1904.

168. Note 166, op. cit., *ibid.*

the constant connection in which we find it placed with Baal indicates that the Ashera represented that aspect of the Baal cultus¹⁶⁹ which is called phallic.

The question can rightly be asked here: how did the tree acquire its sacred character? W. R. Smith attributes the adoption of the tree symbols at Canaanite sanctuaries to the fact that all Canaanite Baalim were intimately associated with naturally fertile spots and¹⁷⁰ consequently worshipped as the donors of vegetable increase.

To begin with, the life-blood of the god was conceived as diffused through the sacred waters, which this became filled with divine life and energy. It was an easy extension of this idea to suppose that the tree, which over-shadowed the sacred fountain or stream and drew strength from the moisture at its roots, was infused with a particle of divine life. The ancients believed that one and the same divine life could be shared by a number of objects, namely, if all of them were nourished from the same source. As regards the connection between holy waters and holy trees, we are reminded that in most Semitic lands, trees can flourish only where there is underground water, and where springs and wells exist beside the trees. Hence, it is not difficult to arrive at the idea that the same life that is manifest in water is likewise manifest in the surrounding vegetation. That is a probable explanation of how the sacred tree¹⁷¹ became infected with a ^{sacred} sanctimonious character.

169. Society of Biblical Archeology, Proceedings, vol. XI, p. 295.

170. R.S., p. 190.

171. *ibid.*

The place the cult of trees held in the more developed forms of Semitic religion W. R. Smith is not able to determine. He seems convinced that there is no room to believe that any of the greater Semitic cults was developed out of tree worship.¹⁷² The feature that is common to all Semitic cults is the altar service.¹⁷³ But, as Smith points out, since we find that no Canaanite high place was complete without its sacred tree standing beside the altar, and when we assume the undoubted fact that the direct cult of trees was familiar to all Semitic groups, then it is almost impossible to avoid the conclusion that some elements of tree worship entered into the ritual of those deities who in their origin were not tree gods.¹⁷⁴

The local sanctuaries of the Hebrews, which the prophets regarded as purely heathenish and which were fashioned after the Canaanitish plan, were primarily altar sanctuaries.¹⁷⁵ But from the prohibition in Deuteronomy, we may assume that the altars were always set up "under green trees," and also that the altar was incomplete without an Ashera beside it. Whether it was a living tree or a tree-like post we can not tell from the passages, but in all probability either was acceptable. The oldest altars, as we gather from the accounts of the patriarchal sanctuaries,¹⁷⁶ stood under actual trees. But, according to Smith, this rule could not always be followed, for in the period of the kings it would seem that the place

172. *ibid.*, p. 186.

173. *ibid.*, p. 187.

174. *ibid.*

175. 16:21 * "Thou shalt not plant an Ashera of any kind of wood [or tree] beside the altar of Yahve."

176. Gen. 12:6, 13:8, 21:33.

of the living tree was taken by a dead post or pole, "planted in the ground like an English Maypole."¹⁷⁷

The next task we shall set for ourselves will be to study the Biblical references to Asheras, and from these to try to understand both how they functioned in the Israelitish cult and how our archeological evidence throws light upon this entire material.

First, though, let us try to determine from the Biblical references at what time in Israel's history the Ashera worked its way into the sanctuaries. From Exodus 34:13, Deuteronomy 7:5, and 12:3, we learn that the children of Israel are commanded to cut down the Asherim, which belong to the Amorites, Canaanites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites, whose land they are dispossessing. When in Judges 3:7 we read the interesting comment: "And the children of Israel did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, and forgot the Lord their God, and served the Baalim and Asheroth." This follows a previous statement saying that the Israelites "dwelt among the Canaanites, the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites; and they took their daughters to be their wives, and gave their own daughters to their sons, and served their gods."¹⁷⁸ This would seem to indicate that after the Israelites conquered the Canaanitish tribes, they settled among them, and adopted their Canaanite mode of worship. That the Ashera was part of the furnishings of the Canaanitish high-places we learn from I Kings 14:23, II Kings 18:4, and Judges 6:25-30. And further proof of the

¹⁷⁷. R.S., p. 188.

¹⁷⁸. Judges 3:5 ff.

fact that the Israelites adopted these high-places with the Asheras is derived from such passages as Micah 5:13 ff., Isaiah 17:8, 27:9, Jeremiah 17:2, II Kings 17:10, 16. The worship of the Asheras must have become, more or less, universally adopted, because we learn that they not only stood at the Canaanite places of worship, but they found their way into the prominent sanctuaries at Samaria,¹⁷⁹ Bethel,¹⁸⁰ and Jerusalem.¹⁸¹

That the Ashera was wood we learn from Judges 6:26 - "and offer a burnt-offering with the wood of the Ashera which thou hast cut down."¹⁸² It could be artificially made as implied in Isaiah 17:8,¹⁸³ I Kings 14:15,¹⁸⁴ 16:33.¹⁸⁵ It sometimes was carved,¹⁸⁶ draped,¹⁸⁷ made in the likeness of an image;¹⁸⁸ it could be cut down,¹⁸⁹ plucked up,¹⁹⁰ burnt down,¹⁹¹ and broken in pieces.¹⁹²

A hint as to exactly what their function was in the sanctuary can be gained from II Kings 23:7 - "And he broke down the houses of the sodomites, that were in the house of the Lord, where the women wove coverings for the Ashera." In commenting on this verse, W. R. Smith offers an interesting suggestion. According to a myth told at

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179. II K. 13:6.
 180. II K. 23:15.
 181. II K. 23:6
 182. This could imply that the Asheras were large in size.
 183. "Neither shall he look to that which his fingers have made, either to the Asherim...."
 184. "Because they have made Asherim."
 185. "And Ahab made the Ashera."
 186. II Ch. 15:16, I K. 15:13.
 187. II K. 23:7.
 188. I K. 15:13.
 189. Ex. 34:13.
 190. Micah 5:14.
 191. Deut. 12:3.
 192. II Ch. 34:4.
 193. R.S., p. 191 Note 3, quoting Plutarch, Isis and Osiris, paragraphs 15 and 16.

to the practice of covering altars with cloths. In this case the prophet speaks only that they were pledged garments.

Byblos during the time of Plutarch, the sacred erica, which was worshipped at the temple, was naught but a sacred stump, for it was cut down by Isis and presented to the Byblians, wrapped in a linen cloth and anointed with myrrh like a corpse. This erica suggests the Ashera.¹⁹⁴ Can the "coverings which the women wove for the Ashera" in II Kings 23:7 be compared to the Byblian ritual of draping the stump with linen cloth?

Certain scholars, chief among whom is Kuenen,¹⁹⁵ are of the opinion that the Ashera is a goddess. The burden of their proof rests upon such passages as Judges 3:7, I Kings 15:13, 18:19, II Kings 23:4, and II Chronicles 15:16. In these passages the Asheras are mentioned in connection with the Baalim. In other words, the images of the goddesses stood next to those of the god, the images being the posts or stumps which were sacred in character. This interpretation seems all the more plausible when we read that there were "prophets of Ashera."¹⁹⁶ W. R. Smith dismisses the entire idea with the suggestion that in those passages where the Baalim are mentioned with the Ashera it is simply that later writers have confused the sacred post with the Assyrian goddess Astarte.¹⁹⁷ Meager as our archeological evidence was concerning the Asheras, the writer believes that some light has been cast upon the problem when certain material is taken into consideration. It will be remembered

194. *ibid.*

195. *The Religion of Israel*, vol. I, p. 75, 88, 247.

196. I K. 18:19, II K. 21:7.

197. R.S., p. 560 ff.

Amos 2, 8 which seems to refer

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that at Bethan several cylinders were found, upon which were depicted
sacred trees, or Asheras. One showed a god holding a sacred tree.¹⁹⁸
On another cylinder was represented a sacred tree together with a
deity.¹⁹⁹ This seems strongly to suggest that the Ashera was con-
sidered a counterpart of a deity, perhaps Baal -- if not a counter-
part, then very intimately connected with him, which would fit in
with the theory that the tree was suffused with sacredness through
its contact with a deity.²⁰⁰

Biblical evidence seems to support Collins' theory that the
Ashera was a phallic symbol. The word occurs in the feminine plural
only three times,²⁰² while in the masculine plural nineteen times. In
I Kings 15:13, II Kings 21:7, and II Chronicles 15:16, we have the
expression, "planting an Ashera," which Collins takes to mean an
upright post and therefore a phallic symbol.²⁰³ The exaggerated male
sex organs which were found at Gezer would seem to lend credence to
Collins' view.²⁰⁴

The lack of evidence from archeological research, concerning
the Asheras, may be as significant as if a great amount of evidence
had been uncovered. The absence of material, perhaps, indicates the
thoroughgoing reforms of the Deuteronomic Reformation, thus leaving

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198. supra, p. 37.
199. supra, p. 37.
200. supra, p. 37 ff.
201. supra, p. 39 ff.
202. Judges 3:7, II Ch. 19:3, 33:3.
203. S.B.A. vol. XI, p. 296 ff.
204. supra, p. 38.

us with lukewarm hints as to the fact that the Asheras even played a part in Israelitish worship. The writer is of the opinion that "archeological silence" speaks eloquently for the success of the Josianic Reformation.

Not necessarily! The wood of which the Ashera was made must have decayed and disintegrated in more cases, than its absence can be ascribed to a purge.

IV.

Massebas *th*

As we noted in our previous study of the Ashera, the Canaanite high place was characterized by the presence of two important cult objects, the Ashera and the Masseba. It is not the purpose of this paper, nor any of its sections, to discuss the "bima," or the place the "bima" filled in ancient Canaanitish and Israelitish worship. However, once we have studied the Ashera and the Masseba, their prevalence and their function, we shall have had indirectly an insight into the "bima."²⁰⁵

The Massebas, or pillars, which have been excavated during the past ten years, the writer has classified under four headings. The first group includes those pillars which seem to have had little or nothing to do with the sacrificial cult, but rather were a type of memorial or witness stone. The second group includes those pillars which were actually used for sacrificial purposes or else were used in connection with some ceremonial rites such as anointing, stroking, or kissing. The third group represents those pillars which were not used for sacrificial altars but which stood at the side of the altars. The fourth group is represented by the sun-pillars. Of course, these divisions are logical ones, and therefore, we must make allowance for the possibility of overlapping between groups. We shall now discuss the extant Massebas under these four headings.

205. For the physical appearance of the Biblical "High Place," see Oesterley and Robinson, Hebrew Religion, Its Origin and Development, p. 124.

Of the first group there were several specimens found in Moab, some at ²⁰⁶Ader and others at Ain Lejjun. To the north-east of Ader Dr. Glueck uncovered three monoliths among sherds belonging to the early Middle Bronze and extending into Early Bronze. "One upright monolith is about four and a half meters high, 40 centimeters thick, and tapering in width from 1.4 meters at its base to one meter at a height of two meters and about 60 centimeters at the top." ²⁰⁷Near this Massebah are two more lying on the ground. One is 3.8 meters long, 40 centimeters deep, and one meter wide. The other menhir has practically the same measurements. ²⁰⁸At Ain Lejjun, ²⁰⁹upon a slope below the north-western corner of the seti, there was found a curved row of sixteen massebas, running north and south, with a few of them having fallen down. The stones are plain limestone, most of them ²¹⁰about 1.5 meters high. Dr. Glueck has dated them Middle Bronze.

At the north end of the city of Tel En Nasbeh Bade excavated a ²¹¹building of four rooms, in which was found a Massebah. At the same site, but from a different section, the same archeologist unearthed ²¹²a similar conical baetyl. Both finds were dated Late Bronze.

In an EI Temple at Beth-Shan, Rowe points out that the roofs of the rooms were made of wood, supported by two stone columns. Rowe suggests that these stone pillars were not simple braces, but were ²¹³revered as Massebas.

206. Bulletin #51, p. 17.

207. Annual A.S.O.R. vol. XIV, p. 46 ff.

208. *ibid.*, illustration, p. 46.

209. See note 206, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

210. *ibid.*

211. Bulletin #37, p. 8.

212. P.E.F.Q.S. 1930, p. 12.

213. P.E.F.Q.S. 1926, p. 211.

Let it be noted that among these finds there was no evidence of the fact that these Massebas were used as part of the sacrificial cultus. None of them were found near altars. Therefore, it is quite possible that these stone pillars are witness or memorial pillars -- at least this is the contention of this writer.

Of the second group, consisting of stone pillars which were actually used in some ceremonial rite, there have been uncovered numerous examples. In an open-air sanctuary at Beth Shemesh there was discovered a circular, stone table, which, Grant conjectures²¹⁴ was used for sacrificial purposes. Technically, this stone-table is not an altar, however; it seems to combine the functions of both the Masseba and a place for sacrificing. Grant points out that this circular slab was grooved and fitted with pan and cup marks, which would seem to indicate that it had seen service in some sort²¹⁵ of ceremonial or sacrificial rites. Two similar "altar-Massebas" were found along with the former, one slightly tilted and cracked,²¹⁶ the other in a higher level -- it was not grooved but corrugated.²¹⁷

At Tel-en-Nasbeh Bade uncovered an early Israelitish sanctuary. Among the finds were large stone structures, which for our classification we shall call "altar-Massebas." These Massebas, too, were characterized by flat surfaces and cup marks, which, again, suggests to us that they were used in the service of the Canaanitish and early

214. Bulletin #31, p. 5.

215. Annual, A.S.O.R., vol. IX, p. 1 ff.

216. *ibid.*

217. Excavations at Tell en Nasbeh, p. 30-34.

Israelitish cults. ²¹⁸ Bade himself suggests that these rocks represented natural or artificial grottoes. Of course, animal sacrifices were not offered up on these Massebas, but it is not impossible that libations were poured out on these rocks.

In a sanctuary belonging to the period of Ramses II (1200), from the site of Tel el Duweir, there were excavated long narrow benches around the three sides of the sanctuary room. ²¹⁹ Starkey suggests that offerings were placed by devotees on these benches, to await removal later by the officiating priests. Of course, it is quite possible that the stone slabs were simple conveniences which the worshippers made use of when they came to the sanctuary. Then again, these slabs may have been infected with the spirit of the deity, and the offerings were placed upon these stones to affect a relationship between the deity and the sacrifice. This seems to exaggerate the function of the Massebah, but as we shall see later in our study, the Masseba could well serve in this capacity.

The most interesting Masseba, from the point of view of our second classification, were those discovered at Gezer and Beth-Shan. The Late Bronze high place at Gezer yielded a row of eight Massebas, ranging in height from 5 ft. 5 in. to 10 ft. 9 in. Masterman points out that though the majority of the Massebas are LB, some of them ²²⁰ can be dated earlier and some later than that time. The feature

218. *ibid.*, p. 32.

219. P.E.F.Q.S. 1934, p. 171 ff.

220. *ibid.*, p. 139 ff.

which singles out these Massebas for their second classification is the trough at the bottom of them. The presence of this trough helps us to reach our conclusion that the Massebas were used as sacrificial altars. In the corridors of the Southern Temple of Thothmes III (LB), at the Beth-Shan site, there were excavated several Massebas, each one consisting mainly of a cone-shaped piece of basalt resting upon a base of unhewn stone. Below the Massebas was a basalt libation bowl, which no doubt once had a shallow channel leading to it from the Masseba, for the purpose of conveying to the bowl the libations,²²¹ blood or oil, which drained off the columns. This latter find at Beth-Shan should prove beyond any shadow of a doubt that the Masseba was used as a receptacle for libations, and at times as an altar-table for animal sacrifices.

The third type of Masseba is the pillar-stone which stood at the side of the altar, and which was an integral part of the altar service. Chief among these were those excavated at Beth-Shemesh. In a Canaanite sanctuary there was uncovered a stone altar-table, and immediately adjacent to this altar there were these pillar-stones.²²² On the same site, in a flat-iron shaped building, a similar set-up obtained. In one of the rooms was a stone-altar, and closely surrounding it were these sacred pillars.²²³ These latter pillars have been dated between LB and EI I. At Beth-Shan there was unearthed a Temple belonging to the period between Amenophis III (1411-1375) and Amenophis IV (1375-1358). In the courtyard there was an altar, and on

221. P.E.F.Q.S. 1928, p. 78.

222. *ibid.*, p. 180.

223. Grant, Beth Shemesh, p. 51.

either side there was a stone column, the worshippers evidently re-
garding these as sacred.²²⁴ In the upper altar room of this Temple
there was a stone altar with a sloping top, and at the side of the
altar was a basalt model of a chair or throne, which Rowe interprets
to be a form of a Masseba - the physical embodiment of the deity re-
siding at the altar, the place of sacrifice.²²⁵

The fourth and last group we have called "sun-pillars." The
sun-pillar, which was discovered at Tel Beth Mirsim,²²⁶ turned out to
be a limestone structure with four horns, known in the Bible as
Hamman. Heretofore, "Hamman" had been translated "sun-pillar," but
now with this new discovery, the translation will have to be re-
vised to "incense-altar." All of the implications of this change in
translation and concept will be discussed in that part of this sec-
tion which deals with Biblical correlation.

The presence of Massebas is not limited to Palestine, for we
find the Masseba, whether it be standing alone, or arranged in
circles of gilgals, or arranged so that two support a horizontal
stone (a menhir), in practically every known country. That we might
have some conception of the extensive worship of the Masseba, it
may be well to list the various countries in which these sacred pil-
lars have been discovered: Japan, India, Persia, the Caucasus, the
Crimea, Bulgaria, Palestine, Tripoli, Tunis, Algeria, Morocco, Mal-
ta, Southern Italy, Sardinia, Corsica, the Balearic Isles, Spain,

224. P.E.F.Q.S. 1927, p. 69-73.

225. *ibid.*

226. Bulletin #31, p. 8.

Portugal, France, British Isles, Scandinavia, and the German shores
of the Baltic. ²²⁷ By whom these pillars were first erected and the
time of their origin are unknown to us, but it is interesting to
note that all of these specimens were discovered within one hundred
miles of the sea. ²²⁸

The problems that are foremost in a consideration of the
Massebas are: a) How did people come to regard an artificial struc-
ture as the symbol or abode of the deity and b) Why is the artifi-
cial structure in the form of a stone or a cairn of stones.

a) In tree-worship or in the worship of fountains, obeisance
is paid to an object which man did not create out of his own re-
sources, something which has independent life and properties --
which to the savage mind and imagination may well appear to be di-
vine. By the same process of reasoning, one can understand how
natural rocks and boulders, by virtue of their size to affect the
uneducated mind, have acquired in various parts of the world the
reputation of being animated objects with power to help and to hin-
der man, and therefore possessing the inherent qualities for re-
ceiving religious homage. But the worship of artificial pillars
and cairns of stones, picked evidently at random and set up by man's
hand, is different from this. "Of course, no one actually believed
that in setting up a sacred stone he was thereby making a new god;
what he did believe was that the god came into the stone, dwelled
in or animated it, so that for practical purposes the stone was

227. Barton, Semitic and Hamitic Origins, p. 150.

228. *ibid.*

thenceforth an embodiment of the god -- to be spoken of and dealt with as if it were the god himself. There is a difference between worshipping the god in his natural embodiment, such as a tree or some enormous rock, and persuading him to come and take for his embodiment a structure set up for him by the worshippers.²²⁹

Obviously, from the metaphysical point of view, the worship of stocks and stones prepared by man's hands seems to be a much cruder thing than the worship of natural life as displayed in a fountain or tree, but the idea that the godhead consents to be present in a structure set for him by his devotees implies a degree of intimacy and permanency in the relations between man and the being he worships. It is true that the rule of Semitic worship is that the artificial symbol can be set up only in a place already consecrated by tokens of the divine presence, but the sacred stone is not merely a token that the place is frequented by a deity; more than that, it is a permanent pledge that in this place he consents to enter into stated²³⁰ relations with men and to accept their service.

b) That deities, like those of ancient heathenism, could enter into a stone for the convenience of their worshippers, seems to us a fundamental difficulty, but it was not a difficulty that was felt by primitive man. When we speak of an idol, we think of an image presenting a likeness of the god, but there is no reason in the nature of things why the physical embodiment, which the deity assumes

229. R.S., p. 206.

230. *ibid.*, p. 207.

for the convenience of his worshipper, should be a copy of his proper and original form, and in the earliest times to which the worship of sacred stones go back, there was evidently no attempt to make the idol an exact replica. A cairn or rude stone pillar is not a portrait or representation of anything. Even when the arts had made considerable progress, the Semites felt no need to fashion their sacred symbols into likenesses of the gods. The notion that a sacred stone is a simulacrum of the god seems also to be excluded by the observation that sacred pillars may stand together as representatives of a single deity.²³¹ In the Arabian rite described in Herodotus 3:8,²³² two deities are involved, but seven sacred stones are anointed with blood, and a plurality of sacred stones around which the worshippers circled in a single act of worship are frequently spoken of in Arabian poetry.²³³

Because of the shape of the Masseba,²³⁴ Barton advances the theory of Movers that the sacred pillar was a phallic symbol;²³⁵ however, Smith denies its connection with any sexual emblem by reason of the fact that exactly the same kind of pillar or cone is used to represent gods and goddesses indifferently.²³⁶

In our presentation of the archeological material bearing upon the subject of Massebas, we made reference constantly to the fact that the Masseba was used often as a place of sacrifice, inferring

231. Jos. 4:20 - at Gilgal 12 pillars were set up, and at Sinai (Ex. 24:4) 12 pillars were erected at the covenant sacrifice.

232. cited in R.S., p. 210.

233. *ibid.*, op. cit., p. 207-210.

234. S.O., p. 102.

235. R.S., p. 212.

236. cf. R.S., additional Note D, p. 456, where Smith attacks this theory.

4. Sacred Black Stone at Mecca
Original content of ark
4. Ishmael's god on Shams represented by a stone.

by this, of course, that originally the altar and the Masseba were not differentiated definitely. ²³⁷ Smith is of the opinion that the original form of the altar among the northern Semites, as well as among the Arabs, was a great stone or cairn at which the blood of ²³⁸ the victim was shed. He further points out that at Jacob's covenant with Laban no other altar appears than the cairn of stones beside which the parties to the compact ate together. ²³⁹ That a single stone sufficed appears from I Samuel 14:32 ff. where the first altar built by Saul is simply the great stone which he caused to be rolled to him after the battle of Michmash, that the people might slay their booty of sheep and cattle at the side of it, and likewise not eat the flesh with the blood. The simple shedding of the blood by the stone or altar consecrated the slaughter and made it ²⁴⁰ a legitimate sacrifice. Thus we find that there is sound basis for our contention that some of the pillars which were excavated, especially those which had trough attachments to catch the blood from ²⁴¹ the sacrifices, served as altars as well as the seat of the divine presence.

We have reason to believe that the Massebas were connected with stroking, and subsequently anointing, rites. "When the Arab daubed blood on the 'nosb' his object was to bring the offering into direct contact with the deity, and in like manner the practice of stroking

237. *ibid.*, p. 202.

238. *ibid.*

239. Gen. 31:46.

240. *supra*, note 237.

241. *supra*, p. 49 ff.

the sacred stone with the hand is identical with the practice of touching or stroking the garments or beard of a man in acts of supplication before him. The same conception must have prevailed among the Canaanites before the altar and pillar were differentiated one from the other, otherwise the pillar would have been changed into the more convenient form of an altar, and there would have been no reason for retaining both. So far as evidence from tradition and ritual goes, we can only think of the sacred stone as consecrated by the actual presence of the godhead, so that whatever touched it was brought into immediate contact with the deity.²⁴²"

Thus we have some conception of the origin, extension, and function of the Masseba. Our next task will be to find whatever correlations there are between the Massebas which have been excavated the past ten years and the Biblical material referring to the Massebas. In doing so, we shall try to correlate the two bodies of materials according to the four classifications we set down at the beginning of this section. Naturally, there will be some haziness in accomplishing this, due to the fact, first, that the archeological finds are not clear-cut so as to show us exactly what purposes they served at the sanctuaries, and, secondly, that the Biblical material is not always well defined and consequently useless for our purposes.

The first group of Massebas which we described were those which were set up to commemorate some important incident or event, especially those which were symbols of the various theophanies -- as

²⁴², R.S., p. 205.

those, they stood reminders of the fact that the deity, at that place, had entered into a covenant relationship with his worship-²⁴³pers. The Bible records several instances of where such pillars were set up. Especially suitable for our purpose are those passages which relate of the covenants and intimacies between Jacob and the deity. Such an interpretation we can place upon the following passage: "I am the God of Beth-el, where thou didst anoint a pillar, where thou didst vow a vow unto me....."²⁴⁴ A similar covenant is sealed by the erection of a pillar at Beth-el -- "And Jacob set up a pillar in the place where He spoke with him, a pillar of stone, and he poured out a drink-offering thereon, and poured oil thereon."²⁴⁵ Of course, we cannot fail to mention the well-known theophany of Jacob, in which the deity appears to him in a dream and, upon awaking, he sets up a Masseba to fix his memorable event: "And Jacob rose up early in the morning, and took the stone which he had put under his head, and set it up for a pillar, and poured oil on top of it....and this stone which I have set up for a pillar shall be God's house."²⁴⁶

It is for a like purpose that Joshua sets up a Masseba: "And Joshua said unto all the people: 'Behold, this stone shall be a witness against you, lest ye deny your God.'²⁴⁷" Samuel sets up a stone Masseba at Mizpah as a symbol of Yahve's presence there: "Then

243. supra, p. 54.

244. Gen. 31:13.

245. Gen. 35:14.

246. Gen. 28:18, 22.

247. Joshua 24:27.

Samuel took a stone, and set it between Mizpah and Shen, and called the name of it Eben-ezer, saying: 'Hitherto hath the Lord²⁴⁸ helped us.'" It will be noted that this latter passage makes no mention of the appearance of the deity in a vision or in a conversation, but it leaves us with the impression that something miraculous happened to the people, so they set up the Masseba as a gentle reminder for the deity -- as though the pillar now gives the deity the right to come into contact with his worshippers when so ever he desires. It seems that the same psychology is exhibited in the story of the crossing of the Jordan; for after the people had crossed the waters safely, Joshua orders the Masseba to be erected, apparently to commemorate the auspicious event. Evidently Joshua interprets this as a visitation from the deity, so he marks the spot²⁴⁹ with Massebas.

It is apparently for different reasons than mentioned above that Jacob orders a Masseba to be erected as a witness between Laban and himself -- "And now come, let us make a covenant, I and thou; and let it be a witness between me and thee."²⁵⁰ In this case it appears that Jacob sets up the Masseba to symbolize the deity, in order to make the contract between Laban and himself more binding. Doubtless, they both believed that by setting up this stone pillar they were inviting the divine presence among them, and consequently they had to be cautious lest they offend the deity by lightly undertaking a vow.

248. I Sam. 7:12.

249. Joshua 4:7.

250. Gen. 31:44.

An important function of the Masseba, which we must emphasize by singling out, is to mark the various sanctuaries. We are not unmindful of the fact that the founding of these sanctuaries depended upon some theophany, such as we discussed above, but we repeat those passages which bear upon the establishing of the sanctuaries in order to get a rounded picture of the Biblical Massebas. We read that sacred pillars were set up at Shechem, Bethel, Gilead, Gilgal, Mizpah, Gibeon, and Enroyeh, to mark the presence of Yahve at these spots, and because He did appear there they became fit places for His worship.

We must therefore conclude that the "witness-pillars" which have been excavated during the past ten years served some such purposes as described in our Biblical material, and we must also state conversely that the Massebas mentioned in the Bible must have had the appearance of those which have been uncovered by our archeologists.

The second group, which included the Massebas with cup marks and channeled troughs, throws light upon certain Biblical passages. It will be recalled that we defined this second type of Massebas as one which was actually utilized in some sort of ritual, whether it be an anointment, stroking or sacrifice. So far we have found nothing in the Bible that would indicate that these Massebas were used

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- 251. Joshua 24:26.
 - 252. Gen. 28:18.
 - 253. Gen. 31:45.
 - 254. Joshua 4:5.
 - 255. I Sam. 7:12.
 - 256. II Sam. 20:8.
 - 257. I K. 1:9.
 - 258. supra, p. 47, 49 ff.

blood sacrifice or for some stroking ritual. However, there is evidence of the fact that they were anointed with oil. We have only to refer to those passages in which Jacob pours oil upon the pillars which he sets up.²⁵⁹ It is not impossible that those Massebas, the tops of which were worn smooth or were covered with cup marks,²⁶⁰ were used in some anointing ritual such as was performed by Jacob.

The third type of Masseba were those which stood at the side of altars,²⁶¹ and it seems that we have ample Biblical material to prove that such Massebas stood at the side of altars at the early Israelitish sanctuaries. From Hosea's prophecy we deduce that the pillar was a common appurtenance at the sanctuary: "For the children of Israel shall sit solitary many days without king, without prince, and without sacrifice, and without pillar."²⁶² The same impression is given in a later passage: "As his fruit increased, he increased his altars; the more goodly his land was, the more goodly were his pillars."²⁶³ When Micah describes the destruction of all foreign influences at the sanctuaries, among the despised objects are the pillars.²⁶⁴

When Israel enters Canaan, they are warned to tear down the pillars which stand at sanctuaries of the peoples whom they have conquered. In every instance the pillars are mentioned along with the altars, as though the pillars served at the side of the altars.²⁶⁵

259. Gen. 28:18, 22; 31:13; 35:14.

260. See note 258.

261. supra, p. 47, 51 ff.

262. Hosea 3:4.

263. ibid., 10:1.

264. Micah 5:12.

265. Ex. 23:24, 34:13. Deut. 7:5, 12:3.

We find though that the kings of Israel did not always heed the prohibition, for Rehoboam,²⁶⁶ king of Judah, and Hoshea,²⁶⁷ king of Israel, set up these Massebas at the sanctuaries. However, these Massebas were removed by Hezekiah and the Josianic Reformation.²⁶⁸²⁶⁹

The fourth type of Masseba we classified as sun-pillar. Up until the time the sun-pillar was excavated at Tel Beth Mirsim,²⁷⁰ Biblical scholars, as well as archeologists, took for granted that the Hammanim were stone structures on the order of the Massebas. But with the discovery of this four-horned stone at Tel Beth Mirsim, the entire concept of sun-pillars has been revised, and this four-horned stone has come to be an incense altar.²⁷¹ Ingholt recently discovered a similar altar of incense in Palmyra, bearing an inscription which positively proves that the name of this object was "hamman."²⁷²²⁷³ Lohr and Wiener maintain that these recent discoveries prove that the Wellhausen position with regard to the use of incense in the official ritual of Israel is entirely wrong. It is Wellhausen's contention that incense was not employed in the Mosaic ritual until the Babylonian exile, where it appears in the P. Code.²⁷⁴

The word "hamman" occurs frequently in the Bible as the name of an objectionable pagan cult-object, against the use of which Isaiah²⁷⁵

266. I K. 14:23.

267. II K. 17:10.

268. II K. 18:4.

269. II K. 23:14.

270. supra, p. 47, 52.

271. J.P.O.S., vol. IX, p. 53.

272. Das Raucheropfer im Alten Testament, eine archaologische Untersuchung, Halle, 1927; cited, A.P.B., p. 108.

273. The Altars of the Old Testament, Leipzig, 1927, p. 12 ff.

274. A.P.B., p. 109.

275. 17:8.

276
and later writers inveighed. The presence of these "hammanim" at the sanctuaries is attested to by the passages in Exodus 23:24, Leviticus 26:30, and II Chronicles 14:3. Hitherto, the word "hamman" has been rendered most enigmatically "sun-pillar" -- a translation which was quite meaningless to archeologists.²⁷⁷ The "hammanim" which have been found in Palestine, far from disproving Wellhausen's view on this particular point, help to prove its correctness.

This discovery at Tel Beth Mirsim explains why incense was not used in the ritual employed by the official Mosaic religion of Israel; it was too closely bound up with objectionable pagan practices. "At the same time, this group of archeological discoveries supports the results of ^{the} documentary hypothesis and eliminates one of the principal arguments against the originality and uniqueness of Mosaism."²⁷⁸

Technically this latter should have been treated separately, under an individual heading, but the writer felt justified in including this discussion of sun-pillars under Massebas, for the very reason that they were once misunderstood to be a form of Massebas.

276. Ezekiel 6:4.

277. See note 274.

278. *ibid.*

V.

Serpent-Cult

The efforts of the archeologists have not gone unrecorded in their attempt to discover new evidence bearing upon the religious beliefs and practices of the Israelite. Especially noteworthy, in this respect, are the serpentine cult objects which have been uncovered and which throw light upon the vague hints of such a cult practice in the Bible.

The Northern Temple of Thothmes III (1501-1447), upon the site of Beth-Shan, yielded innumerable evidences of the fact that certain aspects of the serpent-cult had been practiced at that sanctuary. Let us note that this sanctuary dates Late Bronze, which represents the period when the Israelites first contacted the Canaanite civilization. The main room of the Temple consisted of a roughly rectangular shaped affair, with a dividing wall running across it from south to north. In a room to the southwest of this room there was found a pottery bowl with an undulating serpent in bas-relief as its exterior. This serpent bowl is of utmost importance, for it indicates that ophialatry, so prevalent in Beth Shan during the regime of all the later Egyptian kings who controlled the town, was practiced there in the time of Thothmes III. And we can be safe in saying that after the Israelites occupied the town the cult was still continued, if not intact, then in a modified form.

279. P.E.F.Q.S. 1928, p. 75.

From the pre-Amenophis III level (1446-1412), at the same site, there came some very illuminating cult objects. One represented a serpent with human breasts and a milk bowl beneath him, and another one showed a serpent with human breasts with a small serpent coiled around its neck.²⁸⁰ The Amenophis III level (1415-1380) yielded some interesting finds. Altogether there were discovered ten serpent cult-objects, each in the form of a uraeus on a stand. One of these serpents has the breasts of a woman, with a cup below them²⁸¹ to catch the lacteal fluid.

These excavations show that Beth-Shan was the center of a great serpent-cult in Palestine, and we cannot help but wonder whether its ancient name, "Beth Shan," a "House of Shan," does not reflect a distant connection with the old Mesopotamia serpent-deity named²⁸² "Shakhan," "Shahan," or "Sakhan." The University of Pennsylvania Museum does possess a cylinder seal (c. 1900 B.C.E.) depicting in male form the figure of this deity who is called "Shakhan, son of²⁸³ Shamash." Behind him is a staff with two serpents coiled around it. From the various figurines of serpents with breasts on them, it seems rather certain that the serpent-deity of Beth-Shan was a female one. Or again, the female breasts may be a synchronization of the Astarte figurines, thus connecting these serpents with fertility and productivity.

280. *ibid.*, p. 82 ff.

281. *ibid.*, p. 85. Illustrations, plate III.

282. *ibid.*, p. 76.

283. Albright, *American Journal of Semitic Languages*, XXXVI, p. 274.

At Beth-Shemesh, in a sanctuary, the cult-objects of which dated around 1400 B.C.E., there was excavated an unusual figurine. It is on a plaque of fine, light brown clay, which was fashioned in a mould and the edges pressed in. The figure of the goddess is nude except for an entwining and serpentine ornamentation. The arms are draped with reeds, and the whole pattern is framed within reed-like ropes which seem to terminate in a pair of heads at the top of the plaque. One hand of the goddess grasps a lotus and the other, a papyrus. Over the left shoulder descends a serpent with its head²⁸⁴ reasting on the left thigh of the goddess. Another figurine, dated at 900 B.C.E., approximately eighty millimeters long, is a portion of a torso with prominent breasts. Only the stump of the upper left arm remains. Evidently the arm went straight out from the side of the body nearly on a line with the breasts. A scar shows in the clay where the right arm was attached to the body. A double row of incised points, pricked as with a pin, starts from high on the chest and runs within and beside the line of the left breast and curves outwardly toward the left thigh. It appears as though the part of the figure had been chipped away of a purpose, carrying away much of the line of incised dots mentioned, so that there is no form left to the umbilical region or to the leg. Feet, head, and neck are gone. Of the dots, or points, there may have been fourteen in each row, averaging three millimeters distance apart in the upper length of the line and five millimeters between the two rows. The position of these dots suggests that a serpent was once

284. Annual, A.S.O.R. vol. IX, p. 2.

entwined about the figure, but had been chipped off when the Israel-
itish religion was purged of foreign influences during the Deutero-
nomic Reformation.²⁸⁵

At Beth-Zur there has been found evidence of the fact that a
serpent-cult existed. Among the potsherds of the Middle Bronze level²⁸⁶
were three sherds bearing serpents modelled in high relief.

Upon the site of Tel Beth Mirsim, in the D stratum, there was
found a well built palace. The walls were plastered with lime. Part
of a large courtyard was excavated; opening off of it were small
rooms. In the debris were found numerous objects which had fallen
from the upper story of the palace at the time of its destruction by
fire. The most important find here was the lower part of a limestone
stele, about thirty centimeters wide, and at least twice that high,²⁸⁷
representing a serpent goddess of the ancient Canaanites. According
to Albright, this is the first representative of the serpent-goddess²⁸⁸
to be found in Palestine. The figure of the goddess, barefoot and
clad in a long dress, reaching to the ankles, is preserved as far up
as the waist. While the entire figure of the goddess is not com-
pletely intact, fortunately the serpent is. It is a large snake,
probably a python, which comes out of the earth between her ankles,
coils around her legs, while its head is seen between her thighs.
In Grant's Astarte plaque, the serpent crawls down over her naked²⁸⁹
body from her left shoulder, with its head reaching her left hip.

285. *ibid.*, p. 3 ff.

286. Bulletin #43, p. 6.

287. Bulletin #31, p. 6.

288. A.P.B., p. 87.

289. *supra*, p. 66.

It will be noticed that in all cases the serpent's head is directed toward the vulva of the goddess, a fact which seems to prove rather conclusively that the serpent represents primarily the fecundizing vis naturae, while the goddess, having been fertilized by the serpent, brings forth vegetation.

Though we find the serpent in close relationship with goddesses of the figurine type, the problem still presents itself as to the place the serpent held in the religions or folk-beliefs of the people.

A way of getting rid of vermin and other noxious creatures, without hurting their feelings or showing disrespect for them, is to make images of them. Appolonius of Tyaria is said to have cleared Antioch of scorpions by making a bronze image of a scorpion²⁹⁰ and burying it under a small pillar in the middle of the city. It is reported that gnats, flies, grasshoppers, etc. were exterminated in various cities, such as Constantinople, Naples, and Fez, by making molten images of these pests.²⁹¹ We even read in I Samuel that when the land was overrun with mice, the Philistines made golden images of the vermin and sent them out of the country in a new cart drawn by two cows, hoping that the real mice would simultaneously depart. Comparably, when a swarm of serpents afflicted the Israelites in the desert, they made a serpent of brass and set it on a pole²⁹² as a means of staying the plague.

290. G.B. vol. VIII, p. 280, citing Q.J. Malalas, Chronographia, p. 264.

291. 6:4-18.

292. Num. 21:6-9.

293

According to W.R. Smith, the serpent represented the sacred animal of David's household, and probably the image of the serpent was set in a sacred place and worshipped as a totem. According to 294 Frazer, this would not be an impossible explanation because there are instances in which kings and royalty, upon death, have been transformed into serpents. Frazer cites many examples among primitive tribes where the king claims kinship with the most powerful animals -- lions, tigers, leopards, etc. 295 It may have been some such kinship that David established with the serpent, and these serpent cult-objects are the remains of the sacred totems that represented his household, or even the household of Dan, since he was given his 295a blessing in terms of a serpent.

In commenting on the serpents which were entwined about the thighs of goddesses, or their heads resting close to the female organ, we stated that this suggested a strong association with the fertility cults. 296 There seems to be some authority for this point of view, because Frazer points to the custom of women marrying 297 serpent-gods for the purpose of ensuring fertility. Further, in order to aid the crops, they invoked the serpent in excessively wet, dry, or barren seasons, and also for the preservation of their 298 cattle. It is also reported that women would sleep in sanctuaries where live serpents were kept so that they would dream about ser-

293. Animal Worship and Animal Tribes, Journal of Philology, IX, p. 99 ff.

294. G.B. vol. IX, p. 84.

295. *ibid.*, p. 85

295a. Gen. 49:17.

296. *supra*, p. 68.

297. G.B. vol. V, p. 66.

298. *ibid.*

pents; it was believed that a vision in which a serpent was present augured an offspring. And should a child be born following this vision, the mothers invariably would dedicate the child to the serpent.²⁹⁹

The writer singled out these above customs and beliefs for discussion, because he felt that they were pertinent to the understanding of the place these recently discovered serpent-goddesses held in the religious practices of the Israelite. At the same time, though, the writer feels that it would be well to mention the part the serpent played in the folk-mores of the people, which may border on the quasi-sacred. The serpent was believed to be both the reincarnation of the dead,³⁰⁰ and the progenitor of children.³⁰¹ It was variously used to stop the rain and to control the wind.³⁰² It played an important role in the initiation ceremony of children.³⁰³ The serpent was on the one hand the embodiment of witches and demons,³⁰⁴ and on the other, the soul of kings and chiefs and a means of thwarting evil spirits.³⁰⁵

With such varied emphasis placed upon the serpent, we see how difficult it is to determine fully just what interpretation is to be placed upon those serpent cult objects which have been excavated. Before we can attempt an explanation, we must try to correlate these discoveries with such Biblical material that bears upon the subject.

299. *ibid.*, p. 80.

300. G.B. vol. IV, p. 84; vol. V, p. 82; vol. VI, p. 103, 173; vol. VIII, p. 291.

301. *ibid.*, vol. V, p. 86.

302. *ibid.*, vol. I, p. 295.

303. *ibid.*, p. 323.

304. *ibid.*, vol. V, p. 90; vol. X, p. 31, 57.

305. *ibid.*, vol. XI, p. 41, 143.

306. *ibid.*, vol. IV, p. 82; vol. XI, p. 201.

307. *ibid.*, vol. II, p. 335.

We have but one verse in the Bible that might be connected with these serpents and serpent-goddesses, and that is the one that tells us that "he [Hezekiah] removed the high places, and broke the pillars, and cut down the Asheras; and he broke in pieces the brazen serpent [Nehushtan] that Moses had made; for unto those days the children of Israel did offer to it; and it was called Nehushtan."³⁰⁸ Evidently, the early writer from whom the Deuteronomist draws in II Kings 18:4 brings Nehushtan into connection with the brazen serpent mentioned in Numbers 21:9 -- "And Moses made a serpent of brass, and set it upon the pole; and it came to pass that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he looked unto the serpent of brass, he lived." It is quite possible that our excavated serpents were images which had been set up in order to drive away the deadly serpents that plagued the camp. It was just such a custom that Frazer referred to.³⁰⁹

Yet we cannot close our eyes to the fact that these serpent-goddesses probably had some associations with the fertility cult. As we noticed above, this was not an uncommon function attached to the serpent;³¹⁰ therefore, it remains a strong possibility that the serpent Hezekiah cut down was part of the apparatus that was served at the high ²¹places in order to ensure fertility of crops, and even cattle. Of course, this does not exclude any of the other magical functions from being attached to the Nebushtan of Hezekiah --

³⁰⁸. II K. 18:4.
³⁰⁹. supra, p. 68. ff.
³¹⁰. supra, p. 68.

The Nehushtan was in the Temple.

namely, those functions which Frazer cites as being so important to
the folk-mores of the people.³¹¹

If we must find an explanation for the two allusions to the brass serpent, in II Kings and in Numbers, the writer believes it can be done. First, it can be taken literally -- namely, Numbers 21:9 refers to the setting up of a brass serpent to which the people paid homage in order to obtain a cure during the time of sickness. And this is understandable when we note that serpents were used to exorcise evil spirits.³¹² Then II Kings simply reports the removal of this type of idol and ritual. On the other hand, it may be that the writer of II Kings could find no *raison d'être* for the serpent, so in order to give it status, he connected it with the serpent that Moses set up in the desert. Another suggestion may be that the statement is made in Numbers in order to explain the presence of the serpent-idols in II Kings.^{312a}

Be that as it may, the writer is still of the opinion that the serpent goddesses which have been discovered are, because of their suggestive position, to be connected with the other fertility cult objects and goddesses.

311. *supra*, p. 70.

312. *supra*, p. 70.

312a. Morgenstern, J., Class notes, Bible 8, Hebrew Union College.

VI.

Miscellaneous Deities

A. Chemosh

One of the most important small finds at El-Medeiyineh (Mat-
tanah) was the head of a figurine, discovered at the northwestern
section of the tel. ³¹³ The head is very skillfully moulded, every
feature being clearly and boldly delineated. By the head-dress and
the general appearance, this is taken to represent either a Semitic
king or a deity. ³¹⁴ A smaller head of another male figurine was found
on the dump-heap. The prong by which it was attached to the body
proper remained intact. Both heads have been dated about Early
Iron I. ³¹⁵ Upon the same site there was found a pottery fragment,
representing part of the body of an animal, with the legs and arms
of a rider still attached to it. ³¹⁶ Another fragment had only the
feet of a rider still attached. The fragments are probably parts
of representations of gods on horseback, as the reconstructions of
Dr. Glueck indicate. ³¹⁷ If so, they reveal the presence of the worship
of a new type of deity in Moab. According to Dr. Glueck's knowl-
edge, no such mounted deities have thus far been discovered in ³¹⁸
Palestine or Transjordan, although they have been found elsewhere.

313. Bulletin #51, p. 11.

314. For illustration, see Bulletin #51, p. 11.

315. See Note 313.

316. Annual, A.S.O.R., vol. XIV, p. 27. Illustration, p. 26.

317. *ibid.*, p. 28.

318. *ibid.*

The type may have been originally imported from Syria. At Palmyra a relief has been found on which the male deity Azizu is shown on horseback.³¹⁹ Among the female divinities from Asia worshipped in Egypt, Asit, who is perhaps to be identified with Astarte, always rides on horseback.³²⁰

The head of a figurine was excavated at Baluah, above the wall, overlooking the dumping-heaps on the northern slopes, which is almost an exact duplicate of the smaller of the two figurines' heads found at el-Medeiyineh.³²¹ The similarity of these two heads is heightened by the fact that the Early Iron Age pottery found at Baluah is exactly like that found at el-Medeiyineh.³²² The same characteristic sherds and the same decorated Moabite pottery were found at both sites. From the nature of the texture of the three heads found, all that can be said is that they belong to the Early Iron Age,³²³ a date which corresponds with the general pottery finds.

At the site of El-Meshbed there was found an almost complete specimen of the type of figurine to which the heads from Baluah and el-Medeiyineh belong.³²⁴ The head is not attached to the body by a prong fitting into a socket, as was the case with the heads of the same type from Baluah and el-Medeiyineh. The figure is nude, and the hands are raised to the breast as if in prayer. There appears to be

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319. *ibid.*, citing Clermont-Ganneau, *Recueil d'archeologie orientale*, vol. IV, p. 203; Rostovtzeff, *Caravan Cities*, p. 138, 151.
320. *ibid.*, citing W.M. Muller, *Egyptian Mythology*, p. 156 ff.
321. *Bulletin* #51, p. 17.
322. *Annual*, A.S.O.R., vol. XIV, p. 24.
323. *ibid.*
324. *ibid.*

some object clutched in the left hand. Pere Vincent and Professor Fisher, to whom Dr. Glueck showed the figurine, agreed that it represented a male figure.³²⁵

At the northwestern corner of the site of Saliyeb there was a large dump-heap on a mound which sloped down into a small dry wadi below it. On the surface of this dump-heap were found large quantities of sherds belonging almost exclusively to Early Iron I and II. Among the sherds there was found a fragment of a figure astride an animal, similar to the mounted deities discovered at el-Medeiyineh.³²⁶

Our knowledge about the god of Moab is rather limited. We are informed by Meska, king of Moab, that the Moabites worship the deity Chemosh, who is also called Ashtar-Chemosh.³²⁷ Chemosh was the national god of Moab, and he doubtlessly bore the same relationship to Moab that Yahve bore to Israel.³²⁸ Barton points out that the compound Ashtar is the masculine of Ashtart, which seems to suggest that Chemosh was a fertility god.

These heads and fragments of figures astride animals, which Dr. Glueck excavated in Moab, perhaps, as the discoverer has intimated,³²⁹ do represent the male deity Chemosh who was worshipped by the Moabites. If this be so, then we can understand why the Bible speaks of the god of Moab as being abominable and detestable. Perhaps it was the physical presence of these figurines, representing Chemosh,

325. *ibid.*, p. 25.

326. *ibid.*, p. 34.

327. Barton, *Semitic and Hamitic Origins*, p. 309, citing Lidzbarski, *Handbuch der Nordsemitischen Epigraphik*, p. 415.

328. *ibid.*, p. 310.

329. *supra*, p. 73.

whether on horseback or a standing figure, that the zealous guardians of Yahve's cult wanted removed.

The Bible tells us in several passages that Chemosh was the³³⁰ god of Moab. However, in Judges 10:6 we learn that the "children of Israel did evil by serving the gods of Moab." Later it is dispar-³³¹agingly related that Solomon built high places to the god of Moab, and when these high places, devoted by Solomon to the worship of Chemosh, are destroyed by the Josianic Reformation, it is done to³³² purify the religion of foreign influences. As late as the time of Ezra it is reported that the children of Israel "do according to³³³ the abominations of Moab."

These passages would indicate that the worship of Chemosh was prevalent among the Israelites, and the recent excavations from Moab would help strengthen that postulate. It may have been just such figures as discovered that were present at the sanctuaries and which were inveighed against by the Deuteronomic writers.

B. Mekal

At Beth-Shan, during the fall of 1927, work was concentrated at the clearance of two Temples, dating from the reign of Tuthmosis³³⁴ III (1501-1447 B.C.E.). A remarkable stele was found in one of the temples, representing Mekal, "the god of Beth-Shan." This stele not only provides us with the name of the local deity, who is met

330. Num. 21:29; Judges 11:24; Jeremiah 48:7, 13, 46.

331. I K. 11:7, 33.

332. II K. 23:13.

333. Ezra 9:1.

334. Bulletin #29, p. 8.

335
here for the first time, but it also gives us a representation of the god himself.

On the upper register is represented Mekal seated on a throne holding the was-sceptre of "happiness" in his left hand, and the ankh-symbol of "life" in his right hand. He is bearded and wears a conical helmet with two horns and two streamers attached to it. The helmet is Babylonian in appearance, and, as pointed out to Rowe by Pere Vincent, is like the helmet with two horns and streamers worn by the god Set-a-Sutekh (who holds the "was" and the "ankh" emblems) figured on the stele of the XIXth-XXth Dynasty from Sinai published by Petrie, and by Gardiner and Peet.

It may be added here that Mekal is dressed much like the figure of the god Resheph, represented in a stele now resting in the Berlin Museum. This god is shown spearing a serpent which he holds by the neck. This latter item may indicate a connection between Mekal and the serpent cult.

Whether the Phoenician Mekel is a later form of the old Canaanite deity Mekal worshipped at Beth-Shan Rowe believes is doubtful; though he is convinced that the god of Beth-Shan is a form of Resheph. Rowe, for his proof, points to the fact that Resheph was baal of Beth-Shan during the time of Rameses II, because his figure was found in the Southern Temple of that king.

335. S.H.O., p. 309.

336. P.E.F.Q.S. 1928, p. 78.

337. *ibid.*, citing Researches in Sinai, p. 126, figure 134.

338. *ibid.*, citing The Inscriptions from Sinai, plate LXXIX, no. 308, p. 15.

339. Muller, Max, Egyptian Mythology, p. 155.

340. *supra*, p. 64 ff.

341. P.E.F.Q.S. 1928, p. 80.

342. *ibid.*

It might be well in this connection to examine the Biblical word *qay*. Please do so!!



Because the evidence is so meager concerning this recently discovered deity, it is difficult to relate it to Biblical material. However, Rowe suggests that since Resheph, with whom Mekal has been identified, means "fiery shaft," "lightning," "burning heat," or "pestilence," it may be possible that Mekal is to be connected with the Hebrew verb "akal," meaning to devour.³⁴³ If this be so, he goes on further to suggest,³⁴⁴ then the attributes of Resheph, the god of "heat" and "pestilence" are practically the same as those of Mekal, "the devourer," whose name then would refer to the great heat and general unhealthiness of Beth-Shan in the summer time.

Rowe's most ingenious suggestion, and one which we cannot overlook, is that Mekal is an intentional transposition of the word Malek, the god of "devouring fire;"³⁴⁵ to whom the people sacrificed their children. If this interpretation be found true in light of later excavations, then we will have valuable information concerning those passages in which "sons and daughters are dedicated to Molech."³⁴⁶

C. Nergal

Upon a panel, which at one time was probably part of a door of the Mekal temple, there was discovered a basalt representation of a lion being attacked by a dog.³⁴⁷ Rowe interprets this particular find

343. *ibid.*

344. *ibid.*

345. *ibid.*, p. 81.

346. Lev. 18:21, 20:2-5; I K. 11:7; II K. 23:10; Isaiah 30:33, 57:9, Jeremiah 32:35.

347. P.E.F.Q.S. 1929, p. 87.

at Beth Shan to be the Babylonian deity, Nergal.³⁴⁸ This panel has
been dated Late Bronze.³⁴⁹

In the Babylonian pantheon Nergal was the god of war,³⁵⁰ and has
been symbolically represented by the lion.³⁵¹ This latter fact would
seem to substantiate Rowe's identification. Earlier Nergal was the
god of the heat of summer or midday.³⁵² Jastrow identifies him with
Gibil the fire-god and Dibbara,³⁵³ the god of death-land.³⁵⁴

This find at Beth Shan, though it is dated much earlier than
the event, may refer to the importation of the god Nergal by the
Cutheans, when these people were settled in Palestine by the Assyrians.³⁵⁵ Though the Biblical event and the archeological find may not
be correlated from the point of view of time, at least we have some
physical conception of the type of god the Cutheans may have brought
along with them and set up for worship. Any final opinion on this
particular phase of foreign deities will have to be postponed until
more material is forthcoming from the archeologists.

D. Dagan

Upon the ancient site of Ugarit,³⁵⁶ or modern Ras Shamra, there
was made the discovery of a temple devoted to the worship of Dagan,
which discovery Albright has termed as being of greatest importance.

348. *ibid.*, p. 88.

349. *ibid.*

350. Cheyne, T.K., *Encyclopedia Biblica*, vol. VIII, p. 3395.

351. Jastrow, *Religion of Babylonia and Assyria*, p. 537, 580, 582.

352. *cf.* note 350.

353. *ibid.*, p. 534.

354. *ibid.*, p. 232.

355. II K. 17:24, 30.

356. A.J.A. vol. 39, p. 145.

Among the objects in this temple were two limestone statues, bearing cuneiform alphabetic inscriptions, which M. Dussaud has deciphered,³⁵⁷ and which prove to be dedications to this god. It is an important discovery, because this temple of Dagan is the first one of its kind to be found in Canaan.

There was a Babylonian god, Dagan, whose name appears in conjunction with the god Anu, which would seem to identify him with a god of the heavens.³⁵⁸ We also know that there was a god of the same name who was worshipped by the Philistines.³⁵⁹ Whether the Philistine Dagon is the same as the Babylonian Dagan cannot be determined from the evidence at hand. From the inscriptions of Assurnasirpal, Shamshi-Ramman, and Sargon we learn that a similar deity was worshipped in Assyria.³⁶⁰

Various theories of the origin and nature of Dagan have been propounded. Philo Byblius, deriving the name from "dagan," meaning "corn,"³⁶¹ makes Dagan a deity of husbandry. Rashi advances the idea that the name of the deity was derived from the Hebrew "dag," meaning "fish,"³⁶² and therefore Dagan is taken to be a fish-god. Modern scholars have completely rejected this latter idea, and they lean more toward the theory that Dagan was an agricultural deity worshipped by the Philistines.³⁶³ However, this does not mean that the

357. *ibid.*

358. Jastrow, *Religion of Babylon and Assyria*, p. 208.

359. Judges 16:21 ff., I Sam. 5:2.

360. S.O., p. 230.

361. Moore, G.F., *Encyclopedia Biblica*, p. 984 (article on Dagan).

362. Rashi's comment on I Sam. 5:2.

363. Cook, S., *Additional Notes; R.S.*, p. 578.

Philistines brought the worship of Dagan with them when they entered Palestine, but that they adopted this worship because Dagan was the god of their newly acquired home.³⁶⁴

From the Bible we learn that there were temples dedicated to Dagan in Gaza and Ashdod,³⁶⁵ and we may assume in other Philistine cities, too.³⁶⁶ Further, we may conclude that Dagan's worship among the Philistines was national and not local;³⁶⁷ but, at the same time, he did not enjoy the privilege of being the sole deity, since his worship did not exclude that of other Baals.³⁶⁸ The Philistines regarded him as giving them victory over their enemies, rejoicing before him when Samson was in their power,³⁶⁹ and placing Saul's head in his temple.³⁷⁰ Our Biblical evidence may throw some light upon the function that Dagan performed. From the passages cited above, we would be correct in our deductions that Dagan was a god of war. However, Dagan's fall comes when the Philistines' fields are ruined by the mice running through them,³⁷¹ which suggests that Dagan was the god of agriculture and when he failed to meet his obligations, he ceased to function as a god for the people.

The discovery of this Temple of Dagan in 1934 was important for our understanding of the folk-religion of Israel, because, first, it offers us positive proof that such a deity was worshipped by the

364. S.O., p. 231.

365. Judges 16:23.

366. I Sam. 5:1 ff.

367. I Chron. 10:9.

368. II K. 1:2 ff.

369. cf. Note 365.

370. I Chron. 10:10.

371. I Sam. 6:4-5.

Philistines, and, secondly, it was probably just such a temple that was appropriated by the Hebrews when they conquered the Philistines. If we assume that Dagan served in the role of an agricultural deity, then we may be safe in postulating that agricultural rites were practiced in connection with the worship of Dagan, in such a temple as was excavated. In fact, had the Hebrews done otherwise when they were successful against the Philistines, it would have been contrary to practice, because after they dispossessed the Canaanites, they took over their places of worship and syncretized their ritual. We have no reasons to believe that the Israelites did otherwise after the conquest of the Philistines. How strong this influence was we do not know, but undoubtedly its degree of intensity was gauged according to the thoroughness of conquest by the Hebrews, which, we are led to believe, was not complete.

VII.

Bull - Images

Excavations of the past ten years have furnished us with convincing evidence of the fact that the bull was considered a sacred animal among the ancient Hebrews, and as such the images of the same played an important part in the folk-worship of the people.

Especially noteworthy are the bull-images which were unearthed at Beth-Shan, one in a Late Bronze temple of Amenophis III, and the other in an Early Iron I sanctuary. The former was attached to a cylindrical stand, but the latter was part of the decorations on an urn.

At Beth-Shemesh Grant uncovered a LB figure, the body of which was probably at one time part of an Astarte figure, with the head of an animal. Because of the peculiarly shaped organs at the side of the head, which doubtlessly are horns, this is believed to have once served as a bull-image. If the stand upon which this animal-head rests is the nude figure of a goddess, we perhaps have here the physical representation of the fusion of two cults, the Astarte and the bull..

Moab yielded a bull image, and in Edom there was found the head

372. P.E.F.Q.S., 1928, p. 85.

373. P.E.F.Q.S., 1926, p. 211.

374. Annual, A.S.O.R., vol. IX, p. 2 ff.

375. Annual, A.S.O.R., vol. XIV.

376. Annual, A.S.O.R., vol. XV, p. 136. Illustration Plate 30A, no. 3, p. 197.

of an animal figurine with bulging eyes and small ears, dated EI I, which Glueck conjectures to be a bull.

First, let us realize that it is not surprising to find the bull a sacred animal and worshipped as such by those people who depend upon agriculture or husbandry for a livelihood. There could really be no more natural symbol of strength, energy, and virility than a young bull.³⁷⁷ His blood was drunk by certain priestesses to procure inspiration;³⁷⁸ he often served as a symbol of the sun and therefore was a sort of charm to encourage fertility;³⁷⁹ and in the religious rites of Cybele and Attia, testicles of bulls were cut³⁸⁰ up and used.

The bull has been intimately associated with various deities. Among the attributes which mark out the deity of Ibreez of Cappadocia as a power of fertility are the horns on his cap. Frazer considers these to be the horns of a bull, because the primitive cattle herders regarded the bull as the most appropriate emblem of generative force.³⁸¹ At Carchemish, the Hittite capital on the Euphrates, a relief has been uncovered which represents a god or priest clad in a rich robe and wearing on his head a tall horned cap.³⁸⁴ This "horned cap" is taken to be significant because archeologists found at the palace of Euyuk, in northwestern Cappadocia, proof that the Hittites

377. G.B., vol. IV, p. 71 ff.

378. *ibid.*, vol. I, p. 381 ff.

379. *ibid.*, vol. IV, p. 71 ff.

380. *ibid.*, vol. V, p. 276.

381. *ibid.*, p. 123.

382. *ibid.*

383. *ibid.*, p. 132.

384. *ibid.*, vol. VII, p. 16 ff, and Vol. VIII, p. 3 ff.

worshipped the bull and sacrificed rams to it.³⁸³ Also we find the interesting detail that the Greeks conceived the vine-god Dionysus in the form of a bull.³⁸⁴ In ancient Egypt the sacred bull Mnevis of Helopolis was deemed an incarnation of the sun-god, and for thousands of years the kings of Egypt were delighted to be called "mighty-bull."³⁸⁵ We also learn that among the Babylonians there was a bull-god, who was thought to be Merodack.³⁸⁶ We are also informed³⁸⁷ that Ea and his wife had two divine bulls attached to each of them.

Biblical evidence regarding the presence and the worship of bull-images is rather prevalent. At the outset, though, it may be said that no Biblical proof whatsoever can be adduced to show that the live bull was ever used in folkloristic rituals among the Hebrews: of course, this precludes the bullocks that were used in the official sacrifices of the people. We shall limit ourselves to the Biblical evidence concerning bull-images.

First we have the very interesting narrative in Exodus 32 that relates of the setting up of an image of a "golden calf." The important features of this narrative are: Becoming impatient because of the continued absence of their leader, the people prevail upon Aaron to make them a god. With the gold furnished by the women and children, a "molten calf" is fashioned, before which an altar is

383. *ibid.*, p. 132.

384. *ibid.*, vol. VII, p. 16 ff., and vol. VIII, p. 3 ff.

385. Budge, E.A. Wallis, *The Gods of the Egyptians*, 1904, vol. I, p. 25, 330.

386. Sayce, A.H., *Origin and Growth of Religion*, Hibbert Lectures, 1888, p. 289 ff.

387. *ibid.*

built, and to which, as a symbol of Yahve, divine services are paid. The rest of the chapter tells of the anger of the Lord, the destruction of the calf, and 3000 of its worshippers.

Of course, the question is immediately raised how can we construe this "molten calf" to be a "bull-image," if only from a physical point of view? Barton³⁸⁸ makes the suggestion that in consequence of the costliness of the metal, the images were small, and from their size, rather than from the age of the animal regarded sacred, they were called "calves." Another suggestion has been made that the term "calf" was used because whenever a young bovine was sacrificed, it was called "bullock" and not "calf;"³⁸⁹ therefore, it would seem that the two terms were loosely and interchangeably used.³⁹⁰

Returning to the Exodus account, we would find that a comparison of verses 4 and 20 with other passages where similar images and their manufacture are depicted seems to point to the fact that this "golden calf" had a wooden core overlaid with gold.³⁹¹ If this be true, then it is quite possible that this particular image was life-size, as suggested by the amount of gold used and the altar that was set up in front of it.

These portable images of a bull, overlaid with gold, occupied, down to the time of the prophets, a prominent position among the equipment of the Israelitish sanctuaries. We hear of them in the

388. J.E., vol. III, p. 510.

389. Lev. 1:5.

390. Dr. Glueck, in personal conversation.

391. Deut. 7:25, Isaiah 30:22, 40:19, 44:10.

Describe with myself
H disagree
?/

St. J.

great sanctuaries of the northern kingdom: in Dan and Beth³⁹² where they are said to have been set up by Jereboam, in Samaria the capital of the kingdom, and in Gilgal.³⁹³ What ritual was employed in connection with these images may be hinted at in the words of Hosea (13:2):

"Of them Ephraim they say: 'They that sacrifice men kiss calves.'³⁹⁴"

Among the measures taken by Jereboam I for the consolidation of his new kingdom was one which was primarily designed to secure its independence of the rival kingdom of the south in all important matters of public worship. With this end in view, perhaps also with the subsidiary purpose of reconciling the priesthood of the local sanctuaries to the new order of things, Jereboam set up the two calf or bull images, one at Bethel and the other at Dan.³⁹⁵ With regard to the religious significance of this action on the part of Jereboam, it is now admitted that the bulls are to be recognized as symbols of Yahve, and under such symbol of the golden bull Yahve was worshipped both in the wilderness and at the sanctuaries of Bethel and Dan.³⁹⁶

We cannot conclude our Biblical evidence without some statement about the attitude of the prophets toward these images. The attitude of Amos toward this worship is not as evident as one might expect, but of Hosea's attitude there is no doubt. It is one of profound scorn and bitter contempt.³⁹⁷ In the same spirit, and in harmony with

392. I K. 12:28 ff.

393. Hosea 8:5, 10:5.

394. Amos 5:4, Hosea 4:15, 9:15, 12:11.

395. I K. 12:26-33.

396. Kent, C.F., A History of the Hebrew People, 1928, The Divided Kingdom, p. 30-34.

397. Ex. 32:5

398. S.O., p. 298; Kuenen, vol. I, p. 285.

399. Hosea 8:5 ff., 10:5, 13:2.

the true character of the religion of Yahve, as revealed through the prophets who followed Hosea, the Deuteronomic editor of the Book of Kings repeatedly characterizes the introduction of the bull-images into the cult of Yahve as the sin wherewith Jereboam made Israel to sin.⁴⁰⁰

The next problem that faces us for solution is: how did the Hebrews derive this symbol? How did they come to represent the deity under the form of a young bull? Robertson tells us that the answer given most generally by early writers is that the Hebrews borrowed it from the Egyptians. The burden of their proof rests upon the fact that both Aaron and Jereboam had intimate relations with Egypt just previous to their fashioning their respective images. Robertson points out some of the difficulties in the way of accepting the Egyptian origin of the bull-images: a) The Egyptians worshipped only the living bull of Apis and Mnevis, as incarnations of Osiris and of the sun-god respectively b) it would be absurd to speak, as Aaron did, of the golden calf as representing the God Who brought the Hebrews up out of Egypt had the image been but a reflection of any Egyptian deity c) the historical situation of I Kings 12:25 ff. requires that the new symbolism by which Jereboam hoped to consolidate his kingdom should not be an importation from without, but something genuinely national.⁴⁰³ Other writers share Robertson's point of

400. I K. 14:16, 15:26.

401. The Early Religion of Israel, 1892, p. 215.

402. Jeremiah 46:15.

403. cf. Note 401, op. cit., p. 215 ff.

404
view. They prefer to seek the origin of the bull-symbolism in the native religious tendencies of the Hebrews themselves, -- tendencies which they shared with other Semitic peoples about them.

On the basis of our archeological finds, one conclusion is certain, namely, that the bull-images did play a part in the folk religion of the Hebrew people. Though the finds were only the heads of bulls, this should not alter our conclusion. Also the bull-images discovered in Moab and Edom should lend credence to the theory that this type of symbolism was indigenous to the native religious tendencies of the Hebrews and of the Semites²² who lived about them.

21 Of course, the presence of these images in Moab and Edom could prompt us to say that the Hebrews borrowed the cult from them; however, if the cult was a borrowed one, there is no reason to doubt that it was taken from the Babylonians, with whose deities the bull was associated⁴⁰⁵ and with whom the Israelites had intercourse. The one fact that would militate against this latter conclusion is the similarity that exists between the Palestinean and the Transjordanian finds. With the evidence at hand, we can only conjecture about the origin of the cult, but we can say rather positively that these were the types of bull-images referred to in the Bible.

The north-Canaanite influence must be considered:

404. Kuenen, vol. I, p. 235 ff., 260 ff.

405. supra, p. 85.

VIII.

Pig-Cult

Through recent archeological discoveries we now have evidence of the fact that the pig was considered a sacred animal among the ancient Hebrews, and from their presence we may be correct in postulating that there was some cult centering about their worship.

All of our evidence comes from Beth-Shan, and likewise all of the objects are products of the Late Bronze period. In the pre-Amenophis level (1446-1412) there was discovered part of a pig-headed cult-object; it was badly mutilated, therefore difficult to determine its size or its function.⁴⁰⁶ In the temple of Amenophis III (1411-1375) among the cult-objects there was found a clear cut head⁴⁰⁷ of a pig mounted upon a cylindrical stand. There is no doubt but that this object played a part in the religious ceremonies of the peoples' worship. Most interesting of all the finds was the discovery of six bricks in the Seti I level (1319-1301), bearing the impression of a cloven-hoofed animal, which Rowe interprets to be⁴⁰⁸ the hoofs of a pig. This latter fact would seem to indicate that either a live pig was kept in the temple and guarded as a sacred animal, or that the bricks, impressed with the hoofs of the pig, were considered sacred and worshipped as a cult-object.

406. P.E.F.Q.S., 1928, p. 85.

407. P.E.F.Q.S., 1929, p. 73.

408. P.E.F.Q.S., 1928, p. 87.

One might think that the pig was considered a sacred animal by other people, too. That observation is well-founded as we shall soon see. However, in several instances the pig was regarded both as sacred and as taboo, that is, by the same people and at the same time, and there are as many people who consider the pig taboo, and therefore to be avoided, as there are people who deem the animal sacred.

Among the Egyptians, if a man so much as touched a pig in passing, he stepped into a river immediately with his clothes on to wash off the taint.⁴⁰⁹ Also swineherders were forbidden to enter the temple⁴¹⁰ and they were forced to marry among themselves. On the other hand, the Egyptians sacrificed pigs to the moon and to Osiris, and not⁴¹¹ only sacrificed them, but ate of the flesh.

Among the Babylonians the pig was a sacred animal of Ninurta and Gula; yet, though the animal was eaten at special feasts, it was⁴¹² considered taboo and unclean on certain days of the month.

We have much evidence to prove that the pig was considered sacred without any reservations. We know that this animal was devoted to the corn-goddess Demeter and used in the mystery cults attached to this goddess.⁴¹³ Also whenever pollution accidentally took place in any of these grain-rituals, the mishap was expiated by the⁴¹⁵ sacrifice of a pig.⁴¹⁴ According to Al-Nadim, the heathen Harranians

409. G.B., vol. VIII, p. 24.

410. *ibid.*

411. *ibid.*, p. 25.

412. Cook, notes on the R.S., p. 621.

413. G.B., vol. VIII, p. 16 ff.

414. G.B., vol. VII, p. 74.

415. R.S., p. 290 citing Fihrist, p. 326.

sacrificed the swine and ate swine's flesh once a year. Evidently, this was an ancient ceremony, for it appears in Cyprus in connection with the worship of the Semitic Aphrodite and Adonis.⁴¹⁶

Contrast this with the testimony of Frazer that certain people who are engaged in the fields will under no circumstances eat pork;⁴¹⁷ because pigs are the most dangerous foes of the crops, and should a laborer eat pork, the flesh of the dead pig would attract live pigs⁴¹⁸ into the fields. Also among the Syrians the pig was taboo.⁴¹⁹

This division between the sacred and the taboo with regard to the pig doubtlessly grows out of the uncertainty between the concepts of unclean and holy.⁴²⁰ The question naturally arises whether the pig was sacred among the Egyptians, Babylonians, and Syrians, and for that reason was considered taboo and untouchable? Or, as Frazer suggests,⁴²¹ the pig perhaps belonged to that category of animals which possessed magical powers, and should anyone eat of its flesh, the animal could avenge itself by exercising malignant power over the individual. But even in Frazer's suggestion there is the hint that the taboo was placed upon the pig to protect its sacred character.

According to our Biblical evidence, the eating of swine's flesh was prohibited among the Hebrews, for we read: "And the swine, because he parteth the hoof, and is cloven-footed, but cheweth not the cud, he is unclean unto you... Of their flesh ye shall

416. R.S.

417. G.B., vol. VIII, p. 33.

418. G.B., vol. VII, p. 100.

419. R.S., p. 153.

420. *ibid.*, p. 448, Note B.

421. G.B., vol. VIII, p. 138 ff.

not eat, and their carcasses ye shall not touch; they are unclean
unto you." ⁴²² The same prohibition is uttered in Deuteronomy 14:8.
Among the detestable things of which Isaiah accuses the people of
Israel are their eating of swine's ⁴²³ flesh and their drinking of
⁴²⁴ swine's blood, and from the context of the passages there is no
doubt but that the writer looked upon these practices as being re-
pulsive. From the utterances of Isaiah we may conclude that the pig
was considered a sacred animal by the people and employed as such in
the sacrificial meals. However, if we had only the passage in Le-
viticus upon which to base our conclusions, we would be faced with
the dilemma of whether the prohibition was made to keep foreign in-
practices out of Israel or to destroy the practice that already ex-
isted in Israel. It is very doubtful whether the prohibition was a
taboo levelled in order to protect the sacred character of the pig. ⁴²⁵
In fact, on the basis of our archeological evidence, it should be
clear, beyond any shadow of a doubt, that the pig cult did play a
role in folk worship of the people, and that the prohibitions and
exhortations were made because the condition actually existed, as
proved by these pig-heads excavated at Beth-Shan.

422. Lev. 11:7 ff.

423. Isaiah 65:4, 66:17.

424. Isaiah 66:3.

425. This would be counter to the Deuteronomic reforms, the pur-
poses of which were to purify the Yahvistic cult.

IX.

Divination

Divination, the pseudo-science which has found expression among all peoples and in every age, was not without its counterpart among the ancient Hebrews. Rowe believes that with the cylinder seal he unearthed at Beth-Shan in 1927 he has external evidence that divination was practiced in some form.⁴²⁶ This particular seal was excavated in the Amenophis III level and has been dated MB. Upon its surface there are three lines of Babylonian cuneiform, which, when deciphered,⁴²⁷ read: "Ma-a-nu-um, the diviner, and servant of the god Eukl."

Evidently divination was performed at the sanctuary which stood on this tel, and Ma-a-nu-um was the agent or interpreter.

Our knowledge of the particular type of divination that was practiced by the ancient inhabitants of Palestine is enhanced by a find that was unearthed at Tel Beth Mirsim. This was a limestone⁴²⁸ tablet, liver shaped, and upon which was carved a maze pattern. Albright suggests, and doubtlessly correctly,⁴²⁹ that this tablet was used in hepatoscopy or liver divination. A remarkable coincidence lies in the fact that this divining tablet belongs to the same period of civilization as the cylinder seal upon which the diviner is inscribed -- MB.

426. P.E.F.Q.S., 1928, p. 84.

427. *ibid.*

428. Bulletin #31, p. 6.

429. *ibid.*

These physical remains, which suggest to us not only the fact that divination was practiced but even the type of divination employed, express the longing to penetrate the future, which is one of the impelling motives in all religions, ancient or modern.⁴³⁰ The needs of daily life, combined with an instinctive fear of the unknown, lead man to turn to Powers for some signs which may indicate what these Powers have in mind to do. Divination is prompted by the longing to break the fetters and tear the veil from the mysterious future. "Success in any undertaking being dependent upon the co-operation of the gods, it was all-important to ascertain whether or not that co-operation be forthcoming."⁴³¹ The endless, unforeseen changes in nature, in the varying appearance of the heavens, in the unstable phenomena on earth, found expression in man's associating changeability with the guides of human destinies. One could never be sure of the mood of the higher Powers; it was, therefore, a matter of practical importance to find out, if possible, their disposition at any given moment.

In any survey of the limitless field of divination, we may distinguish two divisions: one we may designate as voluntary divination,⁴³² the other as involuntary divination. By voluntary divination is meant an act of deliberately seeking out some object through which it is hoped to secure a sign indicative of future events. So,

430. This statement and the following treatment of Divination are taken from Jastrow, M., Religious Belief in Babylonia and Assyria, p. 143-206.

431. *ibid.*, p. 143.

432. *ibid.*, p. 144.

for example, the common practice among ancient Arabs of marking arrows and then throwing them before an image or symbol of a deity, and according to where they lodged or the side on which they fell, to be able to conclude what the deity had in mind to do or what he desired of his worshippers. Any action of this type would fall under the category of voluntary divination.⁴³³ Sending forth birds and observing their flight, as the Etruscans were accustomed to do, would represent another means of voluntary divination, the conclusions drawn from the direction and character of the flight, based upon a system more or less artificially devised.⁴³⁴

The field of involuntary divination, where signs indicating the purpose of the gods are not sought but forced upon the notice of the individual in spite of himself, is larger than the former. The phenomena in the heavens constitute the most conspicuous example of involuntary divination. The changes in the sky from night to night were supposed to correspond to variations in the dispositions of the gods, who were associated with the planets and constellations. All unusual incidents, whether in nature, such as sudden storms, thunder out of a cloudless sky, cloud-bursts, severe inundations, destructive tornadoes, swarms of locusts; or incidents in life that for one reason or another rivetted attention, such as dreams, snakes in the road, deformities in the young of animals, the birth of twins or triplets -- in short, anything which had any feature which gave it

433. *ibid.*

434. *ibid.*, p. 145.

435. *ibid.*, p. 146.

prominence, might be a sign sent by some god, and, in any event, demanded an interpretation by those who were supposed to possess the capacity to read in these signs the will and intention of the higher Powers.⁴³⁵

The practice of these various forms of divination is not restricted to any one race of peoples, but can be found existing among ancients and moderns, from Greenland to Tierra del Fuego, or from Scotland to Singapore. This universal faith in magical divination underlies all creeds, all religions, all types of worship used by peoples.⁴³⁶ If we were to take each type of divination, examine it, discuss its origins and distribution, we would find the material overwhelming and the task high insurmountable.

However, since our archeological evidence points definitely to the practice of hepatoscopy, the writer believes that a more detailed study of liver divination would be valuable.

So deeply rooted is the belief that through a sacrificial animal a sign indicative of the divine purpose can be obtained, that the idea of tribute involved in offering an animal appears (so far as Babylonian religion is concerned) to have been of a secondary character,⁴³⁷ if not a later addition to the divinatory aim. The theory upon which divination by means of the liver rested is both curious and interesting. It was believed that the god to whom an animal was

435. *ibid.*, p. 146.

436. *G.B.*, vol. I, p. 234 ff.

437. See Note 430, *op. cit.*, p. 148.

offered identified himself for the time being with the proffered
438 gift. The god, in accepting the animal became, as it were, united
to it, in much the same way as those who actually eat it. It seems
rather certain that in animal sacrifice an essential feature is
the belief that the soul or spirit of the god becomes identical with
439 the soul of the sacrificial animal. Therefore, through the soul of
the animal, a visible means was obtained for studying the soul of
the god, thus enabling human beings to peer, as it were, into the
mental mechanisms of the gods, and thus find what future events they
440 plan for the world.

But where was the soul of the god? Using the term soul in the
popularly accepted sense, it is not surprising to find mankind, in
his lower stages of civilization attempting to localize in some organ
441 what he conceived to be the soul or vital essence of animate being.

In most of the Aryan and Semitic languages, the word for soul
means "breath" and rests upon the notion that actual breath, blown
through the mouth, represents the real soul. Antecedent to this stage
we find three organs of the human body -- liver, heart, and brain --
receiving in turn the honor of being the seat of the soul. This
order of enumeration represents the successive stages in this en-
deavor. Among people of today, still living in a state of primitive
culture, we find traces of the belief which places the soul in the
442 liver.

438. This theory is shared also by William Robertson Smith, R.S.,
p. 388-404.

439. *ibid.*

440. See Note 437.

441. *ibid.*, p. 149.

442. Tribes of Borneo. *ibid.*, pl 150.

The reason the liver should have been selected as the seat of life is not hard to discover. Blood was, naturally, identified with life; and the liver, being obviously a bloody organ, containing about one sixth of the blood in the human body and in animals often more than that amount, was regarded as the source of the blood, whence it was distributed throughout the body. Traces of this belief are retained in Babylonian literature, where the word "liver" is used as one would use "heart."⁴⁴³ There are traces of this usage in Hebrew poetry.⁴⁴⁴ The Arabic language also furnishes traces of this early conception of the "liver" as comprising the entire range of⁴⁴⁵ soul-life.

To recapitulate the factors in the theory underlying hepatoscopy: The animal selected for sacrifice is identified with the god to whom it is offered. The soul of the animal is attuned to the soul of the god -- becomes one with it. Therefore, if the signs on the liver of the sacrificial animal can be read, then the mind of the god likewise can be read, and the diviner is able to foresee the future because he knows what is in the deity's mind.

It is doubtlessly just such divination that Ezekiel refers to when he says: "For the king of Babylon standeth at the parting of the way, at the head of two ways, to use divination....he looketh into the liver."⁴⁴⁶ We cannot tell from the passage what sort of

443. *ibid.*, p. 151.

444. Lam. 2:11, Prov. 7:23.

445. See Note 443, *ibid.*, p. 152.

446. 21:76.

liver was used in the divination; therefore it may have been a limestone tablet such as was found in Tel Beit Mirsim, and not the live organ. Also, this limestone tablet was described as having upon it a maze pattern. It may be that the actual organ was compared with the pattern on the limestone tablet, and if the veins in the liver compared favorably or unfavorably with the lines on the tablet, the diviner could foretell the degree of success.⁴⁴⁷

Further evidence of the fact that liver divination was popular and current among the Hebrews may be derived from the legislation to burn the liver with the sacrificial offering.⁴⁴⁸ Is it not logical to suppose that, since the liver is an edible organ of any animal, it was cast into the fire with the fat and the kidneys to prevent divination by means of it?

What type of diviner Ma-a-nu-um was we cannot tell from the cylinder seal, but he may have been any one of several mentioned in the Bible. He may have been "kesem,"⁴⁵⁰ "meonen,"⁴⁵¹ "nihes,"⁴⁵² "gazerin,"⁴⁵³ "assaph,"⁴⁵⁴ "kasdaim,"⁴⁵⁵ "gad,"⁴⁵⁶ or "meni."⁴⁵⁷ These latter are not nouns but verbs describing the physical exertion which diviner may have used to produce his divination.

447. For illustrations of similar limestone tablets, cf. Jastrow, Religious Belief in Babylonia and Assyria, Plate 21, figures 1 & 2.

448. Lev. 3:4.

449. supra, p. 94.

450. I Sam. 6:2, 15:23, 28:8; Zech. 10:12; Josh. 13:22; Isa. 3:2.

451. Lev. 19:26; Deut. 18:10,14; Judg. 9:37; II K. 21:6; Isa. 2:6, 57:3; Jer. 27:9; Micah 5:12.

452. Gen. 30:27, 44:5,15; Lev. 10:26; Num. 23:23, 24:1; I K. 20:33; II K. 21:6 (II Chron. 33:6).

453. Dan. 2:27, 4:4, 5:7,11.

454. Dan. 1:20, 2:2,10, 4:7.

455. Dan. 1:4, 2:10, 5:7,11.

456. Isa. 65:11.

457. ibid.

The phenomena upon which the diviner may have relief can be
classified under the headings, voluntary and involuntary. The vol-
untary methods mentioned in the Bible are: Rhabdomancy -- divina-
tion by rods; ⁴⁵⁹belomancy -- ⁴⁶⁰divination by arrows; the casting of
lots; ⁴⁶¹hydromancy -- the pouring out of water; ⁴⁶²necromancy -- the
consulting of the spirits of the dead; ⁴⁶³and the Urim and Thumim. ⁴⁶⁴
The involuntary methods are: ⁴⁶⁵astrology -- divination by the stars;
dreams -- Jacob will not take a decisive step without direct reve-
lation -- ⁴⁶⁶divine communication by dreams exceeds the power of human
reason -- ⁴⁶⁷the author of the speeches of Elihu also attaches great
importance to dreams -- ⁴⁶⁸opposition to the diviners of false dreams -- ⁴⁶⁹
interpretation of dreams by inspired prophets -- ⁴⁷⁰other noteworthy
instances of divinely sent dreams; ⁴⁷¹and divination by the flight of
birds. ⁴⁷²

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459. Ex. 4:2 ff., 7:8 ff.; Num. 20:8 ff.; Hosea 4:12.
460. Ezek. 2:26, I Sam. 20 (Jonathan shoots the arrow and foretells
the future for David).
461. I Sam. 14:41, 10:20 (Saul elected king); Josh. 7:13-19 (Achan's
guilt detected), 14:2; Num. 26:55,56 (land divided by lots).
462. Gen. 44:5 (Joseph's divining cup).
463. I Sam. 28:7 (Saul and the witch of Endor), Isa. 8:19.
464. Num. 27:27.
465. Judg. 5:20, Job 38:33 (stars influence fortune of men), Isa.
47:13, Dan. 2:48 (astrologers).
466. Gen. 31:10-13.
467. Gen. 20:3,6, 37:5, 40:8, 41:1.
468. Job 33:14-16.
469. Zech. 10:2.
470. Dan. 2:27, 4:10-28.
471. Gen. 28:12 ff., 31:24; Judg. 7:13; I K. 3:5 ff.
472. II K. 17:17, 21:6; Ps. 58:5.

Further evidence of the fact that divination was practiced by the people is derived from the legislation set down in the law codes which prohibits every type and degree of divination mentioned elsewhere in the Bible.⁴⁷³

Our conclusions are simple -- perhaps overdrawn -- namely, that the diviner Ma-a-nu-um practiced some of the aforementioned types of divination and that the "liver-tablet" is to be associated with the hepatoscopy which we have ferreted out of the Biblical material.

473. Ex. 22:18; Lev. 19:26,31, 20:27; Deut. 18:10,11.

There is ~~as yet~~ no archaeological evidence to show that child-sacrifice was carried on by the Israelites. The only Iron Age example you give is from Beth-Shean, which is Philistine & not Israelite.

Child Sacrifices

Archeological evidence of the past ten years seems to point to the fact that the sacrifice of children was practiced by the Hebrews. At the outset, the writer must admit that the evidence is not overwhelming nor conclusive, at least not commensurate with the great abundance of Biblical material that refers to this subject. However, because some of the remains showed evidences of being burnt we may not be too far amiss in correlating the excavated finds with the child-sacrifices described in the Bible. Of course, the objection can always be raised that if children were killed and burnt, one could really not expect to find the remains. Or the argument can be advanced that these burials may be those of children who died of disease or by accident, and they do not belong to children who were sacrificed. The writer is presenting these views, not to deprecate the work of the archeologists, but rather to show how cautious we must be in drawing our conclusions from the few finds that we have at our disposal. However, we shall proceed on the assumption that these finds represent the burials of children who were sacrificed to the deity, with the belief that future finds may corroborate our conjecture.

At Teleilat-el-Ghassul, a tel situated about five kilometers east of the Jordan and about the same distance north of the Dead Sea, among the findings belonging to the EB age, there were discovered pottery jars in which had been interred the bones of a large number

of infants. Some of the finds were charred, indicating that they had⁴⁷⁴ been burnt. Whether these children were burnt as sacrifices, or whether the charred condition of the jars and bones is due to a conflagration of the city -- perhaps hundreds of years after these burials were made -- we do not know.

From the MB age come similar infant burials. One, at El-Adeimeh, was contained in a small stone cist.⁴⁷⁵ The other one, at Tel el-Duweir (Biblical Lachish) was sealed in under the Hyksos revetment of the town. It was a small, oval grave, some three feet in length, just large enough to contain the tightly contracted skeleton⁴⁷⁶ of a child.

In the LB age there were several of these infant jar burials,⁴⁷⁷ one at Beth Shemesh, and eight at Jabeil (ancient Byblos or Gebal).⁴⁷⁸ The latter ones were found underneath the wall and resting upon the native rock on which the city once stood.⁴⁷⁹

In the EI II age we find an interesting departure from the general procedure. At Beth Shemesh, at this level, infant burial jars were found, not scattered through the city, but underneath the house-floors.⁴⁸⁰ These belong to the period of Israelitish history when the practice of sacrificing children was supposed to have flourished; however, we shall have more to say about this as our study progresses.

474. Bulletin #41, p. 12-14.

475. *ibid.*, p. 16.

476. P.E.F.Q.S., 1934, p. 168.

477. Grant, E., Rumeileh Ain Sherns Excavations, Part III, 1934, p. 22.

478. A.J.A., vol. 36, p. 71 ff.

479. *ibid.*

480. Bulletin #52, p. 5.

Assuming that these remains indicate the presence of child-sacrifices, we next must determine the motives behind the sacrificing of human beings. 1) The dead bodies may have been used for magical purposes.⁴⁸¹ 2) It may have been motivated by the desire to contact the super-sensuous, the feeling that the passage from life to death unites the seen and the unseen realms.⁴⁸² 3) The object, more precisely, may have been to arouse the gods -- to elicit their aid.⁴⁸³ 4) The *modus vivendi* may have been to secure the presence of a human spirit -- a man's "mana" or his sacred influence.⁴⁸⁴ 5) While a death is often regarded as something vicarious -- on the belief that another man's death has saved one's own -- the next logical step would be to slay deliberately in order that another may live, and typically to strengthen or to prolong the life of a king, sacred man,⁴⁸⁵ or chief.

It is known that children, and especially the first born, have been sacrificed to cure barrenness, or, more generally, to ensure good health, good fortune, and fertility.⁴⁸⁶ There are various savage rites, for example, the devouring of the first born, or killing them outright;⁴⁸⁷ or the first born may be sacrificed to ensure the preservation of his successors.⁴⁸⁸ It is even recorded that the first few children have been sacrificed in some localities.⁴⁸⁹ Children are

481. Cook, S.A., Notes on R.S., p. 630.

482. *ibid.*

483. *ibid.*, citing Westermarck, *Morocco* I, p. 528 ff.

484. *ibid.*

485. G.B., vol. IV, p. 160 ff., vol. VI, p. 221 ff.

486. *ibid.*, vol. IV, p. 184.

487. Frazer, *Belief in Immortality*, vol. II, p. 89.

488. FOT, vol. III, p. 173.

489. G.B. vol. IV, p. 181.

slain by a king to restore to life a friend or to preserve the king's
⁴⁹⁰life, and often this child is the king's own offspring, for the
birth of a son may be an indication that the father will die. ⁴⁹¹This
adds significance to our archeological evidence, for these infant
burials indicate both human sacrifice and the sacrifice of first-
borns.

As to the origin and extent of the ancient custom, Frazer in-
forms us that it was practiced by the Carthaginians, Phoenicians,
Canaanites, Moabites, and Sepharvites, but whether it was only the
first-born children who were sacrificed we are not told by the anc-
⁴⁹²ient writers. For the Moabites the limitation is clearly indicated
when we read that the king of Moab offered his eldest son, who
should have reigned after him, as a burnt sacrifice on the wall. ⁴⁹³
As for the Phoenicians, it is not quite so clear because in the
statement of Porphyry we have it that the Phoenicians used to sacri-
fice one of their dearest to Baal, and in the legend recorded by
Philo of Byblos we learn that Cronus sacrificed his only-begotten
⁴⁹⁴son. It is agreed generally by scholars that the ancient Hebrews
⁴⁹⁵acquired this cult practice through the Phoenicians.

The name of the deity to whom the Hebrews sacrificed their
children was Molech or Moloch. The appellation Molech occurs in
Leviticus 18:21, 20:2, 5; I Kings 11:7; II Kings 23:10; and Jeremiah

490. *ibid.*, vol. VI, p. 226.

491. FOT, vol. III, p. 173.

492. G.B., vol. IV, p. 178.

493. II K. 3:27.

494. G.B., vol. IV, p. 166 ff.

495. E.B. III, p. 3183 ff.

32:35. The Greek translators refer to the deity as Moloch in Amos 5:26 and Zephaniah 1:5. ⁴⁹⁶ Moore believe that this rite is alluded to in Isaiah 30:33 and 57:9.

That the name was originally Melek and not Molech is attested to by the theory of Frazer that the sacrifices of children were intended to prolong the life of the human king. ⁴⁹⁷ Especially significant in this respect is the fact that two kings, Ahaz and Manasseh, both ⁴⁹⁸ ⁴⁹⁹ sacrificed their sons to this false god. ⁵⁰⁰ W. R. Smith is of the opinion that the name was originally Melek, corresponding to "king," but he further believes that the name was later twisted to Molech to give the word the same vowels as in "boeth," meaning "shame." Doubtlessly this is an attempt on the part of later writers to cast aspersions upon this ritual.

The term regularly employed to describe the rites of the Molech worship is "he'ebir," meaning "cause to pass over," "make over to a deity," synonymous with "give" or "pay." Thus in one passage we ⁵⁰¹ have the expression "to give over to Yahve." In several places we ⁵⁰² ⁵⁰³ have the phrases "to give over to Molech" and "to pass through fire." In the last mentioned, the name of the deity is not expressly stated, ⁵⁰⁴ but scholars understand the passages to refer to Molech. Similarly understood are those passages which read "to cause to pass over to ⁵⁰⁵ idols." The testimony of the narrators, the prophets, and the law

496. *ibid.*, p. 3183.

497. *supra*, p. 105ff. Also cf. G.B., vol. VI, p. 219 ff.

498. II K. 16:3.

499. II K. 21:6.

500. R.S., p. 372.

501. Ex. 13:12.

502. Lev. 18:21, 20:2-4; II K. 23:10; Jer. 32:35.

503. Deut. 18:10; II K. 16:3, 17:17, 21:16; Ezek. 20:31; II Chron. 33:6.

504. E.B., III, p. 3184.

505. Ezek. 16:21, 23:37.

is abundant and unambiguous as to the fact that these children were slain first, and then burnt as a holocaust, like other sacrificial offerings.⁵⁰⁶

The place of sacrifice, or at least the only one mentioned in the Bible, was at Jerusalem in the valley of Ben Hinnom, just outside the city gate "Harsith" not far from the Temple, and this place is called "Tophet."⁵⁰⁷

The testimonies in the Bible concerning the sacrifices of children to Molech relate chiefly of the seventh and of the sixth centuries B.C.E. We have the statements that Ahaz and Manasseh both offered their sons by fire, and scholars are of the opinion that Ahaz reintroduced the cult.⁵⁰⁸ Further proof of this late date is attested to by the fact that the prophets of the eighth century, in striking contrast to those of the next, make no mention of child sacrifice in the enumeration of the sins of their contemporaries. In the last century of the kingdom of Judah the denunciations of the prophets⁵⁰⁹ and the prohibitions of the legislation⁵¹⁰ prove that the sacrifice of children was a common thing.⁵¹¹ Moore is of the opinion that these sacrifices were suppressed by Josiah in 621,⁵¹² but the worship was revived under Johoiakim and continued on until the fall of Jerusalem.⁵¹³

506. Gen. 22; Deut. 12:31; II K. 17:31; Isa. 57:5 ff.; Jer. 3:24, 7:31, 19:4-6; Ezek. 16:20, 23:37; Ps. 106:37 ff.

507. Jer. 19:2.

508. E.B., III, p. 3185.

509. Jer. 7:31, 19:5; Ezek. 16:20, 36, 20:26, 31, 23:37, 39; Micah 6:6-8.

510. Lev. 18:21, 20:2-5; Deut. 12:31, 18:10.

511. E.B., III, p. 3186.

512. II K. 23:10.

513. Jer. 11:10-13, Ezek. 20:30 ff.

Moore rests the burden of his proof upon the testimony of the
⁵¹⁴ prophets. Jeremiah calls the place of sacrifice "the high place of
⁵¹⁵ Baal;" Ezekiel speaks of sacrificing children to idols and character-
⁵¹⁶ izes the worship as fornication and adultery. ⁵¹⁷ There can be no ques-
⁵¹⁸ tion that to the prophets this cult was an apostasy to heathenism;
 however, we cannot be certain that the judgment of the prophets re-
 flects the intention of the worshipper, for we shall find evidence
 that the prophets themselves knew that the people who thus sacri-
 ficed were not sacrificing to foreign gods.

Moore offers the suggestion that Molech, as a corruption of Me-
 lek, is a title rather than a proper name, and when it says that the
 people were sacrificing their children to Molech, it is Yahve Who
⁵¹⁹ is meant. This supposition is supported by the statements of Jere-
 miah and Ezekiel. Jeremiah protests repeatedly that Yahve had not
⁵²⁰ enjoined these sacrifices. The prophetic denial is the best evidence
 that those who offered these sacrifices were offering them to Yahve,
 since they believed they were acting in obedience to Yahve's com-
 mandments. This conclusion is affirmed by Ezekiel. The people had
 disobeyed the good laws which Yahve had given unto them, therefore
 "I gave them statutes, not good, and ordinances whereby they cannot
 live, and defiled them by their sacrificial gifts in offering every
⁵²¹ first-born, that I might fill them with horror." He leaves us in

514. E.B. III, p. 3187.

515. 19:5, 32:35.

516. 23:39.

517. 16:20.

518. 23:37.

519. E.B., III, p. 3188, cites for his proof such passages in which
 Yahve is equated with "king."

520. 7:31.

521. Ezek. 20:25 ff.

no doubt as to what this destructive law was, for he quotes exactly the words of Exodus 13:12, which demands that the first-born be surrendered to the Lord.⁵²² It is not strange that these sacrifices should have multiplied in the last days of Judah, when disaster after disaster proved the anger of Yahve. If their neighbors, at such a time, offered to their gods in this fashion, would Yahve expect less of His people?⁵²³ Yahve demanded as much -- so the people reasoned from the law in Exodus 13:12, which Ezekiel quotes. From early times the people had been nurtured on the belief that the first-born was sacred to Yahve, and though they knew that Yahve had waived his rights to them in consideration of the five shekels per head,⁵²⁴ still in a national crisis they believed that Yahve would be better pleased if they gave him not the shekels but the most valued object,⁵²⁵ the first born child.

Our archeological evidence is silent upon the question of the practice of child sacrifice immediately preceding the downfall of Judah. Perhaps this silence, this lack of positive evidence, speaks eloquently for the influence of the prophets at this time. It is reasonable to believe that if there had been such widespread practice of this type of worship so late in Judah's history, archeology would have unearthed more abundant evidence than it has. Perhaps the future digs will supply the necessary information. Another alternative for the solution of the problem of lack of concrete

522. Compare with the prohibition of Lev. 18:21.

523. E.B., III, p. 3190.

524. Num. 18:15 ff.

525. G.B., vol. IV, p. 174.

evidence may lie in the fact that this worship never took place so late in Hebrew history, but it was merely "historical memory" on the part of the prophets, who were calling to mind the tradition that their people had once indulged in this practice. The early date of our infant burials seems to substantiate this conjecture, and perhaps future archeology will heap up evidence.

526. *supra*, p. 103 ff.

XI.

Offerings for the Dead

Archeology in the coming year may unearth valuable evidence with regard to the burial customs of the Hebrews; however, it may be that in the recent find at Tel En-Nasbeh we have the beginnings of an interesting study. In an EI I tomb, at the Tel En-Nasbeh site, there was uncovered a unique terra-cotta bottle-jar.⁵²⁷ It simulates, with incised spirals, a bee-hive built up in a blunt cone by means of coiled ropes of straw. A spirally incised bottle-neck on the side marked the door-way for the bees. The neck was broken off so that it was possible to secure and submit to special chemical examination a caked substance still adhering to the bottom. Unfortunately, the sample was not preserved in an air-tight vessel, and in consequence it dried out so completely that the analysis gave no positive result. But when the substance was removed, its surface still had a fatty appearance which suggested wax. Bade conjectures that this was probably "honey," used as a food-offering for the⁵²⁸ dead. Honey, when separated from the combs, often contains a considerable quantity of wax; the latter is a rather stable substance and has, under favorable circumstances, been known to persist for a long time.⁵²⁹ If this be correct, then we probably have here an instance of food-offerings for the dead.

527. P.E.F.Q.S., 1930, p. 16 ff.

528. Bade, W.F., Some Tombs of Tell En-Nasbeh. A Special Report, 1931, p. 28.

529. *ibid.*

What the motive was behind these offerings we do not know for certain, but we have certain information that throws light upon the subject. Among the Babylonians it is known that dates, grain, poultry and fish were buried with the dead, and Jastrow understands by this that the people believed that the dead could suffer pangs of hunger; they offered food both at the time of the burial and afterwards.⁵³⁰ Lucian tells of the Greeks that they offered meat and drink to the dead and of one king Kerberos he relates they deposited with the corpse a honey-cake.⁵³¹ We are safe in inferring from this that these offerings were made for the purpose of allaying the hunger of the dead.⁵³² Tylor cites another interesting example of a mausoleum in Madagascar which was found furnished with a table and two chairs, a bottle of wine, and two tumblers. In Egyptian tombs there were found reed-tables, bearing offerings of cakes, ducks, or other things, according to the wealth of the donors; one of them was found at Thebes and now rests in the British Museum. On the lower shelf are cakes; the central shelf has a duck cut open and spread out;⁵³³ and upon the top is some fowl prepared in a similar fashion.

In any of the above cited instances it seems quite clear that the food was offered or placed in the tomb to permit the dead person to satisfy his hunger. However, in addition to this theory Frazer presents an interesting suggestion that these food offerings

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530. The Religion of Babylon and Assyria, p. 598.
531. Tylor, E.B., Primitive Culture, vol. I, p. 490, citing Lucian, De Luctu.
532. op. cit., vol. II, p. 30 ff.
533. Wilkinson, J.G., The Ancient Egyptians, vol. III, p. 432 ff.

were made to enable communion between the living and the dead.⁵³⁴

With the practice of making food offerings to the dead so prevalent in Babylon and Egypt, it is not surprising that it found its way into Palestine. It was doubtlessly to offset such a practice that the legislation was set down in the law codes, prohibiting the "giving of food for the dead."⁵³⁵ If we accept Frazer's suggestion, namely, that the food offerings were made to facilitate intercourse with the dead,⁵³⁶ then perhaps we have such an implication in the prophet Isaiah.⁵³⁷ R. H. Charles would also include, by implication,⁵³⁸ Ezekiel 24:17, 22 and II Chronicles 16:14.

It may be that the cruse of honey discovered at Tel En-Nasbeh can be correlated with the above Biblical passages. Our attention is immediately called to the fact that the Biblical literature is silent about these offerings, with exception to the explicit statement in Deuteronomy. The prophets, with the exception of a few derelived sentiments, have nothing to say concerning the matter. The silence of both archeology and the Bible with regard to this practice may be fit tribute to the effectiveness of the Deuteronomic reforms. If this be so, then we may interpret the find at Tel En-Nasbeh as being an example of a few errant ones who did not comply with the legislation, or it may be the practice, as represented by

534. G.B. vol. VIII, p. 154.

535. Deut. 26:14. So interpreted by Driver, International Critical Commentary. Deuteronomy, 1895, p. 291 ff.

536. supra, p. 113 ff.

537. 8:19, 19:3.

538. E.B., vol. II, p. 1337.

this find, which called forth the legislation. This latter conclusion gains support with the observation that the Tel En-Nasbeh discovery falls rather late (EI I) in Hebrew history.

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540. *ibid.*

541. Lev. 20:14.

542. Lev. 21:19.

by Petrie represents this type of punishment being carried out in an extreme or exaggerated form. It is not too far from reality to suggest that the community was so incensed at the act of the individual that they not only burnt the person, but all of his personal possessions as well, so as completely to free the community from any of the guilt.

However, the conjecture of Petrie is borne out by the use of such strict measures among ancient peoples, to remove any guilt that may have been incurred through contact with objects devoted to the deity, and to destroy all tabu objects thereby preventing any such contacts. Let us remember that, if Petrie's suggestion be correct, we must concern ourselves not with those minor incidents in which an individual removes tabu by remaining outside the camp or taking a ritual bath, but with the more serious offenses in which the guilt is expiated only by completely destroying the contaminated property, and with these cases in which the devoted objects are so sacred, or tabu, that they must be "banned" immediately -- the method banning generally being that of burning the sacred objects.

The practice of devoting to the deity the spoils of war, persons, or things, which is found among ancient nations and tribes, is inseparably connected with the idea of a holy warfare which claims all booty for the god who leads to victory and in whose honor the captured foes, as well as goods, are destroyed ("banned") immediately upon the spot. King Mesha of Moab tells in his inscription

543. E.B., I, p. 468.

544. J.E., II, p. 487, citing Moabite Stone, lines 16 ff.

how, after having carried off the vessels of Yahve from the city of Nebo and dragged them before Chemosh, his god, he devoted 7000⁵⁴⁵ prisoners to Ashtar-Chemosh and how he "slew the inhabitants of Attarot as a spectacle to his god Chemosh."⁵⁴⁶ Generally, the people, before going to battle, devoted, in the form of a vow, to the deity the whole booty in order to assure themselves of the deity's aid.⁵⁴⁷ This was a common practice among the Teutons and the Gauls; and in like manner did Israel vow "to ban" the Canaanites and their cities⁵⁴⁸ should Yahve deliver them into Israel's hands.

Since Israel was engaged in warfare against idolatrous nations throughout its pre-exilic history, this particular view of the consecration of the booty, whether expressed in a vow beforehand or not, lent its coloring to every battle. Consequently, the ban fell not only upon the persons and things captured, but also upon that individual who appropriated them, and even upon the very house where the devoted thing was ceremoniously placed. The mortal sin of an individual was a thing that affected the whole community or the entire family of the offender. Accordingly it is the business of the community to narrow the responsibility for the crime and to free itself of the contagious taint of fixing the guilt either on a single⁵⁴⁹ individual or the entire family. Thus before the capture of Jericho⁵⁵⁰ Joshua proclaimed that the city and all its contents should be devoted.

545. *ibid.* The word used "heheramtî" means to destroy completely.

546. See Note 544.

547. *ibid.*, p. 488.

548. Num. 21:3.

549. R.S., p. 421.

550. Josh. 6:19-21.

ed to the Lord, and at the same time he warned them of the consequences issuing from the trespassing of such a prohibition. Therefore, when Achan took of the devoted booty he brought doom upon the whole people, and the entire camp became contaminate with the guilt⁵⁵¹ until Achan and his household were singled out and destroyed. Hence we may infer that when a tribesman is executed for an impious offense, he dies on behalf of the community to restore normal relations⁵⁵² between them and their god.

Of similar significance, in the war against Amalek, was Samuel's proclamation to "utterly destroy" (herem) all the property of⁵⁵³ the enemy. On the other hand, after Saul had placed a ban (harem) upon Agog and his people, he tried to spare the valuable objects, which deed caused the wrath of Yahve to be kindled; to fulfil the⁵⁵⁴ ban Agog had to be killed and his property destroyed.

The ban (herem), as a primitive war measure was enforced in the⁵⁵⁵ Deuteronomic legislation, with special attention being paid to the gold and silver idols of the foreign nations that they be burnt in⁵⁵⁶ fire. This is related as having been carried out by Joshua. The⁵⁵⁷ idolatrous Israelite city was to be treated in the same manner as the Canaanite city -- thoroughly destroying it and burning it with⁵⁵⁸ fire. The banned city was made a place of desolation, as in the⁵⁵⁹ case of Jericho and Ai. All idolatrous nations were considered under⁵⁶⁰

551. Josh. 7:11-15, 25 ff.

552. See Note 549.

553. I Sam. 15:3.

554. I Sam. 15:8, 9, 32.

555. Deut. 7:2.

556. Deut. 7:25 ff.

557. Josh. 10:1, 28-40, 11:11-21; I K. 9:21.

558. Deut. 13:16-18.

559. Josh. 6:26, I K. 16:34.

560. Josh. 8:28.

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the ban, as well as idolatrous individuals. 562

By way of summary we may say that Petrie's "burnt-pile" may be that of an individual condemned to die because of some heinous crime; or that of one who brought contamination upon the community by appropriating objects devoted to the deity, and, therefore, he and his possessions had to be utterly destroyed, as in the case of Achan; or that of one who was an idolator or a member of an idolatrous people and had to pay for his crime by being burnt.

561. Isa. 34:2, Jer. 25:9, Micah 4:13.
562. Ex. 22:19, Lev. 27:29.

XIII.

Tattooing

One of the finds at Tel Beit Mirsim may be a clue to certain religious practices prevalent among the ancient Hebrews. This practice the writer refers to is that of tattooing the body. Of course, from the physical appearance of the find one cannot tell what motive was in the mind of the people in tattooing their bodies, but from certain Biblical references to the practice one can make conjectures.

Let it be said that our conclusions are not based upon positive evidence, but inference. In the C level (LB) Albright discovered a nude goddess, of the Astarte type, distinguished by a circle of dots around the navel.⁵⁶³ It is our contention that these dots are tattoo marks in imitation of an actual custom practiced by the people. The fact that these were found upon an idol should not weaken but strengthen our argument; it doubtlessly shows the sacred character of the practice, otherwise, there would be little reason for the presence of these tattoo marks upon the figurine. Biblical statements concerning this practice, as well as the universality of the custom, lend unusual credence to our theory. If these marks on the figure are not tattoos, that does not abrogate our Biblical evidence. If they be tattoos, as later archeology may prove them to be, then we have found support for the Biblical statements on the subject.

563. Bulletin #31, p. 8.

These dots may signify nothing more than the public hair

In the legislation of Deuteronomy⁵⁶⁴ and in the Holiness code,⁵⁶⁵ the Hebrews are forbidden to cut themselves for the dead. The prohibition in question is aimed at one of the most widely spread tokens of grief at the loss of relatives or of friends. To scratch and to beat oneself to the effusion of blood, to gash oneself purposely to indicate extreme grief, was almost a universal custom among all nations, with the exception of Egypt.⁵⁶⁶ Herodotus tells us that the Scythians of his time, on the death of a king, cut off their ears⁵⁶⁷ and made incisions all over their arms. Xenophon gives a similar account of the Armenians and the Assyrians.⁵⁶⁸ The legislation of Solon, according to Plutarch, forbade the women of Athens to beat themselves and to make markings on their bodies to the point that blood flowed forth from the wounds.⁵⁶⁹ The shedding of one's own blood, by marking the flesh, in memory of the dead, is intimately connected with the belief in the necessity of propitiating the spirit⁵⁷⁰ of the deceased.

~~This is incorrect; cf. I Kings 18, 28; 29, 28, 41~~
The earliest Biblical reference to this custom of making cuttings in time of mourning is taken to be Hosea 7:14, which describes⁵⁷¹ the wailing that took place during the wine and corn rites. Perhaps the reference here is to the mourning and lamentations for the dead Tammuz, at which time the people expressed their grief and held

564. 14:1.

565. Lev. 19:28.

566. Wilkinson, Ancient Egypt, vol. II, p. 574.

567. Driver, Deuteronomy, I.C.C., p. 156.

568. D.B., vol. I, p. 537, citing Cyrop III 1, 13.

569. *ibid.*, p. 538.

570. *ibid.*

571. *ibid.*

communion with the dead deity by gashing their flesh until the blood
⁵⁷² flowed -- this was generally accompanied by wailing, and perhaps it
 is this type of wailing that is referred to in Hosea. This prac-
⁵⁷³ tice was probably prevalent during the time of Jeremiah, and not
 only among his own countrymen but among the neighboring Philistines
⁵⁷⁴ and Moabites. ⁵⁷⁵ The fact that it was common would show that his con-
 temporaries did not recognize the law in Deuteronomy.

Our "marks" on the figurine goddess may have an entirely dif-
 ferent interpretation placed upon them. Under "cuttings in the
 flesh" must be considered the particular practice referred to in
 Leviticus 19:28b not "to print any mark on you." The expression
 does not occur elsewhere, but one may be rather certain that it re-
 fers to the ancient custom of tattooing the flesh. The origin of
 the custom is immediately associated with the incision in the flesh
⁵⁷⁶ made in mourning or in honor of the dead, and this suggests that in
 their origin these tattoo marks were nothing more than the permanent
 scars of punctures made to draw blood for a ceremony of self-dedica-
⁵⁷⁷ tion to the deity.

The best known illustration of the prevalence of this practice
 is supplied by the priests of the Syrian goddess who were tattooed
⁵⁷⁸ on their wrists and necks. Philo refers to the allied practice of

572. supra, p. 26.

573. 5:7, 16:6.

574. Jer. 47:5.

575. 48:37.

576. supra, p. 122.

577. R.S., p. 334, note 1.

578. Smith, W.R., Kinship and Marriage in Early Arabia, p. 249.

branding or of tatooing in the case of slaves and of criminals.⁵⁷⁹
Ptolemy IV is represented as having Jews branded with the ivy leaf,⁵⁸⁰
the symbol of Dionysus. These tatoos commonly denote devotion to,
or possession by, a god, as evidenced by the facts that Egyptian
captives were branded with the name of the deity or the divine king⁵⁸¹
and that the priests of Isis had cross-like marks on their forehead.⁵⁸²
It is Cook's suggestion that tatoo marks testify to the fact that all
individuals marked with the same cutting or impression participated⁵⁸³
in the same rites.

These citations show that it was not an unusual practice to
have tatooed or branded in one's flesh the name of a deity to whom
one was especially devoted, a practice which gives us an explanation⁵⁸⁴
of the passage: "Another shall mark in his brand -- 'Yahve's'"⁵⁸⁵
Jewish tradition has it that the obscure passage with regard to
Johoiakin refers to the breach of the commandment in Leviticus 19:
28b -- letters having been tatooed into his flesh, presumably the⁵⁸⁶
name of some heathen deity. In Ezekiel we read of marking a "sign"⁵⁸⁷
on the foreheads of the faithful in Jerusalem, who are to be spared
from the slaughter. Another account tells of how one of the proph-

579. D.B., vol. I, p. 538, citing De Monarch I.

580. ibid., citing III Maccabees 2:29.

581. Cook, S.A., R.S., p. 619, citing Breasted, J.H., Ancient Records of Egypt III, 414, and IV, 405.

582. Cook, R.S., p. 619.

583. ibid.

584. Isa. 44:5.

585. II Chron. 36:8.

586. D.B., vol. I, p. 538, citing Leviticus Rabbah 19.

587. 9:4,6.

ets disguised himself with a bandage over his eyes; the king does not recognize the man as a prophet until the latter takes away this covering from his face, whereupon the king discovers him as one of the prophets.⁵⁸⁸ Palpably there must have been some distinguishing mark, the letters of the deity's name or a symbol of the deity, on the forehead of the man whereby he was recognized as belonging to the prophetic order.

Our suggestion, then, is that the marks on the figurine imitate either the practice of cutting the flesh in mourning rites or the practice of tatooing into the flesh the name or symbol of the deity to whom one is devoted. Perhaps the "circle of dots" near the navel represents just such a symbol. Of course, we have kept in mind the fact that our archeological evidence in this matter was not as complete as perhaps it shall be in the future.

*On the face of the Mwabte god I discerned
are two tato marks. //*

588. I K. 20:35-43.

XIV.

Amulets

If we understand an amulet to be an inanimate object~~d~~ invested with supernatural powers to ward off evil and induce good for the individual who employs it, then we can say that most of our material evidences of folk religion served just that purpose. In this section we shall not limit ourselves to a discussion of the amulet-like qualities of the Astarte figurines, the Serpent-goddesses, the Pig images, or the Bull images, for the writer feels that these objects have received sufficient consideration in their respective sections. However, we shall devote our attention to those objects, scarabs in particular, which were worn as ornaments or carried in the clothing to bring good luck to the individual.

In the past ten years of archeological research in Palestine, scarabs have been unearthed in great quantities from practically every site and from every level that was excavated. Many of the scarabs have no definite impressions upon them, but we can identify them by their general "beetle-form" and by comparing them with other specimens. Innumerable ones of this type have come from Beth Shemesh, from the MB and LB levels. ⁵⁸⁹ Steatite was the common substance used for these scarabs, though serpentine, paste, crystal, amethyst, ⁵⁹¹ and carnelian were also used. ⁵⁹⁰ Jericho yielded MB and LB scarabs, and

589. Bulletin #31, p. 15. Grant, Beth Shemesh, p. 32.

590. Grant, op. cit., p. 31.

591. A.J.A., vol. 37, p. 165.

at Lachish there were discovered EI I scarabs distinguished by the
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holes pierced through them. Perhaps these latter ones were strung
together and worn around the neck. From Tel Beit-Mirsim came a
quantity of MB and LB scarabs, their form and design definitely
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characterizing them as Hyksos types. Many of these were found in
what is believed to be the houses of the poorer section of the D
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stratum.

Of course, the question still remains why we have attached religious significance to these scarabs. Our position becomes clearer when we examine some of the better preserved scarabs and we attempt to determine the basis for their sacred character.

In general let it be said that the beetle was considered sacred by the ancient Egyptians. The Egyptian hieroglyph pictures a dung beetle, which lays its eggs in a ball of dung, and may be seen on sandy slopes in hot sunshine compacting the pellet by pushing it backward uphill with its hind legs and allowing it to roll down again, eventually reaching a place of deposit. Whatever the Egyptian may have understood by its actions, he compared the pellet to the globe of the sun. The scarabs were intended principally for seals, but they were also used for ornamental purposes. The inscriptions on more of the scarabs would lead us to believe that they were used by the Egyptians as charms, for often the inscriptions were "mottoes"
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containing words of good omen or friendly wishes.

592. I.L.N. July 6, 1935, p. 19.

593. Bulletin #31, p. 5. Bulletin #47, p. 11.

594. A.P.B., p. 90.

595. Encyclopedia Britannica, vol. XX, p. 52 ff.

Doubtlessly, those discovered in Palestine were sacred in character too, for on many of them have been found representations of gods and inscriptions to devoted deities. At Jericho in the EI I level of occupation there was found a most instructive scarab showing a northern deity of the Hadad type.⁵⁹⁶ This was the only one discovered of this particular kind, but should later excavations yield more, we may have here the beginnings of fresh information about the extensiveness and use of scarabs in the Near East. In the Thutmose III level (1501-1447) at Beth Shan there was found a light green faience scarab, showing an unidentified figure with a lotus in his right hand.⁵⁹⁷ The figure may be that of a deity and there may be some religious significance attached to the lotus.

In the E stratum (MB to LB) at Tel Beit-Mirsim, among the house ruins, there was uncovered a scarab bearing a carelessly executed inscription and reading "Son of Re, y q b, given life."⁵⁹⁸ Re, of course, is the great Egyptian sun-god, but Albright offers the suggestion that the part of the inscription reading "y q b" may be a corruption of the Hebrew "Yaakob," the third patriarch.⁵⁹⁹ Another scarab, showing the god Re, was discovered at Beth Shemesh in the LB area.⁶⁰⁰ It depicts the seated figure of Re holding the ankh emblem and facing him is another seated figure, possibly the king, wearing the double crown.

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596. P.E.F.Q.S., 1932, p. 152 ff.
 597. P.E.F.Q.S., 1931, p. 90.
 598. Bulletin #47, p. 10.
 599. *ibid.*
 600. Grant, R.A.S., p. 23.

At Lachish and at Beth Shemesh there were brought to light scarabs upon which were depicted the god Ptah. The one at Beth Shemesh is LB and upon its limestone composition there is fashioned Ptah holding a "was" scepter, while facing him there is the figure of a god or devotee holding an "ankh." This scarab was bored from either end, which immediately suggests its having been worn as an amulet. Ptah was one of the early and great gods of Egypt. He was the patron of the artisan, the artificer, and the artist, and his high priest was always the chief artist of the court. Another scarab at Lachish showed the goddess Bast. Bast was the name the sky-goddess took at Bubastis; she was in the form of a cat, an animal sacred to the Egyptians.

Another type of scarab was that representing the god Horus. At Lachish the entire figure of the deity was represented on the scarab, while the MB one at Beth Shemesh was represented by an "eye."

To understand the significance of Horus and the sacred "eye," we must know something of the mythology connected with that deity. Osiris, aided by his faithful sister-wife Isis, succeeded the sun god as king on earth. Though a benefactor of mankind, he was craftily misled and slain by his brother Set. Isis later gave birth to a son, Horus, whom she secretly reared as the avenger of his father.

601. P.E.F.Q.S., 1933, p. 195.

602. R.A.S., p. 24.

603. Breasted, J.H., A History of Egypt, p. 60.

604. See Note 601.

605. See Note 603, op. cit., p. 61.

606. See Note 601.

607. See Note 600, p. 16.

608. See Note 603, op. cit., p. 58.

Grown to manhood, the youth pursued Set, and the battle of Horus with Set was waged so fiercely that the young god lost his eye at the hands of his father's enemy. When the eye was finally recovered by Thoth, this god spat upon the wound and healed it. Horus now seeks his father that he may offer to him the eye which he has sacrificed in his father's behalf.⁶⁰⁹ This act of filial devotion made the sacred Horus-eye revered by the Egyptians. It became the symbol of all sacrifice. With the exception of the sacred beetle, it became the commonest and the most revered symbol known to Egyptian religion.⁶¹⁰

This sacred "Horus-eye" was the only one unearthed during the past several years of excavations, although Grant speaks of many that were found during the first few years of digging.⁶¹¹ However, in a room of a house at Beth Shemesh, in an EI I clearing, there came to light a wedding-scarab belonging to Amenophis III.⁶¹² Upon it was the following inscription: "Live Horus, mighty Bull, Shining in Truth, Favorite of the two Goddesses, Establisher of Laws, Quieter of the two Lands (i.e. Egypt), Golden Horus, great in strength...."⁶¹³ A like wedding-scarab was found, commemorating the union of Princess Tiy of Phoenicia with Amenophis III.⁶¹⁴ There should be little doubt but that these medallions served as potent charms, either carried by an individual or built into the house structure. Otherwise, why should they be present in a city that flourished around 1000 B.C.E.,

609. Breasted, J.H., The Development of Religion and Thought in Ancient Egypt, p. 31.

610. *ibid.*, p. 59, 78.

611. R.A.S., p. 16.

612. *ibid.*, p. 66.

613. *ibid.*, translation by Alan Rowe.

614. *ibid.*, p. 38.

since these scarabs were fashioned to celebrate an event that took place some 400 years before? Evidently, since these scarabs had upon them some inscription connecting them with Horus, the people considered them as sacred and therefore saved them.

At Tel En-Nasbeh several scarabs were found under a street pavement of the third city level in association with pottery of the EI I age. In order to secure an opinion about the significance of these scarabs, Bade submitted photographs of them to Dr. Max Pieper of the Egyptian division of the State Museums in Berlin, and to Dr. Ludlow Bull, Associate Curator of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. A few of these scarabs bore the images of fish, lions, and scorpions, and Dr. Pieper made the observation that animal-scarabs came during the late Egyptian period, from about 1200 B.C.E. onward. It will be interesting to note what Dr. Pieper writes about the significance of these animal-scarabs:

"The scorpion certainly is apotropaic in character. On the famous Metternichstele, which contains a whole series of magic spells, it is said of Isis, as she flees before the wicked Set, 'I fled at eventide and seven scorpions were behind me and helped me.' Even today the fellahin of Upper Egypt place scorpions on the rims of their braziers that they may guard against harm.

The lion also belongs to the category of beings that are believed to protect against evil. A magic spell of the Middle Kingdom

615. Bade, W.F. Some Tombs of Tell En-Nasbeh, p. 28.

616. *ibid.*, p. 29.

617. *ibid.*, p. 32 ff.

intended to furnish protection to a man who descends into the underworld, is to be spoken over the anterior part of a fierce looking lion. Against the destructive Apophis serpent one is advised to make a 'white lion' on which is scratched 'Misery of the Apophis serpent.' A further statement on the Metternichstele declares, 'The protection of Horus at night is the lion that comes forth from the Mountain of the West; he is also the protection of every sick person.'

"More difficult to interpret is the fish, but about its apotropaic character there likewise is no doubt. A fish leads the bark of the sun in the heavens. On the equation of the fish with the soul, cf. Spiegelberg, Archiv fuer Religions wissenschaft, vol. XII (1909) pp. 574 ff. Thus all three symbols are to be regarded as means of protection against sickness. It accords with this view that in front of the symbols stands the sign of the scepter which signifies prosperity, good fortune, or the like. Under the animal symbols are more hieroglyphs which on the cited scarabs are not always the same. But MRWT, meaning 'love,' is meant in all cases. Thus the ensemble means 'Protection against perils and sicknesses -- welfare and love.' So much, I believe, I am able to say with certainty."

After Dr. Pieper's searching analysis, there can be little doubt in our minds but that these scarabs served as potent charms for the ancient Israelites.

Before we proceed to our Biblical evidence, there is still another type of scarab that must come under our consideration -- scar-

618. *ibid.*, p. 32. citing Book of the Dead, XV:24.

abs inscribed with the names of Egyptian kings. These, too, could have been invested with a sacred character by virtue of the fact that the kings were considered divine and most of them were patrons of some favorite god or goddess. At Jerusalem, in the LB level, there were scarabs inscribed with the name of Thuthmose III (1501-1447), and similarly inscribed ones were unearthed at Tel En-Nasbeh from the EI I level of occupation. A scarab, the inscription of which belonged to Amenhotep III (1411-1375), was uncovered at Tel El-Duweir. Two scarabs inscribed to Ramses II (1292-1225) were found, one at Beth Shan, LB level, and the other at Beth Zur EI I stratum. At Megiddo, from the EI I level, there were taken scarabs inscribed to Ramses III (1198-1167).

In the Bible, the references to charms and amulets are more or less of an incidental nature. Still, such as they are, they suffice to show that alongside the official religion of Yahve, there survived the ineradicable belief in the efficacy of amulets which is so prominent a characteristic of the Eastern peoples and also of the Semitic groups. The first of such references is in Genesis 35:4 where the association of the ear-rings of Jacob's household with the strange gods shows that the ear-rings were regarded as charms or amulets. In early times, it may be said that every ornament was an amulet. The old custom of wearing jewelry is to be less the out-

619. P.E.F.Q.S., 1925, p. 19.

620. Bulletin #49, p. 17. A.J.A., vol. 37, p. 166.

621. P.E.F.Q.S., 1934, p. 170.

623. Bulletin #43, p. 7.

624. A.J.A., vol. 39, p. 138.

625. Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, vol. III, p. 439 ff.

come of female vanity than the result of a desire to secure the various orifices of the body against the entrance of evil spirits.⁶²⁶

Among the articles of female adornment mentioned by Isaiah,⁶²⁷ we find, in addition to the more easily identified jewels, mention of articles which the etymology of the original (lehashim) shows to have been charms.⁶²⁸ Their precise nature and form cannot be fixed.⁶²⁹ Another article on the list is the saharon, literally "little moon," so called because they derived their potency from their association with the moon-god.⁶³⁰ Again in the "stone of grace"⁶³¹ we may recognize a stone worn as a charm to procure favor or good luck.⁶³² The Book of Proverbs, which mirrors the popular views of life, makes reference to prevailing conceptions about amulets when it says of wisdom, it "shall be an ornament of grace unto thy head and chains about thy neck."⁶³³ Especially significant is Proverbs 4:22 when it says "they (My words) are life unto those who find them and health to all their flesh." In many passages which speak figuratively of a necklace, of an ornamental crown, or of the protection afforded by the law, the popular conception of the power of the amulets is alluded to.⁶³⁴ The signet ring, carried over the heart or upon the arm, served as an amulet,⁶³⁵ either owing to the material of which it was composed or from the inscription upon it.

626. R.S., p. 453, note 2.

627. 3:18-23.

628. See Note 625.

629. Isa. 3:18.

630. See Note 625. cf. Judges 8:21, 26.

631. Prov. 17:8.

632. cf. Nahum 3:4.

633. Prov. 1:9, also cf. Prov. 6:21.

634. Ps. 73:6, 103:4; Prov. 3:22, 11:9, 13:5.

635. Cant. 8:6, Jer. 22:24, Haggai 2:23.

Compared to the scarabs discovered, and in passing let it be pointed out that the writer did not exhaust the archeological evidences, but took only representative examples, our Biblical material is rather scant. Of course, this may have been due to the universal use of amulets and charms, such as the scarabs, and because of their deep-rooted position in the sentiments of the people they were not only not eradicated with the rest of the objects included in the far-reaching reforms, but no one even dared to legislate against their presence or their use. It is our contention, therefore, that these multitudes of scarabs discovered in Palestine do represent a type of amulet and charm employed by the people, and may even be those which the Bible mentions by inference as being used.

XV.

Ivories

Some of the most unusual finds that were excavated during the past ten years were the ivory panels that were found at Samaria. They are important, first, because, they reflect some of the folk-religious beliefs of the people, and secondly, because they clarify the denunciations of a pre-exilic prophet.

Samaria was founded approximately 875 B.C.E., and destroyed by the Assyrians in ⁶³⁶722. Ahab, who reigned from about 870 to 850, was famous for the house of ivory which he built, and the couches of ivory used by the people of Samaria were denounced a few decades later by the prophet Amos. ⁶³⁸All of these ivories were discovered with Israelite potsherds of the eighth and ninth centuries. ⁶³⁹Therefore, with Crawfoot, ⁶⁴⁰we may say that the ivories were used at Samaria during the same hundred and fifty years that the town flourished.

One small ivory plaque was found, upon which were inscribed several rows of hieroglyphs, so far untranslated. The ivory was brightly decorated with five threads of blue glass and with faint traces of gold leaf. ⁶⁴¹Several others, in both white and black ivory, were found decorated with intricate patterns of palms, lotus buds, ⁶⁴²and designs of the sacred-tree type. ⁶⁴³This latter type of decoration

636. P.E.F.Q.S., 1933, p. 18.

637. I K. 22:39.

638. Amos 6:4.

639. P.E.F.Q.S., 1932, p. 133.

640. P.E.F.Q.S., 1933, p. 18.

641. *ibid.*, 12 ff.

642. *ibid.*, p. 14.

643. Bulletin #49, p. 17.

may be a graphic representation of Ashera-worship, the details of which we have described above.⁶⁴⁴ Another ivory shows a figure, presumably a deity, seated upon a nine petaled lotus flower, which is inlaid with pieces of blue glass and outlined with gold-leaf.⁶⁴⁵

The goddess Isis is represented upon another ivory, worshipping a "tet." Upon this plaque she is wearing solar disks in place of her usual emblems. From her hands seem to spring lotus flowers. The "tet" is crowned with a solar disk, and its base is formed like an inverted lotus.⁶⁴⁶ The place of Isis in Egyptian mythology we have already discovered.⁶⁴⁷

Upon another ivory there is carved a figure that is thought to represent Osiris. It is handsomely decorated with red and blue glass insets.⁶⁴⁸ Osiris was looked upon as a man-god who had lived, suffered, and died, and then risen again from the dead. Osiris was dismembered by the wicked Set, but restored to life through the filial devotion of Horus. When Osiris rises from the dead, he becomes the lord of the underworld and every soul that dies and hopes to rise again is called Osiris, the god being identified with the soul of even the most humble worshipper.⁶⁴⁹ At the same time it must be remembered that this deity was identified with the soil and was considered the source of all fertility.⁶⁵⁰ It is not surprising to find Osiris depicted upon these ivory panels, especially when we

644. supra, p. 37 ff.

645. P.E.F.Q.S., 1933, p. 10 ff.

646. ibid., p. 11 ff.

647. supra, p. 129 ff.

648. P.E.F.Q.S., 1933, p. 12.

649. Breasted, Development of Religion and Thought in Ancient Egypt, p. 31-38.

650. ibid., p. 20 ff.

consider how closely allied Osiris is with Tammuz and Adonis, deities to whom the Israelites paid homage.⁶⁵¹ Other ivory panels depict other Egyptian deities. Among them are Re, the sun-god, holding a figure of Maat, the goddess of truth and justice;⁶⁵² the infant Horus;⁶⁵³ Isis and Nephthys;⁶⁵⁴ and Hah, the personification of eternity;⁶⁵⁵ with the emblem signifying "thousands of years."⁶⁵⁶

On another ivory plaque there is depicted in relief a cherub,⁶⁵⁷ with a human head, the body of a lion, and high spreading wings. The lion is represented on another ivory, tearing the head of the bull.⁶⁵⁸ The significance of the lion and the bull we have discussed above.⁶⁵⁹

71 The style and subjects of the ivories suggest an immediate comparison with decorations of the Temple of Solomon. Figures borrowed from the Egyptian pantheon naturally would be ignored by Biblical writers, but most of our subjects are mentioned not once but several times in the chapters devoted to Solomon's works.⁶⁶⁰ The "lions and cherubim," "the cherubim, lions, and palm trees," "the lions on the steps of the great throne of ivory," -- all these variations in our ivories are paralleled in I Kings.⁶⁶¹ And such a verse as that about the doors of the Temple -- "he carved thereon cherubim and palm trees and open flowers, and he overlaid them with gold fitted upon the

651. *supra*, p. 22 ff.

652. Note 649, *op. cit.*, p. 173.

653. *supra*, p. 129 ff.

654. *supra*, p. 129.

655. Bulletin #49, p. 17.

656. *ibid.*

657. P.E.F.Q.S., 1933, p. 13.

658. *ibid.*, p. 14.

659. *supra*, p. 83ff., 131ff.

660. I K. Chaps. 6-10, 22:39; II Chron. 9:21; Ps. 45:9.

661. *ibid.*

⁶⁶²
graven work" -- describes not only the subjects but the treatment
we have studied on the ivories. "Ivory work overlaid with sapphire"⁶⁶³
no longer seems an extravagant picture.

Crowfoot makes an interesting observation in that he points out
that our Samaritan ivories are not Egyptian importations but the
product of Israelitish workmen. He bases his proof upon the general
craftsmanship of the ivories and upon the foreign elements that are
introduced into pure Egyptian settings.⁶⁶⁴ This is important for our
conclusion because it not only shows to what degree Egyptian be-
liefs and religious ideas infiltrated into Palestine, but it like-
wise shows that these foreign ideas were acceptable to such an ex-
tent that they found their way into the artistic productions of the
age. If the people had utter contempt for the gods and practices of
the Egyptians, there is little reason to believe that they would have
carved their ivories with figures of their deities and with sacred
subjects indigenous to Egypt. That the Israelites were not adverse
to the Egyptians' influences has been amply proved by the innumerable
scarabs that have been found upon which were inscribed Egyptian
⁶⁶⁵
motifs.

Of course, we can not definitely fix what folk-religious practices
grew out of these Egyptian influences, but the writer feels that this
may be at the basis of Amos' denunciation of those who "lie upon beds
of ivory."⁶⁶⁶ Many of the panels show traces of burning; lumps of

662. I K. 6:35.
663. Cant. 6:14.
664. Bulletin #49, p. 17.
665. supra, p. 126 ff.
666. 6:4.

charcoal were found among them, indicating the remains of wooden furniture which was inlaid with these ivory pieces.⁶⁶⁷ It is true enough that Amos probably identified these ivory couches with wealth ill-gotten through the oppression of the poor, but the consideration still remains that because of the elements foreign to the pure worship of Yahve, which were depicted upon these ivories, Amos denounced those people who owned them. It is perhaps not too unlikely that in the back of Amos' mind there was the association that if people possessed such ivories, they must not be opposed to the ideas presented upon them. Of course, the writer realizes upon what dangerous ground he is treading. Perhaps future discoveries, in the way of ivories, will throw more light upon the religious practices native to the Israelites.

667. Bulletin #49, p. 17.

XVI.

Ras Shamra Tablets

It was universally assumed by competent scholars up to 1928 that the literature of the Canaanites and the Phoenicians had perished forever in view of the well-known fragility of papyrus and leather and their poor resistance to moisture. But each year, since then, has yielded new discoveries of clay tablets containing parts of this long lost literature.⁶⁶⁸ Had this new literature not been found, it would have been impossible to evaluate fully the relation of our Biblical literature to its environment. The influence of Babylonian, Assyrian, and Egyptian literature has already been traced, but as long as so little was known about the literature of Canaan,⁶⁶⁹ there was an important gap to be filled.

The importance of Canaanitish texts for Biblical studies can not be undervaluated, because they present to us for the first time a literary picture of the religious customs and practices in Syro-Palestine before the days of Israel, revealing many of the prototypes of Israelitic institutions. With this early material in hand we are now able to trace the course of the development of these practices and to determine the original significances which lie behind the later interpretations introduced by the writers and

668. J.P.O.S.; vol. XII, 1932 (Reprint), p. 1.
669. Bulletin #46, p. 15 ff.

redactors of the Bible.⁶⁷⁰ But first let us see the nature of these tablets.

In 1928, while a peasant was cultivating his field at Minet-El-Beida, he chanced upon some fragmentary tablets. The place of discovery was formerly the ancient port of Ras Shamra on the coast of northern Syria.⁶⁷¹ Ras Shamra was the capital and the principal port of one of the ancient kingdoms. Due to its exceptionally favorable geographic situation (150 miles north of modern Beyruth and about eight miles north of Lattakia) it had come to discharge a leading economic function in the exchange of Asiatic goods, particularly those from Mesopotamia, for products of the Aegeo-Mycenaean world and of Egypt.⁶⁷² In passing, may the writer point out that just as Israel was influenced religiously through its economic relations with other countries, so may we assume here that much of the Ras Shamra culture was influenced by the culture of the Egyptians and of the Mycenaeans with whom these people were in constant contact by virtue of their economic interdependence.

No sooner had the tablets been found than H. Bauer, P. Dhorme, and C. Virolleand began their work to decipher these fragmentary remains.⁶⁷³

The terminus a quo for the date of these Ras Shamra tablets has been placed at 1800.⁶⁷⁴ W. F. Albright places the burden of his proof

670. P.E.F.Q.S., 1934, p. 141.

671. See Note 609, p. 17.

672. I.L.N., April 27, 1935, p. 686.

673. See Note 668. In 1930 Virolleand published the first of his results in Syria, vol. XII.

674. J.P.O.S., vol. XIV, p. 110.

upon the fact that since the "mimation" was used by the West Semites down to the years between 1800 and 1500, as proved by the evidences⁶⁷⁵ of Egyptian and Babylonian transcriptions, it follows necessarily that our text cannot go back before the eighteenth century at the earliest.

On the basis of internal evidence, furnished by excavations in the Ugarit district, the date of the tablets has been fixed more definitely. The incised inscriptions on certain bronze tools found in the cemetery of the Ugarit compare favorably with the inscriptions on some of the tablets. The inscription on the tools is placed at about 1400 B.C.E., and by analogy the date of the writing of the tablets is set in the early part of the fourteenth century.⁶⁷⁶ This opinion is shared by no less scholars than Albright and⁶⁷⁷ Ginsberg.

The cuneiform alphabet used in the Ras Shamra tablets has also⁶⁷⁸ been published by Albright, and let it be pointed out that there is a definite similarity between the Hebrew alphabet and the alphabet used in the Ras Shamra tablets. To quote: "The number of characters (apparently 27) and the number of characters in a word (separated by vertical strokes from the adjoining words), as well as the nature of the grammatical forms, show clearly that the language

675. J.P.O.S., 1928, p. 233-5.

676. Bulletin #50, p. 19; #53, p. 19.

677. Tarbiz, vol. IV, #1, p. 106.

678. J.P.O.S., vol. XII, p. 3.

must be Semitic containing something of a Hebrew dialect.⁶⁷⁹ Among the other external likenesses there is the similarity of meter. Ginsberg and Maisler⁶⁸⁰ collaborate in saying that in the Ras Shamra text there is a definite rhythm based on a fixed number of word stresses; the prevalent meter of the Ras Shamra being three plus three, which is commonly found in the Bible. Montgomery, more or less, bears them out when he says that there can be felt, if not exactly diagnosed, a similarity in poetic rhetoric between the Aleyan epic and the song of Deborah.⁶⁸¹ In another place he even suggests that the poetry can be arranged in chorus form, as the Psalms⁶⁸² have come to be analyzed.

Our chief interest in this section will be to call attention to those items in the Ras Shamra tablets that throw light upon the folk-religion of the ancient Hebrews, for which we already have the archeological remains of these practices. In short, the Ras Shamra texts will be documentary evidence or literary background for the devoted objects that have been excavated. In this study we will not consider those hosts of phrases and words that are found in the tablets and for which we have Biblical counterparts, but rather we shall concern ourselves with concepts and ideas which parallel folk-religious practices described or hinted at in Biblical literature.

679. Bulletin #46, p. 15.

680. J.P.C.S., vol. XIV, p. 248, note 15. *ibid.*, 1932, p. 207.

681. J.A.O.S., vol. 53, p. 99 ff.

682. *ibid.*, p. 101.

The contents of the Ras Shamra tablets, for the most part, can be classified, by way of description, as a religious epic in which gods and goddesses fight one another, prevail, or go down in defeat, and are subject to the same emotional stimuli as human beings. Although it is difficult to follow the thread of the story due to the fact that the material is fragmentary, it is possible to make out a coherent theme.

At the beginning of the epic, a goddess, whom we learn by implication to be Anat, is bringing tidings of the death of Aleyan, the dying god of fertility among the North Canaanites like Adonis in ⁶⁸³Phoenicia proper. However, according to another account, ⁶⁸⁴Aleyan was not killed, but was held prisoner by Mot, the god of death. However, both accounts are in agreement as to the final outcome of the struggle. Anat intervenes in behalf of Aleyan, who, by the way, is her brother, which immediately establishes that brother-sister relationship so common in ancient mythology. ⁶⁸⁵At the proper moment, Anat seizes Mot, splits him in half with the sword, winnows him with the winnowing sieve, burns him in fire, grinds him in the mill, and sows his flesh in the field that his fate might be consummated. Then, we are told, ⁶⁸⁶Aleyan has gained his freedom from his imprisonment.

683. Bulletin #46, p. 17. Supra, p.

684. Bulletin #50, p. 18.

685. supra, p. 8, 25 ff., 129.

686. Bulletin #46, p. 19. Bulletin #50, p. 18.

The name of the god, Aleyan, immediately strikes a familiar note in our minds. Not only is there a phonetic similarity between Aleyan and Elyon, but there is a fundamental relationship between the two as well. ⁶⁸⁷Albright justifies the identifying of Aleyan with Elyon on the basis of the fact that Berut, meaning "fresh-water wells," was the paredros of Elyon. Why Elyon should have a consort with such a name is not quite clear until we see that Aleyan had as his paredros Anat, who, like him, was a deity intimately connected with fertility and hence with the flow of underground water. As the god of fertility Aleyan was the storm-god who sent rain upon the earth. That the god who causes rain should have a consort who causes the flow of springs is only naturally, espec- ⁶⁸⁸

ially when we recall in later Jewish Haggadoth that the waters of ⁶⁸⁹the upper fresh-water ocean, whence came the rain, were masculine, while the waters of the lower ocean, whence came the fountains, ⁶⁹⁰were feminine. The writer realizes that the development of the Haggada is post-Biblical, but we must not overlook the sources from which the Haggadists drew.

As we mentioned at the outset, Anat is pictured as the goddess who frees her brother Aleyan from the clutches of Mot, the god of death, by killing Mot and sowing his flesh in the field. This myth is reminiscent of the Tammuz-Adonis fable, and our proof is quickly forthcoming in the facts that the Ras Shamra texts mention a

687. J.P.O.S., vol. XII, p. 6 ff.

688. *ibid.*, p. 7, citing Pirke d'Rav Eliezer, XXIII.

689. Compares with Aleyan.

690. Compares with Anat.

⁶⁹¹"Naaman" and call a deity explicitly by the title ⁶⁹²"Adonis." It is not too much to conjecture that there must have been sacred rites devoted to Aleyan or Anat, much the same as we found with Tammuz ⁶⁹³and Adonis. Our text mentions "ladies of the Chapel," who are ⁶⁹⁴thought to be Kadeshote connected with sacred prostitution. Another one informs us that as a feature of the ingathering festival the gods were entertained by their worshippers and "booths" were ⁶⁹⁵erected to protect them from the sun. As we learned above, the ⁶⁹⁶fall-festival was originally connected with the fertility cult. Through these texts we not only have a picture of the Canaanitish religious culture which the Israelites met and assimilated with, but we see that the cult objects uncovered by archeology actually possessed the significance which we ascribed to them. We know, through the Ras Shamra texts, that Adonis and Tammuz were worshipped, that there were "sacred women," that there were festivals at which these fertility rites were practiced; therefore, our finds, relating to folk-religion, become more valuable for the understanding of the ancient Hebrew religious customs.

In one of the longer texts there is mentioned a rite which provides the pantomime for the autumn harvest-festival. In this rite a kid is seethed in its mother's milk as a charm to promote dairy

691. *supra*, p. 29.

692. Bulletin #46, p. 19. J.A.O.S., vol. 53, p. 104.

693. *supra*, p. 25 ff.

694. P.E.F.Q.S., 1934, p. 142. *supra*, p.

695. *ibid.*, p. 144.

696. *supra*, p. 32 ff.

697 produce. This perhaps explains why in Exodus 23:19 and 34:26 the prohibition against this rite is in a setting associated with the harvest ritual.⁶⁹⁸ According to Dr. Morgenstern, "This prohibition had its origin and primary purpose and significance in the early stages of pastoral culture."⁶⁹⁹ And we have further Biblical proof of the fact that the goat, or Se'ir, was part of an ancient cult practiced by the Hebrews. In Leviticus 17:7 we read: "And they shall no more sacrifice their sacrifices unto the Se'irim, after whom they go a-whoring. This shall be a statute forever unto them throughout their generations." In the account of Josiah's reforms occurs this meaningless passage: "And he broke down the high places of the gates that were at the entrance of the gate of Joshua the governor of the city."⁷⁰⁰ The "high places of the gates" should be emended to read "the high places of the Se'irim." The emendation is made simply by changing the reading from "ha-she'arim" to "ha-se'irim."⁷⁰¹ This is borne out by the statement in II Chronicles 11:15 that Jereboam had "appointed him priest for the high places, and for the Se'irim, and for the calves which he had made." From these passages it can hardly be doubted that at one time the Israelites worshipped these animals, either as gods, or as representing gods,⁷⁰² just as in the case of the calves. Then in later days, when,

697. See Note 694.

698. "The choicest first-fruits of thy land thou shalt bring into the house of the Lord thy God. Thou shalt not seethe a kid in its mother's milk."

699. The Oldest Document of the Hexateuch. Reprint H.U.C. Annual, vol. IV, 1927, p. 99.

700. II K. 23:8.

701. Oesterley and Robinson, Hebrew Religion, p. 64.

702. *supra*, p. 83 ff.

through the work of the prophets, the worship of Yahve had become such that no other form of worship could be tolerated these gods were degraded into demons.⁷⁰³

To be connected with the Se'ir is the Azazel which was driven out into the wilderness, carrying with it the sins of Israel.⁷⁰⁴ From one of the passages it is clear that Azazel is regarded as a personal being like Yahve.⁷⁰⁵ We also see that Azazel dwelt in the wilderness like the Se'irim.⁷⁰⁶ "Without going into details, the data suggests that Azazel was originally a god of the flocks -- just as Astarte was a cow deity -- and that this Azazel ritual was a development and an adaptation of what at some early period was an offering to a god of the waste.⁷⁰⁷.... Then Azazel became degraded to a demon of the waste, possibly being thought of as the head of the Se'irim."⁷⁰⁸ Obviously the Ras Shamra texts reflect the magic character which the Canaanites believed the goat to possess. Evidently, as the Israelites absorbed the Canaanite culture, they took over this form of goat-worship, evidences of which in the Bible we have pointed out. Just as the Ras Shamra tablets tell us of the custom of seething the kid in its mother's milk, doubtlessly a harvest ritual, so the Hebrews must have practiced this rite; otherwise why should they have legislated against it?⁷⁰⁹

703. Note 701, op. cit. p. 65.

704. Lev. 16:8, 10, 26.

705. Lev. 16:8 -- "one lot for Yahve, and the other for Azazel."

706. Lev. 16:10.

707. Compare with Isaiah 13:21.

708. See Note 701, op. cit., p. 66.

709. Schmidt, J.B.L., XLV, p. 278. J.P.O.S., vol. XIV, p. 248.

In one of the texts, a shrine is mentioned as Asr, which finds
⁷¹⁰
 its counterpart in the Hebrew "Ashera," the presence and meaning of
 which cult object among archeological remains we have already dis-
⁷¹¹
 cussed.

⁷¹² W. F. Albright and ⁷¹³ H. L. Ginsberg, discussing the sacrificial
 cult described in the Ras Shamra tablets, point to the following:
 "O creatures of the gods, thou hast come. Truly thou art hungry
 and truly thou art thirsty. Eat now! Drink! Eat of the tables'
 bread, drink of the jars' wine, from a golden cup the blood of
⁷¹⁴
 trees!" Similar phrases occur in the Bible. Not only is there an
 external similarity due to the phraseology, but there is an internal
 likeness due to the same concept that underlies both. The formula
 quoted sounds very much like an invitation which the worshipper is
 extending to the deity, namely, that the deity should partake of a
 meal with him. This was the original method of gaining the favor
 of the gods, because, according to the custom of the times, once
 two people have eaten bread together, a covenant of everlasting
 peace is automatically set up between them. Similarly, once the
 individual partook of a meal with his god, the deity was honor
 bound to protect that individual. This, too, was the underlying
⁷¹⁵
 idea of the Israelitish sacrificial cult.

In one of the texts this is an object called 'Ed, a sort of
 table-stone on which sacrifices could be placed and around which

710. P.E.F.Q.S., 1934, p. 94 ff.
 711. supra, p. 37 ff.
 712. J.P.O.S., XIV, p. 122.
 713. ibid., p. 248, note 15.
 714. Gen. 49:11; Prov. 4:17, 9:5.
 715. R.S., p. 212 ff.

sacred women danced; therefore, Gaster identifies it with the South Arabian cult object which is called "qaif" or "stone of circuit,"⁷¹⁶ used as an altar and ritually circumambulated. The stone was called 'Ed or "witness" because like "qaif," oaths were sworn beside it. Perhaps "the stone of witness" mentioned in the Ras Shamra tablets may be a type of Masseba, a cult object so prevalent among the ancient Israelites.⁷¹⁷

Gaster also throws out the suggestion that in 'Ed lies the origin of the Biblical "Eduth."⁷¹⁸ It is conceivable that the "ark of the Eduth" was the sacred chest containing the "stone of testimony" which was carried constantly by the nomadic people. Later, under influence of the fact that the "tablet of Eduth" was a current term for a "contract table" it was possible for the view to arise that the chest contained a stone inscribed by the deity with the terms of his contract with the people.⁷¹⁹

It is quite a natural assumption that the ark of Yahve contained a stone. This was a common practice among the ancient Semites,⁷²⁰ and the evidence is ample that it was current in ancient Israel.⁷²¹ This was the most natural object in which a deity, who must move or be transported from place to place, would be thought to reside. Such powers could not be ascribed to a primitive deity residing in a sacred spring or tree. These deities, of necessity,

716. P.E.F.Q.S., 1934, p. 134 ff.

717. supra, p. 47 ff.

718. See Note 716, p. 145.

719. ibid.

720. R.S., p. 200 ff.

721. Gen. 28:20-22.

are bound to a fixed spot. But a deity dwelling in a sacred stone can be conceived as moving or being moved from place to place, and just such a deity was the god of the ark of Israel. The ark, the symbol of the deity within, was conceived of as leading Israel upon the march and selecting the way it should go and of going into battle with the armies of Israel and giving it victory over its enemies, and probably in the first of the three periods of the development of the ark a sacred stone was the object contained in the ark. If we accept this interpretation, there is every reason to believe that this concept originated among the Canaanites, as evidenced in the Ras Shamra tablets, and the Hebrews acquired it from them.

Certain myths, apparently believed by the ancient Hebrews, are made clear through the Ras Shamra tablets. Upon a tablet discovered in 1931, there is mentioned a "Leviathan," called "Lotan," who is described as the "fleeing serpent, the crooked serpent, the writhing serpent, the accursed serpent with seven heads." When we compare this with Isaiah 27:1, Psalms 74:14, and Job 26:12 ff., we find a marked similarity. Albright makes the statement that these Biblical passages were unintelligible until this new material in the Ras Shamra tablets were discovered. The passage from our text states that the Leviathan had seven heads, a fact which was previously unknown to us. In another passage there is expressed the

722. Morgenstern, The Book of the Covenant, Reprint, H.U.C. Annual, V, 1928, p. 118 ff.

723. *ibid.*, p. 36 ff.

724. J.P.O.S., XIV, p. 248. Tarbiz, vol. IV, p. 112.

725. Bulletin #46, p. 19.

belief that the gods dwell in the "recesses of the north, in the heart of the seas." ⁷²⁶ The god, in one place, is called Baal-Sapon. ⁷²⁷ "Sapon" sounds like the Hebrew "Tzafon," meaning "north." This same belief is expressed several times in the Bible. In Isaiah 14:13 Lucifer exclaims: "I will soar into heaven, and set my throne above the stars of God; I will dwell on the mount of assembly, in the hinterland of the north." Similarly in Ezekiel 28:2: "The prince of Tyre will sit in the seat of the gods, in the heart of the seas." ⁷²⁸ "In the heart of the seas" is made intelligible, according to Gaster, when we understand that the gods of the Ras Shamra dwelt on the horizon where all rivers flow into the very "navel" of the North. In Psalms 48:3 we have a reference to the habitation of the gods in the North: "The city of our God.....in the uttermost parts of the North."

The goddess "rabbat Atirat Yam" -- "the lady, Atirat of the sea" -- is an interesting addition to our knowledge of the Canaanite pantheon. Atirat is not a new goddess. She is mentioned in an Egyptian text of the nineteenth century as "Astart who has her throne in the sea." The appellation "Atirat of the sea" is comparable to the passage referred to in Ezekiel 28:2 -- "I sit in the seat of God, in the heart of the seas" ⁷²⁹ and may also be identified ⁷³⁰ with Astarte whom we have discussed above.

726. P.E.F.Q.S., 1934, p. 145.
 727. J.P.O.S., vol. XII, p. 7.
 728. See Note 726.
 729. See Note 727, op. cit., p. 9.
 730. supra, p. 1 ff.

In another place the heavenly family is called the "sons of El,"⁷³¹ which compares favorably with certain expressions used in the Psalms. Psalm 29, verse 1, reads: "Ascribe unto the Lord, O ye sons of⁷³² might." In like manner reads Psalm 89, verse 7: "Who among the⁷³³ sons of might can be likened unto the Lord." In the same context,⁷³⁴ in the Ras Shamra tablets, El is called the supreme deity. The writer need not go into detail with that large number of passages⁷³⁵ from Genesis which express this same idea. Another deity mentioned⁷³⁶ is Yah-elat. The first element of this compound can be equated with Jah, the earliest form out of which JHVH evolved. Evidently,⁷³⁷ Yah and the goddess Elat were fused into a bi-sexual amalgam.

With the finding of these Ras Shamra tablets we now have filled out an important gap in the understanding of the background of the folk-religious practices of ancient Israel. We now see what these practices and beliefs were among the ancient Canaanites, how it was possible for the Hebrews to take them over and work them into their own cult, and to what extent Canaanite culture influenced the religious culture of Israel.

731. See Note 726.

732. B'nai Elim.

733. *ibid.*

734. J.A.O.S., vol. 53, p. 102.

735. 14:18, 16:13, 17:1, 21:23, 31:13, 35:7.

736. P.E.F.Q.S., 1934, p. 94-96, 144.

737. *ibid.*

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