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THE FEAST OF SUKKOTH IN RABBINIC AND
RELATED LITERATURE

A Thesis
Presented to
Hebrew Union College--Jewish Institute of Religion
Cincinnati, Ohio

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Philosophy

by
The Reverend D. Peter Burrows
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PIYYUT

O hark to the herald of sure salvation, I hear my Beloved,
his voice is nigh,
He comes with his myriads of hovering angels, on the
Mount of Olives to stand and cry.

The herald comes--be the trumpet sounded, beneath his
tread by the mountain cleft.
He knocks--at his radiant glance the hill-side shall half
from the eastward be rent and reft.

Fulfilled is his ancient prophetic saying, the herald is
come with his saints around;
By all upon earth shall a still small voice to the utter-
most islands be heard resound.

The seed he begot and the seed he reared hath been born
as a child from its mother's womb.
But who then hath travailed and who brought forth, and a
similar thing hath been told to whom?

The perfectly Pure hath achieved this marvel, what mortal
hath seen such a wondrous way?
Salvation, Redemption in one united, the earth bringing
forth in a single day!

Though He in the heights and the depths be potent, yet
how can a nation at once be born?
The radiant One shall redeem His people, and then at the
evening it shall be morn!

And up to Mount Zion shall march her saviours, for Zion
hath travailed and bringeth forth.
A voice is proclaiming in all her borders, thy tent-place
enlarge both to south and north.

Thy dwelling extend unto far Damascus, thy sons and thy
daughters again to take,
Exult and be joyful, O rose of Sharon, beholding the sleepers
of Hebron wake.

Return unto me and be saved, O Israel, if only to-day ye
would hear my voice!
A man hath sprung forth, and the Branch his name is--
yea David himself, 'tis King David, rejoice!

Up, up! in the dust lie no longer buried! ye dwellers in
ashes awake and sing!

The desolate city shall rise imperial to hail as aforetime
her ransomed King.

The name of the wicked shall God extinguish--He grants
His anointed celestial grace.

Then make of our seed an eternal people, preserving for
ever King David's race.

by Eleasar Kalir (?)

trans. by Israel Zangwill

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Alvena Stanfield, my typist, labored with this manuscript and a now beautiful daughter, Sally, through the spring months. My pleasure in both her accomplishments is thorough.

Though final responsibility for this dissertation is my own, I am surely indebted to certain choice teachers who have both enthused and guided my work. Charles William Frederick Smith, Edmund Swett Rousmaniere Professor Emeritus of the Language and Literature of the New Testament at the Episcopal Theological School, Cambridge, Massachusetts, is a dear friend and teacher, careful scholar, loving pastor, and honest preacher. He first stirred my imagination and troubled my intellect sufficiently to drive me to this study of Sukkoth. Rabbi Melvin Sands at the Claremont School of Theology, Claremont, California, provided water in a drought and directed me to Cincinnati. He facilitated the unlikely, and I am in his debt.

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Finally to my wife, Judith, who in the midst of being unique mother, scholar in her own right, woman of valor, and an antidote to burning, I offer my thanks and lovingly dedicate this dissertation.

D.P.B.
May, 1974/ Iyar, 5734

ABBREVIATIONS

- AVAuthorized version of 1611 C.E. (The King James' Version of the Bible). All biblical citations in the text are taken from the Revised Standard Version of the Bible. Chapter and verse citations follow the Hebrew Bible usage and variations in the Authorized Version are supplied in parenthesis. Thus
- BBabylonian Talmud
- BASOR. . . .Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research
- BDB.Brown, Driver and Briggs. Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament
- CBQ.Catholic Biblical Quarterly
- EJEncyclopedia Judaica
- HUCAHebrew Union College Annual
- JThe Jerusalem or Palestinian Talmud
- JEJewish Encyclopedia
- JQR (n.s.) .Jewish Quarterly Review
- JTS.Jewish Theological Seminary of America
- LXX.The Septuagint
- MThe Mishnah
- MTMassoretic Text
- REJ.Revue des Études Juives
- SCM.Society for Christian Missions
- SPCKSociety for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge
- TThe Tosephta
- VTVetus Testamentum

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The Subject

The subject of this investigation is primarily the Feast of Sukkoth as an institution of rabbinic Judaism. The work is undertaken, however, not simply as an exercise in the compilation of rabbinic texts on the subject. The purpose of the work is rather to demonstrate that in the Rabbis' treatment of this one institution it is possible to discover some major themes and methods of rabbinic theology generally. Therefore it is also accurate to say that the subject of this enquiry is the rabbinic perception and institutionalization of the covenant between Israel and the Lord God of Israel as manifested in the Feast of Sukkoth.

The Rabbis and their predecessors, the Pharisees, received the covenant tradition from the Sopherim who came out of the great Babylonian Exile to re-establish Israel, land and people, according to their understanding of the will of God. These Sopherim had presumably inherited the covenant tradition from the Prophets and the Prophets from those before them reaching back to that occasion when the

Lord said to Israel through the mediation of Moses, "Behold, I make a covenant" (Ex. 34:10).

For reasons which will be explained further on, it is quite impossible to present a logical and systematic statement of the rabbinic treatment of the covenant. The difficulty is not one of quantity of material, but rather it is one of method. Rabbinic theology, unlike Christian theology, is organismic and treats the religion of Israel as a living organism rather than a structured, logical edifice in which every layer from foundation to roof is defined and circumscribed by that which is above and below it. Therefore the rabbinic material does not lend itself naturally to logical categorization and structuring.

The more useful approach to rabbinic theology is to pick one particular point on the organism and from that point move into the organism to explore and examine as much of the body as time and space permit. The goal is to describe as accurately as possible that which has been examined and perceived in a form most comprehensible to those who have not explored the rabbinic literature and who perhaps cannot do so. The balance of communicating the significance of the material is a delicate one. Too much adaptation to the mindset of the audience threatens to misrepresent that which has been apprehended. Failure to give adequate translation

conveys none of the satisfaction and could leave confusion where once there was only unawareness.

In this present work I offer a translation, not of language, but of mind set--a translation which will provide to those unfamiliar with rabbinic poetic theology an opportunity to at least appreciate the accomplishment of the Rabbis in preserving intact the covenant relationship between God and Israel despite some rather formidable historical impediments.

Our purpose is not to make the rabbinic expression conform altogether to an alien framework, but as far as possible to meet and examine the Rabbis and their constructions on their own terms, and to compare their organismic approach to God, Israel, and the covenant with our own western, logical, systematic, and dogmatic constructions.

I stated above that any point on the organism is appropriate for entry to the whole, that any rabbinic concept leads from itself into the whole organism of the covenant. I have chosen the Feast of Sukkoth as the entrée to the covenant for yet another reason. The Feast of Sukkoth for the many reasons described below is the covenant feast of Israel par excellence, not only in its antiquity (for in one form or another it is the oldest of Israel's major festivals), but in its dimension as well. The Feast of Sukkoth, the seven/eight day festival in

Jerusalem is, I believe, a microcosm of the whole of the time and place of the covenant relationship between God and Israel. Thus it is not only a point of departure into the organism, it is a miniature of the covenant itself and offers breadth of investigation as well as an opening to the depths.

It should become apparent in this study that the Rabbis have not departed radically from biblical religion. The canonical Scripture is, I believe, the literary record of the self-same organism of the covenant before the rabbinic period. The only significant difference between biblical and rabbinic religion is one of form. Biblical institutions which convey the covenant vary from age to age in the biblical record itself; thus it should be no great surprise to find yet another configuration of unique institutions in the rabbinic period bearing the constant and unchanging covenant.¹

¹It is, of course, a matter of great controversy as to whether the rabbinic reading of biblical literature is more or less appropriate in discerning God's revelation of His will therein than is the Hellenistic and post-Hellenistic theological reading of it. I trust that in the course of this work it will become apparent that the rabbinic method, its flexibility notwithstanding, has remained true to the biblical process itself and represents no real departure from the biblical tradition, save only in the institutional means of conveying essential revelation. The measure of the Hellenistic-Christian methodology will require first a satisfactory response to the question of whether or not God is consistent in will and action.

If this assumption of a consistent connection between biblical and rabbinic religion is correct, we would not expect that the Rabbis have suddenly introduced or imposed a new, artificial, unfamiliar, and radically different system into the flow of Israel's covenant religion. Their institutions may appear quite different, but they are made of the same stuff as were the biblical institutions which preceded them.

Our study of the Feast of Sukkoth must begin, then, with a summary of the biblical texts, halachic and narrative/halachic, from which the Rabbis derived their own theology and upon which they devised their own peculiar and unique institutions. We will set forth the appropriate biblical passages and provide a brief analysis of each text, stating their difficulties and their value to the rabbinic study of Sukkoth.

My proposed approach to both the biblical literature and rabbinic texts is the organismic approach. I find this access to the literature at least potentially objective, permitting the texts to speak for themselves, freed of the structures and pressures of a highly-developed and insistent theology.¹ The clarity of the rabbinic theology will depend

¹There is another, very different approach to rabbinic study. This approach is the study of rabbinic literature as an environment of something greater than itself; something which rabbinic literature nourishes but for which the rabbinic literature itself is peripheral. This is the

to a great extent upon an unencumbered apperception of Scripture.

The next chapter is an explanation of methodology. We have spoken of three difficulties to be overcome in dealing with rabbinic theology: expressing the rabbinic value-concept in a language and mind-set foreign to it, without misrepresenting the concept; making that same rabbinic value-concept comprehensible to an audience in a fashion familiar to that audience; and, perhaps most importantly, avoiding being drowned in the great sea of the covenant organism.

This chapter sets up arbitrary categories which convey the rabbinic material with its integrity undamaged, its message comprehensible to those who have not enjoyed it before, and in a controlled fashion to prevent flooding. The expanded methodology is offered as a potentially useful one for interpreting and controlling any topic in biblical or rabbinic literature of the covenant. The object of the chapter, then, is to provide a scheme as carefully and extensively worked out as to be useful beyond the single topic of this dissertation.

Christian approach, and it is understandable, even if it is not altogether useful or appropriate to this study. In this Christian approach, the Hebrew Scriptures are not usually studied for themselves on their own merits; rather they are generally studied and interpreted as a praeludium and preface to the Christian event. This is exegesis with an agenda which cannot help but affect the understanding of rabbinic theology.

We come, then, to the Feast of Sukkoth in rabbinic and related literature. The effort here has been to employ the system established in the previous chapters, bringing it to bear on as many of the themes of Sukkoth (both as a category of the covenant and as a microcosm of the covenant) as appear in the rabbinic literature. An effort has been made to view Sukkoth with the Rabbis as it was celebrated before the destruction; though much of the literature was actually written well after 70 C.E., when the Temple context was only one of memory, imagination, or metaphor. The extra-rabbinic literature is introduced to provide a glance at exceptions to the norm and to add further proof of the success and viability of the rabbinic enterprise.

The final chapter has a four-fold function. First, it shows that the Rabbis were successful in preserving the covenant intact by means of their new institutions, and perhaps more importantly, their ability to maneuver and take advantage of the ambiguity of older institutions. Second, it confirms the methodology set forth earlier as consistently applicable and potentially useful in the development of other rabbinic themes. Third, the chapter presents a novel interpretation of Sukkoth and its major theme, the sukkah, which may prove useful in the understanding of the Feast of Sukkoth and of the covenant itself. There is a summary and conclusion.

Summary of the Sources

The previous treatments of the Feast of Sukkoth fall into several general categories requiring here only a short survey. The study of origins and development of themes in Israelite religion was a favorite subject of scholars, particularly in those times when a great flood of new archeological treasures provided material for comparisons with Israelite religion. Of this kind of scholarship the most useful work to date, especially for its collection of figures and illustrations relating to Sukkoth in the rabbinic period, is Erwin Goodenough's Jewish Symbols in the Graeco-Roman Period.¹ Dr. Goodenough has compiled a greater treasure than he seemed to realize in his analysis of the material. Other general works on origins, development, and comparative religious practice like Frazer's Golden Bough, W. Robertson Smith's Religion of the Semites, I. Goldziher's Mythology Among the Hebrews and A. Rappaport/R. Patai's Myth and Legend of Ancient Israel are about equally useful and misleading. I have used them only peripherally, usually to be aware of similar themes, practices, customs, and traditions in other societies and cultures.

¹All titles listed in this survey are to be found with complete bibliographical information in the selected bibliography, pp. 469 of this dissertation.

Another general category of literature on our subject includes works dealing more specifically with the feast itself. The classic works here are P. Volz's Das Neujahrsfest Jahwes (Laubhüttenfest); Strack and Billerbeck's "Exkurs: Das Laubhüttenfest" in Kommentar zum N.T., Vol. 2. The latter work provides a useful collection of the literature, but very often the rabbinic literature in this whole work is injudiciously lifted out of context and misapplied to the New Testament text. Parallels are discovered where they do not exist. The excursus on Sukkoth is, however, a useful study. A more recent summary of the feast is G. W. MacRae's "The Meaning and Evolution of the Feast of Tabernacles" in CBQ, Vol. XXII. MacRae provides little that is new; but he treats the subject in an orderly fashion, sets forth some of the more pertinent questions, and cites some of the more recent secondary literature. The few pages on rabbinic literature are, for the most part, a summary. A work which, though it is actually a treatment of the spring festival, provides a wealth of information on Sukkoth as well, is J. B. Segal's The Hebrew Passover. While Segal deals more with the biblical literature, his work is an essential prolegomenon to any treatment of the pilgrim feasts. Also in this category should be included the summary articles on the feast and the various festal themes and cult objects in the encyclopedias, particularly the articles in the Jewish Encyclopedia and the newer Encyclopedia Judaica.

Many works have been written on various particular themes and customs of Sukkoth. By far the most extensive treatment in this category is that of R. Patai on water and the libation rites in the Temple. H. Riesenfeld has an extensive chapter devoted to the sukkah in his Jésus Transfigure and T. H. Gaster has treated the fire rites and other themes in his various works, including Thespis. The subject of calendation is most complex and has been touched on in this work only briefly, when such information would shed light on the interpretation of some Sukkoth theme. Anyone interested in pursuing further this complex and often speculative kind of study cannot overlook the works of J. Morgenstern which present a most extensive treatment of this theme. H. and J. Lewy have also contributed much information on Israelite calendation. Finally there is the work of an entire school of scholars, the myth and ritual school led by A. Mowinckel, S. H. Hooke and W. O. E. Oesterley, which interprets the feast as an occasion for God's enthronement and sets forth in detail the royal metaphors of the feast. Some balance is achieved in this particular area by the opposition of N. H. Snaith in his The Jewish New Year Festival: Its Origins and Development. I have not relied on the works of this school as I believe they have misunderstood both the themes of the feast and the unique religion of

Israel. Their work must be mentioned, however, as it does pertain to one significant category of Sukkoth.

There are a host of anthologies, collections, and modern commentaries on Jewish festivals which include treatments of Sukkoth. I would mention here only T. H. Gaster's Festivals of the Jewish Year; H. Schauss Guide to Jewish Holy Days; Y. Levinski's Sefer haMo'adim: Sukkoth; and a new work by P. Goodman, The Sukkot and Simhat Torah Anthology. These are all rather popular treatments of Sukkoth and can provide only the briefest survey of the feast. An important work in Hebrew by S. Safrai, Pilgrimage at the Time of the Second Temple, is unique among these commentaries in providing a more detailed analysis of the feast on the basis of primary sources. It is, of all the collections, by far the most useful and well-annotated work related to our particular period.

It would be impossible to list here the great host of books and articles on the rabbinic period and rabbinic theology which are relevant to any thesis in rabbinic studies. While they may not deal directly with the particular topic of this work, a selective sampling is given in the bibliography. I would mention here only a few that have been of greatest use to me in this present study. S. Schechter's Aspects of Rabbinic Theology and G. F. Moore's Judaism are classic works. H. Slonimsky's Essays, particularly "The

Philosophy Implicit in the Midrash," J. J. Petuchowski's Heirs of the Pharisees, A. Guttmann's Rabbinic Judaism in the Making, and the several works by M. Kadushin have been of great usefulness in the understanding of the rabbinic mind set and methodology.

As this dissertation is not a work in Bible, but depends greatly on a particular approach to the study of biblical religion, a reference to a few of the works in biblical sources are in order. E. A. Speiser's works, especially his "Introduction" to the Anchor Bible Commentary on Genesis, together with Y. Kaufmann's The Religion of Israel, have been most important. One article, the length of which is, in my opinion, in inverse proportion to its significance in the study of Israelite religion is H. C. Brichtho's "On Faith and Revelation in the Bible" in HUCA Vol. XXXIX.

Finally, the halachic and haggadic midrashic sources provide the best testimony to the study of the Feast of Sukkoth in rabbinic literature. Both the Blackman and the Albeck editions of the Mishnah provide helpful introductions and notes on the text. The same may be said for S. Lieberman's edition of the Tosephta. The Babylonian and Palestinian Talmuds, the halachic midrashim such as the several Mechiltas, Sifra, and Sifré have been consulted, together with the Midrash Rabbah, the Pesikta de Rav Kahana, the Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer, and the Pesikta Rabbati. These and a great

many other midrashim must be searched for the primary material on any rabbinic topic. One anthology with an invaluable set of bibliographical notes is L. Ginzberg's Legends of the Jews. The related literature is from the works of Josephus and Philo; the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha in the Charles edition; and several texts from Tacitus and Plutarch. The New Testament, the Targumic literature, and L. Nemoy's Karaite Anthology together with P. S. Goldberg's Karaite Liturgy have provided much of the related literature.

A selected bibliography is provided at the end of this dissertation which provides a broader range of references and aids in the study of Sukkoth particularly and rabbinic theology generally. I must add that in no book or article examined have I discovered a treatment of Sukkoth as a major theme of rabbinic theology or as in any way a primary manifestation of Israel's covenant religion in the rabbinic period. Nor have I found any work which discovers quite the same elevated status of the Feast of Sukkoth in the rabbinic literature which the feast enjoyed in the Bible. Sukkoth has been called Israel's feast par excellence; but no one has been moved to explain how this superlative valuation of the feast might be applicable in the time after 70 C.E. This is another agenda for the present work.

CHAPTER II

THE BIBLICAL TEXTS

The Organismic Principle and Biblical Texts

I have suggested in the Introduction that the covenant between God and His people Israel may be observed in microcosm at that time when the quintessential presence of the Lord meets the congregation of Israel gathered at the Feast of Sukkoth. If at that time the nations of the world would look to the holy place with its altar in Jerusalem upon the heights of Zion, they would observe the beloved, as she goes up "to the mountain of the Lord, to the Rock of Israel (Is. 30:29)." The nations would see the bride arrayed in shining, golden splendor; adorned with garlands; sweet-smelling in the scent of offerings and sacrifices; singing to the music of pipes and flutes; sounding the horn and shouting with the cry of praise; dancing and leaping in circuits around the altar and through the courts; bearing the symbols of life and victory--palm and willow, lulab and ethrog.¹ She comes with great rejoicing, as Scripture says:

¹For an explanation of the use and significance of the lulab and ethrog, Cf. Chapter IV, pp. 37lff.

They shall see the glory of the Lord, the majesty of our God. . . . Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then shall the lame man leap like a hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing for joy. . . . And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away (Is. 35:2c, 5-6a, 10).

For it is said of the bride:

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; and those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shined. Thou hast multiplied the nation, thou hast increased its joy; they rejoice before thee as with joy at the harvest. . . . (Is. 9:2-3);

For your Maker is your husband, the Lord of hosts is his name; and the Holy One of Israel is your Redeemer, the God of the whole earth he is called. For the Lord has called you like a wife forsaken and grieved in spirit, like a wife of youth when she is cast off, says your God (Is. 54:5-6);

Sing, O barren one, who did not bear; break forth into singing and cry aloud, you who have not been in travail. For the children of the desolate one will be more than the children of her that is married, says the Lord. Enlarge the place of your tent, and let the curtains of your habitations be stretched out; . . . (Is. 54:1-2a);

You shall have a song as in the night when a holy feast is kept; and gladness of heart, as when one sets out to the sound of the flute to go to the mountain of the Lord, to the Rock of Israel (Is. 30:29). Look upon Zion, the city of our appointed feasts! Your eyes will see Jerusalem, a quiet habitation, an immovable tent, whose stakes will never be plucked up, nor will any of its cords be broken (Is. 34:20);

I wash my hands in innocence, and go about thy altar, O Lord, singing aloud a song of thanksgiving, and telling all thy wondrous deeds (Ps. 26:6-7);

For he will hide me in his shelter in the day of trouble; he will conceal me under the cover of his tent, he will set me high upon a rock. . . . Thou hast said, "Seek ye my face." My heart says to thee, "Thy face, Lord, do I seek." Hide not thy face from me (Ps. 27:5, 8-9a). Thy solemn processions are seen, O God, the processions of my God, my King, into the sanctuary--the singers in front,

the minstrels last, between them maidens playing timbrels. "Bless God in the great congregation, the Lord, O you who are of Israel's fountain! There is Benjamin, the least of them, in the lead, the princes of Judah in their throng, the princes of Zebulun, the princes of Naphtali (Ps. 68:25-28//24-27 A.V.)

And of the bridegroom it will be said on that day:

Therefore my people shall know my name; therefore in that day they shall know that it is I who speak; hear am I (Is. 52:6);

Then the Lord will create over the whole site of Mount Zion and over her assemblies a cloud by day, and smoke and the shining of a flaming fire by night; for over all the glory there will be a canopy and a pavilion. It will be for a shade by day from the heat, and for a refuge and a shelter from the storm and rain (Is. 4:5-6);

For your Maker is your husband, the Lord of hosts is his name; and the Holy One of Israel is your Redeemer, the God of the whole earth he is called (Is. 54:5);

Again I will build you, and you shall be built, O virgin Israel! Again you shall adorn yourself with timbrels and shall go forth in the dance of the merrymakers. . . . Then shall the maidens rejoice in the dance, and the young men and the old shall be merry. . . . I will feast the soul of the priests with abundance, and my people shall be satisfied with my goodness, says the Lord (Jer. 31:4, 13a, 14);

I am the Lord, I have called you in righteousness, I have taken you by the hand and kept you; I have given you as a covenant to the people, a light to the nations (Is. 42:6);

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

For it is the day of the Lord and the day of His bride:

And he will give rain for the seed with which you sow the ground, and grain, the produce of the ground, which will be rich and plentiful. In that day your cattle will graze in large pastures; and the oxen and the asses

that till the ground will eat salted provender, which has been winnowed with shovel and fork. And upon every lofty mountain and every high hill there will be brooks running with water, in the day of the great slaughter, when the towers fall. Moreover the light of the moon will be sevenfold, as the light of seven days, in the day when the Lord binds up the hurt of his people, and heals the wounds inflicted by his blow (Is. 30:23-26);

Your eyes will see the king in his beauty (Is. 33:17).

As is apparent in these passages from the prophets and psalms, it would be altogether impossible to list completely the biblical texts that pertain to, that suggest, that imply, that employ the metaphor of, that are designed to be sung for, or that are composed to be spoken at the Feast of Sukkoth.

There are several reasons for the difficulty. Chief among them is the fact that biblical religion, like rabbinic religion, is not ordered systematically as a theology would require. Scripture, like rabbinic literature, follows the same mind set and is organismic. Whether we follow Max Kadushin's scheme of four primary value-concepts and many subcategories,¹ or the four great aspects of the covenant with many categories that I will suggest further on, the fact remains that biblical religion is an organism and its value-concepts/aspects and subconcepts/categories can never be

¹Max Kadushin, The Rabbinic Mind, 3rd ed. (New York: Block, 1972).

fully defined;¹ yet they are interwoven into countless concretizations of Halakah and Haggadah. They not only organize but integrate the data of experience and history.²

The passages quoted above by way of example, being prophetic pronouncement and psalmody, might be considered more haggadic than halachic compositions. The unity of these passages, both in themselves and when strung together in a kind of haggadic composition of the motif of marriage, inheres in the "form rather than in a logical order of the statements."³

An objection might be raised that the statements here, since they are Scripture, do not partake of the nature of midrash. Yet the prophets and the psalmists do, I believe, employ value concepts or aspects in the organic unity or body which is the covenant of life.⁴ They are indeed a kind of

¹Ibid., p. 45.

²Ibid., p. 59.

³Ibid., p. 67.

⁴Kadushin raises the point that "the use of abstract value-concepts in a religion is thus a new phenomenon found only in the religions of civilization" (p. 33). Yet I cannot believe that Kadushin would consider the writings of Scripture any less than the "work of civilization." He does in fact distinguish between the religious value concepts of the prophets and the inferred concepts characteristic of scientific and philosophical reasoning. Science and philosophy would relegate religious thought to the level of primitive pre-philosophy by the measure of inference and in the spirit of condescension. Kadushin says of these evaluations of religion, "Unless we recognize that religious valuational concepts are simply not of the same nature as inferred concepts, that they belong in a different category, we shall

haggadic midrash on the covenant, and, as such, are an almost "perfect reflection of the way in which the value concepts function in day-to-day living, in speech and action"¹ --here, we might say, with reference to the festival of Sukkoth insofar as it is a popular festival. Like the categories of the rabbinic midrash on Sukkoth which we will examine in later chapters, the scriptural categories are embedded in the metaphors of the prophets' and psalmists' own commentary on the covenant.² And just as with the rabbinic value-concepts, these scriptural values and categories wait "to be given different determinate meanings, by different personalities or by the same person on different occasions"³ --in this case by the prophets and psalmists.

Another reason for the difficulty of discerning and assigning non-legal texts to the Feast of Sukkoth might

lack a sound, realistic approach to the entire subject" (pp. 48-49).

And even if it could be argued that the Bible is not sophisticated enough to contain value-concepts, the organismic principle would still hold. Kadushin says, "We have also seen that the value-concepts possess characteristics different from those of the other types of concepts. If the other types of concepts also constitute an organismic whole, the latter would seem to be a different, though related, organismic complex" (p. 70). And even Kadushin admits that "the rabbinic complex, then, is a development out of the Bible, but its relationship goes even further. There is a living bond between rabbinic thought and the Bible" (p. 300).

¹Ibid., p. 59.

²Ibid., pp. 63-64.

³Ibid., p. 131.

include Israel's propensity for extending its specific imagery to its general literature. Insofar as Sukkoth is truly a microcosm of the general covenant life of Israel, we can understand this projection of specific to general and the extension of specific themes of the feast to daily life.

Furthermore there is an obvious tendency, due no doubt to the nearly parallel calendar positions of Passover and Sukkoth as spring and autumn feasts, to allow imagery from one feast to describe another, making it difficult to assign liturgical material to one of the three pilgrim festivals with any certainty. As Segal says,

It is sufficient to remark that both retained in varying degrees of vigour the characteristics of a New Year festival in the Near East--indeed, only thus could the change from one to the other have been effected imperceptibly and without obvious trace in the Bible or Jewish writings.¹

There is also a question that arises not so much of dating particular texts as of determining the audience of the text. For whom was legislation binding, and how much does the legislation represent the formalization of popular tradition and how much is priestly and prophetic determination of revelation? In short, is the text vox Dei or vox populi? We must ask if a text--if indeed that text can be identified as a festival text at all--is appropriate to the

¹J. B. Segal, The Hebrew Passover (London: Oxford University Press, 1963), p. 127.

Temple at Jerusalem; or to the Beth El at Shechem; or to both. Does it belong to a local high place and represent a limited tradition? Is it an adjusted or edited text made suitable for a change of audience? If it is an edited text, how old is its source or original form and which tradition's Tendenz does it represent.

Finally we must consider the traditional rule of liturgics, that one does not include the rubrics of liturgy in the liturgical text itself. While the Psalms occasionally contain rubrical introductions and instructions, we are unlikely to discover festival designations for certain prophetic poems which, having achieved canonical status, were subsequently used liturgically as a part of festival worship.¹

Oftentimes we must depend upon the idiom and metaphor employed in a passage to discover its possible liturgical relevance and connection. This is hazardous for the reasons stated above and because we frequently do not know all of the images appropriate to the specific feast.

¹It might be argued that the haphtaroth specified for festivals, namely Zechariah 14:1-21 for the first day; I Kings 8:2-21 for the second day; Ezekiel 38:18-39:16 for the Sabbath of the intermediate days; and I Kings 8:54-66 for the eighth day, are indeed very ancient and represent the very rubrics for which we are searching. There is validity to the argument; but the haphtaroth which we know even today to be very ancient in their festival designation cannot possibly represent the total number of passages from prophets and writings which pertained, say, to Sukkoth.

For example, the image and metaphor of water plays a key role in the Feast of Sukkoth. Yet Passover has its own concern for rains and waters and with the fertility of the fields in general.¹ Did water as metaphor originate with Sukkoth and only secondarily move to a descriptive rôle in Passover? Or was water common to both feasts as metaphor and the origin simultaneous? We cannot know in every instance, and it surely would be folly to take every mention of water as a reference to Sukkoth.

Likewise water, while it pertains specifically to Sukkoth, is an image frequently used in the literature referring to the covenant generally, and not just to the microcosmic feast. Again it would be improper to take every instance of water as a sign of a Sukkoth passage.

When a category or theme of Sukkoth appears in a non-halachic biblical text, but the text is not otherwise specifically designated a Sukkoth text, the only possibility for assigning the text to Sukkoth is that of finding a parallel (hopefully biblical) concretization of the category which is assignable to Sukkoth. This is similar to R. Ishmael's third hermeneutic principle, binyan ab mi-kattub ehad. Even in this case the text will remain in doubt.

¹The rain of Nisan is the late rain, מלקוש, mentioned in Deuteronomy 11:14 and Joel 2:23 as rains of blessing and prosperity. The late rain is discussed by the Rabbis in B. Ta'anith 6af.

Yet we can never completely err either, for by the very organic nature of the covenant, all Scripture is more or less pertinent to the covenant. And if, as we believe, the Feast of Sukkoth is a microcosm of the covenant in action, all Scripture belongs in some way, no matter how remote, to our subject. This is extensio ad absurdum of the organismic principle, and we should be very much more conservative in citing non-halachic scriptural texts as possible sources or origins of rabbinic traditions regarding Sukkoth.

The halachic passages, while they represent concretization of value concepts,¹ are also subject to a nexus "between the laws themselves which, in the first instance, allows them to be classified and organized in accordance with their content."² We will look for a consistency once again between the halachic methodology of the Bible and that of the Rabbis, specifically between the legal requirements for

¹Kadushin, op. cit., p. 93, says "We have depicted Halakah as the most important product of the value-concepts' drive toward concretization."

²Ibid., p. 90. Kadushin continues on p. 96: "Yet so long as the nexus remains more or less implicit, there is room for wide divergence in law; and this is actually the case in the mishnaic period. Halakah, too, thus reflects in a measure the nature of the value-concepts. It is because Halakah is a manifestation of the value-concepts that the practice of the laws can be so whole-souled an expression of the self."

Sukkoth in the Bible and in the Mishnah and Tosephta. What follows here are only the biblical-halachic or narrative-halachic passages commending or requiring the celebration of Sukkoth.

The Texts

I propose to set forth and examine the biblical texts relevant to Sukkoth according to the following procedure: First, the texts will be grouped under general headings, and each text under the heading will be discussed individually. The headings will be: the Halachic Texts; the Early Narrative Texts; Selected Prophetic Texts; Selected Psalms and Wisdom Texts; and Late Narrative Texts. Second, I will attempt in a few pages to make some connections between the halachic texts and the narrative texts to determine, if possible, that the narratives represent concretizations of the legislation or alternately, that the legislation represents the formalization of the traditions represented in the narrative passages. Finally, I will discuss the particular case of the latest halachic legislation in Scripture as a transition to the rabbinic period.

The Halachic Texts

The first text is Exodus 23:14ff.:

Three times in the year you shall keep a feast to me.
You shall keep the feast of unleavened bread; as I

commanded you, you shall eat unleavened bread for seven days at the appointed time in the month of Abib, for in it you came out of Egypt. None shall appear before me empty-handed. You shall keep the feast of harvest, of the first fruits of your labor, of what you sow in the field. You shall keep the feast of ingathering at the going forth of the year, when you gather in from the field the fruit of your labor. Three times in the year shall all your males appear before the Lord God.

The name of our feast in this text is the Feast of the Ingathering (חג האסוף), which suggests an agricultural society and its concerns. The feast is to be kept at the beginning or "the going forth" of the year (בצאת השנה).¹ There is nothing in the text to indicate in what month, on what day of the month, or in what position of the year the feast is to be observed. Since the month of Abib is called the first month of the year in Exodus 12:1-2, we might think that the feast should be kept at the end of the previous month. However the spring month of Abib is hardly that season in which the harvest is celebrated. We must assume, then, that the meaning of "the going out of the year" is the designation of another, older calendar than that which describes Abib as the first month.

In all likelihood the calendar is an adapted Canaanite calendar which celebrates the New Year on the autumnal

¹The translation for *y' pertaining to the year is better rendered "the beginning" than "going out" in the sense of "the end." The verb is used with the same force of beginning in Judges 5:31; Genesis 19:23; and Isaiah 13:10 with regard to the sun's rising or "going forth" from its place.

equinox. The "going out of the year" is most likely New Year day and the days preceding that New Year, the days before the modern 10 Tishri. The number of days of celebration is not indicated. We might speculate that the duration was seven days before the New Year on the basis of the duration of the feast in Abib. It is also possible that "the going out of the year" is not a set time at all, but means only the inauguration of each man's own harvest year. But this is less likely, especially by the time of the writing of this legislation. The feast is the third and last of a tri-festival calendar.

This feast, unlike the one in Abib, is simply agricultural.¹ It is most likely a thanksgiving and celebration for the productivity of the year past, and a preparation (perhaps with the rain petitions) for the agricultural year to begin on the New Year. The purpose of the feast also seems to include the presentation of a tithe, a thanksgiving to the Lord who gave increase to the field so that the celebrant might have an appropriate offering to make. In this way of reckoning, God gives increase of the field so that

¹J. B. Segal, *op. cit.*, pp. 128ff. et passim, rather vigorously denies any connection between this feast and the harvest. He bases his theory on a translation of the word חג (from חג which he associates with חג) to mean a circuit, not of the processional sort by celebrants, but a circuit or revolution of the tropic year.

the celebrant might have the proper offerings to make in the rejoicing of the feast.

Famine, then, is a two-fold punishment. The farmer has not enough to eat, but worse, he has nothing to bring with which to give thanks and to make petition for the forthcoming year--which thus promises to be all the worse (this kind of incapacitation of the covenant is evident in such mid-Exilic books as Haggai, where the vicious circle of no crops produces no offering produces no crops, etc., must be overcome--by building the Temple, says Haggai). The offering does not constitute a bribe; it effectively acknowledges the proper working of the covenant year by year (which is undoubtedly why the feast becomes, later, a covenant-celebration feast).

The second text, also from Exodus and much like the previous text, is from Exodus 34:22ff.

And you shall observe the feast of weeks, the first fruits of wheat harvest, and the feast of ingathering at the year's end (וְחַג הָאֲסִיף תְּקִיפוֹת הַשָּׁנָה [equinox]). Three times in the year shall all your males appear before the Lord God, the God of Israel. For I will cast out nations before you, and enlarge your borders; neither shall any man desire your land, when you go up to appear before the Lord your God three times in the year.

The name of the feast is again the Feast of the Ingathering which is to be held at the circuit (turning) of the year.

The appointed time for the feast is, if anything, less clear than in the previous text, unless the word תְּקִיפָה has a technical meaning already at the time the text is set down.

So little space is devoted to the requirement of the third feast that we must believe that it was either the least important or, more likely, the most familiar of the three and requiring the least information. If the latter reasoning is correct, it would enhance the likelihood of the technical use of חֲסִיפָה, "circuit" to signify "autumnal equinox". We shall see later that this same word appears in a text that presumes only one annual festival, most likely the ingathering, or Asiph.

Again we have no information as to the duration of the feast, and we can only conclude that if it is the very familiar New Year festal prelude, it is probably a seven day feast (like the feast in Abib) on the last days of the old year. There is no offering required (although it may simply be assumed); rather there are two other purposes for the feast stated. The first is the appearance of all males before the Lord God.¹ Perhaps this appearance is a kind of mustering of the congregation, a religious census that

¹The MT points the verb as a niphal. The verb could just as easily be pointed as a gal imperfect without any consonantal changes at all; and, in fact, the presence in the phrase of the particle signifying the direct object before the words "the face of the Lord your God" suggests that this active sense of the verb was its original meaning. The text would then read: "Three times in the year shall all your males see the face of the Lord your God, the God of Israel." Such a translation would be in complete accord with Exodus 24:11 where the chief men of Israel beheld God, and ate and drank. This latter text may well be the paradigm of a feast in Israel, explaining the rite itself, viz. eating and drinking in the presence of God.

implies a re-iteration of the choice of God. To appear before the Lord and to see Him means that at the time when one goes to one's sanctuary at the time appointed for attending one's God, those who go to the Lord's sanctuary declare, by their very presence, that they are His people and He is their chosen deity. The second purpose of the observance of the feast is to assure the fulfillment of the covenant promise of land. This may be the meaning of the promise to cast out nations and enlarge borders. This purpose is not so far removed from the agricultural one of thanksgiving, for the promise of land in the covenant is presumably a promise not just of territory, but of purposive territory: the means of nourishing the people of Israel.

The second part of the promise, that the land would be protected in the pilgrim's absence, looks like a later addition in response to a problem encountered when pilgrims refused to come to the feasts out of concern for leaving their land unattended. It is more hortatory and cajoling than the first part of the promise.

This text, like the previous text, gives no indication of where this event occurs. We might infer from Exodus 20:24b-25, that any of the designated shrines are acceptable so long as they have the appropriate altar (unhewn stone).

The next halachic text for consideration is Deuteronomy 16:13-17, together with 31:10-11.

You shall keep the feast of booths seven days, when you make your ingathering from your threshing floor and your wine press; you shall rejoice in your feast, you and your son and your daughter, your manservant, and your maidservant, the Levite, the sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow who are within your towns. For seven days you shall keep the feast to the Lord your God at the place which the Lord will choose; because the Lord your God will bless you in all your produce and in all the work of your hands, so that you will be altogether joyful. Three times a year all your males shall appear before the Lord your God at the place which he will choose: at the feast of unleavened bread, at the feast of weeks, and at the feast of booths. They shall not appear before the Lord empty-handed; every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the Lord your God which he has given you.

And Moses commanded them, "At the end of every seven years, at the set time of the year of release, at the feast of booths, when all Israel comes to appear before the Lord your God at the place which he will choose, you shall read this law before all Israel in their hearing.

This text has some intriguing features and perplexing problems which will be discussed in the summary section. At this point only the important points need presenting. The name of the feast is not, as it was in the Exodus passages, derived from the function of the feast, although that function is mentioned in the same verse with the name. The name of the feast is "booths" or Sukkoth, which is observed when "you make your ingathering. . . ." Unless the definition is derived from some other passage in the Pentateuch (and I am not prepared to make such a derivation), we have here no definition of booths. The verb is סָבַח , as it is in Exodus 34:22 together with the word לֵל , which probably modifies the

noun אֵל rather than making the verb reflexive. Therefore the name סִבּוֹת is also primarily a modifier in the construct, describing the main subject, i.e. there can be several kinds of חַגִּים which are "yours" and which are differentiated by the modifiers in construct. The simple fact remains that we do not know the meaning of סִבּוֹת from the text except as it is an appellation for this feast.

This text is specific concerning the duration of the feast; it is to be observed for seven days. The text is vague, however, as to the time of observance. The Exodus passages, obscure as they might be to us, give some indication as to the time of the formally reckoned (tropic or lunar?) year. Deuteronomy says only "when you make your ingathering." Does this mean everyone is to make ingathering at the same time, or does it mean that one goes up to make the feast once the ingathering is completed, no matter what time in the month? We can suggest only that the time was either informal and unfixed, or that it was so well known and so easily reckoned that no explicit designation was required, save only the briefest mention.

The place of the feast is very important to Deuteronomy. The feast is to be observed, like so much of the legislation in this book, "at the place which the Lord will choose." The proof text which purports to define this phrase is I Kings 14:21. Thus the place is taken to be

Jerusalem. And perhaps it was to the author or editor of I Kings. The fact remains, and I believe it is an important fact, that we are not told in this text or elsewhere in Deuteronomy exactly where this "place" is to be. It is not at all certain that the text refers simply to a single place. It could mean at a specific place which varied from time to time according to the Lord's choice; or it could mean at all of the places that the Lord chooses at a particular time. We can do no more than to say that from the text itself it is impossible to know which place is intended.

The list of those who are to observe the feast is much expanded in Deuteronomy from the list in Exodus. The implication is that everyone is to keep the feast who lives in the towns of Israel. They are all to go to the Lord's place and keep the feast of booths.

The text then seems to reverse itself beginning with verse 16. At this point we seem to have a restatement of the legislation in the two Exodus passages. Three times in the year all the males are to observe the feast and are to appear before/see the Lord God. They are not to appear empty-handed. I would suggest that vss. 16-17 have been appended to an earlier text, vss. 13-15, to bring the Deuteronomic legislation into conformity with the other legislation. But I do not intend to pursue the possibilities

raised by such an addition at this point in the description of texts.

The purpose of the feast is not altogether clear from the text. Does the use of 'ו with the imperfects indicate that observance of the feast is a means of assuring future blessing? Or does the text intend to say that observance is desirable because God will bless in any event (a kind of proleptic thanksgiving for the stability of the covenant promises)? Whatever is intended as the purpose of observance, the intent seems to be "that you will be utterly joyful." Again, we should question the significance of the waw in the second phrase. Is it merely the indication of yet another purpose of the observance, a simple connective "and" (furthermore), or does it have the force, used in conjunction with the introductory 'ו, of a "so that"? The purpose of the second half of the text is the same as that in the Exodus passages.

Special note should be made of the short text 31:10-11. The feast is again mentioned by its name, booths; and like the first part of the previous text, the assumption is made that all Israel is to attend the feast. The legislative purpose of this passage is the septennial reading of the law at the feast which is required in the year of release, at the end of seven years. We may perhaps infer from this that the feast is to be kept at the end of the calendar year

(Abib is not designated the first month in Deuteronomy 16 as it is in Exodus).

The halachic text in Numbers 29:12 and 35 is specialized.

On the fifteenth day of the seventh month you shall have a holy convocation; you shall do no laborious work, and you shall keep a feast to the Lord seven days. . . . [there follows the sacrificial requirements for each day of the feast] . . . On the eighth day you shall have a solemn assembly; you shall do no laborious work, . . .

This text would seem to be the priestly schedule of sacrifices for the feast. The name of the feast is simply given as "a feast to/for the Lord" or "the Lord's feast." Here, however, we have the specific dates for the feast. It is to be observed for seven days beginning on the fifteenth day of the seventh month. If the other texts have referred to a feast which precedes the solar New Year by seven days (that is, from the third to the ninth day of the month--whether that month is the first or the seventh month), this text must then represent a change of the time of the feast to a lunar reckoned feast day. We might conjecture that the date of the feast has been changed to make it conform to the Passover timing, seemingly a lunar-based feast from the beginning. In that event, the feast of booths becomes the balancing feast of the year, six months exactly from the spring festival. Both feasts are then reckoned by the moon rather than the spring feast alone. This possibility will be discussed in detail further on.

It is possible that this priestly schedule of sacrifices is quite old, and that it has been adjusted from time to time to make it conform to whichever festal calendar was in effect at a given time. The added feature of a solemn assembly on the eighth day looks suspiciously like the old New Year festival, which used to fall on the autumnal equinox and ^{is} now retained as an eighth day of the feast, perhaps as a non-functional anachronism required by tradition. The purpose of the feast is implicit in the legislation. That purpose is to make sacrifice. The legislation is addressed to "my people Israel" in 28:1.

It should be clear that this legislation is not specifically intended for all Israel, but for those concerned with the technicalities of the sacrifices for a feast described elsewhere. Therefore there is little ground for Wellhausen's prejudicial and vitriolic evaluation of the feast as though this text represented the only observance of the Feast of Sukkoth after the Exile:

Thus the feasts entirely lose their peculiar characteristics, the occasions by which they are inspired and distinguished; by the monotonous sameness of the unvarying burnt-offering and sin-offering of the community as a whole they are all put on the same level, deprived of their natural spontaneity, and degraded into mere "exercises of religion."¹

¹Julius Wellhausen, Prolegomena to the History of Ancient Israel (Cleveland: The World Publishing Co., 1957), p. 100. For Wellhausen's true agenda, cf. p. 513.

Wellhausen either does not know the Mishnah or chooses to ignore it.

We come finally to the legislation of Leviticus 23, the great festival calendar. Again there is much to say concerning the place of this legislation in Israel's history, but I intend to save that discussion ~~for~~ the last section of this chapter. The text is in two parts, Leviticus 23:33-36 (A) and 23:39-43 (B). The first part (A) is as follows:

And the Lord said to Moses, "Say to the people of Israel, On the fifteenth day of this seventh month and for seven days is the feast of booths to the Lord. On the first day shall be a holy convocation, you shall do no laborious work. Seven days you shall present offerings by fire to the Lord; on the eighth day you shall hold a holy convocation and present an offering by fire to the Lord; it is a solemn assembly; you shall do no laborious work.

This first part of the text is almost identical to the legislation of Numbers 29, with two exceptions. First, the fire offerings are only mentioned, but not explained in detail. Second, and of much greater importance, is the fact that while the legislation is the same in every other way to that in Numbers 29, Leviticus 23:33-36 knows the feast by its proper name. It is not "a feast to the Lord," but it is "the feast of booths to the Lord." And as with Numbers 29, the agricultural aspect of the feast is totally absent. This is a more cultic feast than an agricultural one. This is not to say that it is not agricultural; only that the harvest aspect is not mentioned. The ordinance for eschewing

laborious work might be taken to imply that ordinary labor is to be set aside in favor of the cultic labor and obligations.

The second (B) part of the text is very different from any of the previous texts in several ways.

On the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when you have gathered in the produce of the land, you shall keep the feast of the Lord seven days; on the first day shall be a solemn rest, and on the eighth day shall be a solemn rest. And you shall take on the first day the fruit of goodly trees, branches of palm trees, and boughs of leafy trees, and willows of the brook; and you shall rejoice before the Lord your God seven days. And you shall keep it as a feast to the Lord seven days in the year; it is a statute for ever throughout your generations; you shall keep it in the seventh month. You shall dwell in booths for seven days; all that are native in Israel shall dwell in booths, that your generations may know that I made the people of Israel dwell in booths when I brought them out of the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God.

This text is peculiar in that it is repetitive of some of the legislation of the A part of the text and of the other texts that we have already examined. At the same time it contains new material that does not appear in any of the other halachic texts of the Pentateuch. There is a reason for this new material which will be discussed later.

The name of the feast in this text is, as in Numbers 29, "a feast to the Lord". While this section states the obligation for dwelling in booths for seven days and explains the significance of this observance, it does not call the feast by the proper name, "booths". Are we to

assume that this legislation does not know Deuteronomy 16 (and the first part of the Leviticus text) because it is older than these texts which do mention the feast by name? Or may we assume that by the time this legislation was set down, this feast was the normative feast which required no name--it was the feast to the Lord? But there is, finally, a third possibility. The place of origin for this legislation may have always known the feast by its name, "the feast of the Lord." Perhaps it is the intent of this legislation to combine the name and traditions of this place with the name (and possibly the traditions) of another place that knows of the feast as "booths".

There is no question as to the time of the feast or its duration; we may indeed wonder why there is so much repetition of day and duration. The feast is known no longer as one of three pilgrim festivals, as in the tri-festival schemes of other legislation. It is here the last feast of a very full and carefully explicated festival calendar. The phrase "when you have gathered in the produce of the land" has been added as a kind of modifier to the specific month and day of the feast. The phrase sounds much like a paraphrase of Deuteronomy's justification for observing the feast at this particular time (just as it seemed that Deuteronomy's reason for the explanation was to make the

connection between the feast called "booths" and the feast in Exodus called "ingathering").

As for those obligated to observe the feast, even though the first part of the text and the introduction to many of the other feasts in Leviticus 23 begins as does Numbers 29, "Say to the people of Israel," verse 42 says specifically that the feast is obligatory for "all that are native in Israel." The promise of blessing and rejoicing in Deuteronomy 16 has become in this passage a requirement: "and you shall rejoice before the Lord your God seven days." No definition of the word rejoicing is given, but it would seem to have a more technical, cultic meaning than in Deuteronomy.

Unique to this Pentateuchal text is the requirement to take fruit, branches, boughs, and willows as a part of the observance of the feast. A particular difficulty is the ambiguity of the words "and you shall take (for yourself)." Nowhere are we told why they are to be taken, how taken, or what is to be done with them once taken.

Finally, there is another unique bit of legislation in the text. All that are native to Israel are required to dwell in the booths for the seven days of the feast as a reminder of Israel's dwelling in booths when they came up out of Egypt. Here is finally the historicization of the feast, the anamnesis of Sukkoth which identifies it as a

feast like Passover. In fact this particular remembrance comes very close to making Sukkoth a part of ^{the} Passover festival syndrome.

A real difficulty of the anamnesis is the likelihood that those coming from Egypt did not dwell in booths (the material for which would hardly have been found along their escape route), but were more likely to have dwelt in tents. Perhaps some explanation for these unique pieces of legislation can be offered after we have examined the narrative texts of the post-Exilic period.

Early Narrative Texts

No attempt will be made to produce these early narratives in full or to treat them with the same detail that has been given to the Pentateuchal halachah. These early narratives are useful to our purpose here in setting forth or clarifying one or more of the themes of Sukkoth which will appear later in the rabbinic texts.

The first mention of a מִן to the Lord is that feast of Exodus 5:1-9 et passim which the Lord commanded Moses to organize for the children of Israel. It was to be a feast three days into the wilderness and involved a prophylactic sacrifice ("lest he fall upon us with pestilence or with the sword"--vs. 3). It was the "God of the Hebrews" that required it. We cannot tell from the scant information in

Exodus whether the ~~an~~ required here was a customary feast which had been forbidden only recently for this people in Egypt by one Pharaoh, or whether the people were confronted with a new obligation for sacrifice required by a God they had not known or had long ago forgotten.

The narrative in Joshua 6:1-5 and 15-16 of the siege and fall of the Canaanite city of Jericho to the Israelites would seem to have little to do with festal observance per se, and indeed the primary function of the story is hardly liturgical. Yet the narrative does contain several themes which adumbrate the later celebration of Sukkoth.

The people, led by the Ark and the priests, are commanded to march around the city for seven days. We are reminded here of the circumambulation of the altar for seven days at the Feast of Sukkoth. The seventh day march involves seven circumambulations with the blowing of the shofar, reminding us of the blowing of the shofar at the feast. Finally, on the seventh day we are told that the people "rose early, at the dawn of the day." The high point of the feast, especially when it was a solar-based feast, was at the rising of the sun at the completion of the feast. The shouts of the people suggest the festal cries of the pilgrims during the circumambulations.

In all likelihood, the connection of this narrative with the Feast of Sukkoth is ⁱⁿ the common solar themes. But

if there is no other connection than this shared solar idiom, we are at least informed of an early Israelite concern that is manifest in both military and festival occasions. Israel's context is, at an early time, a context influenced by solar concerns.

A short passage in Judges 9:26-27 gives us a glimpse of the early agricultural practices of feasts in Canaan. In this narrative we read of Gaal ben Ebed, the Shechemite, who instigated the revolt against Abimelech. Gaal and his kinsmen "went out into the field, and gathered the grapes from their vineyards and trod them and held festival (הלולים), and went into the house of their god, and ate and drank and bad-mouthed Abimelech."

From this short story we may infer that Canaanite custom included a harvest (vintage/autumn) festival held at the completion of the work in the field. The time would appear to be not definite. The place of vintage-rejoicing is in the house of the deity, and the rite consisted of eating and drinking in the presence of the god. The concerns of the clan appear to have been an apt topic of conversation at this meal. The custom of the festal meal is reminiscent of the feast of the elders of Israel in Exodus 24:9-11.

The festal traditions of the Lord's high place at Shiloh are first known to us in the narrative of the obtaining of wives for the Benjaminites found at the close of

the book of Judges, especially 21:16ff. The dilemma of the tribes of Israel, which had vowed to refuse their daughters to the Benjaminites to wife and yet which had no desire to see the demise of one of the tribes of Israel, was resolved by a scheme that gives us important information concerning the festival practice of Israel before the monarchy.

We are informed that there was a yearly feast of the Lord at Shiloh (the Ark resting at Bethel, however-- cf. 20:26ff.). The feast was called a π , and its time was designated $\pi\pi\pi\pi$, that is, annually. It would appear, though it is by no means certain from the text, that this time was a fixed one in the agricultural year.

We are not told of the practice at the high place itself, but of the festivities in the vineyard. The Benjaminites are told to hide in the vineyards, and as the (unmarried) daughters of Shiloh came out to dance, each man was to seize a wife for himself from the girls in the dance. The story sounds much like the account of the rape of the Sabine women, which was, probably, no rape at all.

Why did the daughters of Shiloh come out to dance at this time, and how was the dilemma of Israel resolved by the action of the Benjaminites on this occasion? The maidens danced at the conclusion of the harvest evidently in order to be seen by the young men of the vicinity who were seeking wives. The rite was a natural part of an annual festival of

life at which the concerns and the joys of the realities of life, namely land and progeny, were expressed. The festival seems to have been a time during which the social strictures or formalities pertaining to the obtaining of a wife were relaxed in favor of the obtaining of progeny. It would seem from the narrative that the fathers and brothers were in a position to complain about the seizure of their wards but not in a position to do anything about the situation legally. Nor does it seem that they were inclined to push the matter too far anyway. The life of Benjamin as a tribe in Israel was assured, and the other tribes were not forced to violate their oath.

The narrative of the Benjaminites may be compared with the opening chapters of I Samuel for a more detailed picture of this yearly feast that was held in Shiloh before the establishment of the kingdom. The birth narrative of Samuel is intimately connected with the yearly feast (מִיָּמִים) at Shiloh to which Elkanah and his family were wont to go up "to worship and to sacrifice to the Lord of hosts." As in the previous narrative we are not told whether this feast was tied to a particular point in the solar or lunar year, or whether it was Elkanah's own particular time for making his annual sacrifices and vows.

The name of the feast is not given, if indeed it is a specific feast at all. Neither are we informed of the

duration of sacrificial rites, although the narrative would indicate that Elkanah and his family remained more than one day. On at least one day, namely the last day, the worship of the Lord was held at daybreak (1:19).

Those participating in the feast included the entire family of Elkanah, although he seems to have been the leader of the family's worship; for it was he that distributed the sacrificial meat and portions to the others in his family. Evidently extenuating circumstances allowed members of the family to be absent from the rites, since Hannah remained home for a period after the birth of her son. We are also given a rather detailed description of the responsibility and activity of the local priesthood in 2:12ff.

Two details are of particular importance for our study. First we should note that this feast is concerned with life as manifest in progeny. It is Hannah, the barren, who makes her prayer to the Lord of hosts at Shiloh; it is at this pilgrimage that she receives assurance that the Lord will visit her and that it is He that raises up an otherwise moribund line; and it is at this feast that Hannah's song of life (2:1-11--if indeed it is truly Hannah's song at all)¹ is truly pertinent. We should note especially

¹At least the last two verses look suspiciously like later material, perhaps indicating that this hymn is not

2:5-6 as signifying the real thrust of this worship and sacrificing at Shiloh.

The second detail pertains to the portions that Elkanah gives to the members of his family. In this action we have yet another instance of the manner in which a person or family worshipped the Lord at this early period. Appropriate worship is sacrifice, but most importantly it is eating of the festival meal in the presence of the Lord. Again we are reminded of Exodus 24; and again we are given a hint as to the technical, cultic meaning of rejoicing, both at this early period in Israel's history and later.

The narrative of Solomon's dedication of the Temple in Jerusalem in I Kings 8 suggests the connection of the great feast, whatever it was in the earlier narratives, with Temple dedication and the entire Jerusalem tradition. It also suggests the beginnings of the separation of that feast from its agricultural origins and practices.

The name of the feast at which (or following which or preceding which) Solomon dedicated the Temple is not given; we are informed only that it is "the feast in the month Ethanim, which is the seventh month" (I K. 8:2). Not only are we not informed of the name or nature of the feast,

specifically Hannah's, but that it does belong to a later development of this feast and has been read back upon what the author of I Samuel considered to be the prototype of the covenant/life feast of his own time.

there seems to be a discrepancy in both the actual time and the duration of the feast. In I Kings 6:38 we are told that the Temple was completed "in the month of Bul, which is the eighth month." Was the Temple dedicated before its completion (which seems unlikely), was there nearly a full year between completion and dedication, or is it possible that completion includes dedication and that dedicatory feast of Ethanim occurred at the end of that month? Furthermore, in I Kings 8:65, in the MT, we are informed that the total time of celebration was twice seven, fourteen days. The implication is that the regular feast of seven days was held and an additional feast of dedication either preceded or followed it. The people were then sent home on the eighth day of the second feast.

Could it be that the first seven days of the feast, the regular feast of the seventh month (Ethanim), fell on the last seven days of that month, so that a solar festival of New Year would occur on the eighth day, the autumnal equinox, the first day of Bul (the eighth month)? And could it further be possible that Solomon's dedicatory prayer and sacrifices were offered on that New Year day (very much a part of the feast of Ethanim, yet actually the first of Bul) and that the dedicatory festival continued for an additional six days in Bul, the people being sent home on the eighth day of Bul? Such a suggestion solves several problems.

First, the dedication would have been held on what must have been the most significant day in the solar year, the equinoctial New Year, even more appropriate to Temple dedication if that Temple had any connection with solar imageries. Second, the Temple would have been dedicated when the festival crowd would normally have been in the city for the seven day feast of Ethanim, the praeludium to New Year. The king would surely have wanted the largest crowd possible for the dedication ceremony. Third, it seems likely that an event of the magnitude of this dedication would have warranted a festival period of its own, which would explain the extra seven days of the MT and which would furthermore explain the completion of the Temple in the eighth month, Bul. It should be noted, however, that the LXX does not have the second seven days, although it retains a bit of solar imagery which the MT text has omitted, viz. at the time of dedication Solomon's introit commences with the words, "The Lord has set the sun in the heavens...." We shall return to this problem of the date of the dedication and the solar concerns at the conclusion of this chapter.

It should be noted that the feast, whatever its name and date/duration, is held in Jerusalem; this city, with its Temple is to become the center and focus of Israel's worship of the Lord (8:27ff). It should also be noted that

the royal house of David and the covenant with the Davidic line is tied to the Temple (8:25ff). The later messianic theme of the Feast of Sukkoth is perhaps first articulated here.

Solomon's prayer of dedication is a veritable treasure trove of covenant themes; it might well be called a reiteration of the covenant as it is to function in the time of the monarchy. Insofar as the Feast of Sukkoth, or the Feast, is a celebration of the covenant of life, this dedicatory prayer deserves careful scrutiny for discerning the manifold expressions of the covenant of life in the days of the monarchy and the centralization of the cult in Jerusalem. We shall mention only three, however, as perhaps most appropriate to the later festal idiom and representative of the rest.

First, and undoubtedly most pertinent to this study is the effectiveness of the Temple vis-à-vis the obtaining of rain for Israel in time of drought. We shall have occasion to see further on the importance of rainfall to Israel's normal agricultural needs, but also as a sign of the viability of the covenant between the Lord and Israel. Thus when Solomon prayed that the Temple might be that place to which the people might turn in times of drought (8:35ff), he was making a connection between the covenant, viz. that which is fundamental to Israel's very existence and

normative for Israel's life, and this new institution in the new royal city.¹

¹Actually the connection is somewhat more complex than this statement makes apparent; and the complexity applies to most of the categories of the dedicatory prayer. The Temple should not be construed as that place where Israel comes when there is a scarcity of water, or sickness, or defeat, or any of the other national setbacks of Israel's history. The Temple is not another high place where Israel comes to deal directly with God. The Temple is a mediative institution; and all its rites, sacrifices, practices, and sacred officers exist to deal with that which is seen to be the source of Israel's difficulty or problem in its national life, namely sin. Simply stated, Israel does not come to the Temple to pray for rain in time of drought; Israel turns to the Temple as the mediative institution for dealing with Israel's sin, the correction of which results in the restoration of a covenant sign, a supply of water. Drought and famine are not simply an agricultural problem to be dealt with directly at any number of high places. They are the sanctions against Israel's sin; and the appropriate place for dealing with sin is now to be the Temple in Jerusalem.

There is in this subtle shift in the covenant relationship a centralization and conformity which were surely in the interest of the Davidic monarchy and which instituted a certain collectivity in Israel which had not existed before. This collectivity would break apart at the time of the Pharisees with their notions of individualism and non-cultic practices in dealings with the Lord God of Israel.

A moral or religious judgment is not intended here; only an objective statement of a fundamental change in Israel's institutions at the time of Solomon. Israel's situation, both internally and on the international stage, required the institution of the Temple at this time, just as it would later require the demise of the Temple and a re-institutionalization at the time of the Pharisees and the Rabbis.

It is possible that an objection would be raised at this point with regard to any discussion of Israel's sin and its correction as a subject more appropriate to a work on Yom Kippur than on the Feast of Sukkoth. We must bear in mind, however, that at the time of Solomon and from then until the time of the legislation of Leviticus 23 as it now

Second, the dedicatory prayer expresses an aspect of Israel's covenant life which, while it was undoubtedly most important to Solomon's agenda for empire, was later to become even more expressive of the thrust and purpose of the covenant. The theme is universalism, and it is found in 8:41ff. Solomon perhaps has in mind the growing importance of his empire, economically and politically, in its strategic position at the heart of the Fertile Crescent and at the crossroads of Mediterranean life. Yet his immediate concerns provided a foundation for a much greater development of the obligation for mission implicit in the covenant from Sinai onwards which the prophets would nurture, which the Pharisees and Rabbis would institutionalize, and which the Diaspora would disseminate. What to Solomon was a practical aspect of the new Temple was for Israel a fundamental theme of the covenant which would henceforth be expressed at this feast in the seventh month.

Third, Solomon's prayer of dedication at this time is significant for Israel's covenant life in the bond which

stands, there was no Yom Kippur. Recognition and repentance of sin were most likely a feature (perhaps in the opening days) of the great Jerusalem feast of the seventh month itself, the feast which would become known as Sukkoth. If this feast of the seventh month did not exist alone, as in the time of I Samuel and elsewhere, it was most likely one of two major festivals (the other being the vernal feast of Passover/Unleavened Bread) which, at least in Judah and Jerusalem, held the edge as the predominate feast.

it created between the Temple as institution and this feast of the seventh month, whatever it had become by Solomon's time. If, as appears likely, the feast of the seventh month is the same agricultural celebration as the Asiph, discussed previously, then this fundamentally agricultural feast with its crucial agricultural agenda is now tightly integrated with urban, royal, and perhaps more formally cultic concerns and imagery. It is perhaps even eclipsed by them. In short, what was primarily an agricultural feast of thanksgiving became, with the dedication of the Temple, a royal feast of covenant celebration, a feast of identification of the covenant with the Temple and all that the institution of the Temple implied. This celebration of the Temple (with and without direct royal involvement) was to last through the Exile and the Second Commonwealth, until the final destruction of the great house of the Lord in 70 C.E. And even with that final destruction, Temple themes would persist in the celebration of Sukkoth even to our own time.

That there was something more to this dedicatory feast than the older agricultural celebration of the Asiph is suggested by the narrative in I Kings 12:25ff. Upon Solomon's death and his son Rehoboam's accession to the throne of Judah, the tribes of the north severed their alliance with the Davidic dynasty and empire and declared their independence of the southern kingdom. They did not,

however, reject the principle of monarchy, and they set Jeroboam over them as king at Shechem.

One of Jeroboam's first acts in establishing his new kingdom was to establish a central place of worship at the royal seat to turn the people's attention from the royal Temple at Jerusalem. And beyond establishing the royal shrine at Beth El, Jeroboam also "appointed a feast on the fifteenth day of the eighth month like the feast that was in Judah, . . ." (12:32). We may learn several important facts from this short narrative episode.

First, there evidently was no feast in Israel like the feast of the seventh month in Judah, for Jeroboam had to institute it. There are several possibilities suggested by the information given here. Perhaps we are to understand that there was no Temple dedication feast in the north such as Solomon had instituted in Jerusalem. In this case there might well have been an Asiph festival in the seventh month, but, just as in Jerusalem before Solomon's time, the agricultural feast had never been associated with a royal, urban, temple feast. Or it is possible that in the north the original counterpart to the southern autumnal celebration of harvest and New Year was to be found in the celebration of Passover and Unleavened Bread in the spring. Certainly we have sufficient texts declaring the month of Abib, the month of Passover, to be the first month of the year.

The celebration of the Passover and the spring New Year might well be more appropriate to the tribes of Joseph in the north than to the tribe of Judah and the city of Jerusalem in the south. If this were the case, Jeroboam would indeed have instituted an entirely new feast to offset the one in Jerusalem.

There are more difficulties. The text says that Jeroboam's feast was in the eighth month, on the fifteenth day, like the one in Jerusalem. Does this mean that the feast in Jerusalem was held in the eighth month as well, even though we are told that it was a feast of the seventh month? Perhaps the suggestion given above that the feast of the seventh month in Jerusalem was held on the last seven days of the month with the eighth day, the New Year, falling on the first day of the eighth month was operative at Shechem as well. But this does not solve the problem of the day. We are told explicitly that Jeroboam's feast was held on the fifteenth day of the eighth month, not the first day.

The solution may lie in the phrase, "like the feast that was in Judah." The force of the prepositional particle כ in כהג does not necessarily require the translation "identical to." It is quite possible that the feast in Shechem was like the feast in Jerusalem both in rite and intention (evidently Jeroboam's chief concern) without its

being on the same day or even in the same month. But we have also already suggested the possibility of Solomon's addition of a new seven-day Feast of Dedication either before or after the traditional feast of the seventh month. Jeroboam might not have departed from Jerusalemite custom so far as the author/editor of I Kings would have us believe.

The speculative possibilities for harmonizing these two feasts in north and south are probably as fruitless as they are endless. We must be content with two bits of information, the accuracy of which remain in doubt due to the anti-Jeroboam, polemic style of the author of our narrative. That which makes Jeroboam evil insofar as the author is concerned is that Jeroboam celebrated a legitimate feast in the wrong month (12:33), a month of his own devising. This suggests that the feast in the south, no matter what the date of the New Year (which, because of its special position in regulating the solar calendar, may have very well been unassigned to a particular month), was a feast of the seventh month.

The second bit of information that must be noted from this narrative piece is the day of the month on which the feast was to be held at Jeroboam's altar. This day does not seem to have bothered the author of I Kings, for he takes issue only with the month. Are we to assume, then, that the fifteenth day of the month was the established day

for the feast in the south at the time of Solomon? Yet this seems very unlikely indeed, for it would imply that the new year in the south was reckoned by the full moon of the seventh month. Solomon's Feast of Dedication was probably one of his own devising; yet the people were already gathered for the regular feast of the seventh month. To suggest that their feast of the seventh month was held at the full moon of that month would be to suggest that all the previous narratives and halachic requirements concerning a feast at the turning or going forth of the year were lunar feasts and that New Year was tied to this full moon of the seventh month. And yet we know that even in that community which celebrated the Passover (itself a festival reckoned by the full moon of the month) as its major feast, the New Year was the first day of the month of the Passover (Abib). Furthermore there is a preponderance of evidence for a solar idiom connected with the Jerusalem Temple. The most we can say about this second bit of information is that in the north there was a tradition which considered the full moon as the appropriate time for festival, spring or autumn. For some unknown reason, even though the southern kingdom celebrated the solar New Year at the beginning of the month, this variant in the day of the month on which Jeroboam kept the feast was of peripheral concern to the author of I Kings compared with the apostasy of the celebration of the feast in the wrong month.

In fine, then, we have these two pieces of information that will be important in the summary later. The appropriate time for keeping the feast in the south (which was to become normative later) was the seventh month, probably at the solar moment of the autumnal equinox until the time of Solomon when it was shifted to a place before or after the Feast of Dedication. But we also have an early testimony to the fact that in the north, the feast was kept on the fifteenth day of the month, the time of the full moon (and evidently a lunar moment, then), no matter what the month.

One last narrative must be included in this section of early references to themes of Sukkoth. It is the story of Elijah and the priests of Baal on Mt. Carmel at the time of a great drought and famine in Israel. The narrative is found in I Kings 17-18, the drought and subsequent famine being attributed to the apostasy of King Ahab in building an altar to Baal and an Asherah in Samaria, his new royal city.

There is no festival described in this narrative. The issue is rather one of imagery. There is no need to dwell on the story. Suffice it to say that Israel suffered collectively from the infidelity of the king, and Israel was punished with that punishment that is particularly appropriate for Israel, drought followed by famine--a threat

to life and a sanction imposed directly by the Lord God.

The issue on Carmel was precisely whether the Baal or the Lord was the source of the fructification of the land and the nourishment of the people. The priests of Baal are seen as engaging in overt magic, i.e. the cajoling and manipulation of their god by a day-long series of sympathetic actions to induce the rain to fall. When the time comes for Elijah to perform, he builds an altar in the Israelite fashion, an altar of uncut stones (twelve for all the tribes), and he has a trench dug round it. Having laid the wood and cut and set the sacrifice, he then proceeds to perform a rite which is of great significance to our study. He orders that four jars be filled with water three times, and these twelve jars full of water he pours upon the altar and the sacrifice.

The dramatic effect of this action is fine; the wood and sacrifice soaked can only create an even more unlikely and surely more difficult set of circumstances for any kind of ignition of the holocaust. But in fact this pouring of water represents far more than a dramatic touch; it is a water libation that is perfectly consonant with Elijah's prayer of petition for relief from the drought. We should note that Elijah does not engage in magic. He petitions the Lord God to accept the offering as an earnest

of His mercy and favor which will be signified by rain. And indeed the Lord causes His fire to fall and consume the sacrifice and the water with it. The rainfall is almost immediate.

This narrative record of a water libation in connection with sacrifice with the intent of relieving drought is unique to the story of Elijah. There is one other instance of a water libation, that of David's pouring out the water as a water libation to the Lord. The water was brought to him by his mighty men from Bethlehem and he offered it to the Lord in recognition of his men's valor. This narrative is a later one from I Chronicles 11:15ff.

There are perhaps other narratives that contain or pertain to themes of Sukkoth, such as the celebration of a feast of the new moon by the court of Saul in I Samuel 21¹;

¹Perhaps this reference to the feast of the new moon celebrated in Saul's court, at which feast attendance by courtiers seems to have been sacrally de rigeur, should not be so lightly passed over in our study. That a lunar feast is kept in Israel as early as the time of Saul is surely noteworthy. So also is the excuse David devises to explain his absence from court. He must attend an annual family sacrifice in his home city, and such a celebration seems to override even the royal celebration of new moon. Does Saul's court celebrate every new moon, or only the new moon of the first month of the year, i.e. a lunar New Year? And is David's pretended family feast the kind celebrated by Elkanah's family; and if so, are these family feasts observed always at some particular solar or lunar moment in the year? Or does every family or clan hold an annual feast to the Lord at a time in the year that has no celestial importance but is of significance to the family or clan? Is it possible that every family or extended family clan in

but beyond the narratives mentioned, the connection of themes in other narrative passages with our specific topic became nebulous and forced.

Selected Prophetic Texts

If the task of identifying narrative texts that belong to the Feast of Sukkoth or its precursor, the Asiph, was difficult, the identification of prophetic texts which have no specific mention of Sukkoth in the text itself as prophetic utterance pertaining to our feast is well nigh impossible. It is probably safe to say that much of the prophetic material from the literary prophets which we possess is, in addition to whatever else it might be called, homiletic material. The recorded prophecy, which was originally oral prophecy, first required an audience. If the prophets were intent on addressing the collective Israel or even those persons of rank representing Israel, the context for their prophecy would most naturally be that time

Israel was accustomed to observe a clan festival at some time which had meaning to that clan alone (that is, neither a lunar or solar festival)? Was it at this festival that the scattered members of the family returned to their home territory for reconstitution and reaffirmation as family unit as they "went up" to the high place in their own district? If this were the case, even as late as at the time of Saul, perhaps the significance of Solomon's dedication of the Temple is one, not only of centralization and conformity, but actually of consolidation: families and clans would all keep the same date, the feast; and they would observe the common feast of Israel at the same place, namely the royal city of Jerusalem.

and that place in which Israel was assembled in great number. That context can only be the festivals in Jerusalem. It is therefore reasonable to assume that much of the literary prophetic material that we possess was at first delivered as homily at the feasts, probably in and around the Temple itself. The prophets, especially the southern prophets, do not attack the Temple institution; they are an adjunct of that institution. Their preachments are addressed to the worshipers and are a part of the worship experience. We might well expect to find festival themes throughout the prophetic material, and indeed we do. Can there be any possible question that such passages as Isaiah 30:23ff. or 33:17ff. belong to a festival context, most likely a Sukkoth context?

And yet the prophetic material has been gathered, edited, or even simply amassed in such a way that we have no means of positive identification of the particular festival context for the material even when we are certain that there is one. Prophetic literature, by the very writing of it, has become timeless and placeless. What was once a specific homily for a particular audience at a definite festival was written for the edification of a much wider audience at any time or place the scroll happened to be read.

We can recognize Sukkoth prophetic texts definitely in two, possibly three ways. First, the text mentions Sukkoth by name. Second, the text has come to us as a haphtarah for the Feast of Sukkoth and the generally conservative nature of liturgy gives assurance that this text has always belonged to Sukkoth. And possibly third, the occurrence and configuration of themes are so evidently belonging to Sukkoth and to no other feast that we may safely assume that the text is a Sukkoth text. Space permits only a single example of each.

The prophetic text which most specifically mentions Sukkoth by name and which speaks most directly of major themes of the feast such as rain, light, and universalism is Zechariah 14:1-21.¹ Two direct quotations are self-explanatory.

Then every one that survives of all the nations that have come against Jerusalem shall go up year after year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the feast of booths. And if any of the families of the earth do not go up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, there will be no rain upon them (Zech. 14:16-17).

And the Lord will become king over all the earth; on that day the Lord will be one and his name one (Zech. 14:9).²

¹This text is also the haphtarah for the first day of the Feast of Sukkoth.

²While Ezekiel 45:25 does not mention Sukkoth by name, there is no question that the feast on the 15th day of the 7th month and for seven days is our feast.

The haphtarah text which makes no reference to Sukkoth but which has from early time most likely belonged to Sukkoth and its celebration is Ezekiel 38:18-39:16, the prophecy about Gog. The themes of the day of the Lord, universalism, rain (as destructive), and the prelude to the banquet of Israel's restoration are all present in this text.¹

Any number of texts qualify for the third category. Perhaps a comprehensive example of a positive Sukkoth text is Isaiah 12:3-6:

With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation. And you will say in that day: "Give thanks to the Lord, call upon his name; make known his deeds among the nations, proclaim that his name is exalted. Sing praises to the Lord, for he has done gloriously; let this be known in all the earth. Shout, and sing for joy, O inhabitant of Zion, for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel."

And an example of a negative (chastising) Sukkoth text is Isaiah 29:1ff.:

Ho Ariel, Ariel, the city where David encamped! Add year to year; let the feasts run their round. Yet I will distress Ariel, and there shall be moaning and lamentation, and she shall be to me like a cold hearth (ariel).

Selected Psalms and Wisdom Texts

The same problems of identification apply to the psalms as to the prophetic passages. Since many of the

¹The haphtarah for the second day of Sukkoth is I Kings 8:2-21, a part of the narrative of the dedication of Solomon's Temple. This passage from Ezekiel is for the intermediate Sabbath of Sukkoth.

psalms were the liturgical music for the Temple itself, some of these hymns were most assuredly composed for and used in the Temple liturgy of Sukkoth. And given the status of the feast as the Temple feast par excellence, there are undoubtedly more of the psalms appropriate to Sukkoth than we shall ever know. For while there are perhaps more rubrics attached to the psalms than to the prophetic material, the rubrics unfortunately do not yield the information we seek. Three psalms or psalm groups must serve as examples of the *psalmody* of Sukkoth.

The minor talmudic tractate Sopherim (19:2) appoints Psalm 76 for use on the Feast of Sukkoth. The psalm opens with an allusion to the sukkah of the Lord, His dwelling place in Zion:

In Judah God is known, his name is great in Israel. His abode (סוכו) has been established in Salem, his dwelling place in Zion. There he broke the flashing arrows, the shield, the sword, and the weapons of war. Selah.

The remainder of the psalm, apart from verse 12, appears somewhat remote from the themes of the feast. A study of the psalm in both the MT and the LXX by H. St. J. Thackeray in which he establishes connections between the themes of this psalm and the haphtaroth, Zechariah 14 and Ezekiel 38-39, does much to clarify both the meaning of the text and establish its relevance for Sukkoth.¹ He

¹Henry St. John Thackeray, The Septuagint and Jewish

suggests that the imagery of the psalm is an idealized account of the overthrow of Sennacherib and the Assyrian empire symbolizing the coming battle of Armageddon, the war of Gog and Magog described in Ezekiel. The difficult verse, verse 11, he reads from the LXX, emmending the Hebrew וְהָיָה to וְהָיָה and translating: "The residue of brooding wrath shall keep feast to thee." This verse he links to Zechariah 14:16. With this and other interpretations, Thackeray makes a good case for the close association of this psalm with the haphtaroth for Sukkoth.

The second psalm group is Psalms 42-43, probably originally a single psalm, if the lack of title or rubric at the head of Psalm 43 is any indication. While this psalm group is not connected with the Feast of Sukkoth by tractate Sopherim, it is the psalmody in use presently in both the Ashkenazi and Sephardi mahzorim for Sukkoth. Thackeray also discusses these psalms,¹ explaining that they have replaced Psalm 76 for the feast. He says of them:

There are many reasons for regarding this alternative (sc. the substitution of Psalms 42-43 for Psalm 76) as based on ancient, if not quite the most ancient, practice. (i) The use is common to the ritual of the two main divisions of orthodox Jews, Ashkenazim and Sephardim. The divergence of these groups takes us far back and a community of practice is proof of antiquity. (ii) The use of the pair is shown by the

Worship: A Study in Origins (The Schweich Lectures, 1920) (London: Oxford University Press, 1921), pp. 67-72.

¹Ibid., pp. 72-74.

absence of a title for xliii and the refrain which they have in common, "Why art thou so cast down, O my soul?" The modern practice seems to be older than the separation; yet the Psalm is already divided in the LXX. (iii) Lastly, the festival use has left its impress on the Greek, the Midrash, and apparently even the original text.¹

Thackeray makes a good case for the association of these psalms with Sukkoth (we are only interested in their connection with the feast and not with the particular time at which they became a part of the festal liturgy). His description of the author as an exiled priest or Levite looking from his place of banishment in the upper Jordan longingly toward Jerusalem at festival time is unsubstantiated and overly romantic. I have suggested a translation for 42:5 in Appendix C of this work.²

The third psalm group appropriate to the celebration of Sukkoth (and to other festivals as well, but probably as an extension from initial and primary usage at Sukkoth) is the Hallel, Psalms 114-118. The use of the Hallel in the feast as reflected in the Hosha'anah Rabbah will be discussed in Chapter IV. At this point we need only notice the difficulty with the translation of 118:27. The difficulty as usual derives from the lack of a satisfactory translation for the word אֵל, which difficulty is

¹Ibid., p. 73.

²Cf. Appendix C, p. 455.

compounded by the use of the word עַנְחִים . Even the sense of the verb is unclear in the context of the second part of the verse, "even unto the horns of the altar." Just how or why one ties/marshals a אֵן to the horns of the altar is not entirely clear. If the אֵן is the sacrifice and עַנְחִים constitutes plaited cords, the verse makes some sense, albeit very poor sense, since this does not sound like normal sacrificial procedure even if the אֵן is the sacrifice. If the אֵן is the festival procession, we might well wonder what binding that procession with leafy or plaited branches to the horns of the altar could signify. Thackeray has solved the problem by declaring the verse overweight by reason of the second part. Thus he says that this second part is a rubric which has crept from the margin to the text.

We then read: "JHWH is God and hath given us light: [Here start the branch-waving procession.] even unto the horns of the altar." In other words, He has by some dazzling display of light manifested his acceptance of the sacrifices upon the altar.¹

This is indeed an ingenious solution and may have merit. And yet the corrected verse, "JHWH is God and hath given us light: even unto the horns of the altar," is not altogether clear either.

Moses Bottenwiser has given a translation of the verse that is probably as useful as any, even though he

¹Thackeray, op. cit., p. 76.

removes the psalm from its place in the Sukkoth liturgy altogether by assigning verse 25 to Psalm 116A:4 and calling Psalm 118 a "Psalm Inspired by the Appearance of Alexander the Great."¹ Bittenwieser's translation is as follows:

Our Lord is God, he has shown us light.

With green boughs in your hands, link the dance
Up to the horns of the altar.

This suggests an almost maypole type of affair with worshipers manifesting their relationship with the Lord, with the earth (as the altar represents it, decked with green boughs over which the libations are poured), and with each other in their circumambulations. Other translations are possible, but we shall leave the passage as an unsolved one beyond the suggestions offered.

As for the Wisdom Literature the only passage to be pointed out as significant for Sukkoth, and then only to a very specific theme in the feast in later rabbinic development, is Job 40:31 (AV 41:7). The larger passage is concerned with the power of the Leviathan, and the verse itself is translated: "Can you fill his skin with harpoons, or his head with fishing spears?"

The verse does not sound promising at all in terms of Sukkoth until we know that the word for harpoons (or

¹Moses Bittenwieser, The Psalms (New York: Ktav Publishing House, 1969) pp. 659-660.

that is here translated as harpoons) is שִׁבּוּת, and that the first part of the verse in Hebrew is הַחֲמַלָּא בַשְּׁכוֹת עוֹרָו. The Targum on this verse, perhaps making some connection with Isaiah 27:1, has already begun to make an association between Leviathan's skin and what will finally develop in the rabbinic literature into the sukkah of the world to come made from the skin of Leviathan, under which the righteous will dwell.¹

Late Narrative Texts

We must consider now three post-Exilic texts, one of which is a key passage for our understanding of the transition of the Feast of Sukkoth from biblical to rabbinic feast. The first text is the reiteration of Solomon's dedication of the Temple in the post-Exilic book of II Chronicles, itself perhaps an early midrashic commentary on the earlier book of Kings. The account of the dedication is found in the 5th-8th chapters of the book, and for the most part the narrative follows that which we have already seen in I Kings. The feast is still called the feast of the seventh month (5:3), but the duration of the feast is no longer seven (or twice seven) days. It would appear from 7:9ff. that two distinct seven day feasts were held

¹The reading of Koheleth at the Feast of Sukkoth is a later liturgical development which does not concern this study.

consecutively: the feast of the dedication of the altar and the feast. But beyond the fourteen days, Solomon observed an Atzereth as an eighth day on one of the feasts.

The order of these two feasts is obscure from the text. The text reads: "And on the eighth day they held a solemn assembly; for they had kept the dedication of the altar seven days and the feast seven days." Does the feast of dedication precede the feast? If so, the Atzereth belongs, as seems likely, to the feast of the seventh month. We are further informed that Solomon sent the people home on the twenty-third day of the seventh month. Fourteen days of festival plus a day of Atzereth which ends on the twenty-third day of the seventh month puts the beginning of the entire festival time on the eighth day of the seventh month. This day seems to have no special significance itself; yet it is two days preceding the autumnal equinox, a solar festival of some major import to the Temple institution, even in a luni-solar calendar.

This double feast adding the seven days of the Feast of the Dedication to the previously established feast of the seventh month is only hinted at in the MT of I Kings 8, and the days of the month are not designated in the earlier narrative. By the time of II Chronicles it is apparent that what was probably a New Year celebration and harvest thanksgiving centered upon the solar moment of the autumnal

equinox (the feast at the "turning" or the "going forth" of the year, the Asiph) had been shifted from its solar position to a lunar one. The first day of the shifted feast was now on the full moon of the seventh month, just as the vernal feast, the Passover/Unleavened Bread, had always been observed at the full moon of the first month of the year.¹

The shift was not an arbitrary one; its intent was to permit the celebration of another feast more appropriate to the solar New Year, the feast of the dedication of the altar. We are told very little about this feast of dedication as a separate feast, and it is difficult to determine from I Kings 8:65 in the MT if the double feast actually reaches back to the time of Solomon in the formal sense of a second, full seven day festival in the seventh month. We do know that the Feast of the Dedication, or Hanukkah, was removed to the winter solstice by the Maccabees. Yet it was celebrated with the same imagery as Sukkoth and seems to have been a close copy of that feast.

One further detail in this passage from II Chronicles should be noted. In 8:13 there is a list of the three pilgrim festivals (together with the new moons) which

¹If II Kings 23:22 is an accurate statement of fact, then Solomon did not observe the vernal feast at all, and the lunar-solar corrective days (if there were such days) would then have all been in this autumn festival period.

calls our feast Sukkoth, the only tri-festival listing apart from Deuteronomy that calls the feast by this name.

The second late narrative in which we have an account of the observance of the Feast of Sukkoth is in Ezra 3:4. A restoration is reported in Ezra during the reign of Cyrus. The expedition was led by Sheshbazzar (a Davidic prince of Judah); his son Zerubbabel; Jeshua the priest; Levites; the prophets Haggai and Zechariah (men obsessed with the necessity of the Temple and the Davidic king for assurance of the fertility of land and progeny); and exiles from Judah and Israel (Ezra 1 and 5).

The evidence in Ezra is that this initial return operated under the institutional preconceptions of the Jerusalemite cult after the "discovery" of Deuteronomy. Ezra 3:4 suggests also that the sacrificial schedule of Numbers 29 was restored. Davidic "governors" represented the civil government, the priests were Zadokite and assisted by the Levites and nethinim, the prophets were of the Jerusalemite cult variety, and the priests consulted the oracular Urim and Thummim. The altar was rebuilt and dedicated shortly before the Feast of Sukkoth, perhaps on the old Temple feast.

It would appear from Malachi (1:10-11, 2:11) that the Zadokites returned to the old, pre-Josianic practices of solar worship and cultic recognition of the Queen of

Heaven.¹ Malachi's message, immediately before the Edomite attack, was that God's name transcends the rising and setting of the sun (Mal. 1:11), and that for their improper liturgy they would be superceded by the Levites (Mal. 2:1-9), and that the imposition of the Deuteronomic Code once again (Mal. 4:4) with its facilitator par excellence, Elijah (Mal. 4:5), was immediately necessary. But there was no time for the reform.

After some local harassment, the work of rebuilding the Temple proceeded again under Zerubbabel in the reign of Darius. The building was finished and dedicated in Adar;² the Passover was observed properly on 14 Nisan (Ezra 1-6). And this is all we hear of this first restoration according to the Jerusalemite version of the Deuteronomic Code. The redemption from Babylon was likened to the redemption from Egypt--thus the elevation of the Passover to first-rank festival status in Ezra 6:19ff.

¹Cf. also Haggai 2:18-23 and Julian Morgenstern, "The Chanukkah Festival and the Calendar of Israel," HUCA Vols. XX and XXI (Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College, 1947 and 1948), pp. 1-136 and 365-496, for a reasonable explanation.

²This dedication in Adar (or the first of Nisan) does not square with the autumnal feast of dedication in Kings and Chronicles. Perhaps expediency required dedication at the nearest solar occasion which would, in this instance, have been the 10th of Nisan--the vernal equinox.

If Sandmel¹ is correct, that Zerubbabel's Temple was sacked by an Edomite league of some sort between 516 and 450 B.C.E. (ca. 485 B.C.E.), we have a reasonable motive for the despair of Nehemiah upon receiving evil tidings from Jerusalem. As an intimate of Artaxerxes, Nehemiah won permission to rebuilt the city walls, which he did in the face of great opposition from the great hodge-podge of peoples who now resided in Judah and the city.²

The third late narrative text appropriate to Sukkoth and of great importance for us as a transition passage to the rabbinic and other accounts of the feast's observance during the II Commonwealth is Nehemiah 8 and the reformation undertaken by Ezra, Nehemiah, and the other leaders recently returned from Exile. What is significant for our study of Sukkoth in the accounts of Nehemiah's (and Ezra, the priest-scribe's) restoration is the absence of any remarkable change in festal calendar, priesthood, or any other institutions of the city-state of Jerusalem. The priesthood was still Zadokite, with twenty-two courses and a high priest.³

¹Samuel Sandmel, The Hebrew Scriptures (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1963), p. 208.

²Ezra 9:6-9 indicates that upon his arrival, Zerubbabel's temple was once again in ruins, although 10:9 suggests that some kind of House of God still remained. When that House was expanded to the proportions of the great Temple of the Second Commonwealth, or by whom this was accomplished, is not a matter of biblical record.

³Cf. Appendix A, pp. 445.

The narrative in Nehemiah 8 is of such importance to our study, that the pertinent portions of it will be set forth here.

And when the seventh month had come, the children of Israel were in their towns. And all the people gathered before the Water Gate; and they told Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses which the Lord had given to Israel. And Ezra the priest brought the law before the assembly, both men and women and all who could hear with understanding, on the first day of the month. (Neh. 8:1-2).

On the second day the heads of fathers' houses of all the people, with the priests and the Levites, came together to Ezra the scribe in order to study the words of the law. And they found it written in the law that the Lord had commanded by Moses that the people of Israel should dwell in booths during the feast of the seventh month, and that they should publish and proclaim in all their towns and in Jerusalem, "Go out to the hills and bring branches of olive, wild olive, myrtle, palm, and other leafy trees to make booths, as it is written." So the people went out and brought them and made booths for themselves, each on his roof, and in their courts and in the courts of the house of God, and in the square at the Water Gate and in the square at the Gate of Ephraim. And all the assembly of those who had returned from the captivity made booths and dwelt in the booths; for from the days of Jeshua the son of Nun to that day the people of Israel had not done so. And there was very great rejoicing. And day by day, from the first day to the last day, he read from the book of the law of God. They kept the feast seven days; and on the eighth day there was a solemn assembly, according to the ordinance. (Ibid. 8:13-18).

The name of the feast of the seventh month celebrated here is Sukkoth. Its duration is seven days, with an Atzereth on the eighth. The place of celebration is Jerusalem, for the people gathered there from their own towns. The time of the feast can only be time of the

ancient, pre-Solomonic feast of the seventh month, from the third to the ninth of the month, with the Atzereth on the tenth--the equinoctial New Year. It would seem that these people either did not know of or preferred to disregard the double feast of Solomon's Temple, for they observed only the one feast. The Feast of the Dedication is dropped at this point, to be re-instituted at the time of Hanukkah at a new time.

The crucial question, the answer to which will give perspective and integration to all the halachic and narrative passages that we have examined, is this: What was the law that Ezra read to the people? The obvious answer, and the answer that not only satisfied but even inspired Wellhausen's evaluation of post-Exilic Judaism, is this: that Ezra read from the newly-devised Priestly document, the work of the priests in Babylon to restore Israel under their own hegemony. The specific legislation which the people heard on this occasion in Nehemiah 8 was Leviticus 23. I am in complete disagreement with this answer, but my response must be limited to only a few particular points here, so that we may proceed without misconception to the rabbinic material on the Feast of Sukkoth.

The first major difficulty is with the date of the feast. There is no problem with the month; the feast is the feast of the seventh month. But these people in

Jerusalem are observing a feast which Leviticus 23 assigns to the 15th day of the month on the 3rd day. Granted the sacrificial schedule in Numbers 29:12 states that the beginning of the feast is the 15th. But the very nature of this schedule in Numbers requires that it be adjustable to complement the normative calendar of any given time in Israel's history. The kinds of sacrifice are set from long ago; the time of those sacrifices depends upon the particular calendar in force. I would suggest that the present text of Numbers 29 is a sacrificial schedule designed to complement Leviticus 23, but that it did not apply (as to date) to either Ezra 3:4 or to the celebration described in Nehemiah 8.

This observance of the feast on the 15th appears in two other places. We are told in II Chronicles that Solomon observed the feast, either the feast or the dedication for seven days with an Atzereth, ending on the 23rd. This would imply that Solomon, too, observed the 15th for a feast in the seventh month. It would be much too facile to dismiss II Chronicles as a late source and unreliable in the matter; the MT of I Kings 8 itself suggests a double feast in the seventh month. It is quite within the realm of possibility, and even likely, that Solomon wished to have the solar imagery of the early feast and New Year for the celebration of the Temple dedication. And since his empire included the

northern tribes whose penchant for celebration of lunar festivals is best expressed in the Joseph tribes' observance of the Passover/Unleavened Bread on the full moon of the vernal equinoctial month, Solomon could not have offended either kingdom by a solar (for Judah and Jerusalem) and a lunar (for Israel) feast celebrated back to back in the seventh month.

Confirmation of the northern proclivity to celebrate feasts on the moons is contributed by the account, libelous as it is, of Jeroboam's feast of the eighth month (the month of his own devising) on the fifteenth day of the month (which does not seem at all blameworthy in the text). Then we must recall that even in the early stories of Saul we find the celebration of new moons (I S. 20). But here Saul is dealing with the people of Israel; and David's family feast, though only a ruse, is a perfectly good excuse (for David's family comes from the south).

In summary, then, there is good evidence for the celebration of the feast of the seventh month on the 15th day. But it seems also to be more a phenomenon of the northern kingdom, except when it is convenient in the southern kingdom. Either the people in Nehemiah 8, troubled as they were by their previous non-compliance with the law of God, ignored the terms of the very law to which they had given their solemn assent, or the law which they heard was not Leviticus 23.

And with regard to the same subject of compliance with the law read and interpreted to the people in Nehemiah 8, we cannot help but wonder what happened to their great desire for careful obedience when it came time for gathering the flora for the celebration of the feast and for making booths. There is really no way to harmonize the kinds of branches actually gathered in Nehemiah 8 with those required in Leviticus 23. The objection could be raised that the people on this first occasion could not find the proper kinds, or that in their enthusiasm they picked everything in sight. If they had Leviticus 23 before them, they did not comply, or even come close to complying with its requirements.

And from another perspective, if Leviticus 23 had been written by priests in the Exile for the exercise of their authority over the people in great detail, and if Ezra was their spokesman in situ, why were these author-priests so vague in Leviticus 23 to begin with, and why did Ezra allow such gross deviation from the law in this first opportunity to enforce it? These people did not have Leviticus 23 in its present form before them at all, and it was not the document that Ezra read and had interpreted to them. As vague as Leviticus 23 is, it is still more specific than was reflected in the ad hoc behavior of the

people. Halachah generally moves in the direction of refinement, not the other way on.

There is finally the question of the name of the feast. The occasions in Scripture upon which the feast is referred to by the name Sukkoth are quite limited. These occasions are: Deuteronomy 16; Zechariah 14; II Chronicles 8; Ezra 3; Nehemiah 8; and of course Leviticus 23:34. Zechariah is nearly post-Exilic (at least representing the first attempt at restoration); Ezra, Nehemiah, and II Chronicles are definitely post-Exilic; which leaves only the two halachic passages as possible sources for the proper name of the feast.

While Leviticus 23 has a great deal to say about the making and dwelling in booths and has two different sets of legislation requiring observance of the feast, the name "Feast of Sukkoth" is used only once, and in what is probably the older bit of legislation. But there is even here a difficulty. The formula throughout Leviticus 23 of "a (n) to the Lord" seems quite natural in every case except this one. An offering to the Lord, a fire offering to the Lord, a feast to the Lord, first fruits to the Lord, wave offering, burnt offering, pleasing odor to the Lord, all of these seem quite natural. But "on the fifteenth day of the seventh month and for seven days is the feast of booths to the Lord" is awkward and forced. The word

"booths" has probably been inserted in this text, which raises the question: Why was this word inserted in the legislation? It should be obvious from the foregoing passages that the feast of the seventh month is a feast well-known. It has been referred to as the feast; there is no need to add an identifying word, unless it is the identifying word that is really the word requiring identification. In other words, that unusual and enigmatic feast called "booths," coming from a source outside the immediate community, is in fact what we, the insiders, have always called the feast or the feast of the seventh month. It is Sukkoth that is identified by Hag and not the other way round. Leviticus 23:39-43, far from being an early fragment of legislation, is actually a much later attempt to explain the meaning and legislative ramifications and obligations of this unfamiliar insertion into the older legislation for the feast of the seventh month.¹

And now we have both an answer and an even more perplexing problem. What was the law that Ezra read to the congregation in Israel on the first and second days of the seventh month? It was the scroll of Deuteronomy! It was Deuteronomy that informed Zechariah, Ezra, and II

¹The attempt at historicization of the feast in verses 42-43 is a rather poor effort to bring this feast into the Passover syndrome. It was never taken too seriously by the Rabbis.

Chronicles. And it was from Deuteronomy that the word "booths" was inserted into the 34th verse of Leviticus 23. The legislation of Leviticus 23:40-43 is simply the attempt to explain this loan word on the basis of what had already happened and become customary from the ad hoc performance described in Nehemiah 8, on which occasion the people were attempting to observe the law of Deuteronomy which spoke of an institution they knew nothing about. It is to the Levite and darshan on that occasion that we must look for the origins of the forays into the hills for gathering branches and the explanation of what constitutes a sukkah. And we might be just the least bit suspicious that they themselves had little idea, save the obvious, plain meaning of the text, of Deuteronomy's intent either.

And now the mystery. What is the source of Deuteronomy? We are told that it is the scroll discovered in the Temple by Hilkiah the high priest at the time of Josiah's reform and which was used as the blueprint for that short-lived reform. Yet this legislation is not the concoction of a priest or group of priests writing an ideal reformation of the Torah. And we can know this by just such usages in the scroll as the observance of a feast called, without explanation, "Sukkoth." Reformations do not deal in obscurities. Generalities, perhaps; but not obscurities. This Feast of Sukkoth is either a most unlikely obscurity,

or it is a feast that for some group of people who worshiped the Lord God of Israel had such meaning and value that there was no need for explaining the details of observance; they had already a long history of observance and tradition.

The question still stands: what, or who, is the source of the book of Deuteronomy? At this point we know only that it has a history of its own and a popular tradition, a community in which it developed and from which it sprang. Beyond these affirmations lies another, entirely new subject; and we must leave off here, hoping that even in the unresolved puzzle there is some perspective, clarification, and integration of the biblical sources.

While we can go no further here with Deuteronomy, we can proceed further with an exploration of Leviticus 23. The only reasonable explanation for the existence of the festival calendar of Leviticus 23 is to assign it to a period after the initial reorganization of the community by Ezra and Nehemiah. There is no other period in either the legal or narrative portions of the Bible to which this revolutionary calendar can be assigned with good reason.

What, then, is the motive, source, and occasion for Leviticus 23? One feature in this new calendar and one bit of narrative from Ezra and Nehemiah will point to the direction we must take to find the answer. Leviticus

23 is most noteworthy because it is, above all else, a calendar in which the feasts and fasts are reckoned by the moon. Granted that Passover had been a lunar feast since Israel came out of Egypt; and we have seen how Israel's calendars have developed as luni-solar calendars, especially at such times as those of Solomon, who used both to best effect. There is no reason (and no other text save the Samaritan text) for Sukkoth to be translated from its pre-autumnal, equinoctial position to the fifteenth of Tishri, save the conscious motive on the part of some party in power to break firmly with the luni-solar calendar which had served Israel for so long and probably so well. Why would any group concerned with the re-establishment of a viable community be moved to exchange a smooth-working, easily reckoned, universally accepted solar calendar for the enormous complications of a lunar-based calendar?¹

The answer to the question of motive is this: the reformation, usually attributed to the priests during the Exile and exported to Jerusalem by Ezra and Nehemiah for implementation, is a vain imagination. The reformation of Israel's religious community commenced on the 24th day of Tishri, after the celebration of Sukkoth in that year.

¹It does not take much study at all to comprehend the enormous complexities of a lunar calendar and the very obvious wedge which the adoption of such a calendar by a community would make between themselves and the rest of the nations.

Ezra and Nehemiah did not bring a reformation from Babylon; they initiated a reform in Israel after the return! But why should they initiate a reform? Because the covenant was in eclipse, an eclipse that brought Nehemiah to Jerusalem in the first place.

The problem of an unstable covenant, even when the people were in the land and guided by a designated facilitator, is known to us from the three latest prophets, Haggai, I Zechariah, and Malachi. Haggai was particularly sensitive to the problem, for he complained that the covenant lay dormant and the presence of the Lord remained absent, even though the people (progeny) were in Jerusalem (the land) and led by a scion of David's line (Zerubbabel the facilitator). Haggai's solution to the problem was to rebuild the Temple (Hag. 1:7-11), so that the glory of the Lord might return to His place and the covenant be set at rights.¹

Nehemiah's despair over the ruins of Jerusalem suggests a catastrophe² which negates the validity and efficacy of Haggai's solution. Ezra and Nehemiah, as

¹The four great aspects of the covenant mentioned here in passing will be more fully explained in Chapter III.

²Cf. Samuel Sandmel, op. cit., and his suggestion of an Edomite uprising and destruction of Zerubbabel's city and Temple.

facilitators of Israel, had to discover a different solution to the same problem, i.e., the dormancy of the covenant for want of God's presence.¹ Their solution is the subject of Ezra 9 and 10; Nehemiah 13:1-3 and 23-30; 13:4-9; and 13:10-14. This solution was the separation and purification of the congregation to make it holy and fit as a bride for the Lord.

The total preoccupation with the vitality of the covenant is a reasonable and appropriate motive for the reforms that are canonically recorded. Foreign wives, profanation of the Sabbath, and irregular tithing for the Levites were manifestations of the need for reform--the motive for separation and purification. Repeatedly Nehemiah's prayer to the Lord is "remember me," a word most pertinent to the covenant. The summary of his reform at the end of the narrative is a sign of this new reformation:

Thus I cleansed them from everything foreign, and I established the duties of the priests and Levites, each in his work; and I provided for the wood offering, at appointed times, and for the first fruits. Remember me, O my Good, for good.²

There is no reason to believe that the reformation was limited to these initial actions of Ezra and Nehemiah.

¹There is a hint in Ezra 10:9 that the sign of God's displeasure and His withholding His presence was not drought but flood, an equivalent disaster by the approach of the winter solstice (at which time a decision had to be made whether or not to celebrate the fire feasts of Haggai 2:18-19).

²Nehemiah 13:31ff.

In fact the evidence of a flourishing city and Temple later would indicate that Ezra and Nehemiah had indeed found the catalyst for the covenant in separation and holiness. The reform continued even though the narrative ends. We have both source and motive for the festal calendar of Leviticus 23 and perhaps other texts as well.

The significant feature of Leviticus 23, as we have said, is its lunar-based festivals and the absence of solar festivals, which is both without precedent and without any claim to natural development from any other of Israel's festival calendars. The source of Leviticus 23 becomes clear. The excesses of the luni-solar calendar are a matter of prophetic record. The very purpose of Solomon's new solar festival calendar was to facilitate economic and political communion with the empire's neighbors and potential allies. The rise of a commercial class and the growing chasm between very rich and very poor was the burden of prophets, especially in the south. The existence of the calendar and its Temple invited conformity not only within the empire, but also conformity of the empire vis-à-vis the solar traditions and mythologies of the whole area of the fertile crescent. It does not require much imagination to perceive a clear picture of the kind of solar rites that were happening in the name of YHWH in Jerusalem.¹

¹We need only begin with Solomon's wives to know the widespread apostasy of the empire. "Now King Solomon

Ezra and Nehemiah saw, but only after their arrival in the land, the impediment to the covenant. The narrative in Nehemiah gives some details of the corrections initiated. One such correction, the one upon which all the others would rest, is included, not in the narrative, but in the position where it would have greatest force, viz. in the Priestly Code of the Pentateuch itself. Leviticus 23 is the very foundation of Ezra and Nehemiah's reformation, a reform undertaken unsuccessfully by Hezekiah, Josiah, and Zerubbabel; but a reform that finally worked.

Following the ancient precedent of the lunar feast of spring and possibly Solomon's own attempts to shift the feast forward to make way for his Feast of Dedication, Sukkoth was separated from its traditional position as prelude to the New Year feast. As Passover was lunar, so Sukkoth was made lunar, just as in Jeroboam's northern autumnal festival the time for celebration had been the full moon of the eighth month. As the first day of Passover's month was a new year, so the first of Tishri was made a feast of trumpets. And to assure the total suppression of the New Year sun rites, the most important

loved many foreign women; the daughter of Pharoah, and Moabite, Ammonite, Edomite, Sidonian, and Hittite women, from the nations concerning which the Lord had said to the people of Israel, 'You shall not enter into marriage with them, neither shall they with you, for surely they will turn your heart after their gods'; Solomon clung to these in love" (I Kings 11:1-2).

Solomonic Temple festival day of the entire year was re-
tained as the most important day of the year--but its sig-
nificance was completely reversed. It became a day of
fasting upon which there could be no feast whatsoever.

The complications of the new lunar calendar were
serious. But the results far outweighed the complications.
Separation from solar-fire rites and metaphors was effec-
tively achieved. Israel was unique, holy, and acceptable
as the Lord's spouse once more. The necessary and popular
traditions concerning fertility and the rains were pre-
served. Israel's appointed status as facilitator for the
world (in the world but not of it) was restored. The au-
thority of those who promulgated the efficient calendar was
proven functional and was thereby verified. Indeed, what
other decision could have been made that would so effec-
tively separate Israel from the nations of the world than
this alteration of the calendar. The legislation goes so
far (23:42) as to limit observance to those that are native
to Israel--another example of separation. Leviticus 23 was
the master stroke of post-Exilic Israelite religious re-
form, and it, even more than the Temple's destruction, marks
the beginning of rabbinic Judaism.

Who were these leaders of the reformation who, to-
gether with Ezra and Nehemiah, continued the purifying
process? To whom was given the mandate for continued reform?

The Bible does not tell us. The rabbinic literature (Pirke Aboth I:1 and elsewhere) has a tradition of the Men of the Great Assembly, אנשי-כנסת הגדולה. The very existence of this body has been open to question, and even more so, its composition.¹ Yet without some such governing body to exercise whatever power and privilege had been granted by the Persian authority--especially in matters so delicate as adding to canonical texts and handing down decisions of case (or oral) law--the smooth operation of society could not have been accomplished. One is tempted to say that had the existence of a Great Assembly not been recorded, we might be inclined to postulate the existence of such a body.

Since there is such an assembly of record and since it is described as having canonical powers, broad membership, and important canonical jurisdiction, there is no reason to dismiss the tradition out of hand. We cannot know the Assembly's composition, its origins, or its life span. But we can and do know its function and its purpose.

¹A recent work by Alexander Guttman, Rabbinic Judaism in the Making (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1970), pp. 5-7 and notes, explains the Great Assembly and provides the textual citations which refer to that institution. Dr. Guttman notes the scholarly debate over the Assembly's existence and appears himself to grant its existence, though he has reservations concerning certain of the rulings and Midrashim attributed to this body. He would assign the Gezereth to a later time and suggests that the Midrashim attributed to this body are of doubtful authenticity.

And perhaps its most important piece of legislation was the festival calendar of Leviticus 23, with all its implications and ramifications.¹

One final word about this admittedly speculative (though I believe reasonable) explanation of a troublesome text. If the major thrust and purpose of the reformation was purity, separation, and holiness, and if the terms of normative reform were established by the Great Assembly, there were no separatists at this point, except perhaps the Samaritans.

When the Maccabees rose up to redeem and cleanse the Temple of the Syrian abomination of desolation, they

¹It has been argued that since the Samaritan Pentateuch contains Leviticus 23:39-44 with no deviations from the Massoretic text except in a few instances of spelling, Leviticus 23 must be much older than Ezra and Nehemiah. Yet such a hypothesis assumes that the Samaritan schism occurred at an early time, before the return under Nehemiah. It is equally possible that the Samaritan schism occurred at a time when Leviticus 23 had been established in the Pentateuch and that the break was perhaps the result of some strong disagreement with the Assembly in Jerusalem, possibly more political than canonical (cf. Neh. 13:28).

Jeroboam left the south for political reasons but took with him the very same cult, almost intact, as existed in Jerusalem. The Samaritan problem, it would seem, was fundamentally a problem of the place of worship and not so much of the texts of Scripture. If, as we have supposed, the Law which Ezra read to the people included (or was) Deuteronomy, and if "the place which the Lord your God will choose" was designated Jerusalem by the Great Assembly, it is reasonable to suppose that those members of the Assembly with a northern heritage would be twice insulted. First the Jerusalemites would have arrogated the D Code for themselves. But second, and worse, they would have arrogated the central shrine. What better motive for schism?

were attacking a pollution of the Temple installed on the 25th of Kislev, the winter solstice. That a family of minor priests should triumph despite impossible opposition is remarkable--even miraculous. That they should pick the very day that the Temple was violated, the day of celebration for Zeus Olympus in a clearly solar calendar system, for the permanent celebration of re-dedication is equally remarkable, though hardly miraculous.¹ Morgenstern's discourse on the antecedents of Hannukah in Israel is most edifying. If the Maccabees did indeed restore an ancient Israelite (or semi-Israelite) solar festival, i.e. Solomon's Feast of the Dedication or perhaps some even older regional feast, modeling the feast of Kislev after that of Tishri and augmenting it with certain popular (but perhaps latent) fire/solar rites, the likelihood of some schism in Israel is great.

It is conceivable that the Great Assembly continued to administer the reformation government until the time of direct intervention by Antiochus, who was seeking a Hellenistic conformity in his empire. Such conformity would have included the radical modification of calendar and worship practices in Jerusalem.

¹Cf. J. Morgenstern, "The Chanukkah Festival and the Calendar of Ancient Israel, Parts I and II," op. cit., for the explanation of why Antiochus picked this particular day for the installation of the idol and for the suggestion that his motives were not so much anti-Jewish as they were directed at the Hellenizing of Jerusalem.

When the Maccabees succeeded in frustrating the Antiochine plan, they did take control of the severely corrupted "Zadokite" high priesthood when Judas was installed in that position in 163 B.C.E.¹ But the Hasmonean family had no legitimate claim to this high office; their right to reign was by popular mandate and depended heavily upon popular enthusiasm. It is conceivable that it was the very popular favor which the Maccabees had to curry in order to reign that led to the restoration of certain popular fire/solar traditions which the Great Assembly had suppressed years before.

The combination of an irregular high priest installed by popular acclaim and the restoration of a solar festival with all its potential occasions for apostasy, in deference to popular demands,² could only have been an

¹F. Josephus, Antiquities (Cambridge, Mass.: Vol. VII of Loeb ed. of Harvard Univ. Press, 1930) XII: x,6, pp. 218-219. But cf. I Maccabees 9:54-57 which states that Alcimus died after Judas and says nothing of Judas having ever become high priest. According to I Maccabees 10:15-21, the first Hasmonean high priest was Jonathan, who was elevated by Alexander Balas on the Feast of Sukkoth "in the one hundred and sixtieth year," the office having been vacant for some seven years after the death of Alcimus. We can only wish that the author of I Maccabees had seen fit to give us the day in Tishri upon which Jonathan was installed.

²Even the Maccabees could not undo Leviticus 23; but they could add a feast, the very image of the Solomonic Feast of Dedication, at a solar moment not covered by Leviticus 23 and do so without tampering with the canon.

The influx of Gileadites whom Judas had freed from Syrian control in the Galilean campaign (I Macc. 5:37ff.)

open invitation for the more conservative reformers to become schismatic. The entire description of the rededication of the Temple in I Maccabees 4 is suspicious, especially the phrase, "And they took whole stones according to the Law, and built a new altar after the fashion of the former (one)." To which "former" altar does the reference apply? It would seem to be some altar of former times, but not of the time just prior to the abomination of desolation.¹ There is a significant clue in II Maccabees 2:6ff. about the suppression of fire/solar imagery in Jeremiah's time and a renewed interest in it at the time of the Maccabees.

Now when Jeremiah came to know this (sc. that he had been followed as he went to hide the ark), he blamed them, saying, Unknown shall the spot be until God gather the people again together, and mercy come; then indeed shall the Lord disclose these things, and the glory of the Lord shall be seen, even the Cloud, as in the days of Moses it was visible, and as when

and had brought into Judah (5:45) might well have stimulated some of the solar rites in the south. The Gileadites had had a winter solstice festival in their area ever since Jephtha's daughter's day was celebrated there from ancient times.

¹Equally suspicious is the statement in 4:57: "And they decked the forefront of the temple with crowns of gold and small shields . . .", and Josephus' statement (Ant. op. cit., XII:vii, 7, p. 169), "Nay, they were so very glad at the revival of their customs, when, after a long time of intermission, they unexpectedly had regained the freedom of their worship, that they should keep a festival, on account of the restoration of their temple worship, for eight days. And from that time to this we celebrate this festival, and call it Lights" (underlining mine).

Solomon prayed that the Place might be consecrated with solemn splendour. It was also narrated how he, in his wisdom, sacrificed at the consecration and completion of the temple; as Moses prayed to the Lord, and fire descended from heaven to consume the sacrifice, so Solomon also prayed, and the fire descended and burned up the holocaust; and Solomon kept the eight days.

And the description of the feast itself:

Now it so happened that the cleansing of the sanctuary took place on the very day on which it had been profaned by aliens, on the twenty-fifth day of the same month, which is Chislev. And they celebrated it for eight days with gladness like a feast of tabernacles, remembering how, not long before, during the feast of tabernacles they had been wandering like wild beasts in the mountains and the caves. So, bearing wands wreathed with leaves and fair boughs and palms, they offered hymns of praise to him who had prospered the cleansing of his own place, and also passed a public order and decree that all the Jewish nation should keep these ten days every year.¹

The coincidence of the day of rededication is contrived, the references to Solomon and the fiery glory of the Lord too obvious, and the connection with Sukkoth too close to claim that the Maccabean rise to power represents anything less than a radical departure from the reformation of the Great Assembly. It is perhaps not by coincidence that the followers of Onias III, the last of the non-Hellenistic Zadokite high priests, established a Temple in Leontopolis in Egypt with Onias IV as high priest.² Nor

¹II Maccabees 10:8.

²The significance of this event is, however, in some doubt. While Onias IV represents the last of the Zadokite line, and an argument can be made for his desire to retain a certain purity of worship in the legitimate

is it coincidental that Pirke Aboth (1:2) lists the high priest Simon I, the Just, as one of the last men of the Great Assembly.

Finally the occasion of Hasmonean accession and the subsequent reversal of calendar and holiness reformations must have had an effect upon those who supported the reform. The occasion was ripe for the separation of those who favored political freedom but religious conformity and purity from the Hasmonean establishment. The occasion was appropriate for a minority within the establishment to take a stance of opposition to the revival of solar practices.

The antagonism between Pharisees and Sadducees is profound. We know some of the specific points of disagreement. It is tempting to suggest that at least one of the fundamental points of separation was the calendar, and specifically the struggle between lunar and solar idiom. These Pharisees were without doubt devoted to the Temple; but they could not have countenanced the restoration of solar rites under the irregular Hasmonean control. The

high priestly line, his choice of Leontopolis in the Nomus of Heliopolis (and associated with Bubastis) raises doubts about his conformity to the lunar calendar rulings of the Great Assembly. Even granting his desire to fulfill the prophecy of Isaiah 19:19ff., the solar aspects of this new temple are manifest (Cf. Flavius Josephus, Antiquities of the Jews, W. Whiston, ed. (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, _____), XIII, 3:1-3, and Whiston's note at the end of 3).

Pharisees represented the same tradition as the pre-Exilic Jerusalemite prophets and had the same concerns: purification of the Temple and separation of the people of Israel from all that was polluting to the holy people, God's chosen bride. Their triumph of control was achieved in 79 B.C.E., upon the death of their greatest opponent, Alexander Jannaeus. They were finally re-established as fathers of reform by Salome Alexandra, the wife of Alexander Jannaeus, following his death. But insofar as festival calendar is concerned, their origins may be traced to the formulation of Leviticus 23.

And all the while, the institutions of the covenant were beginning to melt, so that at the final destruction of the Temple in 70 C.E., the essentials of the covenant had, to all intents and purposes, been cut loose from their concretizations and were available for rabbinic re-institutionalization and re-concretization at Javne and the rabbinic academies. The four great aspects of the covenant and the categories to be discussed in the next chapter would reappear, re-clothed in a form appropriate to the realities of the Diaspora.

CHAPTER III

PRELIMINARY SURVEY

The Nature of the Revelation

This chapter proposes, in somewhat general form, a scheme for the organization and systematic presentation of the rabbinic (and biblical) texts related to the theme: The Feast of Sukkoth. The scheme is arbitrary, as all such devices for translation must be--especially when the translation is one of mind-set and fundamental system. As was pointed out in Chapter I, the enterprise here is the presentation of the rabbinic (and biblical) organismic religion in terms comprehensible to the western system of logical, dogmatic, and systematic theology.

I am hopeful that the scheme proposed here might be useful in the translation of themes beyond that of Sukkoth. For this reason, more pages have been devoted to it than might be expected in a study of one theme in the entire literature.

History and Institution

To understand the rabbinic method and purpose, we must first understand the close relationship generally

between institutions and history. For institutions have a limited life span, and their usefulness depends very much upon their relevance to their particular place in history. The rabbinic enterprise is but one configuration, albeit a consistent one, of all the configurations in the history of Israelite religion.¹

The context for Israel's life is history, the words and deeds of the people within the confines of time and place. Such a context is by no means unique to Israel, however; for the description of the life of any people is likewise confined to the same stage and may be historically described. Israel's uniqueness lies, rather, in the exercise of will in choosing to affirm the involvement of God in history, and particularly the involvement of God in their own affairs.

¹It is difficult 1) to demonstrate that the Rabbis have faithfully preserved the essence of biblical religion; 2) to show what re-institutionalizations of biblical religion they accomplished; and 3) how they accomplished what they did if the recent history of biblical criticism (since Wellhausen) has been based upon the premise that the Rabbis accomplished just the opposite. Christianity's vested interest in reading Old Testament as efficient cause of Christian Scripture and theology rather than reading Old Testament on its own terms has done a great disservice to the cause of both biblical and rabbinic studies. Some attempt at correction will be in order.

History Based on Choice: Repentance

Yet even this affirmation of divine pathos¹ in history is by no means unique to Israel. The involvement of the gods with men are known in most civilizations. That which sets Israel apart from the nations of the world, which makes Israel a holy nation, and which makes Israel's history a sacred history is Israel's willingness to respond to the Lord God and to reckon and measure both the quality of its life and indeed the source of its life in the context of this God's creativity and intent to give life.

Such a choice, to describe the life of a people in historical terms and the involvement of a god in that history, is undoubtedly reflected in the range of meaning of the word בחר. Israel is frequently called "chosen" or "chosen of God"²; yet Israel is a choosing people as well.

Abraham "believed/trusted in the Lord who accounted it to his merit" (Gen. 15:6). Abraham's faith was the result of revelation--hardly an astounding bit of information --yet for this he was reckoned meritorious. The fact is that revelation does not compel faith. Revelation comes

¹The description of God as a pathetic God, intimately involved in and concerned for His creation, is a part of the poetic theology of the late Abraham Joshua Heschel, ל"י.

²Deuteronomy 7:6-7; Isaiah 44:1; Ezekiel 20:5, et passim.

as human experience and man must decide--he must choose--to accept or reject the event as the revelation of God. Abraham's choice to believe the revelation was a choice for the Lord God. In this he was meritorious.¹ And likewise God chose Abraham.

Again, Joshua, in addressing the people at the close of his life, urged Israel to "choose this day whom you will serve" from among all the gods that would lay claim upon them in the promised land (Josh. 24:15ff). He and his house will, he tells the people, choose the Lord. The context of all life for Joshua and his family, in whatever their time and place, no matter what alternatives are offered or how attractive they might be, will be the Lord.

This propensity for choosing on the part of both Israel and God seems always to have been a mutual endeavor. God's revelation of Himself to Israel in history is never an unequivocal event, totally precluding the possibility of alternatives for choice. In fact, the obscurity of many of the incidents of the Lord's manifestations of Himself and His will are cause for amazement that Israel should or would have even discerned the divine Presence, much less have chosen It, when the alternative int

¹The explanation of Abraham's choice is a paraphrase from an article by Herbert C. Brichto, "On Faith and Revelation in the Bible," HUCA, Vol. XXXIX (Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College, 1968), particularly pp. 44-45.

interpretations of the historical event might have been so much more appealing.

Surely if monotheism has any real meaning at all, it is precisely this obsession with searching for the One at every occasion, when the preponderance of the evidence points to other explanations.¹ In like manner, if Israel is a chosen people, it is due also to God's inclination to choose a people from among many to be the agents of His purpose in history.

So it is that God affirms to Israel: "For you are a people holy to the Lord your God; the Lord your God has chosen you to be a people for his own possession, out of

¹I am suggesting that monotheism is not functionally a matter of the belief in one God, but the repeated choice of the Lord God as the contextual explanation for the events of history and episodes within history. Apostasy, then, is not the recognition of alternative gods or historical motivators, but the choice of any of these alternatives in favor of the choice of the Lord God.

The attractiveness of other possibilities is well exemplified in the story of the ten plagues upon Egypt. The scrambling of scholars to find natural explanations for the phenomena or their theological ramblings to ease their discomfiture at God's hardening of Pharoah's heart are precisely the inability of these scholars to perceive, much less to participate in, the unswerving predeliction of Israel to choose the Lord God as the motive for even the most unlikely or uncomfortable historical configuration. In the last analysis it is a matter of the correct apprehension of the meaning of faith and revelation. The key to this pre-Pauline notion of faith is made clear in the article by Herbert C. Brichto, "On Faith and Revelation in the Bible" *op. cit.*, pp. 35-53, especially on pp. 39ff. in the discussion of the oblique style of biblical idiom.

all the peoples that are on the face of the earth" (Deut. 7:6). "And I will take you for my people, and I will be your God" (Ex. 6:79). And in like manner, Israel responds to the claim upon them, "You shall have no other gods besides me" (Ex. 20:3), with "The Lord is our God, the Lord alone" (Deut. 6:4).¹

In the course of Israel's history there are occasions when Israel succumbs to the seduction of alternatives and, in the prophetic imagery, goes a-whoring. These lapses into wrong choice, these infidelities, are called sin. It is clear, then, that the opposite of faith is sin, and that both are a matter of choice, one correct and one incorrect.

It is reasonable to suppose, based on this notion, of faith and sin, that at times a semantic equivalent for *בחר* is *שוב*. *שוב* is a turning away, a shunning of alternative gods and explanations, but with the implication that on one or more occasions the wrong choices have been made. Thus when Scripture uses *שוב* instead of *בחר*, the intent is still hortatory, but with the added dimension of judgment upon the peoples' present condition--a judgment not implied in *בחר*. With *בחר* there are simply alternatives; with

¹The *שמע* may not represent the oldest form of Israel's affirmation, i.e., it may not be the original kernel of what Christians call *kerygma*; but it surely represents the Tendenz of Israel's response to God's revelation from earliest times.

וְיִהְיֶה there are alternatives which are or have already been chosen.

The rabbinic value-concept of repentance, תשובה, is the culmination of the biblical thrust of choice. The Bible itself does not employ the noun with this sense at all. The nearest biblical noun is מַשׁוּבָה, which has just the opposite meaning, i.e. apostasy.¹ The imperative verbal form does occur, however, with similar meaning² and with a force that suggests that what Joshua meant by בָּחַר is fundamentally what the rabbis intended by תשובה, although the rabbinic usage adds the dimension of the penalties for wrong choice or sin.

As to the nature of repentance, it is as the word תשובה suggests, first of all the returning from the evil ways, that is, a strong determination on the part of the sinner to break with sin.³

Whether the issue is one of turning from a wrong choice or of turning toward a right one, the fundamental

¹As in Hosea 14:5, and especially in Jeremiah, cf. BDB, p. 1000a. The idea of alternatives is, of course, as present in the negative as in the positive choice. It is important to note that this negative form suggesting a wrong choice is used most frequently by Jeremiah, the prophet most intimately involved with the immediate consequences of infidelity.

²As in Hosea 12:6, Joel 2:12 (here with the penitential signs of remorse for having made wrong choices); and Ezekiel 14:6 (where the alternatives are spelled out).

³Solomon Schechter, Aspects of Rabbinic Theology (New York: Schocken Books, 1961), p. 334. Consider such a passage as Jeremiah 2:11.

point remains: Israel's consistent and appropriate function in history is proper choice in response to God's movement in history, itself a matter of divine free will. The midrash on Psalm 85 is illustrative of this holy struggle in history:

"Thou hast taken away all Thy wrath; Thou hast turned Thyself from the fierceness of Thine anger" (Ps. 85:4). As Ezekiel said: "Thus shall Mine anger spend itself" (Ez. 5:13), and so Hosea also said: "I will heal their backsliding . . . For Mine anger is turned away from him" (Hos. 14:5). When the sons of Korah asked: How long will Thou be angry with us? Thou didst say, "Return, O backsliding children" (Jer. 3:14). However, when the children of Israel said to Thee: 'Return Thou first,' as it is said "Return, O Lord; how long?" (Ps. 90:13), Thou didst reply: "Nay, but let Israel return first." Since Thou wilt not return alone, and since we will not return alone, let the two of us return as one, as it is said, "Return [both of] us, O God of our salvation" (Ps. 85:5). And what is Thine answer? "Wilt Thou be angry with us for ever?" (Ps. 85:6): If we repent, wilt Thou not receive us? "Wilt Thou not quicken us again?" (Ps. 85:7), even as Ezekiel says: "Behold, I will open your graves, etc." (Ez. 37:12), and again "And I will put My spirit in you, and you shall live" (Ez. 37:14).¹

The call to repentance, then, seems to be a continuation and amplification of the obligation to choose among alternatives--to shun the wrong one and to respond appropriately with the right choice. "As soiled garments can be cleansed, so the Israelites, albeit they sin, can return by repentance unto the Lord."² Even the basic message

¹William G. Braude, The Midrash on Psalms, Yale Judaica Series Vol. VIII:2, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1959), pp. 67-68.

(Sonnino ed.),

²Exodus R., Beshallah, 23:10.

of Jesus is primarily a restatement of Joshua's exhortation. "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt. 6:33// Luke 12:31). There is but one viable alternative, says he, and it is present now; therefore choose it.

The rabbis go so far as to suggest that not only is the need for correct choice--for well-aimed repentance--a covenant requirement assuring the very existence of Israel, but also that God needs Israel's faithful choice. As Slonimsky states it:

We come now to the boldest, most forward-reaching thought concerning God in the Midrash, to that conception of God in which the Agada anticipates the most modern speculation concerning the nature of God and his relation to man. It is this: that God depends on man for his strength and for his failure, for his growth and for his retrogression. In a world in which both are growing or in process, it is man who by his acts increases or decreases the stature of God.¹

If this be true, and the very dominion which God gives man in Genesis 1:28 suggests this kind of co-creatorship, the rabbis perceived that God, too, was in the position of active risk-taking and choice-making in the covenant process.

If a choice of the Lord God is at the heart of Israel's faith, and if that choice has been properly made, Israel must then wrestle with the means of institutionalizing that choice according to Israel's situation at any given time and place in the flow of history.

¹Henry Slonimsky, Essays (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1967), p. 48.

Institution vs. Revelation

It is not our purpose here to trace the history of Israel's institutions. We need only comment upon the process itself, and suggest again that the institutions of the rabbinic period are consistent with the rest of Israel's covenant history.

It is necessary to have in mind a clear distinction between revelation and institution, between covenant and conveyance. In the history of Israel as recorded in the Bible and in post-biblical literature, the revelation has been a constant.¹ The only flexibility, as has been described above, is the movement within the realm of choice.

The Transitory Institution

The institutions of Israel, on the other hand, are the adaptable element of Israel's religion. This is not to say that Israelite institution is in no way conservative or that it is capricious. The very fact that the institutions are vehicles of singleminded monotheism assures us that they reflect a stability to which the people became very much attached.

¹See below, p.268f for a further discussion of the terms of the covenant/revelation and the connection with the Feast of Sukkoth.

It is probably fair to say that in any given period of Israel's history, when the institutions function well in conveying the covenantal relationship, the commitment to these institutions is as great as the commitment to the revelation itself, they being the visible manifestation of it. The Temple provides a brief example.

At the time of the second Temple, that edifice with its rites and functionaries was the center of Israel's religious, economic, and social attention. The commitment to the Temple was such that many lives were given for its defence in 70 C.E. Yet there was a time when the revelation existed and the Temple did not;; the revelation was authentic but the Temple institution was not historically viable. And in like manner there came a time when the Temple was no more; yet the revelation persisted without it.

What is truly unique in the history of Israel's institutions is not so much the commitment of the people to them as the ability of the people to sustain the loss or destruction of institutions without the dissolution of the covenanted people itself. The ability to re-form other, sometimes entirely new institutions for the conveyance of the unchanging revelation is truly the genius of Israel and Israel's God.¹

¹I am here indebted to Ellis Rivkin, The Shaping of Jewish History (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1971), for suggesting this approach to the study of Israel's unique system of history.

The process since the revelation to and choice of Abraham has followed a general pattern. Israel's situation in history, contiguous as it is to so many great and powerful civilizations, makes certain demands and offers certain forms and vehicles convenient and appropriate to the conveyance of Israel's treasure. These forms and vehicles are adapted to fit them for Israel's particular need, and the revelation becomes visible to the nations of the world. Israel and Israel's covenant¹ become incarnate in time and place. Such visibility is necessary in that the revelation implies a mission and testimony to the nations concerning the holy choice--Israel is to be a light to the nations (Isa. 49:6).

Following the institutionalization there is a period of flourishing and growth. Minor changes and modifications occur according to the exigencies of history. Then at some point an obstacle to the continuing flow of institutions arises in history. This is so great an obstacle as to be called a major catastrophe, in that it precludes the continuation of the current institutional configuration. Often the obstacle is destructive to the status quo and not just a neutral barrier. It could be (and has been) a famine, a Pharaoh's intransigence, a Philistine

curator

¹As will be seen later, Israel and Israel's covenant cannot truly be separated. Israel is Israel because of the covenant.

incursion, a Babylonian invasion, or a Roman destruction. The obstacle threatens the very existence of Israel itself.

The genius of Israelite religion is its ability to withstand the destructive force of these barriers and obstacles and to emerge from them with its revelation intact. The means by which this extraordinary persistence of the revelation has been accomplished, not once but at every point which has seemed assuredly terminal, is a process of melting of institutions.¹

The Permanent Revelation

A distinction has been made between revelation and institution in Israel. When the institutional configuration

¹This explanation is suggested to me by Hayyim Nahman Bialik in his article "Halakah and Aggadah: or Law and Lore" in Contemporary Jewish Record, VII, 6 (December, 1944), pp. 662-680, in which he uses this melting imagery in describing the process of change and reformation:

It is as if a man were to regard the ice and the water in a river as two distinct elements. Like ice and water, Halakhah and Aggadah are really two things in one, two facets of a single entity. They are related to each other as words are related to thought and impulse, or as deed and its material form are to expression. Halakhah is the concretization, the necessary end product of Aggadah; Aggadah is Halakhah become fluid again. . . . The process by which Halakhah and Aggadah in turn solidify and dissolve is common knowledge and becomes particularly clear in times of revolution when new ordinances are established. The old, outmoded Halakhah, grown useless, descends into the crucible of the heart where it is converted into Aggadah which may or may not resemble it; the refined Aggadah emerges and enters

of Israel meets an obstacle in history which denies passage on the one hand and threatens to destroy Israel on the other, the institutions melt and in fluid form penetrate the obstacle, only to reform on the other side, transfigured and refashioned in a manner more suitable to the new configurations of history.

The revelation remains intact in this melting process precisely because it is in no way bound to any one institutional vehicle. The revelation is, in fact, timeless and not confined to place. Israel and Israel's institutions are indeed the incarnation of the revelation in history, the operative and driving force in the world. But the incarnation is flexible according to the needs of history, for the incarnation is the means to revelation, not the end.

This is not to suggest that Israel's institutions are abandoned easily and carelessly, without great suffering or pain. Nor does it suggest that God is capricious or untouched by the hurt involved in the melting process. Thus we see Israel's response to the dissolution of its own incarnation in Isaiah's description of the Suffering Servant or in the Psalm, "By the streams of Babylon,

into the forms of thought and action, where it again solidifies in Halakhah but in a new and revised version.

there we sat down and wept, when we remembered Zion" (Ps. 137:1).¹ Likewise God's pathos is described in the midrash:

Then the Lord wept, and said, "Woe is me, what have I done? I caused my Shechinah to descend because of Israel, and now that they have sinned, I have returned to my former place. Far be it from me that I should be a laughing stock to the nations and a scorn to men." Then Metatron came, and fell on his face, and said, "I will work, but thou must not weep." Then God said, "If thou sufferest me not to weep, I will go to a place where thou hast no power to enter, and I will weep there, as it is said, 'My soul shall weep in secret places'" (Jer. 13:17).²

Despite the hurt, the suffering of both parties involved in the melting down of institutions, melt they do; for institution--incarnation itself--is but a means to that end which is most important, the revelation. Any vehicle, any institution is expendable; the revelation is not. Israel may fight and die for institutions, just as other peoples have and will defend to the death their institutions. Israel may well fixate upon or be obsessed with its institutional configuration, assuming that the institution is that which defines Israel and gives Israel being and meaning. So the nations of the world look to their own institutions as the constitution and assurance of life. But when Israel's institutions are destroyed from time to

¹Cf. also Isaiah 42:1-4; 49:1-6; 50:4-9; and 52:13-53:12.

²Lamentations R., Introduction, 24, f.6b (foot of outer column), quoted in C. G. Montefiore and H. Loewe, A Rabbinic Anthology, pp. 67-68.

time; when the particular incarnation dies; when the person of Israel is touched harshly; Israel, unlike the nations of the world, persists to be resurrected and newly incarnate beyond the barrier.

Thus six million Jews could line up for the ovens of the Holocaust, and with indescribable pain and suffering participate in the melting of institutions. Yet just as Ezekiel beheld in the valley of dry bones, Israel persisted; for the revelation continued with the reshaping of institutions. Again there was a resurrection, and again the incarnate revelation continued its relentless proclamation of the choice to be made.

This method of institutionalization, uniquely Israel's, is to be compared on the one hand with the method of the nations of the world, as previously noted. For the nations, the institutions are often conceived as ends in themselves, or if they are manifestations of anything, it is a thing far less than the revelation and choice of the Lord God.

If the institutional configuration stands alone, as the divine Pharaoh in ancient Egypt subsumed in his person all other institutions of that land, the people rise and fall with the institution. A destructive obstacle in the path of Egypt's history is exceedingly destructive to the aspirations of that nation. Thus we find an Akhenaton

attempting to disengage the institution from the revelation; and we see him fail. And the problem of Imperial Rome, or Edom, is comparable to that of Egypt.

For those nations who did draw their institutions from a source greater than the institutions themselves, the test of those nations' endurance is the real power of their revealed choice. So the Mesopotamian peoples derived their institutions from the laws, and the laws were given by the gods. Yet neither law nor god in Mesopotamia had the life-giving power, which is the real difference between them and the Lord God of Israel.¹ Nor does institution derived from consent of the governed, or any social contract, have the ultimate strength to melt and reform beyond the obstacles of history time after time as Israel has done.

Israel's method of institutionalization may be compared, on the other hand, with that of the Church. While it can be argued that the Church has also chosen a relationship with God--a faithful revelation--the Church has, since the destruction of Jewish Christianity in 70 C.E.,²

¹Cf. a discussion of the causes for the migration of Abraham from Ur in Ephraim Avigdor Speiser, Genesis, Vol. I of the Anchor Bible Series, ed. by William Foxwell Albright and David Noel Freedman (44 vols.; Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Co., Inc., 1964), pp. XLIII-LII.

²I do not mean to suggest by this statement that Jewish Christianity was totally obliterated with the destruction of the Temple. I do believe with C. G. F. Brandon (The Fall of Jerusalem and the Christian Church [London: S.P.C.K., 1968]) that the sudden destruction of

dealt with the potentially destructive obstacles of history by a process of assimilation rather than melting.

While Israel continued the process of melting the settings for the revelation and refashioning those settings anew beyond history's barriers, the Church swallowed obstacles, creating always more and varied overlays around the revelation. Perhaps the revelation in the Church is now too encrusted to be visible; or perhaps the next bite will be too big.¹ Any future discussion between Jew and Christian must include a consideration of these quite different methods of dealing with the obstacles of history and the institutionalization process. The revelation may well have been the same originally, but the incarnational

the mother church in Jerusalem left the satellite churches both in Palestine and throughout the Roman Empire with a vacuum of authority of such magnitude as to mortally wound them. The church in Jerusalem, judging from the Acts of the Apostles and even Paul's own testimony, exercised almost absolute control over the mission congregations. The flight of the church to Pella is, as Brandon demonstrates (pp. 168-173 et passim) a tradition with little grounding in fact. Thus when the authority no longer resides in Jerusalem with the caliphate-like line of Jesus, the Hellenistic churches, many of them oriented to Pauline Christology, assume the authority by default. The only remnant of the Jewish church are small, weak, and heretical sects, such as the Ebionites.

It is possible, I believe, to recover from the gospels and the early church fathers some of the authentic traditions--perhaps even Jesus' own covenant concern--of this first Christian fellowship.

¹The Church's claim to be the only true Israel after the events of 70 C.E. will be evaluated more fully below, p. 408, n. 2.

methodologies are so very different as to be often mutually exclusive.

The purpose of this work is to explore the literature of the Tannaitic period of Israel's history. The Sitz im Leben of this literature represents a period in Israel's history which includes a prelude to obstacle, the obstacle itself, and a period of re-formation. It is the period of the close of the Second Commonwealth, the destructive barrier of Roman incursion and occupation, and finally the time of the founding and growth of the rabbinic academies.

If the foregoing description of Israel's method of dealing with obstacles holds good, we should expect to find the painful memories of the melting institutions interspersed with the often radical re-institutionalizations of the Rabbis, reflected in the literature of the period. We must always be aware of the strictures which history, particularly the Hellenistic Roman history after 70 C.E., place upon Israel as it again strives for viable incarnation, guided by the Tannaitic Rabbis.

And being aware of the strictures, how much more will we appreciate the excellence of the fruits of their labors. But beyond the observation and appreciation of the reformation process, we will look carefully for the revelation and whether or not it has survived the crisis unchanged and intact.

The Covenant of Life

Before exploring the general nature of the variable, i.e. the institutionalization process in the rabbinic period, we must refine the understanding of the constant in all Israel's history, the revelation. The movement within the revelation has been described above by the words choice and repentance. Now when the Lord God offers Himself as a viable and attractive choice, what is the mechanism, what are the terms of the offer to be chosen? The answer, almost too simple to be credible, is life.

In the opening chapters of Genesis, the life-giving intention and inclination of God is narrated. The life, death, and procreation themes are evident in the Eden narratives. The rights of man to take human life and animal life are significant aspects of the stories of Cain and Noah. And the concern for progeny and land-holdings are at least implicit in the listings of the generations.¹

¹I am indebted to Professor Herbert C. Brichto of the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion for sharing, both in lecture and conversation, his insights concerning life themes in the biblical narrative and legislation. Two articles by Rabbi Brichto which have had an obvious influence in the analysis of the covenant set forth in this work are "On Faith and Revelation in the Bible," op. cit., and "Kin, Cult, Land and Afterlife: A Biblical Complex," HUCA, Vol. XLIV (1973), to appear shortly.

Even in these stories of mankind in general, the substantive issue is life.

When God decides in Genesis 12 to continue the experiment of life in microcosm and historically on a smaller scale, we find that life and choice are still very much the function of the revelation. This time the choice is offered to Abraham, the concentrated distillate of mankind in general. It is with Abraham that the Bible begins to speak of the specific covenant with Israel. God reveals Himself as life-giver and so offers Himself as a viable choice to the person of Abraham through the terms of a covenant.

The essential text for the terms of the revelation which is to persist unchanging and unchanged throughout all the exigencies of Israel's history is Genesis 15:1-6. And the heart of the matter is in the sixth verse.¹ Abraham is declared meritorious, not simply because he had an experience of God, a divine revelation, which compelled him to believe; for such an experience of God, coming as it does under the very natural figures of human experience, does not compel belief. Abraham's merit derived from his choice, uncompelled and freely made, to have faith in this God and in His power to deliver that which Abraham desired so much. The choice was offered and Abraham in his freedom

¹Cf. above, p. 100ff.

chose rightly. The Lord God and He alone from among all the potential choices available to Abraham, not only could provide the life which Abraham desired above all things, but offered to so provide it. And the judgment upon Abraham's free and persistent assent was favorable, i.e. he was reckoned meritorious.¹

St. Paul was aware of the impact of the passage,² but he missed its point. His system called for faith defined as the opposite of law, and this antinomian faith he equated with Abraham's belief. But Abraham's faith is no quantified thing; it is the free assent to a relationship which invites instruction from the One Chosen, which instruction flows naturally from the choice.³

The Four Aspects of the Life Covenant

Life is the offer of God's revelation to Abraham and his seed. But it is not simply chronic, undifferentiated

¹Cf. H. C. Brichto, "On Faith and Revelation in the Bible," op. cit., pp. 44-45.

²Cf. Romans 3:21-5:1 and Galatians 3:6-18.

³There is the tacit assumption here that the Lord God is an ethical God and that He requires ethical behavior of those who choose Him. It is evident at this point also, that while Martin Luther was on sound footing in his interpretation of Paul on this point, by his very comprehension and agreement with Paul, Luther errs with the apostle.

I will have more to say about the "faith of Christ" as the choice of Jesus in a later discussion of facilitators of the covenant.

life. The covenant is one of life conveyed in identifiable categories. For the purposes of this work the covenant of life will be described by four great aspects which characterize it.

Again, because this description is a systematic one imposed upon a mind-set that does not partake necessarily of the canons of logic and western science, the description is necessarily arbitrary and artificial. The reader familiar with biblical-rabbinic methodology will recognize the constant overlap of the four great aspects and the infinite possibilities of other, equally valid descriptions and values. Thus the caveat against absolute categorizing of biblical and rabbinic literature, a project better left to the work of theologians and philosophers.¹

Life Sustained--Land

The first great aspect of the covenant of life is concrete. The promise of the covenant with Abraham and his descendants is land; nor is this promise about land some vague generality. A specific land is promised

¹It has been staunchly maintained, and I believe properly, that a theology of the rabbis is impossible and a contradiction in terms (cf. Schechter, Finkelstein [Intro. to Schechter], Kadushin and others). Since I would maintain that the rabbis represent generally a continuation of the biblical method, I do not imagine that a biblical theology is any the more possible than a rabbinic theology. No apologies are necessary to Yehezkiel Kaufmann who writes of biblical religion, not a biblical theology.

Abraham, a land which is uniquely his, arbitrarily designated by the Creator as the place He chooses to have His name known and invoked there.¹

This land of the covenant promised to Abraham and his seed figures prominently in one way or another throughout the entire biblical narrative and legislation. Sometimes Israel is in the land or preparing to occupy it. At other times Israel is driven from the land by famine or exile. It is important to live on the land, as the half-tribe of Manasseh and the tribes of Reuben and Gad were to discover as they built their "memorial" to prevent later accusations by their Israelite brethren that they would "have no portion in the Lord" (Josh. 22:7ff.).

As the Lord God of Israel's land, a concrete connection existed between His revelation and the land where He revealed Himself. Thus we find Naaman of Syria carrying earth back to Syria with him to Beth Rimmon that he might properly worship the God of Israel in His own land

¹Genesis 12:7; 13:15; 15:18, and the specifics of Gen. 23 in which Abraham, by demanding to pay for a burying place for Sarah and by paying an exorbitant price for Machpelah, initiates the fulfillment of the land promise. His small purchase is the earnest of the larger promise.

The first two aspects of the covenant, land and progeny, as they figure in Israel's ancient concept of immortality are suggested to me by Herbert Chanan Brichto's article, "Kin, Cult, Land and Afterlife: A Biblical Complex," op. cit.

(II Kings 5:17-18). And of course Jonah is convinced that the word of the Lord was confined to the Lord's own land. Israel, exiled from the land, could not sing the Lord's song (Ps. 137:1).

There is legislation which applies to the land. Boundary markers (Deut. 19:14), tithing of produce (Deut. 14:22), the resting and rotation of the use of the land (Lev. 25:4ff.), the laws of gleaning (Lev. 23:22) and the alienation of property (Lev. 25:25ff.), are among the legal concerns for the promised land.

The threat of punishment for Israel's apostasy spoken by the prophets is the threat of barrenness of the land or outright removal of the people from the land. In like manner the prophetic passages of comfort are replete with references to the land, the returning of the exiles to it and its blossoming as a sign of the Lord's favor.

Famine, the failure of the land to produce, is the force which drives the people from one place to another.¹ The promise of fruitfulness, the land flowing with milk and honey, is likewise the force that moves the people of Israel from the wilderness to the land of promise (Ex. 3:8 et passim).

¹So Abraham in Egypt (Gen. 12:10ff.), Isaac in Gerar (Gen. 26), the family of Joseph in Egypt (Gen. 42), and Elimelich and his family in Moab (Ruth).

There are, in fact, several occasions when the land (although in these cases not the promised land) is very nearly personified. In the case of Cain's murdering his brother Abel, the earth cries out against the innocent blood which it receives and refuses to be productive for Cain any longer (Gen. 4:10-12), much as the curse on the land denied his father Adam's right to enjoy the free produce of the untilled land (Gen. 3:17-19).

The function of this land of promise in the covenant of life is to provide a particular place for life. In a general sense such a place for life offers sustenance and nutrition to those who live in the land. And it was to this end that a land was given to Abraham and his seed, a fertile land capable of productivity for the sustenance of life for the generations of Israel.

Yet there is something beyond the general and the ordinary in this land. This land is God's chosen land, His favored land, His designated place, a land which Israel holds at His pleasure. And how is this remarkable bit of divine arbitrariness known beyond the mere claim of a sacred book? It is known by the way in which this land, as against the lands surrounding it, is rendered fertile.

It is a well-known fact that the land of Egypt is watered by the Nile River. Along the valley of this great stream was one of the cradles of civilization, for

the annual flooding of the river is and always has been the sure guarantor of the fertility of the land of Egypt. Of the river and its land, Breasted says:

Thus year by year, the soil which would otherwise become impoverished in the elements necessary to the production of such prodigious harvests, is invariably replenished with fresh resources. . . . Thus a genial and generous, but exacting soil, demanded for its cultivation the development of a high degree of skill in the manipulation of the life-giving waters, and at a very early day the men of the Nile valley had attained a surprising command of the complicated problems involved in the proper utilization of the river.¹

It is only natural, too, that Egyptian notions of divinity and cosmography should take this water-source into account. Thus while the sun disc held sway, as chief of the Egyptian deities,² the motion of the sun was understood as that of a barque moving by night west to east along an underground Nile waterway, emerging at dawn at the first cataract of the Nile.³

The point is that in Egypt the land was made fertile by a natural river which could be and indeed was manipulated at all seasons by men. And further, even the

¹James Henry Breasted, A History of Egypt (2nd ed.: New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1909), pp. 8-9.

²"In a land where a clear sky prevailed and rain was rarely seen, the incessant splendour of the sun was an insistent fact, which gave him the highest place in the thought and daily life of the people." Ibid., pp. 58-59.

³Ibid., pp. 55-56.

high god was dependent upon this waterway, or one likened to it, to fulfill his function.

Turning to the other traditional cradle of civilization, Mesopotamia (the land between the rivers), we find again that the fertility of the land was dependent upon a river system¹ which was very early within the aegis of man's control and manipulation. Writing of the urban economy developed by the Sumerian civilization, M. Rowton says:

Although much still remains to be learned about this momentous development, it is reasonably probable that the chief factor in it was the need to construct and maintain a large and intricate system of canals in Lower Mesopotamia. . . . These canals were needed for several purposes: to drain the marshes for their rich alluvial soil, to ensure a sufficient supply of water for irrigation, and to protect the country from devastating floods. The records show clearly that work on the canal system was to remain one of the dominant tasks of government, particularly in Lower Mesopotamia.²

Unlike the regularity of the deity-involvement with the Nile in Egypt, the connection between the Mesopotamian deities and the watering of the land reflected the caprice

¹That the biblical authors were aware of this natural watering in Mesopotamia and quick to point out that its ultimate source was the Lord God of Israel is apparent from the story of the general covenant with mankind in Genesis 2. Note especially vss. 5b and 10-14 of that chapter.

²M. Rowton, "Mesopotamia," Encyclopedia Americana, 1966 ed., XVIII, 688b.

which characterized these Mesopotamian gods. This caprice, Speiser suggests, is the motive which drove Abraham from Ur.¹

Of this divine caprice associated with fertility, Rowton continues:

A problem which greatly puzzled the ancients was that sometimes, in spite of all diligence and "science," the gods would visit totally unmerited disaster on state and individual. This problem is posed in myth and epic, particularly in the Babylonian story of the Flood. For floods were the most outstanding instance of divine irrationality, since they destroyed not only the wealth of the gods' servants but also the very estates of the gods themselves.²

The essential point is that the two lands at the extremities of the Fertile Crescent yielded their fruitfulness, at least in large part, according to the enterprise and scientific efforts of man. The deities of these lands were either dependent in some fashion upon the natural waterways or capable of disrupting the natural process of fertilization according to their own caprice or their own lack of control.³

The land of the covenant stands in marked contrast to its neighbors, a visible fact which establishes it as

¹E. A. Speiser, op. cit., pp. xliii-lii.

²Rowton, op. cit., p. 689a.

³The matter of pagan gods, their caprice, and their own subjection to a higher, metadivine power, is masterfully dealt with in Kaufmann's The Religion of Israel, trans. and abridged by M. Greenberg (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960), pp. 21ff. et passim.

a unique and "holy" land. Whereas it is possible to be confused or unsure of the life-giving source to the land in Mesopotamia and Egypt, the conditions of watering in Israel left no doubt that man was not, nor could not supply the fructifying agent in that land, and this condition of man's powerlessness must surely have contributed to the choice of the God Who could and would supply the rains.

The point of the source of the fertility in this land of the covenant is made clearly by the Deuteronomist:

For the land which you are entering to take possession of it is not like the land of Egypt, from which you have come, where you sowed your seed and watered it with your feet, like a garden of vegetables; but the land which you are going over to possess is a land of hills and valleys, which drinks water by the rain from heaven, a land which the Lord your God cares for; the eyes of the Lord your God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year to the end of the year (Deut. 11:10-12).

A primary aspect of the covenant is, then, the specific land which God Himself has chosen and which He tends. It is a land to which Israel was married from the first and to which Israel must be faithful.¹ It is a land providing sustenance for life; and the unmistakable source of this sustenance is the Lord God, for the rains fall at His pleasure and He is subject to no higher power.

Insofar as salvation implies a gift of life, then this land of the covenant is the land of salvation.

¹This imagery of the land as Israel's wife is found in Malachi 2:14-15.

If redemption suggests rescuing and return, then this is the land of redemption to which the captive and exiled are returned and over which the Lord God exercises sovereignty.

Slonimsky would discover in the midrash a further extension of the function of land in the life-giving covenant. It is this: the land is God's land, and He like Israel needs the land, or He too is in exile.

God and Israel need each other. They are partners in the same enterprise. Therefore he who hates Israel hates God, and if Israel is forced into exile by the powers which for the present overshadow both, God will detach his visible Presence, his Shekinah, from himself and send it into exile with Israel, to return to God only when Israel itself is enabled to return.¹

He then cites as example a passage from Sifre on Numbers 10:35:

And so each time when Israel is subjected by the empires, the Shekinah as it were is subjected by them. . . . And when it says (II S. 7:23) "Because of thy people whom thou hast redeemed unto thee from Egypt, a nation and his God," R. Akiba comments: "Had we not a direct Scripture it would be impossible to say it, namely this: Israel said to God, 'Thou hast redeemed thyself.'". . . And thus we find that whenever they went into exile the Shekinah went with them; to Edom, the Shekinah went with them. . . . And when they return (in the Messianic Age) the Shekinah will return with them. For it says (Deut. 30:3) "And the Lord thy God will bring back thy captivity." It does not say יהוה ישוב but וישב that is, God himself will return.²

¹Henry Slonimsky, op. cit., p. 47.

²Siphre d'be Rab, ed. by Meir Ish Shalom [M. Friedman] (Vienna, 1864 and 1924; Jerusalem, 1968), p. 22b; ed. by H. S. Harowitz (Leipzig: Gustav Fock, G.m.b.H., 1917), pp. 81-83; quoted in Slonimsky, op. cit., pp. 47-48.

The land is important to Israel as provender for the people. It is equally important to them for the offerings which it provides and which the Lord requires of His people (Joel 1:13). And, as Slonimsky points out, it is important to God, for it is His special portion for the people of His choosing.

Progeny: Propagation of Life

The second great aspect of the covenant of life is like-wise concrete. It is the aspect of progeny, the promise of a posterity numberless as the dust of the earth, the sands of the sea, and the stars of the sky. And just as the land in which this progeny of Abraham is to dwell is a specific, God-designated and God-tended land, so the posterity of Abraham is just as specific, and just as God-tended.

The possibility of non-specified children inheriting the covenant of life is effectively denied in the Genesis narratives. When it appears that Eliezer of Damascus (Gen. 15:1-11) or Ishmael (Gen. 16) might, according to the mundane and natural order of things, be the inheritors of the covenant due to the barrenness of Sarah, the Lord God intervenes directly. She who was hopelessly barren by human standards despite the fondest desire of her husband, did give birth to the God-designated

son Isaac (Gen. 18:9-15 and 21:1-7). But note that it was not until God intervened directly that she was capable of conception; and the point of the necessity for divine participation is underscored by the information that Sarah was ninety years old and Abraham one hundred years at the time of Isaac's birth (Gen. 17:17). There is no mistaking that the life-source of the covenant is the Lord God. The powerful narrative of the Akedah is intended to remind us again that this child Isaac, the assurance of a holy nation, is totally God-given and God-tended (Gen. 22).¹

As if the story of Sarah's age and barrenness were not enough to convince us of the need for divine participation in that life-giving aspect of the covenant represented by progeny, we are further informed of the barrenness of Isaac's wife Rebekah (Gen. 25:21), of Jacob's wife Rachel (Gen. 29:31), of Manoah's wife, the mother of Samson (Judg. 13:2), and Elkanah's wife Hannah, mother of Samuel (I S. 1:2, 5; 2:5-6).²

¹Cf. also the midrashic exploration of this theme in Shalom Spiegel, The Last Trial (New York: Schocken Books, 1967). The significance of God's life-giving intent expressed in a narrative such as the Akedah will hardly be lost on Christians who understand the crucifixion and resurrection narrative of the Gospels as conveying the same point. An interesting midrash could be written playing on the words עקרה and עקרה, if it has not been done already.

²We should not forget the instances of reverse effect such as the barrenness of Abimelech's wives on account of Sarah (Gen. 20:18) and the death of the firstborn in Egypt (Ex. 12:39-30).

The progeny promised Abraham who become the Children of Israel represent the endurance of life and the intent of God to give life enduringly. It is, as we have said, one of the means whereby life is conveyed via the covenant. It has been called by various names: after-life; life in the world to come; the establishing of one's name, house, line; eternal or everlasting life; and immortality.¹ But whatever the title, this aspect of progeny is basically a manifestation of God's perseverance in giving life as He did in the beginning, blessing it and thereby opening the way in creation for its actualization in every nook and corner of the historical continuum.

Just as the Deuteronomist draws a connection between the fertility of the land and the ethical covenant, so he

The list of matriarchs whose barrenness was removed by divine intervention could be continued in the New Testament with Zechariah's wife Elizabeth mother of John the Baptist (Lk. 1:36), and if it is possible to say it, with Joseph's wife Mary, mother of Jesus. The "virgin" birth of Jesus was undoubtedly of little, if any consequence to early Christians. It would have been of far greater moment to them that Mary was in some way barren until God's intervention in the continuing fulfillment of His covenant of life.

The early Christian theology of Adoptionism (either at Jesus' baptism or at the transfiguration/crucifixion) is probably a later development from the original Jewish tradition. There is certainly no question that the Gospel writers relied heavily upon the Samson and Samuel birth narratives. Connecting the nazirite status of Samson and perhaps Samuel with the description of Jesus as Nazarene would go far beyond the boundaries of even a footnote here.

¹Cf. H. C. Brichto, "Kin, Cult, Land and Afterlife: A Biblical Complex," op. cit.

makes the same connection between the endurance of life through progeny and the ethical covenant:

Therefore you shall keep his statutes and his commandments, which I command you this day, that it may go well with you, and with your children after you, and that you may prolong your days in the land which the Lord your God gives you for ever (Deut. 4:40).

But what lies at the heart of the covenant aspect described as progeny? The heart of the matter, and we tremble again with Slonimsky to suggest it, is this: that Israel is God's progeny and that God's endurance, His life, in the world is assured through His children Israel. They are indeed the children of Israel. The sons of Abraham, the offspring of the patriarchs. But finally this people is the child of God, ensuring in every generation His life in the world (Jer. 51:19).

Examples of the interdependence of life between God and Israel are found in Bible and midrash. At one point the idea of progeny for God is suggested by Israel's being God's wife.¹ At other places the imagery is of Israel as God's daughter, His sister and his mother.² The point is

¹Isaiah 54:10 specifically, and the abundant references made throughout the Bible to Israel's marital infidelity and harlotry, as well as those references to Israel's restoration as beloved spouse of the Lord.

²A very old and beautiful midrash expressing the increasing love of God for Israel is found in the Pesikta de Rav Kahana, ed. by Salomon Buber (Lyck: L. Silberman, 1868; New York: Om Publishing Co., 1949), Piska 1, p. 4a; ed. by Bernard Mandelbaum (New York: The Jewish Theological

made equally well, however, in the imagery of Israel as a son. Thus we read: "For I am a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my first-born" (Jer. 31:9b), and again, "When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called (named) my son" (Hos. 11:1).¹

The midrash, too, is full of examples. Two will suffice. In Numbers 8:19 the phrase "children of Israel" occurs five times. The comment is:

See how God loves the Israelites: in one single verse He names them five times! R. Simeon b. Yoḥai said: Like a king who entrusted his son to a tutor, and kept asking him, "Does my son eat, does he drink, has he gone to school, has he come back from school?" So God yearns to make mention of the Israelites at every hour.²

And with reference to Isaiah 56:1:

"My salvation is near to come" (Is. 56:1). "My salvation," not "your salvation": if the word had not been written, it would have been impossible to say it. But God says to Israel, "If you have no merit, I do it for my own sake," as if He said, "All the days that you are

Seminary of America, 1962), Vol. I, Piska 1:3, p. 7; and in Shemoth Rabbah ("Exodus Rabbah"), with commentary by Issachar ben Naphtali (Jerusalem: Lewin-Epstein, Ltd., 1969) Vol. I, Pekude, 52:5; ed. by H. Freedman and Maurice Simon, trans. by S. M. Lehrman (London: The Soncino Press, 1939), Vol. III, Pekude, 52:5, pp. 579-580.

¹The Gospel of Matthew plays particularly on this theme of Israel as God's son by having Jesus recapitulate on his own life the history of Israel. The later Hellenistic Christian theology of Jesus' Sonship is, of course, quite foreign to this poet's imagery of the interdependence of love between father and son.

²Pesikta de Rav Kahana (Mandelbaum, ed.), Vol. I, Piska 2:7, p. 29, as quoted in C. G. Montefiore and H. Loewe, eds., A Rabbinic Anthology (Cleveland: World Publishing Co., Meridian Books, 1960), p. 60, 164.

in distress, I am with you" [i.e. I too am in distress], even as it is said, "I am with him in distress" (Ps. 91:15), and as it is said, "Behold thy king comes to thee; he is righteous and 'saved'" (Zech. 9:9), for the word is not "saving," but "saved." Even if there are no works in your Lands, God does it for His own sake.¹

The two great aspects of the covenant of life, land and progeny, are interwoven in the biblical imagery. The fertility of the farmer's field and of his wife are of equivalent concern to him and to his own life. Imagery such as seed can serve double function to describe the hopes of a man for his land or for his family.² In Israel's covenant, that which is unique is the conviction that the Lord God is the ultimate source of both the sustenance and the endurance of this life. In giving life in the covenant He requires the appropriate functioning of life, which is ethical behavior. For just as God lives, and in living behaves ethically, so when He gives life to His people in His land, He requires of them ethical behavior. Finally the midrash hints most carefully and subtly (characteristics of poetic midrash; impossible in theology) that God also needs His land and His children to be alive Himself in the world.

¹Exodus R. (Soncino ed.) 30:24, pp. 375-376, as quoted in Montefiore and Loewe, p. 61, 165.

²This overlapping or double function imagery of fertility in land and family is well exemplified in Hosea 2.

The Presence of God as Stimulating Life

This aspect is the presence of the Lord in the midst of His people and, collaterally, Israel's response to God's presence. We have seen above how rain can represent the visitation by God and how the faithful willingness and effort of old Abraham to impregnate his aged Sarah despite the hopelessness of their years can represent the response of Israel. Both are concrete instances of this presence of God and Israel's response.

The simple word "presence" does not sufficiently convey the activity, the motion implicit in this covental aspect. It would be more satisfying to have a single word to express God's presenting Himself to His people and Israel's reciprocal response. But English compares poorly with Hebrew in the availability of verbs over nouns, and we must make do with "presence."

The presence of God by narrow definition is revelation; for revelation is the periodic occasion of God's making His presence known to Israel. It is usually, though not always, a unique and distinctive event.

The revelatory verb is most elusive and is likely the nemesis of the biblical theologian who searches for a neat and manageable list of words which will, in every instance, indicate the onset of divine revelation.¹ The

¹However, the living religion for mind and soul

presence defies capture; the revelation declines to appear in the expected time or place. As it is said of the burning bush on Sinai:

R. Joseph said: "Man should always learn from the mind of his Creator; for behold, the Holy One, blessed be He, ignored all the mountains and heights and caused His Shechinah to abide upon Mount Sinai, and ignored all the beautiful trees and caused His Shechinah to abide in a bush."¹

It is perhaps fair to generalize that any biblical verb, the subject of which is the Lord God, is a sign in the text of God's active presence in the world and most specifically in Israel. Rabbi Brichto recognizes this:

The ambiguities of the latter term [sc. revelation], the ranges of meaning assigned to it, are almost too well known to require comment. The biblical terms most closely corresponding to the English are the nif'al conjugations of the verbs ra'a and galā. But the concept of the Deity revealing Himself or His will to man is understood to be expressed in a wide variety of terms, such as the Deity appearing so the subject of the verbs 'amar, dibber, Qara or ba' (in a dream); or the impersonal devar YHWH, ne'um YHWH and yad YHWH. . . .²

which is biblical religion has been long time imprisoned in the fetters of dogmatic/systematic theology, while the champions in search of the Holy Grail continue to set out on the path of categorization.

¹The Babylonian Talmud (Warsaw, 1880), Tractate Sotah, 5a; ed. by I. Epstein (London, The Soncino Press, 1948), 5a.

²H. C. Brichto, "On Faith and Revelation in the Bible," op. cit., p. 35. Micah 7:18-20 is a fine example of the diversity of revelatory verbs.

Revelation as the active presence of God includes, in fact, all the activity of God in His dealings with His people; that is, all the activity implicit in God's having chosen Israel, including the choice itself.¹

Seeing and Being Seen: Gilluy Shekinah

Max Kadushin deals with revelation, or Gilluy Shekinah, under the heading of normal mysticism.² His analysis is most useful to us here in that he draws conclusions about revelation from a passage pertaining to the Feast of Sukkoth, namely Exodus 23:17//Deuteronomy 16:16: "Three times in the year all thy males shall appear before the Lord God."³

It is Kadushin's understanding, based on the Rabbis' reading of the texts and the halachah derived from that reading, that the intent of the pilgrim festivals was

¹Cf. Deuteronomy 7:6 and the forthright declaration in Exodus 34:10.

²Max Kadushin, The Rabbinic Mind, pp. 222-261.

³The Masoretic text of Deuteronomy 16:16 is pointed: וּבְרֵאשִׁית חֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁלִישִׁי וּבְרֵאשִׁית חֹדֶשׁ הַחֲמִישִׁי וּבְרֵאשִׁית חֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁשִׁי with the verb in the niphal imperfect. The suggestion of Kadushin and others is that the text was originally read וּבְרֵאשִׁית חֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁלִישִׁי וּבְרֵאשִׁית חֹדֶשׁ הַחֲמִישִׁי וּבְרֵאשִׁית חֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁשִׁי with the verb in the gal imperfect and the אֶת as a sign of the direct object. To achieve the same effect in Exodus 23:17 would require a consonantal change from וּבְרֵאשִׁית חֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁלִישִׁי to וּבְרֵאשִׁית חֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁשִׁי. The same vowel pointing change from niphal to gal would achieve the same meaning--"Three times in the year all thy males shall see the face of the Lord God."

to provide the pilgrim an opportunity to see God!¹ Since a blind man is excluded from the festival because he cannot see,² Kadushin suggests that the text can be read: "Three times in the year all thy males shall see the face of the Lord."³ He further substantiates this point by demonstrating that a non-Massoretic reading of the texts which pointed yera'eh as yir'eh was not only possibly but evidently correct. To this end he cites a passage from the Sifre on Deuteronomy: "As he comes 'to be seen,' so does he come to see."⁴ Combining the evidence, he concludes:

¹Y. Kaufmann, op. cit., p. 112, discovers the same understanding of revelation in Scripture itself. He says: "The sacred moment of the feast is the sight of God. . . . Not mystic union with, but 'sight' of, the exalted One whom man cannot see and live; sight 'from afar.' How deeply rooted this concept was among the people is evidenced by the biblical phrase that expresses the purpose of visiting the sanctuary on festivals and sacrificial occasions: 'to behold (read lir'oth) the presence of YHWH' (Ex. 34:231; Deut. 31:11; cf. Is. 1:12). . . . What is looked for is the appearance of God and his blessing, not mystic union with him."

²Mekhilta D'Rabbi Shim'on b. Jochai, ed. by J. N. Epstein and E. Z. Melamed (Jerusalem: Mekize Nirdamim, 1955), Mishpatim, Parashah 21, Perek 17, p. 218; ed. by D. Hoffmann (Frankfurt a./M.: J. Kauffmann, 1905), Mishpatim, Parashah 21, Perek 17, p. 159.

³M. Kadushin, op. cit., p. 240.

⁴"כדרך שבא ליראות כך בא לראות." Sifre on Deuteronomy, ed. by Louis Finkelstein (Berlin: Gesellschaft zur Förderung der Wissenschaft des Judentums, 1939; New York: The Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1969), Piska 143, pp. 195-196.

At all events, the three sources have in common the idea that the pilgrims who went up to the Temple in Jerusalem went up to see God. In other words, they assume that the pilgrims could experience Gilluy Shekinah.¹

Such intimacy of God and Israel, if Kadushin is correct, tends to confirm our proposition that the presence of God in the midst of Israel was a primary aspect of the covenant of life.²

While the covenant aspect identified here as the presence of God or revelation cannot be categorized or described normatively, there do emerge four rather general sub-headings, or concepts, of this great aspect of the covenant under which Israel's experience of, response to, and responsibility for the presence may be grouped. They are the creative presence, the sustaining presence, the critical (in the basic sense of evaluative) presence, and the restorative presence of God. Again the caveat: absolute categories do not apply in biblical religion; thus in this

¹M. Kadushin, op. cit., p. 241.

²It should be noted here that the "presence" of the Lord in the Hebrew of the Bible involves some form of the noun "face." It will be important further on to know that a pan involves a face to face confrontation of Israel and God. While one biblical tradition suggests that to see God is to die (Ex. 33:20), another tradition accepts this face to face relationship as a natural and useful description of God's involvement with His people. So in Exodus 33:11: "Thus the Lord used to speak to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend" (see also Num. 14:14).

case an overlap exists in the very arbitrariness of the categories.

Creative Presence

God's appearance in history, speaking the creative word as He did in the beginning, brought Israel into being and set Israel into purposive motion. The divine presence was first creative and activating for mankind in general when the Lord God said, "'Let us make man in our image' . . . and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being" (Gen. 1:26; 2:7b). The response expected from mankind is one of dominion over creation (Gen. 1:26ff.) and co-creatorship with God, symbolized by his naming the creatures (Gen. 2:19-20). He is to be re-creative, according to the command. "Be fruitful and multiply" (Gen. 1:28).

But for God's special experiment with Abraham and his seed, the presence of the Lord came to Abraham and said, "Go you--לך לך . . . , so Abram went, as the Lord told him." (Gen. 12:1a and 4a). This is the opening story of God's creative presence in Israel and Israel's faithful response. Then at the burning bush, Moses confronted the presence and was entrusted with the Name of God's presence (Ex. 3:13, 16). And despite scholarship's continued inability to adequately identify or analyze the Name, the

text goes on with adequate information for us to connect the Named presence of God with His intended activation of the covenant.

The text itself suggests some unfinished (imperfect), continually pulsive aspect associated with the Name.¹ God's expectation of Israel in the revealing of His Name to the people through Moses is prototypical of God's expectation of Israel throughout history: "Say this to the people of Israel, 'The Lord [YHWH], the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you': יְהוָה שְׁמִי לְעֹלָם וַיְהוָה יִזְכְּרִי לְדֹר וָדֹר" (Ex. 3:15).²

The שְׁמִי and the יִזְכְּרִי are important to Israel as a matter of reliable and consistent information. God says to Israel, "This is My accurate name, and this name authentically reflects My attributes." God reveals His name to Israel, and the knowledge of that name and those attributes, and the perception of them as unchanging לְעֹלָם and יְהוָה tends to be constitutive and creative of Israel--

¹Cf. Exodus 3:16-17, 20-21. One is tempted to render the translation of the Tetragrammaton in English as a kind of verbal blank check: "I am the One Who has, does, or will (fill in the active verb)." Jakob J. Petuchowski, Ever Since Sinai (2nd ed.: New York: Scribe Publications, Inc., 1968), p. 46, referring to Martin Buber, suggests a similar rendition of the Name, connecting the Tetragrammaton with the presence. And cf. pg. 145f, n.2, below.

²Notice the parallelism of the "b" portion of the verse, indicated by the יְהוָה . . . יְהוָה.

not only in the present, but in the future as well.

Israel's creation is critically purposive, for God's name in Israel is the assurance of God's continued life in the world. As God's presence creates Israel, Israel's presence, stamped with the Name of God, is re-creative for the nations of the world, as it says, "I will give you as a light to the nations, etc." (Is. 49:6). Here is no midrashic flight of fancy or poetic hyperbole; for this is the essence of biblical religion as Israel understood it.¹

As the living testimony to the Lord God in the world, Israel is called to be "a kingdom of priests and a holy nation" (Ex. 19:6a), for the Name of the Lord is Holy, as it says: "For thus says the high and lofty One who inhabits eternity, whose name is holy . . ." (Is. 57:15a). And again it says: "For I am the Lord who brought you up out of the land of Egypt, to be your God; you shall therefore be holy, for I am holy" (Lev. 12:45).

It was at Sinai that the fullness of Israel's creation, constitution, and activation was observed. It was at Sinai that a nondescript, formless, chaotic crowd of people

¹The suggestion of God's dependence upon Israel is surely incomprehensible to the Greeks and blasphemy to Christians. Yet it is no more horrifying to them than is a trinity of Gods or a Son of God to the Jews. The understanding of the life-value of *שם* and *יְהוָה* in Israel's literature is explored in the article by Herbert C. Brichto, "Kin, Cult, Land and Afterlife," *op. cit.*, especially the material on p. 31ff. with notes. The extension of the concept to include God Himself is, I believe, my own doing. I trust it will not misrepresent the insights of my teacher.

with vague ancestral credential, a people without purpose, direction, or meaning of their own were created a nation with a mission. Unlikely bits and pieces of undifferentiated humanity were literally formed into a living whole and given a truly astounding responsibility by the Word of God. It was the "being present" of God at Sinai that rendered Israel a living, purposeful being in the world. He spoke and they were created; He breathed and His spirit gave them movement and direction. So Balaam reported of them:

For from the top of the mountains I see him, from the hills I behold him; lo, a people dwelling alone and not reckoning itself among the nations! Who can count the dust of Jacob, or number the dust clouds of Israel? Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my end be like his! (Num. 23:9-10).

The creative presence formed Israel to be a living witness to Him in the world, to be the continuation of His life, extending it to every corner of the earth. As the prophet Isaiah declares:

"You are my witnesses," says the Lord, "and my servant whom I have chosen, that you may know and believe me and understand that I am He. Before me no god was formed, nor shall there be any after me. I, I am the Lord, and beside me there is no savior" (Is. 43:10-11).

Israel's response, then, to the creative presence is to proclaim the Name in all the world. Israel's very existence and presence in the world is creative in its own right. For Israel is a testimony to the life of God. Thus

Israel is described as a light to the nations, extending God's salvation to the ends of the earth (Is. 4:6; 49:6).

So it says in Genesis R.:

R. Isaac said: "Abraham received the passers-by, as they came and went: after they had eaten and drunk, he would say to them, 'Say the blessing.' Then they would say to him, 'What shall we say?' and he would say to them, say, 'Blessed be the Lord of the world, of whose gifts we have eaten,'" So God said to Abraham, "My name is not known to my creatures: as you made me known to my creatures, so I regard it as if you had been in partnership with me in the creation of the world."¹

Israel is God's servant in whom He will be glorified in the world. "Give us life," says Israel, "and we will proclaim thy name!" (Ps. 80:18). "Indeed, it is this witnessing, or rather re-witnessing, to revelation by which God is God; without it he could not be God."²

Jakob J. Petuchowski summarizes:

If the destiny of the world is that time when "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters

¹Genesis Rabbah, with commentary by Issachar ben Naphtali (Jerusalem: Lewin-Epstein, Ltd., 1969), Vol. I, Lek leka, 43:7; Bereschit Rabbah ("Genesis Rabbah"), ed. by J. Theodor and Ch. Albeck (Jerusalem: Wahrmann Books, 1965), Vol. I, Lek leka, 43:7, p. 421; ed. by H. Freedman and Maurice Simon, trans. by H. Freedman (London: The Soncino Press, 1939), Vol. I, Lech Lecha, 43:7, p. 357; quoted in Montefiore and Loewe, p. 115, 303.

²S. Schechter, Aspects of Rabbinic Theology, p. 24. Cf. his footnote 2 on that page in which he refers to the Pesikta de Rav Kahana, 102b; Sifre, 144a; and Hoffman's Midrasch Tannaim I, 72.

cover the sea," (Is. 11:9) then the idea of the Kingdom of God must have its bearers, its protagonists, its missionaries. And it was for this that Israel was chosen.¹

And we might add that it was for this, the very life of God, that Israel was created. The Kingdom of Heaven, the life of one God and all men together in all the world is the fulfillment of the covenant. And Israel is the means to effectuate it.

Sustaining Presence

The presence of the Lord, beyond constituting Israel and entrusting to the nation so great a commission, continued with Israel in history. The presence of the Lord sustained and nourished the creature, instructing, guiding, and teaching Israel how to be holy--how to be an effective testimony to the possibility of God and His creative activity, viz. the Kingdom of Heaven in the world.

As Israel was the creature of God's word, fashioned to be an instrument of God always and everywhere, it is natural to expect that the creature would reflect the nature² of the Creator; and the divine presence did indeed

¹Petuchowski, op. cit., p. 55.

²It is, in fact, more useful to speak of the will than of the nature of the Creator. Plumbing the nature and describing the essence of God is really an Hellenistic and Christian exercise rarely found in the Hebrew Bible. Israel's knowledge of God was gotten by observation of what

abide with Israel in an instructive capacity, as Scripture says:

"Consider too that this nation is thy people." And he said, "My presence will go with you and I will give you rest!" And he said to him, "If thy presence will not go with me, do not carry us up from here. For how shall it be known that I have found favor in thy sight, I and thy people? Is it not in thy going with us, so that we are distinct, I and thy people, from all other people that are upon the face of the earth?" (Ex. 33:13b-16).

The Lord God is an ethical God, not given to the caprice of neighboring pantheons. Israel's God is alone, the Creator of all; and His power is absolute. Having no other claims or pretenders to His power, it is His nature that prevails. It is God's nature to act justly.

While paganism roots moral and natural law alike in the primordial realm and understands it as the task of human and divine wisdom to discover and teach it, Israelite religion conceives of all law as an expression of the will of God, his absolute command. Israel's God created not only the realm of the is, but the realm of the ought as well.¹

Nor is this revelation of God obscure in the Pentateuch. As God muses to Himself, contemplating the merits of revealing to the patriarch the fate of Sodom, He reveals to us His own morality:

God does, how He behaves. The closest Israel ever comes to probing God's nature is the occasion of Moses standing at the burning bush, pressing God for some convincing bona fide of His being. God's retort with a pun on His own Name suggests His opinion of such cheek.

¹Kaufmann, op. cit., p. 327.

"Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do, seeing that Abraham shall become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth will bless themselves through him? No, for I have chosen him, that he may charge his children and his household after him to keep the way of the Lord [which is] by doing righteousness and justice; . . ." (Gen. 18:18-19).¹

Elsewhere the way of the Lord, the *דֶּרֶךְ יי*, is described in other terms but terms which always reflect His ethical concerns. The "Way of the Lord" is not properly His nature or His attributes; perhaps it is sometimes to be translated "the dealings of the Lord" or "the righteous behavior of the Lord" by which He is known. In an early passage like Exodus 15:13, He leads with steadfast love, which is evidenced by His actions in Israel's behalf at the Reed Sea. He loves, executes justice without partiality and bribe, and disciplines His people (Deut. 10:15-18; 11:2). He deals graciously and with mercy; He is slow to anger, rich in steadfast love and ready to relent (Joel 2:13; Ps. 145:8-9). He is ready to forgive and is constant with His people (Neh. 9:17).

The list of His ethical dealings is extensive,² and His presence instructs His people to deal ethically as He does.

Morality, on the other hand, is an absolute value, for it is divine in essence. The God who demands

¹The *דֶּרֶךְ יי* is *משפט וצדקה*.

²Cf. for example these Psalms: 11; 112; 116; 119: 137ff.; and 145.

righteousness, justice, kindness, and compassion is himself just, gracious, kind, and compassionate. Moral goodness makes man share, as it were, in the divine nature . . . morality is essentially godlike, being a reflection of the qualities of God.¹

The manner and specific content of instruction has varied according to Israel's need from age to age; the basic message of the presence has not. Israel is to be ethical as God is ethical.

On some occasions the instructive presence is by direct confrontation (Ex. 24:9-11), sometimes by indirect communication (Ex. 24:15-17), and sometimes by messenger (Ex. 23:20). The content is variously called Torah (תורה), the words of the Lord (אמרי-י'), the word of the Lord (דברי-י'), testimony (עדות and תעודה), a vision from the Lord (חזון-מיי), the judgment of the Lord (משפט-י'), statutes (חקים), precept (מצוה), prophecy (נבואה), vision from the Lord (מחזה או מראה-אלהים), wisdom (חכמה) and understanding (בינה).²

And Israel's response to the ethical expectation of the presence is equally varied as to terminology. Such words as love (אהב), hear (שמע), do (עשה), serve (עבד), watch/observe (נצר), know (ידע), seek (בקש), study (דרש),

¹Kaufmann, op. cit., p. 367.

²Cf. BDB, ad loc. These do not include the designations of punishment, which it must be understood are also a part of the revelation when the occasion calls for it.

observe (שמר), piously obey (יקה), listen/harken (אין and קשב), serve (שרת), and sacrifice (זבח) are just a few of the general and specific terms which represent Israel's faithful response to the instructive presence.¹

The instructive presence of God, later to be epitomized by the Rabbis in the single word Torah, demands a response from Israel; and the quality of Israel's response has far reaching implications for the success or failure of God's purpose in the world.

Goodness is simply a quality of God. . . . While the Bible does not recognize the subjection of God to any compulsion, it does depict him as observing the moral law. But this is not conceived of as an autonomous law, to which God is subject, but rather as itself a manifestation of God's will. What is has been created by the goodness of God. This goodness has been revealed to man, and man has been commanded to realize it in his own like. Man must "create here on earth the world of moral goodness that ought to be."²

The Torah is critically important for Israel, as it says: "As the lily dies only with its scent, so Israel will not die as long as it executes the commands, and does good deeds."³

¹Cf. BDB, ad loc. As with the revelatory words above, the list here does not include the inappropriate responses of Israel (such as "forget," "reject," "spurn," "forsake," and the like), although Israel, by the freedom implicit in the revelation, is capable of wrong choice or sin.

²Kaufmann, op. cit., p. 327.

³Shir ha Shirim Rabbah ("Song of Songs Rabbah"), with commentary by Issachar ben Naphtali (Jerusalem: Lewin-Epstein, Ltd., 1969), Vol. III, II. 2, §6; ed. by H.

The suggestion here is that Israel's life depends upon its continuing willingness to accept the yoke of the Law and to obey the divine Commandments. So much is true; but it is a statement of mechanics only. Israel must respond positively to the purposive presence of God to remain viable.

But why? In fact, Israel has a purposive presence in the world. Israel's very presence in the world is a living testimony to ethical life, the life of God. The world looks to Israel to learn appropriate, ethical behavior, דרך-אֵל; and if Israel is properly reflecting the righteous behavior of the Lord, the דרך-י', the nations will learn the will and ways of God to the end that "justice (will) roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream" (Amos 6:24). Not just in Israel; but in the whole world.¹

Moses, in his confrontation with God on the people's behalf, comes close to forcing the hand of the Almighty with the very argument described. "If you now destroy this people whom You have chosen," says Moses, "You will lose face before the nations; Your power will be thrown in

Freedman and Maurice Simon, trans. by Maurice Simon (London: The Soncino Press, 1939), II. 2, §6, p. 98.

¹The universalism at the day of the Lord in Zechariah and elsewhere is predicated upon the success of Israel's presence.

question; and Your morality will go unproclaimed in the world." And God is convinced, with reservations of course.¹

Israel's response to Torah, then is likewise critically important for God, as it says:

"Ye are my witness," saith the Lord, "and I am God" (Is. 43:12). That is, when ye are my witnesses, I am God, and when ye are not my witnesses, I am, as it were, not God.²

Or again:

R. Azariah in the name of R. Judah b. Simon said: "When the Israelites do God's will, they add to the power of God on high. When the Israelites do not do God's will, they, as it were, weaken the great power of God on high."³

Critical Presence

A third category of God's life-giving presence is His critical presence. Here is the exercise of God's discernment of His people according to His righteousness (קיצ)

¹Numbers 14:10b-23. As a literary form, this passage is almost a model for some of the playful but profound haggadah of later rabbinic midrash. It suggests a continuity of literary style from Bible to rabbinic writings.

²Pesikta de Rav Kahana (Buber, ed.), 102b; (Mandelbaum ed.), Vol. I, Piska 12:6, p. 208.

³Midrash Echa Rabbati ("Lamentations Rabbah"), with commentary by Issachar ben Naphtali (Jerusalem: Lewin-Epstein, Ltd., 1969), Vol. III, I. 6, §33; ed. by Salomon Buber (Wilna, 1899; Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1967), p. 35b (p. 70); ed. by H. H. Freedman and Maurice Simon, trans. by A. Cohen (London: The Soncino Press, 1939), Vol. VII, I. 6, §33, p. 107.

and His justice (משפט). And here is also His own flexibility in dealing with them according to His inclination towards mercy (חסד רחם חנוך) and punishment (אגד and כרת). The critical presence is, in fact, an affirmation of the freedom of will with which He has also endowed man, while retaining His normative stance of righteousness and justice. "Righteous art thou, O Lord, and right are thy judgments. Thou hast appointed thy testimonies in righteousness and in all faithfulness (Ps. 119:137-8)." And again, "Righteousness and justice are the foundation of thy throne" (Ps. 89:15a).

As discussed earlier,¹ the Lord is an ethical God, and the constancy of His ethical behavior is His righteousness and justice. It is for His righteous constancy that He is known as the true God, as it says: "Do you indeed decree what is right, you gods? Do you judge the sons of men uprightly? (Ps. 58:1)."² "Righteous art thou, O Lord, and right are thy judgments. Thou has appointed thy testimonies in righteousness and in all faithfulness" (Ps. 119:137-8).

¹Cf. above, p. 146.

²For a useful interpretation of "the gods" as used in Psalm 58, cf. Matitiah Tsevat, "God and the Gods in Assembly; An Interpretation of Psalm 82," HUCA XL-XLI (1969-1970), pp. 125-137, especially the Addendum, p. 134.

This critical presence of the Lord dwells in the midst of Israel, constantly evaluating the actions of the people against the norm of the Lord's own righteous justice. According to His own truth and justice, God measures the quality of the life He has given Israel. And this people Israel, whom He calls Jeshurun (upright, pleasing, agreeable, a Rechtvolk) is not ignorant of His ways.

When God called Israel for Himself, He expected of them the same ethical behavior which He exhibits; and He required of them the same constancy of ethics as His own. So Israel is summoned to act justly, to function as a righteous, straightforward, moral people, to be a Rechtvolk, as Scripture says, "For the Lord is righteous, he loves righteous deeds; the upright shall behold his face." (Ps. 11:7).

Israel is to discern God's righteousness, and to that end His critical presence has informed and instructed the people through statutes, testimonies, judgments and commandments. The presence has conveyed this teaching to patriarchs, through angels, by the mouths of His prophets, and in the wisdom of the sages. In short, the critical presence conveys the obligation of righteousness and justice through Torah; for He says: "Hearken to me, you who know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law" (Is. 51:7). And again:

Yea, he loved his people; all those consecrated to him were in his hand; so they followed in thy steps, receiving direction from thee, when Moses commanded us a law, as a possession for the assembly of Jacob. Thus the Lord became king in Jeshurun (Deut. 33:3-5a).

We have seen above¹ that Israel's religion is predicated upon the freedom to choose from among the many deities of the nations. Thus while the critical presence dwells in Israel, exhorting the people to righteousness and justice through the instruction of the Torah, it is also a fact that Israel has the freedom to accept or reject such instruction. And in rejecting the instruction or violating it, Israel rejects the righteousness of the Lord Himself, which is itself tantamount to rejecting God, as it says: "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way;" (Is. 53:6a). And again: "For a spirit of harlotry has led them astray, and they have left their God to play the harlot" (Hos. 3:12b).

When Israel freely hearkens to the instruction of the critical presence, they are indeed reflecting the image of God, as it says: "And it will be merit ascribed to us by God if we take care to observe this exactly as He commanded" (Deut. 6:25). Before the Judge they are innocent (יָקִי) and just (צַדִּיק). The freedom of Israel to choose extends to them even in situations where they have chosen to ignore or violate Torah. As we have previously maintained,

¹Pp. 100.

repentance is really a matter of re-choosing. And beyond repentance, which includes an overt change in behavior, Israel is also free to sacrifice, to make vows, to initiate a fast with weeping and mourning, and to pray in order to seek atonement (כפר), the lifting of the burden of sin (נשא), and forgiveness (סלח). These means represent the positive application of Israel's free will to restore a righteous relationship with God--that is, to re-establish Israel's image.

But if Israel chooses to ignore or reject the requirements of Torah, Israel becomes a rebellious people, hostile to the critical presence which gives life, as it says: "But they rebelled and grieved his holy Spirit, etc." (Is. 63:10).

In freely electing to rebel against Torah, Israel can sin (חטא) and can then be judged guilty (רשע, אשם) of transgression (פשע) by the righteous Judge. In this condition, the light of the critical presence exposes the appearance of an unrighteous, unjust, and ungodly people. They can be unrighteous and unjust (עול), perverters of justice (נסתה משפט), harlots (צנה) and unfaithful (נגד). God has said of them at these times,¹ ". . . for

¹It should be noted that none of these words describing Israel's infidelity indicate the state, nature or being of Israel any more than the previously described

you are not my people and I am not your God" (Hos. 1:9b).

In this the issue is one of life and death; for if a nation lives only at the word of its God, then the choice of turning from Him is really a choice for no life.

Earlier, we discussed the matter of choice and repentance. The critical presence of the Lord will continue to exhort the nation to return to righteousness when they stray, as when God warned Zedekiah, king of Judah: "Do justice and righteousness, etc." (Jer. 22:3). But why should a God Who deals righteously and with justice bother Himself with the willful transgressor? Why does He not simply allow his life-giving spirit to depart when flagrantly rejected? Why the divine persistence with Israel--or with mankind?

Such persistence is no caprice, no toying with Israel as cat with mouse. The matter is once again a matter of free will--of the Lord's free will. For reasons that are inexplicable, God chooses to act freely and positively beyond the natural and automatic workings of

appellations of righteousness signify anything about states of being. All are verbs or of verbal origin, indicating ongoing action and involvement of Israel and God in history. As Samuel Sandmel explains this point as differing from the Pauline/Hellenistic Christian view: "For us [sc. the Jews], a sin is an act of commission or omission which is wrong. For Paul, sin is a state of being; it is man's normal condition because man is a bodily creature." Samuel Sandmel, A Jewish Understanding of the New Testament (New York: University Publishers Inc., 1956), p. 59.

retributive justice,¹ overriding it with active affliction (as with Job) or with unmerited favor (as with Jacob).

The critical presence is observed, then, as the working of God's free will. The critical presence is free

¹Perhaps illustrated by the blessings and curses of Deuteronomy (11:26ff. and 28). I believe the book of Job and some of the other so-called "wisdom literature" to be a hyperbolic narrative of the Lord's free will. In the case of Job (without the epilogue, which is likely a later addition, but which spoils the entire lesson) the manifestation of God's free will is not mercy, but quite the opposite, i.e. affliction. The lesson is the same: God is not restricted by absolute attributes manipulated by man in schemes of either retributive justice or guaranteed salvation, but has freedom of will within an ethical environment. If man has free will, how much more the One who created man. And as God hopes for man's choice of Him in worship and praise, so man hopes for God's mercy. As man is capable of not being reliable, how much more can God exercise the freedom to be unmerciful. I call the story hyperbolic with fear and trembling, hoping that indeed the story will suffice to prove the point, and that I will not be called upon as a living, dramatic representation of it. At the very least it answers the question, "Why does this happen to me?" Rather it removes the question. If I can have the power of free will over my neighbor and my God, is it not vanity to assume that the opposite is not true?

The rabbis, commenting on Is. 56:7, make the same point:

R. Johanan says in the name of R. Jose: How do we know that the Holy One, blessed be He, says prayers? Because it says: "Even them will I bring to My holy mountain and make them joyful in My house of prayer." It is not said, "their prayer," but "My prayer"; hence [you learn] that the Holy One, blessed be He, says prayers. What does He pray?--R. Zutra b. Tobi said in the name of Rab: "May it be My will that My mercy may suppress My anger, and that My mercy may prevail over My [other] attributes, so that I may deal with My children in the attribute of mercy and, on their behalf, stop short of the limit of strict justice." B. Berachoth (Soncino ed.), 7a, p. 30.

to act with positive annihilation (שמד) of Israel, should they run after other gods: ". . . for the Lord your God in the midst of you, etc." (Deut. 6:15). Likewise for idolatry: He is free to cut off (כרת) Israel from the land (I K. 9:7) or the individual from the congregation of Israel (Num. 15:30), as easily as He made the covenant of life with them. He can threaten to destroy (חחח) Israel (Hos. 13:9) and cause them to perish (אבד) for their disobedience (Lev. 26:38).

The free activity of the Lord's critical presence in punishing Israel for transgression is most dramatically expressed in covenantal terms by the withholding of rain. There is a suggestion that God's ability to give rain is directly connected with His justice and power, as compared with the false gods of the nations (Jer. 14:19-22). The promise, then, to withhold rain as a sign of divine displeasure; sanction; or assurance for the covenant; is found in Deuteronomy 11:16-17. It is reiterated in I Kings 8:35; II Chronicles 6:26-27, 7:13; Isaiah 5:6; Jeremiah 14:4, Amos 4:7 and Zechariah 14:7. The necessity for rain which activates the land and nourishes the people has direct bearing upon the covenant and has been discussed above.¹ Here we see the willingness to withhold the rain, an active

¹Cf. above, p. 122, and the ninth chapter of Hosea (land: vss. 2-4; progeny: vss. 11-14).

choice on God's part, as a mark of His critical presence. The fundamental point is that Israel's right to choose and God's right to choose are closely intertwined, especially in the results of choice.

The critical presence of God is free to act with positive favor towards Israel. Just as Israel is free to repent, so Scripture records occasions of God's own repenting or the softening of His attitude (נחם), as it says, "The Lord repented concerning this;" (Amos 7:36). And in other situations of Israel's transgression, when the regular workings of God's righteous justice would have resulted in the destruction of the nation, the critical presence works otherwise. According to the Lord's free will, He tempers and even overrides the penalty with mercy (רחם), grace (חֲנּוּן), steadfast love (חסד), and long-suffering (אֵרֶךְ אַפַּיִם), as it says, "Return to the Lord, your God, for he is gracious, etc." (Joel 2:13).

Again there is dramatic expression of the Lord's critical presence, acting freely in covenantal terms, in the metaphor and indeed in the actual bestowing of rain. The beneficent bestowing of rain is a sign of the Lord's favor, for it activates the land which nourishes the people and gives life. Rain provides productivity where there is barrenness, fatness where there is famine, satisfaction where there is deprivation, life where there is death

(Joel 2:23-27). Not only will the land prosper for the satisfaction of the people through God's critical presence, but the land will also produce the offerings by means of which the people maintain the proper relationship with the Lord. The Lord provides the people with even that which He requires of them.¹

Rain as a sign of God's will and desire to bestow life by the covenant is stated many times in Scripture.² There is a compelling midrash which makes the same point:

"The Lord is good to all, and His tender mercies are over all His works" (Ps. CXLV, 9). R. Joshua b. Levi translated: The Lord is good to all, and His tender mercies are over all, because they are His works. R. Samuel b. Nahman interpreted: The Lord is good to all, and His tender mercies are over all, for it is His nature to be compassionate. R. Joshua interpreted in R. Levi's name: The Lord is good to all, and He inspires mankind with His [spirit of] compassion. R. Abba said: Should a year of famine commence tomorrow and men show compassion to each other, then the Holy One, blessed be He, will also be filled with compassion for them.

In the days of R. Tanhuma Israel had need of a fast, so they went to him and requested: "Master, proclaim a fast," He proclaimed a fast, for one day, then a second day, and then a third, yet no rain fell.

¹This is the possible meaning of the troublesome phrase in Joel 2:14: "אחריו ברכה מנחה ונסך ליי אלהיכם." *The Jerusalem Bible*, ed. by Alexander Jones (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Co., 1966), pp. 1472-1473, note "j", suggests that the blessing is one of good harvests, thus making sacred offerings possible again, which will in turn, assure the continuity of the life-giving covenant.

²There are, of course many other citations showing the critical presence of God bestowing mercy in the forms of water other than the rains.

Thereupon he ascended [the pulpit] and preached to them, saying: "My sons! Be filled with compassion for each other, and then the Holy One, blessed be He, will be filled with compassion for you." Now while they were distributing relief to the poor they saw a man give money to his divorced wife, whereupon they went to him [R. Tanhuma] and exclaimed, "Why do we sit here while such misdeeds are perpetrated!" "What then have you seen?" he inquired. "We saw So-and-so give his divorced wife money." He summoned them and asked him, "Why did you give money to your divorced wife?" "I saw her in great distress," replied he, "and was filled with compassion for her." Upon this R. Tanhuma turned his face upward and exclaimed: "Sovereign of the Universe! This man, upon whom this woman has no claim for sustenance, yet saw her in distress and was filled with pity for her. Seeing then that of Thee it is written, 'The Lord is full of compassion and gracious' (Ps. CIII, 8), while we are Thy children, the children of Thy beloved ones, the children of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, how much the more shouldst Thou be filled with compassion for us!" Immediately the rain descended and the world enjoyed relief.¹

That rain should figure so prominently as the image of the giving or withholding of God's life-giving presence is not surprising. In fact, it is quite what we should expect, given the greater contextual imagery of the husband-wife relationship as representing the relationship between God and Israel.² Rain represents the free will of

¹Genesis R. (Theodor-Albeck ed.), Vol. I, Noach, p. 304; (Soncino ed.), 33:3a, pp. 260-261. Cf. also Midrash Wayyikra Rabbah ("Leviticus Rabbah"), with commentary by Issachar ben Naphtali (Jerusalem: Lewin-Epstein, Ltd., 1969), Vol. II, Behar, 34:14; ed. by Mordecai Margulies (Jerusalem: The Ministry of Education and Culture of Israel, 1953), Vol. IV, Behar, 34:14, pp. 806-808; ed. by H. Freedman and Maurice Simon, trans. by J. Israelstam and Judah J. Slotki (London: The Soncino Press, 1939), Vol. IV, Behar, 34:14, pp. 441-442.

²Cf. below, p. 198.

the critical presence to give life within the covenant relationship.

What, then, is to be Israel's response to the outpouring of God's mercy? Israel is to come in to His presence to give thanks, as it says: "Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts ^{with} praise! Give thanks to him, bless his name" (Ps. 100:4). The thanksgiving of Israel is manifest in many ways; it is most important, moreover, to view the response as freely offered by Israel. Thanksgiving properly offered, whatever its form, neither constitutes a bribe nor represents a pay-off. Thanksgiving is the righteous exercise of Israel's free will in response to the exercise of the Lord's free will. Thus thanksgiving looks backward with satisfaction and trust; it looks to the present with immediate rejoicing in the presence of the Lord; and it looks to the future with hopeful expectation.

The looking backwards in thanksgiving undoubtedly accounts in part for the historical framework of Israel's religion. By recounting in song, oral recitation, or written narrative the incidents of God's past mercies when Israel has experienced His presence, the community of any age is able to participate with a kind of anamnesis in the mercies extended to its forefathers. Israel of the present is able to give thanks for the Lord's favor to the

Israel of former years because the sons partake of their father's experience through this special historical remembrance.¹

The thanksgiving of the present is, for Israel, the rejoicing of the people before the Lord. The supreme or essential moment, the appointed time for rejoicing before the Lord, is at festival time. Three times in the year Israel is to appear before the Lord, to be seen of Him and to behold Him.²

The activities of thanksgiving at the feast were many and varied, but all were done in the environment of the critical presence. Eating before the Lord seems to have been a standard function of the festival from earliest times (Ex. 24:11). And the eating included, of course, the preliminary actions of offering and sacrifice. Thus the offering and the eating of sacrifice are to be

¹Notice that this looking backward is not a cultic re-enactment of the history of God in which Israel participates, as with the pagan rites; but it is a re-calling of Israel's history and Israel's experience of God's mercy in that history. God has no history, as Kaufmann points out (p. 54, et passim), and Israel contributes nothing to His power by partaking of the cultic drama.

Rather Israel can enjoy at any given present the divine mercies of the past through the vehicle of historical recall. Thus Israel gives thanks for the past, as it gives thanks for the present, by bringing the past into the present. The celebration is one of Israel's life process, past and present; but it is not one of God's life process.

²Cf. the discussion above, p. 28ff.

viewed as purely thanksgiving and rejoicing activities, not mystical rites of union or communion, as Kaufmann says:

The Priestly Code makes the flesh of the peace offering the property of YHWH. The human partaker of it is, as it were, a guest of YHWH: this is the nearness of God that is symbolized by eating the peace offering (Lev. 7:20ff.). . . . Joy, not mystic union, is the basic emotional content of the Israelite cult; this joy too is "before"--not "with"--YHWH (Deut. 12:12, 18; etc.).¹

Rejoicing further included the abovementioned recalling of the sacred history to make it a part of the thanksgiving celebration.² And this recollection process seems also to have included, from time to time, a recitation or reading of the divine instruction of the past, together with further elucidation of Torah for the present by judges, kings, prophets, and scholars (cf. Ex. 24:7; Deut. 17:18-19; Neh. 8:5-6 for examples).

And finally this present rejoicing before the Lord included the sacred dancing, the shouting, the psalter, the singing, the wonder-working and gaming, and the playing of musical instruments. This emotional outpouring in all its variety gave collective release to all the pressures of agricultural and business concern of the past season,

¹Kaufmann, op. cit., p. 111-21, et passim.

²It is possible that Passover had more of this narrative aspect of the thanksgiving/rejoicing than did Sukkoth. This could account for the persistence of the historicization process in later Passover celebrations and the failure of the process for Sukkoth (though Lev. 23:42-43 makes an initial attempt at it). This possibility is discussed above, p. 39f.

as well as providing emotional involvement in the Lord's mighty and wonderous acts performed for Israel in times past. This is a total immersion in the fever of the moment when past and present converge and agricultural cycle and historical progression intersect, all under the eyes of the Lord, Who Himself rejoices at seeing His children¹ celebrating the offering of their wills to His own Will. It is their "service which is perfect freedom."² God makes merry with His people because of the offering of their will to His own. As it says: "God has gone up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of a trumpet" (Ps. 47:5).

The thanksgiving for the future is also implicit in a feast of the present. Israel thanks the Lord in His presence for that which will give life in the future. It is a proleptic thanksgiving which rejoices for that which is not yet, but which will surely be, because it is a matter of promise and the Promisor is proven reliable.

¹The imagery of a father with his children is descriptive of the relationship between God and Israel second in importance only to that of the husband-wife imagery which is described below, p. 198, as the dynamic of the four covenant aspects.

²From "A Collect for Peace" in the Order for Daily Morning Prayer of The Book of Common Prayer according to the use of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the U.S.A. (Greenwich, Connecticut: The Seabury Press, 1928), p. 17.

The object of hopeful expectation is as variable as Israel's current needs.

Israel's most consistent need is a cyclical, agricultural one. The covenant has indeed promised a fruitful land; yet there is the yearly need for the fulfillment of that promise in the יורה/מורה, the former rains which must fall from the end of October to the beginning of December.

The rainy season sets in at the end of October, or, more frequently, in November. It begins with the "first rain" of the Old Testament (Deut. xi.14 et al.), which loosens the dry earth for plowing. Then, after a period of mild weather, the heavy winter rains set in, toward the middle of December, soaking into the ground and filling the wells and cisterns. They are heaviest in January. . . . The crops depend not only on the quantity but also on the proper distribution of rain. . . . If sufficient rain does not fall in time many of the springs dry up, and the land can not be properly cultivated; the crops wither, there is no harvest, and a general scarcity of grain results, so that the price of bread is closely connected with the rainfall.¹

The Sukkoth ceremonies connected with rainfall and fertility to be examined presently are related precisely to the great necessity for these early rains. While we shall see that the rain rites often suggest an ancient and pagan origin in the realms of sympathetic magic, it is most unlikely that Israel itself resorted to such manipulation of divine power. A consistently ethical God Who possesses all power, Who is mercifully inclined to give

¹Immanuel Benzinger, "Palestine," Jewish Encyclopedia, 1905, IX, pp. 497a and 496b.

life, Who has covenanted to do just that, and Who has specified the exact area of His fructifying concern, is likely to be little more than insulted by a petty pilfering of His power. It is unlikely, furthermore, that Israel was ignorant of correct procedure for obtaining the rains.¹ What appears to be sympathetic magic is most likely a case of proleptic thanksgiving in borrowed ancient garb.²

The second most consistent need for which Israel gives thanks with hopeful expectation is the need for progeny. The need for children to assure immortality and establish a name in Israel is met by the second condition of the covenant; but like the land's fertility, the wife's fecundity is of perpetual concern.

The rites connected with Sukkoth and its antecedent festival, the Asiph (the Harvest-Home), at which fructifying rain is a major theme, seem also to be related to wife-choosing and child-bearing. The thanksgiving pertaining

¹Even Solomon, with his rather catholic acquaintance by marriage of foreign deities, knew that rain was obtained by a proper and prayerful posture toward the Lord and not by magic (cf. I K. 8:35ff).

²It should be evident that petition, whether by sacrifice or prayer, is quite naturally a part of any thanksgiving. In fact, petition further glorifies thanksgiving in that the petitioner, by his very request, attributes the power to accomplish the petition to his Lord, thus praising his Lord so much the more.

to one's children, their begetting, birth, and nurturing is clearly a proleptic thanksgiving. The Gemara says it clearly:

R. Johanan said: Three keys the Holy One, blessed be He has retained in His own hands and not entrusted to the hand of any messenger, namely, the Key of Rain, the Key of Childbirth, and the Key of the Revival of the Dead. The Key of Rain, for it is written, "The Lord will open unto thee His good treasure, the heaven to give the rain of thy land in its season" (Deut. 11:14), the Key of Childbirth, for it is written, "And God remembered Rachel, and God hearkened to her, and opened her womb" (Gen. 30:22). The Key of the Revival of the Dead, for it is written, "And ye shall know that I am the LORD, when I have opened your graves" (Ezek. 37:13). In Palestine they said: Also the Key of Sustenance, for it is said, "Thou openest thy hand, etc." (Ps. 145:16). Why does not R. Johanan include also this [key]?--Because in his view sustenance is [included in] Rain.¹

An Israelite rejoices and gives thanks at taking a wife or presenting a child for the untold generations he sees in that child. He gives thanks now for what he believes the Lord will cause to be in the future.

The critical presence of the Lord was most particularly associated with the feast; the free will of the Lord by which He chose to extend mercy to Israel was most readily apparent at the pilgrim festival. Israel's appropriate response was thanksgiving in as many fitting forms as there were instances of mercy.

The reasons for Israel's rejoicing and thanksgiving especially on the day of festival are obvious enough.

¹B. Ta'anith (Soncino ed.) 2a/b.

Israel enjoys the beneficence of God's goodness and mercy which extend beyond the normal expectations of His justice. But together with Israel's motivation, there is a rejoicing and a satisfaction for the critical presence of God. For when Israel returns time after time to see and be seen of God, there is a continuing opportunity in the pilgrim festival for Israel to choose its God again.

There is the ever-present possibility for Israel to exercise its free will in such a way that the sons' will is aligned with that of the Father. And only through Israel's free choice of God does the Lord God of Israel have an entree to the world: God is known through His servant Israel. If God is chosen and properly represented to the nations of the world, He is well-served indeed, for it says: "In those days ten men from the nations of every tongue shall take hold of a robe of a Jew, saying, 'Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.'" (Zech. 8:23). If God is misrepresented by Israel, He is ill-served indeed, as it says, ". . . Yes, all the nations would say, 'Why has the Lord done thus to this land? etc.'" (Deut. 29:24ff.).

The point of free will and God's critical presence is Slonimsky's point too when he says:

Man has freedom, he can choose God or reject God, he can lead the world to perdition and to redemption. The creation of this being Man with such power of

freedom means that God has made room for a co-determining power alongside of Himself. Man is the cross-road of the world.

To ask whether God cannot redeem the world without man's help, or whether God has need of man for his work, can lead only to quibbling. In history we see that God waits for man. It is clear, then, that God has willed to use man for the completion of his work of creation and to allow him autonomy in that work.¹

Restorative Presence

The fourth category of God's life-giving presence is His restorative presence. This might be explained, in part, as revelation for the purpose of problem solving. It has also an aspect of restoration in the sense of rest or relief, as in the occasional setting down (in transitu) of a burden. Here is refreshment and release for the weariness of life, whatever the occasion of discomfort.

Israel's status as a chosen people has, since the acceptance of the yoke of the Torah at Sinai, entailed a two-fold burden for this holy nation. From these burdens occasional relief is necessary. The first burden is that of the threat of captivity or actual captivity. The second burden is that implied in any mission: the very insistence and weight of the yoke itself.

Israel's experience in history since Abraham has included periods of oppression and captivity. The call to

¹Slonimsky, op. cit., p. 53.

holiness and the promise of obedience still leave a gap to be bridged between what Israel is and what Israel should be as an appropriate image of God's will and concern in the world. The freedom of will which allowed Israel to choose God in the first place is a continuing freedom, the exercise of which has led sometimes to the choice of alternatives to holiness, a choice of idolatry or a choice of immortality.

To choose other than the One Who gives life is to choose a measure of death. And since Israel's life is defined by covenant in terms of land and progeny, death will be described by a cutting off of the nation from its land and its generations. These restrictions on life are, of course, limited characteristics. A loving and proud father, who expects his son's actions to fairly represent his own, will punish the child when the son high-handedly disgraces him. He will not, however, abandon the child forever or destroy him. He desires only that his son not misrepresent him. Sanctions will be external and will continue until the law is written on the child's heart and control exercised from within.

God's correctives for Israel in terms of land and progeny have included famine, exile, foreign occupation, and oppression. And when Israel is bound by the Father's discipline/chastisement (מוסר), the nation cries out for

restoration and reconciliation. Israel waits for the restorative presence of God; and when God does restore, the presence is experienced as His redeeming (גאל), His ransoming (פדה), and His restoring (שוב) Israel--both people and land--from captivity.¹

Therefore thus says the Lord: "If you return (חשוב), I will restore (אשיבך) you, and you shall stand before me. If you utter what is precious, and not what is worthless, you shall be as my mouth. They shall turn to you, but you shall not turn to them . . . for I am with you to save you and deliver you, says the Lord. I will deliver you out of the hand of the wicked, and redeem you from the grasp of the ruthless" (Jer. 15:19-21).

Similarly when Israel is hard-pressed and surrounded by enemies, it is to the restorative presence of the Lord that the nation looks for His relief extended and made effective in terms of need and danger to life.²

Israel's problems of captivity and oppression are concrete

¹At some time, in some literary-theological tradition of Israel (perhaps post-Exilic, but not necessarily), the captivity was represented as less specific and concrete; it became more personal. In this tradition or literature, not Babylon or Egypt, but the sins of Israel are the captivity, cf. for instance Ps. 130:7-8. This is undoubtedly a transitional step towards the evaluational process of the Rabbis. Solomon's Temple dedication prayer must surely be one of the earliest forerunners in equating sin with something that verges on captivity.

²Cf. Emil G. Hirsch, "Salvation," JE, X, pp. 663a-664b, for an analysis of the restorative implications of שׁוּעַ and its synonyms, שׁוּב, מַלְטָה, חַיָּה, and הַצִּיל. Particular note should be taken of the sense in which שׁוּעַ may indicate victory, and is important below (p. 381) in the section on the Hosha'anoth.

in history and require an active presence of God in history for concrete resolution.¹

As Israel awaits (חכה) the coming of the restorative presence of God, the coming day of the Lord of which the prophets speak so often, it is Israel's hope (קיו, יחל) and trust (אמץ, בטח) which give strength, courage and perseverance.² On that day, the day of redemption and relief from whatever might be the present captivity or oppression, the restorative presence of the Lord will gather (אסף, קבץ, כנס) Israel to their place once again as it says: "I will surely gather all of you, etc." (Mic. 2:12-13).

A second responsibility undertaken by Israel at Sinai was the setting forth of the glory of the Lord, that same glory which filled the tabernacle upon its dedication, which moved with the people throughout their wanderings (Ex. 40:34-38), and which dwelt with them, heavy with majesty, in Jerusalem (I K. 8:11). And from there and in all places of their wandering, Israel was to bear and show

¹As opposed, for instance, to the Christian problem of sin as characteristic of man's nature. We would expect to find the same terminology of redemption and salvation in Christian theology bearing significantly different and far less concrete meanings in response to the very different initial problem. Our expectations are certainly not disappointed.

²Cf. especially Psalm 130:5-8.

forth this glory, as it says: "Declare his glory among the nations, etc." (Ps. 96:3).

Based on His own example at creation, the restorative presence of the Lord offered regular respite to the people of Israel that they might rest and rejoice in the glory which was their burden to all the nations. God gave them sabbaths, years of release, jubilee years, and times of festival. And not to the people only, but to their servants; to the sojourners among them; to their animals; and even to the land as well, as it says, "but the seventh year you shall let it rest and lie fallow" (Ex. 23:11).

At Sinai, Moses was keenly aware that any attempt to move the people from their place of rest at the holy mountain without the presence of the Lord accompanying them would be disaster. He pleads, "If thy presence will not go with me, do not carry us up from here" (Ex. 33:15). Yet the Lord assures him, saying, "My presence will go with you, and I will give you rest" (Ex. 33:14).¹

The restorative presence is the comfortable revelation that brings healing to Israel (Ex. 15:26), strengthening the weak hands, encouraging the fearful, opening the eyes of the blind and the ears of the deaf,

¹Cf. the discussion of this passage in Exodus 33 in Herbert C. Brichto, "On Faith and Revelation in the Bible," *op. cit.*, p. 46. He suggests the Buber-Rosenzweig translation: "If I Myself go in the lead, will I then satisfy you?"

causing the lame to walk, and making the dumb to speak (Is. 35:3-6a). This is the presence of the Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph like a flock (Ps. 81:1a), Who leads His sheep by still waters, restoring life (Ps. 23:2b-3a). And when Israel carried the glory into bondage, it was the word of the restorative presence that cried out for all to hear: "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem . . . He will feed his flock like a shepherd . . ." (Is. 40:1-2a, 11a).

Israel's response to the restorative presence of God in the responsibility of general glory-bearing throughout history has been to obey the commandment of God by following His own example in keeping holy the Sabbath. Furthermore they have been responsible for His statutes concerning times and seasons of rest and rejoicing--the sabbatical years, the jubilees, and the festivals.

In those instances in which Israel, due to transgressions, has been in captivity, the people's responsibility, according to God's promise in Leviticus 26:23-39, is to accept His corrective chastisement (מוסר) and learn from it, as Isaiah says, ". . . learn to do good; seek justice, etc." (Is. 1:17). And Isaiah argues on their behalf: "O Lord, in distress they sought thee, they poured out a prayer when thy chastening was upon them" (Is. 26:16).

Thus the people pleaded with God for the preservation of the covenant and their restoration, as in Jeremiah 14:19-22.¹

The Lord's restorative presence has promised relief to Israel even in their distress, as it says: "Fear thou not, O Jacob my servant, saith the Lord: for I am with thee; etc." (Jer. 46:28). But Israel must have patience in its affliction, waiting for the Lord to act with redemption: "'Therefore wait for me,' says the Lord, etc." (Zeph. 3:8). Furthermore, in waiting, Israel is urged to come to terms with the situation of their captivity, discovering the restorative presence even in exile and accepting the fact that even exile can be a part of the Lord's purpose (Jer. 29:7, 11; 42:10-12).

Israel's receptivity to the restorative presence, even when it involves exile and oppression, is of great importance to the Lord. As the Sabbath rest is observed by God Himself from creation onward, so Israel's observance of the Sabbath makes God's own activity known to the nations of the world. As Israel enjoys with rejoicing the restorative presence in festivals and seasons, so the nations can observe the graciousness of the Lord and be drawn to Him.

¹Notice in Jeremiah 14:22 that Israel's penitential recognition of God's claim on them is described in terms of rain and showers.

As Israel enjoys redemption and salvation, the nations are made aware of the true locus of power among the gods. In Israel's healing,¹ the nations learn the source of healing. In Israel's patience, even in great affliction and suffering, the nations learn the obligation and the implications of that obligation for serving the Lord God of Israel.

Just as in the case of the creative and sustaining presence of God, the almost symbiotic relationship of Israel and God suggests, כְּנִיחוֹל, that in Israel's rest, God finds rest; that in Israel's festival, God rejoices; that in Israel's chastisement, God suffers;² and in Israel's redemption and salvation, God's own power is released and expanded in the world, until that time when

¹The relationship between the healing, both individual and collective, of Israel with the day of the Lord's visitation; with the restored covenant of life; with rain; and ultimately with the Feast of Sukkoth is beautifully stated in Isaiah 30:23-26, and will be further dealt with later in the discussion of the day of the Lord, p. 393.

²This poignant suffering of the Lord God in Israel's affliction is beautifully expressed in Hosea 11:8-9 and in the following midrash which plays on Isaiah 40:1:

"Comfort, comfort [me], O my people." R. Abin said: for the matter is like as if a king had a palace or a vineyard, which enemies had destroyed. The king needs comfort, not the palace or the vineyard. But the Temple is God's palace, and it lies waste, and Israel is His vineyard [which went into exile]. Therefore, comfort me, comfort me, O my people." Pesikta de Rav Kahana (Mandelbaum ed.), Vol. I, Piska 16:9, pp. 276-277; (Buber ed.), 128a.

"the Lord will become king over all the earth; on that day the Lord will be one and his name one" (Zech. 14:9).

The Facilitator: The Easing of Life

The fourth and final great aspect of the covenant of life is as concrete as the wind, invisible in itself, yet eminently perceptible through that which it moves and drives. Like the wind, the protagonist is elusive, appearing in first one form, then another. Identification and categorization are momentary, fleeting, and unreliable. The facilitator of the covenant is an ad hoc figure, appropriate at any given time to the condition of Israel.

The aspect of the facilitator is a logical extension of the aspect of the divine presence, being a divinely provided guarantor of the relationship between God and Israel. The function of the facilitator generally is to make certain that the terms of the covenant relationship are correctly perceived, understood, met, and fulfilled. The facilitator attempts to insure that the presence of God to Israel may be a blessing and not a terror, and that the response of Israel will be a joy and not a disappointment to the Lord God. Comfort must therefore be described in this context in its older, more precise definition of "strengthening" and "upholding," as well as with its meaning of "solace." It must also be expanded to include a

sense of corrective punishment to achieve a strengthening of relationship.

It is important to note at the outset that the facilitator, while divinely commissioned and inspired, is in no way to be confused with the Lord God Himself. The facilitator, for all that he is a true and functional agent of the divine presence, is on the side of creation, and not on that of the Creator. The facilitator is, and remains, a means to but never the end of the relationship. His place is in the time/space continuum of history, though his word is the Word of God. R. Jose, commenting on this point says:

Behold, it says: "The heavens are the heavens of the Lord, but the earth hath He given to the children of men" (Ps. 115:16). Neither Moses nor Elijah ever went up to heaven, nor did the Glory ever come down to earth. Scripture merely teaches that God said to Moses: Behold, I am going to call you through the top of the mount and you will come up, as it is said: "And the Lord called Moses to the top of the mount."¹

The narrative of creation in the book of Genesis, no matter who its authors or what its age, indicates to us that Israel was aware that the God of their choice was in fact the Creator of all things; and having established

¹Mechilta d'Rabbi Ishmael, ed. by I. H. Weiss (Vienna: Jacob Schlossberg, 1865), Massektha d'Bahodesh, Yithro Parashah 4, p. 73a; ed. by H. S. Horovitz and I. A. Rabin (Jerusalem: Bamberger and Wahrman, 1960), Massektha d'Bahodesh, Yithro Parashah 4, p. 217; ed. and trans. by Jacob Z. Lauterbach (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 1933), Vol. II, Tractate Bahodesh, Yithro Parashah 4, p. 224.

the source of creation, they were more than passingly interested in the means of creation and the sustenance of that creation. The issue is not so much a scientific one of how God created and sustained the world as it is a religious issue of guaranteeing in the sacred literature itself the definite line of separation between Creator and created.

The difficulty, then, is a problem of how the line is crossed, how communication is achieved and relationship established, without man's being consumed by God's holiness on the one hand, and without God's destroying the world with His glory on the other (Ex. 19:16-25).¹ That

¹The problem is perennial for those religions that do perceive the otherness of God in man's terms, no matter whether the religion assumes the goodness of creation or posits the sinful depravity of creation or any part of it. The statement of the problem in terms of transcendence and imminence of God is not precisely the point, though it arises from the same problem at issue here. This Hellenistic dichotomy suggests that the problem resides in the nature of God and how He can split Himself between two worlds. It is unlikely that the Bible writers considered the problem in this fashion, unconcerned as they were with the nature or essence of God as Being anyway.

For the authors of the Bible the issue was simply a matter of propriety of the most profound sort. Interested more in right action than descriptions of being, and how being could or must function, they operated on precedent. They noted that God does not properly appear in person in their world; and they thus inferred that they must not properly transgress into His holy place. The exceptions, such as God's face to face encounters with Moses, or Isaiah's presence in the divine court are exceptions which prove the rule of propriety and cast doubt upon the necessity for philosophical/theological speculations of transcendence and imminence.

it was God's intent to communicate with His creation and to enter into a relationship with His chosen people was, for the Bible writers, a fact. Their concern was to describe the means of this communication and relationship in a manner sensitive and acceptable to the variable proprieties of their own generation.

The fundamental solution, which lies behind every author's description, hangs on the notion of the word (דבר) and the wind (רוח) of God. Conscious of the phenomenon of breath as a sign of life and of the voice as formed breath proceeding from one person to another which can establish relationship without depleting the speaker or invading the personal integrity of either speaker or listener, Israel discovered the imageries most appropriate to describe the dealings of God with man.

Just as a verbal command from one with power could bring about ordering and movement in the world, so the verbal command of the All-powerful would obviously bring about the good ordering of creation. As breath in a person could indicate life and motion, so the outpouring of divine breath would animate man, not only with life, but also with purposive life and motion. The דבר of God orders the body of man (Gen. 1:26; Ps. 139:13; Job 10:11) and the רוח of God animates his נפש (Gen. 2:17; Ezek. 37:5). And as

God gives order and life to man, so He does with the nation of His choosing.

God's creation of Israel and His inclination to have a relationship with this people necessitated a particularization and specialization of God's דבר and רוח. The relationship was to be very personal, and thus the דבר and רוח had, at each moment in history, to be suitable for recognition. What was useful in one generation had to be altered for the next; but the credentials of the facilitator had always to assure the authenticity of the דבר and רוח of the Lord. Whether comfort to Israel was positive or negative, there could be no mistaking the signs of God's Word and Wind; only choice or rejection of them.

As if the specific relationship were not enough, an impediment to direct communication with this special people necessitated an even closer refinement of the comfortable Word. Thus while Israel is to be ultimately the facilitator of the covenant of life for the nations of the world, there were those persons and other operatives raised up from the midst of Israel itself to be facilitators for God's chosen people. The impediment to relationship, as Herbert C. Brichto points out, was and remains fear. Concerning Deuteronomy 18:15ff he says:

A prophet, an intermediary, is needed, for the general--when their eyes are not closed and their ears are not stopped--are afraid. . . . And that fear is perhaps the

last bar to the fulfillment of Moses' prayer, "Would that all the people of the Lord were prophets, that the Lord put His spirit upon them (Num. 11:29)."¹

The facilitator is for Israel what Israel is for the world: a protagonist. For Israel he (or she--the sacred history provides accounts of both) stands as a functional figure, arguing, pleading, proclaiming, and summarizing Israel's position before the Lord God. He is Israel's advocate-general in matters pertaining to the covenant and Israel's leader, guiding the people in the ways of obtaining the terms of the covenant. He stands for Israel.

When Israel's case needs pleading, he, like Moses (Ex. 33), argues with God on Israel's behalf, beseeching the consistently righteous Lord to repent Him of the evil and to exercise His Will to be merciful in the face of Israel's lapses of faith. When Israel is in the land, he pleads for its fertility, as Solomon did at the dedication of the Temple; as did Honi the Circle Drawer (M. Ta'anith 3:8)² at the time of the great drought; and as Elijah

¹Herbert C. Brichto, "On Faith and Revelation in the Bible," op. cit., p. 53.

²The Mishnah ("Mishnayoth"), ed. and trans. by Philip Blackman (New York: The Judaica Press, 1964), Vol. II, Order Moed, Tractate Ta'anith 3:8, p. 425; ed. by Ch. Albeck (Tel Aviv: Dvir, 1958), Vol. II, Seder Moed, Tractate Ta'anith 3:8, p. 339. Cf. also The Mishnah, ed. and trans. by Herbert Danby (London: Oxford University Press, 1933), Second Division: Moed, Ta'anith 3:8, p. 198.

finally did when the prophets of Baal no more polluted the land.

And when Israel is away from the land, the facilitator stands before Israel to lead them back, like Moses in Egypt and Nehemiah in Babylon. When Israel is thirsty in the wilderness, like Moses he strikes the rock for them. And when Israel thirsts for the waters of their own land, even as they sit by the strange waterways of a foreign land, he, like Ezekiel, comforts them with the vision of unending streams of water pouring from the altar in Jerusalem (Ez. 43). When the holy land is in danger of occupation, there are the likes of Gideon, or Deborah, or Samuel, or Saul risen up to defend it. Like Jeremiah and Jonah, the facilitator is jealous for Israel.

The facilitator is jealous for the children of Israel, the life-giving progeny, the Lord's inheritance. Like Abraham at the very first, he remains faithful to the sons of Israel, guarding that offspring for the Lord with the zeal of Joshua or Judas the Maccabee. Like David and Solomon, he constantly establishes the Lord's brood in the land by assuring and expanding its borders. He is concerned with the people's welfare and continuity, like Joab when he assured the return of the crown prince Absalom (II S. 14). When Israel walks through the valley of the shadow of death, he is rod and staff; when they suffer for

the Lord's sake, he suffers with and even for them, as Elijah did in the cave (I K. 19:9ff.) or Jeremiah in the pit (Jer. 38). He is in the forefront of affliction, whether affliction is the musar of the Lord or the enemy of the nations.

As for God's part of the covenant, the facilitator is the איש-האלהים to Israel (Deut. 33:1), one sent as a messenger of the covenant. Viewed from this perspective, the facilitator is a kind of divinely commissioned and beneficent agent provocateur among the people, actuating the life-giving covenant relationship. As becomes the Lord's penchant for the unlikely, He often raises up a facilitator from among an unlikely community in an unimportant place, as He did with Abraham and Miriam and Saul.

At some times He designates His messengers in splendor, as when Isaiah was commissioned in the heavenly court; at other times the call is simple, unadorned, and lacking the visible investiture of even the establishment, as with Amos (7:14). Sometimes the protagonist is willing; but more often he seeks to avoid his designated function.

The message of God is put in the mouth of the facilitator on some occasions. Sometimes his symbolic actions and hyperbolic parables are the communicative and operative devices. And when he works wonders and produces signs, the מוֹטִים have as their only goal the directing of

the community's attention to the One by Whose power the wonders were wrought.

The facilitator concerns himself with procuring and assuring God's title to the land, as when Jacob built altars in the land and put away the idols (Gen. 35), or as when David purchased the threshing-floor of Araunah the Jebusite for the Ark. And he assures God's dwelling place, as Solomon did when he built the Temple or as Nehemiah did when he surveyed the walls of Jerusalem to rebuild them.

Because the Lord God shows Himself to be righteous and just, it is the function of the facilitator to assure the righteousness of the Lord's people. As God is holy, the facilitator must persist in the effort of insuring the holiness of Israel. When David jeopardized, not only his own family, but his entire kingdom by his adulterous relations with Bathsheba, it was Nathan the facilitator who maneuvered the king into a self-judgment which restored Israel's moral integrity before the Lord (II S. 12). And when the foreign intermarriages of Israel threatened to obstruct the efforts of Ezra to re-establish the holy commonwealth, Ezra the scribe-facilitator insisted upon separation, much as in a later time the Perushim were to extend and expand the Torah to insure the continued holiness of the people.

Often these facilitators are called upon to exercise the Lord's might as Lord of hosts; for Israel was called out of Egypt as a host (Ex. 12:41) and numbered in the wilderness as a host. As a host they moved through the wilderness; as a host they moved into the land of promise; and as a host they conquered it and defended it. When Israel went into exile it was the hope that the Lord, the God of hosts would again lead them through the wilderness to the land.

The facilitator is thus sometimes appointed (פֶּקֶד) leader of the hosts of the Lord, the hosts of His chosen people, יהוה צבאות אלהי מערכות ישראל (Is. 17:45). These facilitators are appointed by the Lord so that His power to fulfill His promises and to bring His people to their land might be remembered through the generations and made manifest to the nations. Joseph was appointed in Egypt to keep alive the remembrance of the Lord there (Gen. 39:5). Moses and Joshua were appointed for His remembrance, as were the judges from time to time; and Samuel; Saul; David; Solomon; and the kings of Israel and Judah. Even a foreigner could be anointed and designated a facilitator in this capacity, when it fulfilled the Lord's need for exercising His might. Thus Cyrus is called "anointed" and given the strength to subdue nations (Is. 44:28-45:2); for the Lord is God of the hosts of the nations too, as He is

Lord of the hosts of all creation (Is. 45:12). All these were facilitators for the true and only Redeemer, the God of hosts (Is. 47:4).

The facilitators are jealous for the God of Israel. They are the comforters upon whom His spirit has rested and in whose mouths His word has been set. Their names are the protagonists of Scripture; their titles are manifold. They are by function: "Sent by the Lord" (מְשֹׁלָה-יִי) and "Driven/Led by the Lord" (מְנַהֵג-יִשְׂרָאֵל); "Facilitator and Protagonist of the Covenant" (גִּבּוֹר וּמְגִבִּיר); "Troubler and Comforter of Israel" (עֹכֵר וּמְנַחֵם-יִשְׂרָאֵל); "Man of God and Lover of Israel" (אִישׁ-הָאֱלֹהִים וְאוֹהֵב-יִשְׂרָאֵל); "Servant of the Lord and Judge of Israel: (עַבְד־יְי וְשׁוֹפֵט-); (מוֹשִׁיעַ בַּמִּלְחָמָה) (יִשְׂרָאֵל); and "Deliverer in Battle" (מוֹשִׁיעַ בַּמִּלְחָמָה). We know know them by many titles and designations: "Patriarchs and Matriarchs in Israel" (הָאֲבוֹת וְהָאֲמָהוֹת בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל); "Angels [Messengers] and Messenger of the Covenant" (הַבְּרִיָּה); "Leaders of the Hosts" (שָׂרֵי-הַצְּבָאוֹת); (הַמְּלָאכִים וּמַלְאָךְ); "Judges" (הַשְּׁפָטִים); "Kings of Israel and Shepherds of Israel" (מְלָכֵי-יִשְׂרָאֵל וְרֹעֵי-יִשְׂרָאֵל); "Prophets and Sons of the Prophets" (הַנְּבִיאִים וּבְנֵי-הַנְּבִיאִים); "Seers, Diviners, and Prophets" (רְאשֵׁי-שִׁבְטִים); "Tribal Chieftans" (הַחֲזוּזִים וְהָרָאִים); "Scribes" (הַסֹּפְרִים וְהַמְּשָׁכִים בְּשֵׁט סֵפֶר); "Elders of Israel" (זִקְנֵי-יִשְׂרָאֵל); "The Righteous, Pious, and Men of Good Works"

(הצדקים והחסידים ואנשי-מעשה); and "Preachers and Expounders of Torah" (הדרשנים).¹

¹I have not mentioned the Nazirim by title for want of sufficient information regarding their vows and function. Certainly Samson and Samuel were Nazirim of some sort, and they were surely facilitators in their generations. Amos 2:11-12 suggests a parallel function for the prophets.

I have named the prophets, and they are without doubt the most obvious of Israel's facilitators. I have not, however, examined them carefully in their widely diverse methods and message, nor have I tried to categorize them by the nature of their messages and their varied Sitzen im Leben. This study is most carefully and usefully done by J. Lindblom in Prophecy in Ancient Israel. The Mechilta de R. Ishmael gives a general evaluation of prophets which might well be extended to include all facilitators. It concerns balance of motive:

Thus you find that there were three types of prophets. One insisted upon the honor due the Father as well as the honor due the son; one insisted upon the honor due the Father without insisting upon the honor due the son; and one insisted upon the honor due the son without insisting upon the honor due the Father. Jeremiah insisted upon both the honor due the Father and the honor due the son. . . . Elijah insisted upon the honor due the Father, but did not insist upon the honor due the son. . . . Jonah insisted upon the honor due the son but did not insist upon the honor due the Father. . . ." (Mechilta de Rabbi Ishmael, Lauterbach ed.), Vol. I, pp. 8-9.

I have purposely omitted the priests from among the facilitators, despite notable exceptions such as Aaron and Simon the Just. The sons of Aaron, of Levi, or of Zadok, it seems to me, are properly designated technicians of the cult rather than facilitators of the covenant. Their anointing and their call draws them more to God's side of the line of propriety. Sometimes kings, judges, prophets, and the like come from the ranks of the priests or perform a normally priestly function. Yet their status as facilitators of the covenant are apart from, and not to be confused with, their priestly function. This judgment upon the status of the priesthood is most arbitrary and requires a much lengthier study than is possible here. The relationship of prophet to the cult needs further examination, as

Some facilitators are anointed (משיחים); some are appointed ^{called by name} (מופקדים); some are ^{raised up} (קרואים בשם); and some are ^{appointed/assigned} (הוקמים) or (ממונים). For some the spirit of the Lord comes as frenzy (Num. 11:24ff.) and to some it is restrained. By some the word of the Lord is spoken; by some it is dramatized. Their sword is two-edged, cutting both ways. There are those facilitators who seek their position (or even usurp it) and some who abuse their function. Most are surprised by their call, and many try to shun it or run from it.

The facilitators are alike in their function of serving the Lord's presence; but they are, as personalities, each one unique. They are indeed heroes of Israel after the definition of Franz Rosenzweig: "The hero is every inch a human being. He quivers in every limb with mortality. His joys well forth from this earth and this sun shines upon his sorrows. . . . Everything is volition, everything

a part of a larger study of the relationship and interplay of facilitators with each other. Y. Kaufmann has much of value on priest and prophet in his The Religion of Israel, op. cit.

Finally, I have omitted agents of facilitation which are non-human. The face to face visits with angels, revelation through the cloud of glory, the pillars of cloud and fire, the winds and storms, trumpets, and the Bath Qol do figure in a discussion of the means employed by God to convey His presence within the confines of history and without compromising His Person. But for our purposes here they may be viewed as auxiliary agents of revelation, non-human facilitators, and left at that until they take on special importance in the Rabbinic literature.

action and reaction."¹ The facilitators are God's heroes for Israel.

But it is of greatest importance to note here and elsewhere: whatever the facilitators' title, function, strength, and status, they are the means to an end and no end in themselves. Their titles are properly and primarily God's titles. Their functions are His action through them. Their strength is His right arm. And their status is as nothing in the face of the Creator of all that lives.

The Lord promised Israel at the time of choosing that Israel would never lack a facilitator of the covenant. Thus Moses says, "The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your brethren--him you shall heed" (Deut. 18:15)--for the fear of death, the fear that the covenant will fail, will persist until the last day. Or again, Moses tells the people, ". . . you may indeed set as king over you him whom the Lord your God will choose" (Deut. 17:14), and David re-iterates the promise to Solomon saying, ". . . there shall not fail you (לא יכרת) a man on the throne of Israel (I K. 2:4b; cf. also I K. 8:25; 9:5; I Chron. 6:16; 7:18). The promise is confirmed by Jeremiah (Jer. 33:17-18) and permanently infixed in the covenant history by extending the limits of

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Franz Rosenzweig, The Star of Redemption, transl. (from the 2nd ed. of 1930) by William Hallo (Boston: Beacon Press, 1972), p. 209.

the facilitators' function to the end of history and deferring completion of their function to a point beyond reckoning. The work of the facilitator will be complete on the day beyond the last day (cf. Mal. 3 and 4), a time which will be announced by Elijah (Mal. 4:5).

A poetic statement of the function of the facilitator is to be found in the two hymns about John the Baptist, considered by some a manifestation of the spirit of Elijah, in Luke 1:14-17 and 68-79.

While Israel has asked for and been promised a protagonist of the covenant for fear of the Holy and for fear of death, the Lord's intent in choosing Israel in Abraham and at Sinai was to provide, for all time, a facilitator for His covenant of life to the world, revealed at creation and confirmed with Noah. For if Israel fears the holiness of the Lord, how much more do the nations of the world fear His righteousness and justice, as it says in Exodus Rabbah:

So when God revealed Himself to give the Torah to Israel, they heard the voice and died, as it says, "My soul failed when He spoke" (S.S. v:6); if Israel were so afraid, then how much more were the nations?¹

And again in the Tanhuma:

If only the nations knew what a benefit the Tabernacle was to them, they would surround it with tents and

¹Exodus R. (Soncino ed.), Yithro, 29:9, p. 343.

forts to protect it. Why? Before the Tabernacle was set up, the divine speech was want to enter the tents of the nations, and they would be terrified, for "who of all flesh has heard the voice of the ever-living God, as thou didst hear it, and live?" (Deut. 5:23). Thou couldst hear it and live, but not they.¹

R. Joshua b. Levi even expands on the midrash and makes our point precisely:

R. Joshua b. Levi said: If the nations had known how valuable the Temple was for them, they would have surrounded it with forts in order to protect it. It was even more valuable to them than to the Israelites, for Solomon in his prayer of dedication said, "And concerning the foreigner . . . do according to all that the foreigner calls to thee to do" (I K. 8:41-43), but when he touches on the Israelites, he says, "Render unto everyone according to his ways," that is, give to him what he asks if it is fitting for him, and if it is not fitting, give it him not. And indeed one could go further and say, "If it were not for Israel, no rain would fall, and the sun would not shine, for it is through Israel's merit that God gives assuagement to His world, and in time to come, i.e. in the Messianic age, the nations will see how God dealt with Israel, and they will come to join themselves unto them," as it is said, "In those days it shall come to pass that ten men shall take hold, out of all the tongues of the nations, of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying 'We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.'" (Zech. VIII:23).²

Israel collectively is the facilitator of life to the nations, assuring the life-giving rain to all God's

¹Tanhuma, ed. by Salomon Buber (Wilna, 1885; Jerusalem: Ortsel Ltd., 1964), Vol. I, Terumah, p. 47a; quoted in Montefiore and Loewe, p. 80, 214.

²Bemidbar Rabbah ("Numbers Rabbah"), with commentary by Issachar ben Naphtali (Jerusalem: Lewin-Epstein, Ltd., 1969), Vol. II, Bemidbar, 1:3; ed. by H. Freedman and Maurice Simon, trans. by Judah J. Slotki (London: The Soncino Press, 1939), Vol. V, Bemidbar, 1:3, pp. 8-9; quoted in Montefiore and Loewe, p. 115, 304.

creation; and it is to this end that Israel was chosen from among the nations. The Lord did begin small with Abraham, but the inference in Scripture is that He did so because of His persistent inclination to perfect the relationship with the whole of His creation. The pre-Abraham narratives in Genesis lead us to understand that God, far from giving up the experiment with man, approached the problem from a different perspective only. And if, at the beginning, the divine intent to give life was catholic, we must assume that the man employed, beginning with Abraham, is a means that must ultimately lead to the fulfillment of the universalism of intent.

Indeed the context of Israel grows increasingly larger throughout the sacred history. At times the expansion of Israel's contact with the world is achieved by conquest. At other times, when the experiment must move beyond the boundaries of the holy land, conquest gives way to captivity. It is at the time of captivity that Israel and Jerusalem stand as a light in the center of the world, while the children of Israel are removed to all corners of the earth. There they mingle with the nations, so that by their very presence, the work of the יְהוָה הַשֵּׁם might be extended to those who would otherwise have never heard of the Lord. Slonimsky speaks of this function of Israel within history:

The process of restitution is called Tikkun and essential parts of that process are allotted to man. The Jew has it in his power, through Mitzwot and prayer, to accelerate or hinder the process. The Tikkun restores the unity of God's name. It is the true purpose of the Torah to lead the Shekinah back to her Master, to unite her with him. Prayer is a mystical action with almost magical potency in proportion to its intensity. Everything is in exile. But the Jewish exile, the Galuth of the Jewish people, is a mission to enable them to uplift the fallen sparks of the Godhead from all their various locations. That is why Israel is forced to be enslaved by all the nations of the world, so that Israel may be in a position to uplift those sparks which have fallen among them. The doctrine of Tikkun thus raised every Jew to the rank of protagonist in the great process of restitution, namely the extinction of the world's blemish, the restitution of all things in God . . . That more feasible function is to convert mankind to all One God. God is the great patrimony, God the special assignment or "burden" of Israel.¹

He then goes on to quote from the Midrash and Talmud. Says God, "If you do not proclaim my Godhead to the nations I will punish you."² "God did a kindness to Israel in scattering them among the nations."³

The theme of universalism, while it underlies the entire sacred history, becomes more evident in the writings of the post-exilic writers. Israel begins to appear as Messiah in such passages as Zechariah 14 and Habakkuk 3:13. Lindblom argues correctly for the identification of the Servant of Deutero-Isaiah with Israel.

¹Slonimsky, op. cit., pp. 52 and 55.

²Leviticus R. (Margulies ed.) Vayyikra 6:5, p. 142; (Soncino ed.), pp. 85-86.

³B. Pesahim 87b.

Together with Israel the converted Gentiles will form a spiritual unity. That is what, in my opinion, is meant by b^erit 'am, a confederation of peoples (Is. 42:6). Thus Israel will mediate welfare and salvation ('ôr) to the pagan nations. Blind eyes will be opened and prisoners released.¹

Lindblom, following Anderson, declares, "Here is the true prophetic gospel."

Because the facilitator's message is often harsh in judgment and outspoken in its demand for repentance, the facilitator, whether he is the protagonist for Israel or is Israel itself as facilitator for the world, is frequently unwelcome. The hostility of the unjust to the declared righteousness of the Lord requires a measure of suffering from the facilitator.² Solomon Schechter, referring to Sifre (73b), suggests that the sufferings of the facilitator are an atonement as great as, if not greater than the sacrifices, reconciling the son to his heavenly father for the entire generation.³ Of the suffering facilitator Slonimsky says:

¹J. Lindblom, Prophecy in Ancient Israel (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1973), p. 400. Cf. also pp. 428ff.

²The question of vicariously meritorious suffering and martyrdom versus exemplarism and the testimony of complete and unwavering obedience is hinted at in Isaiah 53:4ff., but not resolved. The Rabbis seem to be of two minds on the subject.

³Schechter, op. cit., pp. 309-310.

And of course, even though chosen, God, so far from playing favorites, imposes special burdens and special responsibilities on Israel. The prophet's stern reminder that special rights bring special duties ("You only have I known of all the families of the earth, therefore I will visit upon you all your iniquities," Amos 3:2) holds with equal force on Israel's later career. The protagonist must bear burdens commensurate with a protagonist's role.¹

On the day that the goal is achieved, when God's Name will be one and His rule universal, the desire of Moses that the spirit might rest upon all Israel, making them all prophets (Num. 11:29) will be completely realized (Is. 44:2-3; 59:21). In that day there will be no thing that is not holy to the Lord (Zech. 14:20-21), and the spirit of the Lord will be poured out on all the people (Joel 2:28/3:14).

The facilitator will disappear on that day, his function fulfilled. The anointed messenger of the covenant, the Messiah will hand the kingdom back to the Lord, Who will rule as king over all the earth. And the Lord will communicate directly with all His creation, for it will be in perfect relationship with Him. All will be righteousness and justice; the experiment begun at creation, limited with Abraham, and grown universal again through Israel will reach fruition in *בְּרִית עַם* and *יְחִיד הַשֵּׁם*.

¹Slonimsky, op. cit., p. 62.

The Dynamic of the Covenant

A summary of the four great covenantal aspects: land; progeny; presence; and facilitator; and their attendant sub-aspects or general categories are to be found in such passages as Leviticus 23:3ff.; Deuteronomy 28; and Psalm 68:10 (68:9 A.V.). But the biblical passage which introduces the dynamic of the covenant is Jeremiah 2:2:¹

Go and proclaim in the hearing of Jerusalem, Thus says the Lord. "I remember the devotion of your youth, your love as a bride, how you followed me in the wilderness, in a land not sown. Israel was holy to the Lord, the first fruits of his harvest (or, Israel was betrothed to the Lord, the first yield of [the husbandman's] property). All who ate of it (took advantage of it) became guilty; evil came upon them," says the Lord.

And the biblical book which, by midrashic interpretation, became a most useful and appropriate account of the covenant's dynamic is Song of Songs--the one writing which R. Akiba knew Israel would need as a comfort for the loss of the Temple.²

Marriage Metaphors: Biblical Development and Expression

There are in the Bible a number of metaphors to describe the workings of the relationship between God and

¹Cf. also Amos 3:2 (יָדַי) and Hosea 3:19-20.

²The importance of Song of Songs and Akiba's understanding of its importance (cf. M. Yadayim 3:5) will be discussed later.

Israel. But none is more consistently employed, more appropriate to Israel's variable situation in history, and in geography more finely descriptive or more appropriate to the proprieties and profundities of any relationship (especially one involving the Lord Himself) than the metaphor of the marriage relationship.¹

To what may God's love for Israel and Israel's love for God be likened? It is like a man who marries a woman. . . . The extended parable of the marriage of God and Israel running through most of Scripture is wide enough to include almost all aspects of the relationship and deep enough to touch the very depths of that relationship. Its imagery is so rich and extensive that it can describe anything from the ordinary to the extraordinary in the relationship.

¹I do intend to discover (though hopefully not to impose) this metaphor in Torah as well as in the Prophets and Writings. And I am aware that in the 38 middoth of R. Eliezer b. Jose of Galilee it is permitted to employ the mashal only in the Prophets and Hagiography and not in Torah.

My decision rests on two bases. First, the ruling against employing the mashal in interpretation of the Torah is a product of its time; and while a prejudice against Paul and his allegorical method is perhaps still justifiable, I am not inclined to permit the antinomian distortions of one man and his followers to deprive Judaism (and indeed Jesus' own religion) of one of its most useful exegetical methods. Second, the mashal, and especially the marriage metaphor, is present in Torah, both explicitly and implicitly, regardless of R. Eliezer's fears for its distortion.

The marriage metaphor is perhaps most usefully described as a natural mystery. It is natural in that it employs the descriptive terminology for that which is natural to human life. It is a mystery in that under the natural figures of human life is hidden the most important of all relationships. It is so obvious as to confound the intruder; so discreet as not to offend the delicate; so common as to defy the insensitive.

Israel as Wife: The Demythologized
Dynamic

Just as with the four great aspects of the covenant it was necessary to point out the differences between Israel's understanding of reality and the notions of the nations, so here we must make a clear distinction between the metaphorically described dynamic of Israel's relationship with God and the mythologies of the nation's describing their understanding of gods, men, nature, and fertility. The distinction is to be discovered in Israel's use of history as opposed to the nations' use of myth.

Among the nations of the world, the only pretense at history to be recorded, dramatized, or celebrated is the life-story of the gods. Because the gods are subject to the same life patterns as those of men, and because the gods are more important than men, the life story of the

gods from birth to death is the only "history" celebrated. Subject as the gods are to "transcendent, primordial forces which, while conceived of as numinous, are impersonal and universally pervasive,"¹ the gods of the pagans have life stories which are no history by our understanding of the word, but properly termed myth. Y. Kaufmann describes the myth and makes a careful distinction between myth and history.

Myth is the tale of the life of the gods. In myth the gods appear not only as actors, but as acted upon. At the heart of the myth is the tension between the gods and other forces that shape their destinies. Myth describes the unfolding destiny of the gods, giving expression to the idea that besides the will of the gods there are other, independent forces that wholly or in part determine their destinies. . . .

Corresponding to the birth of the gods through natural processes is their subjection to sexual conditions. All pagan religions have male and female deities who desire and mate with each other. The cycles of nature are commonly conceived of as the perennial mating and procreating of the gods. Thus, the gods are subject by their nature to sexual needs. At the same time they are involved in the processes of time.²

The closest the pagan people came to participation in this mythological drama was the annual re-enactment of the events of the lives of the gods at the agricultural festivals.³ The object of these cultic re-enactments seems to

¹Moshe Greenberg, "Translator's Note," in Yehezkel Kaufmann, op. cit., p. 23.

²Ibid., pp. 22-23.

³The mystery religions of later Greece are but an extension of this same participation. In the mystery

have been some attempt by pagan man to secure his own interests--generally agricultural--by combining his own power (achieved by manipulation of the metadivine realm) with that of the god in order to strengthen the god's own agricultural function. There is no real history here. Rather there is only cyclical, annual, dramatic celebration with overtones of sympathetic magic.

There is in myth and in its annual cultic reenactment no plan or proposal for either god or man. All is governed by fate, all derive power from above, both gods and men. Annual celebration, therefore, seems to be little more than man's service to capricious gods, and man's attempt, through magic and manipulation, at self-aggrandizement (probably assurance of agricultural success) by fulfilling his bounden duty in the cult.

It may be argued that ancient Israel, as an agricultural people, were subject to the same fortunes of the agricultural cycle as were their neighbors. And of course they were; but with a significant difference. Israel had no recourse to magic or manipulation to achieve agricultural

religion, the mystes escapes the confines of his own time and place to become an active participant in the god's life. His being and that of the god are merged. Yet the mystes has exchanged the frying pan for the fire, since by becoming one with the god, he is still subject to the exigencies and limitations from the metadivine realm under which the god himself labors and by which he too is ultimately governed.

success, nor did Israel have even the occasion to resort to magic.

Because the Lord God of Israel was Creator of all that is, and because He accomplished this creation with His own power, it was to God and not to the realm of meta-divine power that Israel looked for agricultural success. With God, petition and not magic was the only appropriate means of obtaining help. The festival for Israel was a time for celebration of the goodness of the Lord and petition for the continuance of that goodness. God blessed and Israel thanked; God promised and Israel petitioned.

Furthermore, since God was Creator of times and places, of seasons and of fields, the Lord God was in no way subject to them. The God of Israel has no history of His own and Israel therefore cannot celebrate or re-enact in the cult His birth, life, death or resurrection. He is King by having none ruling over Him, and not by annual enthronement rites performed by His subjects.¹

¹I am, of course, aware of the various theories that differ from the one I present here. Most notable is the Enthronement of YHWH theory set forth by Sigmund Mowinckel, Psalmenstudien II; Das Thronbesteigungsfest Jahwäs und der Ursprung der Eschatologie (Kristiania: Videnskapsselskapets Skrifter, 1922), pp. 1-209 and the summary on pp. 213-219.

Mowinckel identifies certain psalms (47, 93, 95-100) which he believes express a dominant theme of Yahweh's kingship by the repeated use of the formula "Yahweh has become king." These psalms he compares and likens to the

He is just in that He is subject to no other law constraining Him. His justice depends upon no annual affirmation of His Torah by His people. He is faithful to His covenant because He gives the covenant forever, and not because Israel annually confirms (or even keeps) the covenant. He gives the increase of land and progeny because He is the source of life and fertility, and not because the people pour out libations or eat mandrakes. He is the Lord of history because He created and sustains time and place and is not subject to them, but not because Israel dramatizes His life cycle in mythic re-enactments. The concerns of Israel and the imagery with which Israel describes these concerns are the same as those of their

themes of a widespread Near Eastern New Year festival at which the deity is enthroned, married, and otherwise regaled by worshippers. Since the Near Eastern festival is a New Year festival, and since Sukkoth is probably also a celebration of the New Year, Mowinckel would have Israel participating in the same cultic, mythological activities on Yahweh's behalf.

The Myth and Ritual school takes the enthronement of Yahweh one step further and sees Him regularly (annually) enthroned as King of the Universe Who will bestow in the year to come the fertility and prosperity desired by the people.

Both these schools presuppose the very myth and magic of which Kaufmann speaks. They search for parallels without seeking out the differences as well. I would maintain that Israel's unique view of history and the Lord God's relationship to that history provide the very exception to the themes presented by these schools which they would now foist upon Israel.

neighbors. But the resolution of Israel's concerns and the configurations of their imagery are unique to Israel.

Israel has no mythology (though it employs mythological motifs to its own ends), and Israel has no history in the modern sense of scientific history (which is probably the outgrowth of Israel's Heilsgeschichte, without the Heils-). The description and celebration of Israel's relationship with God is unique precisely because Israel remembers, recalls, and celebrates its own history, not for Israel's sake as apologia, not for God's sake as empowering myth, and not for the sake of history as an aesthetic or scientific exercise; but because the God without history participates in and is involved with Israel's life.¹ God has no history of Himself; Israel has no life of itself. But the account of the relationship of God with Israel is sacred history unlike anything the nations have ever known. It is Gott enthaltende Geschichte.²

¹Even the accounts of the gods' intervention in the histories of the nations of the world--as at the time of military victory, accessions to throne, and the like--the difference remains. While the events of the nations are as flexible and planless as the capricious lives of the gods themselves, the history of Israel is "a coherent history directed by moral principles and in accordance with a fixed plan" (Lindblom, op. cit., p. 325). Israel's history is purposive and functional.

²The traditional designation by German Christian scholars of Israel's special kind of history as Heilsgeschichte is not entirely useful for our purpose. There is

The Festival Embrace

It is through Israel, most particularly at the festival, that the Lord God is made apparent in history. It is in Israel's joy at celebration that the attention of the nations is drawn to the cause of their celebration. It is because Israel beholds the Lord God at festival that the eyes of the blind are opened. It is in the behavior of Israel upon return from festival that the nations discover the inclinations of this God. It is through what happens to Israel in history, the recollection of it or the event itself, that the nations learn of the power, the righteous justice, and the abundant mercy of the Lord. Israel speaks the language of the nations and shares the same institutions and imagery. God is actively historicized by Israel: not by Israel's enactment of divine drama, but by Israel's recollections, at one point in time and at one place of meeting, of God's dealings with and for Israel past, present, and future.

Israel, who alone is nothing but a lifeless chaos, is quickened at the festival. It is at festival time that a lifeless, homeless, powerless, nameless motely apart from the beholding of the Lord, give thanks and celebrate with great rejoicing that they are, have been, and shall surely be seen of their God. Israel celebrates her life--the rain

that falls from God; the sun that by His leave and at His bidding awaits the rising of the moon, so that night is as day for a feast in continuous light; the consecrated wives of long-standing and the daughters dancing among the maidens for remembrance's sake, who have borne or shall bear the assurance of life's continuity at God's remembrance and visitation; the sons of the covenant, who carry the seed and raise up the name according to the Lord's promise.

Note that the children of Israel are drawn to the sight of God, *לפני-י*, because they are *קהל-ישראל*. The purpose is to celebrate the everlasting covenant, not to renew it. An anniversary celebrates the recollection of a single event, but does not reiterate the marriage. Perhaps there is evaluation, a recitation of the Torah; perhaps there is proclamation of a special year forthcoming, a sabbatical or jubilee inaugurated; perhaps the promises of relationship are reviewed, an anamnesis of the presence; perhaps the facilitator of the covenant is under some obligation, a prophetic preachment of musar or n'hemta; perhaps some deferred hope is especially brought to mind, a proleptic thanksgiving remembrance.

Whatever the specialties of the particular festival, Israel appears adorned and made beautiful by the accoutrements of festival. Israel comes, not as the nations do,

to seduce the gods or to confirm the god in his strength and status by cultic re-enactment, or to win for themselves another year of prosperity. But Israel comes as active participant in the relationship. Israel comes because Israel is alive, not to grasp for or manipulate life-giving powers. The festival is that most precious moment of intensified interaction by this God and His people. Y. Kaufmann summarizes the joy of the festival:

Dance, song, sacrifice, feasting, and rejoicing are all present, but never drama. There were processions--one moved "with the throng" to the temple "with the sound of shouts and thanksgiving" (Neh. 12:27ff.; Ps. 42:5). There was kneeling, prostrating, shouting, singing, dancing, and circumambulating the altar (Ps. 26:6), but there is no hint of drama.¹

¹By "no hint of drama," Kaufmann does not seem to preclude what has been described above (pp. 56-57) as the special recollection at festival time of God's mighty acts for Israel, the anamnesis of the presence of time past. It is this anamnesis, even if it be dramatically signified, by which Israel separates itself from the nations. Kaufmann does know it, for in the psalm he quotes to show circumambulation (Ps. 26:6), he cannot have overlooked the next verse: "singing aloud a song of thanksgiving, and telling all thy wondrous deeds." And he has told us, "There is to be sure, a certain dramatic element in some Israelite festivals, but it is unique in its kind and therefore most instructive." He continues: "... in Israel the same tendency [sc. historicization] expressed itself in the peculiar form of commemorating moments in the history of the nation in which the wonders of YHWH manifested themselves." (p. 116) Such a dramatic enterprise as Israel's is best described by T. S. Eliot's statement in his introduction to Savonarola: "In genuine drama the form is determined by the point on the line at which a tension between liturgy and realism takes place." (in F. O. Matthiessen, "The Plays of T. S. Eliot," in Essays in the Modern Drama, ed. by Morris Freedman (Boston: D. C. Heath and Co., 1964), p. 268).

The Israelite comes near to YHWH, appears before him, prepares a meal in his presence, and hopes to receive his gracious blessing. The essence of the holyday is to behold the face of YHWH, to appear before him and rejoice in his presence (Ex. 23:15, 17; 34:23ff.; Deut. 16:16; I Sam. 1:22; Is. 1:12; Ps. 42:3; 17:5; 21:7). The Israelite is seated before God, dances, sings, and plays before him (II Sam. 6:5, 14, 16, 21), walks in the light of his presence (Ps. 89:16), has fullness of joy in his presence (Ps. 16:11).¹

Kaufmann tells us further that Israel's two great seasonal festivals have been most thoroughly historicized but claims that the dramatic element of the distinctive features of these festivals are "few and peripheral." His concern that we might confuse Israel's drama with pagan mythological dramatization is well-founded but perhaps overstated. The fact of the matter is that we simply do not have sufficient information of cultic practice in Solomon's Temple (or in Jeroboam's Temple) to warrant a declaration that Israel's enactment of its anamnesis was any different from the pagan enactment of its mythologies, save in intent.

The great catalogue of orations of remembrance by biblical facilitators is large indeed, and these orations of remembrance are to be found in every form of Israel's literature from the Song of Moses (Ex. 15:1ff.) and the so-called "creed" at the offering of first-fruits (Deut. 26:5ff.), on through Joshua's farewell speech (Josh. 24) and the song of Deborah (Jud. 5:1ff.), to psalmic anamnesis (as in Ps. 104-106) and prophetic remembrances (cf. Hosea 11:1 et passim).

Nor is the dramatic potential limited to anamnesis. The biblical narratives themselves purport to record present history (royal chronicles, for instance) and prophetic recollection (so important in prophetic passages of comfort). It is almost inconceivable that from among all the recollections of biblical literature the need of man to imitate (as Aristotle tells us in the Poetics, I, 2-6) excludes Israel. And if there be drama, even if it be dramatic re-enactment of Israel's God-involved history, what more suitable time and place than at the festival, לפני-י. The Lord's attendance does not require His participation, just as His presence at the festal banquet does not imply His participation and communion. (The problem of God-participation versus banqueting לפני-י ~~the~~ The remembrance orations of Stephen and Peter in the Acts of the Apostles are qualitatively no different from those of Moses or Joshua).

¹Kaufmann, op. cit. pp. 119ff.

Here is no communion with God, here is love-making par excellence. This imagery is common to both Israel and the nations; but God and Israel together have transformed the value of the imagery.

Kaufmann later proposes that whatever dramatization occurred in the festival was the result of popular enthusiasm and not a part of the cultic liturgy within the Temple.¹ He is surely correct in making the distinction, and his observation goes far in explaining the substantive differences in the Second Temple between Pharisee and Sadducee. The distinction between popular and priestly liturgy suggests one further clarification of the dynamic of the four covenant aspects.

We have said that Israel's metaphorical description of the dynamic in marriage imagery is qualitatively different from the metaphor of the pagan cults. Israel's sacred history, no matter how extensively dramatized it might have been at the festival, was still no mythological imagery because it was *לפני-י* and not *י-ם*. Beyond this distinction there is yet another distinction within Israel's festival system. The use of history at the feast of Sukkoth is significantly different from the use of history at the feast of Passover.

¹Ibid., pp. 340ff.

Sukkoth vs. Pesah: Marriage or Adoption

The result is simply stated. The cause is exceedingly complex, and some motives are lost to us altogether. The result is this: Sukkoth is a festival which, in its diverse and complex liturgy both public and priestly, includes the narratives, past (anamnesis), present (thanksgiving for the past year/cycle of favor), and future (proleptic expectation), as one feature of the total festival. Passover is, even in its rite of the sacrifice of the paschal lamb, almost entirely cultic recollection and celebration of a specific act of God's redemption and salvation. The remembrance of any and all of God's mighty acts are appropriate to Sukkoth; the remembrance of the redemption from Egypt alone is appropriate to Passover.¹

¹I am making the assumption that the third festival, Pentecost, is the completion of Passover and really a part of it. It is the final chapter of the redemption from Egypt, just as it is the end of the harvest begun at Passover. The Rabbis later tried to show that Shemini Atzereth was to Sukkoth what Pentecost was to Passover (cf. p. 260 below). They were right only insofar as Shemini Atzereth represented a proleptic event, an earnest of what every Sukkoth promised, but was not yet. The following midrash is no idle speculation, but a crucial difference in the expectations of the two festivals.

Commenting on the passage, "So this same night is a night of watching unto the Lord by all the people of Israel throughout their generations (Ex. 12:42)," R. Joshua says, "In that night (sc. Nisan-Passover) were they redeemed and in that night will they be redeemed in the future." R. Eliezer responds: "In that night were they redeemed; in the future, however, they will not be redeemed in that night but in the month of Tishri (sc. the

Passover celebrates the specific event which set Israel free to enter into covenant; Sukkoth celebrates the spinning out, in all its ramifications, of the covenant of life itself. Sukkoth includes anamnesis of all kinds and is proleptic in terms of the covenant. Passover is anamnesis, pre-covenantal in recollection, and thus of doubtful proleptic value (save from year to year--"Next year in Jerusalem").

The truth of this distinction is clearly evident in two places. The first is in the Bible where the narrative of the Exodus is closely, even inseparably interwoven with the prescriptions of the feast of Passover. This is in evident contradistinction to the biblical prescriptions for Sukkoth, which are remotely and unsuccessfully connected with historical narrative only at Leviticus 23:42-43 (a pre-covenantal narrative event especially unsuited for the covenantal theme of Sukkoth).

The second place of confirmation of the distinction is rabbinic, not biblical. The requirement of the Passover Hagaddah is that the intelligent son's question, "What mean the testimonies, and the statutes, and the ordinances which the Lord our God hath commanded you [old Haggadah--us]?" be met with a response that recounts the entire sum

month of the Feast of Tabernacles), as it is said: 'Blow the horn at the new moon, etc.'" Mechilta de R. Ishmael (Lauterbach ed.), Vol. I, Bo (on Ex. 12:42), Tractate Pisha, p. 116; (Horowitz-Rabin ed.), p. 52.

of Passover precepts to the very end, i.e. "One may not conclude. . .". Furthermore the reply to the youngest child's questions, that is, ". . . עבדים היינו לפרעה, and especially the ". . . ואפילו כלנו חכמים is pure anamnesis of "our Festival of Freedom."

Consider, then, the Mahzor for Sukkoth. Here there is not a festival of freedom but a "Festival of our rejoicing." Rejoicing in what? Rejoicing in the life of the covenant and the Lord who establishes it forever. Surely there is, even in present liturgies of Sukkoth, a panoply of remembrances. The literature is rich in anamnesis--and rejoicing, and prolepsis. But nowhere is there a single event separated from all the rest. The number of the cast of the לולב is significant. The burden of the ונענועי אותם is not an event. It is a request: ונענועי אותם. ¹ישפיע עלי שפע ברכות ומחשבות קדושות וגו'.

It is clear, then, in our study that whereas the Feast of Passover is of enormous importance as a celebration signifying the freedom provided by God for the choice by Israel of its Lord, it remains a day of Lord. When we discuss the choice itself, the choosing, the promises, the history of the marriage and the festival of consummation from Sinai to the end, we are discussing the Feast of Sukkoth,

¹Mordecai Adler, Service of the Synagogue: Tabernacles (London: George Routledge and Sons Ltd., 1908).

the Day of the Lord, the an, the Feast par excellence. It is most likely, furthermore, that the imagery of the dynamic for Passover is the father-son relationship, while that for Sukkoth is the husband-wife motif.¹ Here in this motif is the result of the distinction, i.e. an imagery dynamic unique to the Feast of Sukkoth.

Sources of the Dichotomy--The Two Nations

The appearance of two very different approaches to history and the existence of two distinctive images to describe the dynamic of the covenant suggest the possibility of an underlying dichotomy in that organism we call Israel or later, Judaism. To say that pluralism existed in Israel's society and religion would be to say nothing at all remarkable or novel.

There is a formal, stated pluralism in Scripture, for example: the formal listing of the twelve tribes and, in the book of Judges, the hero and narrative for each tribe. And beyond the stated pluralism there are the indications of a flourishing pluralism in the society of Israel that the biblical authors and editors have tried to gloss in order to give the impression of a uniform, well-integrated society functioning under a single God Who is

¹This thematic distinction is, of course, not universally true or consistent; and a study, so far as the texts would yield up their information, would be of interest and much use.

worshipped in one place with one rite. And to a certain extent they have been successful in their efforts. Yet where the weaving together and the chronological tailoring have, for one reason or another, been poorly executed, we are able to glimpse the rich diversity of Israel's life and religion.

Yet even below this pluralism, I detect a fundamental and profound dichotomy which I attribute to the clustering of diverse *ḥēḇ* around two different poles. Both clusters, or nations as they are called, were Yahwist and considered themselves the people of the Lord. And yet these two nations, (or centers--for they were not always nations *per se*) existed for centuries side by side with really quite different traditions and histories deeply rooted in the past. These two nations, sometimes unified, sometimes separate, have generally enjoyed a common bond of religion; but they have also enjoyed specifically unique manifestations and expressions of that religion.¹

¹The existence of the two nations is a matter of biblical record, and scholars have emphasized the differences between them from time to time, but usually as a secondary or peripheral subject or in cursory fashion. I propose that the distinction and difference between Israel and Judah is fundamental and extensive, and that the national dichotomy persists well beyond the Exile, notwithstanding the efforts of editors and redactors to portray a unified narrative. The open hostilities that exist between the two nations from time to time are a manifestation of the proposition. They are only too evident, for example, in such instances as the schism at the time of Jeroboam, the evaluations of a southern

Scripture has attempted wherever possible, as we have said, to conceal this distinction between Ephraim (Joseph/Israel/Samaria) and Judah (Jerusalem/Zion and her daughters/House of David). But the ancient canonicity of tradition has assured us of being able to discern the two and the tension between them, from Genesis to that time when, according to the prophet, those two nations will finally be united under a single king (Ez. 34:23), and when God will rule over them both in unity (Zech. 14:9).

The dichotomy hypothesis is interesting and must be explored for its value in such studies as biblical criticism and the like in another place. The hypothesis is mentioned here only because it may have a direct bearing upon our subject of Sukkoth in rabbinic literature. The connection is to be found in a corollary of the dichotomy hypothesis. For while the dichotomy is interesting in itself, it also produces a tension in Israelite religion that I believe to be the means of a good measure of Israel's revelation.

The effect of the tension is to establish well-defined poles, or objects of choice. It is in this tension

chronicler (as in the Kings) of the northern apostasy, and in the anti-Israelite prophetic homilies delivered (probably at a feast in the Temple precincts) by Isaiah. But the dichotomy does not end with the kingdoms; it persists through the Exile and is manifest in the society of Israel in the return. The dichotomy is even perceptible within Christianity and other sectarian movements and parties.

of having to choose between two rather well-defined alternatives that revelation comes for Israel. It is not to say that one choice, one nation, one tradition is always correct and the other totally false and incorrect. The point is that once Israel has made the fundamental choice for God (and remains constant in that choice), the possibilities for natural revelation are severely circumscribed. By providing a tension within the national structures of the covenant people--a sociological tension within the larger ~~by~~--the Lord God has provided the opportunity for continuing choice within the context of the initial choice once made, viz. the God-choice fundamental to the entire covenant.

When orthodoxy ceases to be a matter of the tension and choice between the traditions, forms, and practices of the two nations which for awhile embody the dichotomy, the dichotomy takes on other forms and guises, sometimes still perceptibly northern/southern, that continue to provide the tension for revelation. Thus we find (and it is only a tendency, not an absolute measure) a patrician establishment centered in Jerusalem during the Second Commonwealth and a proclivity for ardent, messianic-oriented theocracy in the north. But even more important to us is the way that this tension is embodied and manifested in the controversy between Sadducee and Pharisee, or within Pharisaism, itself,

the tension between the written and the oral Torah. Neither of these have much to do with the original dichotomy of the two nations, except insofar as they are extensions of a method operating in Israelite religion that began with the dichotomy of the nations. I would consider that the rabbinic method of disputation for discerning the revelation in Scripture and Mishnah is the logical development of this same revelation through the tension method. Israel has a means, a human means, of combining free will and receptivity to the will of its chosen God.¹

The Feast of Sukkoth which finally emerged from the work of the Great Assembly² and which is known in the Second Commonwealth as the great Day of the Lord³ is a festival centered in the Temple in Jerusalem--a lunar based

¹Cf. Appendix B and the beginning of Chapter IV of this work.

²Cf. above, p. 90 .

³The appearance in Scripture of the phrase "the day of the Lord" is not in every case a reference to the Feast of Sukkoth. The phrase is basically a reference to the day of God's visitation, an event which can have negative as well as positive implications. Thus the "day of the Lord" in Joel 1:15 et passim is a dreadful event, whereas the "day" of Isaiah 27 is a non-specific occasion of joyous expectation. The reference to the "day" in Amos 5:18ff. is probably a specific reference to the great feast, Sukkoth; but the prophecy is a negative one. Perhaps the most specific identification of the day of the Lord with the splendor of the Feast of Sukkoth is found in Zechariah 14.

festival of great popular enthusiasm. The Assembly was never successful in translating the Feast of Sukkoth into a true festival of anamnesis, as Passover had been from the outset. Sukkoth became, rather, a festival of life; a festival celebrating the covenant marriage between God and Israel; a festival into which historical, agricultural, priestly, prophetic, and cosmological metaphors were woven together into a wonderful and joyful fabric of popular thanksgiving. The day of fasting and preparation, as well as the New Year commemoration, were separated from Sukkoth, while an eighth, somewhat anachronistic day was appended to the seven days of the feast.¹

As we have observed, the Feast of Sukkoth is as unique to Israel's festival system as Israel is unique among the nations of the world. The festal imagery and

¹Julian Morgenstern, "Two Ancient Israelite Agricultural Festivals," *JQR* (n.s.) VIII (1917), pp. 31-54; "The Three Calendars of Ancient Israel," *HUCA* I (1924), pp. 13-78; "Additional Notes on 'The Three Calendars of Ancient Israel'," *HUCA* III (1926), pp. 77-107; "Supplementary Studies in the Calendars of Ancient Israel," *HUCA* X (1935), pp. 1-148. Dr. Morgenstern has offered the explanation for Israel's retaining the Shemini Atzereth, if one has the patience, perseverance, and imagination to but follow the labyrinths of his discussions. The work of H. and J. Lewy, "The Origin of the Week and the Oldest West Asiatic Calendar," *HUCA* XVII (1943), pp. 1-152c, should also be consulted with regard to the meaning of Atzereth.

For a less complex summary and explanation of the mystery of Israel's calendars and priests (with which I do not always concur but for which I am most grateful), the reader should consult Samuel Sandmel's *The Hebrew Scriptures*, Appendix II: "The Sacred Calendar and the Priesthood," pp. 517-525.

and metaphor are specifically husband-wife, agricultural-fertility, and natural-cyclical. Israel's history is recalled generally at the feast; but no specific historical incident is peculiarly appropriate. And the goal of this feast (unlike the Passover, the goal of which tends to be limited, particularist, and nationalistic redemption)¹ is the same mission to which Israel was called at the time of Abraham and Moses. Israel's charge is to represent God --even call Him into active being--in His plan to extend redemption to the nations of the world. It is a world of pagans and philosophers, a world whose history needs to become Gott enthaltende Geschichte too.

The idea of one only God has for its corollary one religion. That this God would one day be acknowledged and served by all mankind was proclaimed by the prophets from Isaiah 40ff. on, and became the faith of the

¹As we will see later, the Christian Church eventually opted for the primacy of Passover (Jesus' adoption is based on the northern tradition of collective personality and the narrative, "Out of Egypt I called [named] my son [Hos. 11:11//Matt. 2:15]") to the almost total neglect and subsequent disappearance of Sukkoth, although Jesus himself was far more inclined toward the imagery of the Feast of Sukkoth. To further complicate the Christian process, the Church later severed the lunar connections of Passover and re-instituted a solar calendar system. Thus while the Great Assembly made the solar Sukkoth a lunar parallel to Passover, the Christian fathers made this lunar Passover into a solar feast, probably under the pressures of Mithraism and often with many of the solar excesses which the Rabbis had finally succeeded in suppressing in their own calendar. Cf. also my article, "Palm Sunday: The Christian Feast of Tabernacles," Christian News from Israel, Vol. XXIV #1 (13), (Summer, 1973), pp. 16-24.

following centuries. It was self-evident that the universal religion of the future would be that which God had revealed, immutable as himself, and entrusted meanwhile to one people, that it might be his prophet to the nations. The Jews were the only people in their world who conceived the idea of a universal religion, and labored to realize it by a propaganda often more zealous than discreet, which made them many enemies; and precisely in the age when the "anti-universalistic" law was enthroned in the completest authority was the expansion of Judaism at its height.¹

Moore is correct save in one point. The "law enthroned," far from being anti-universalistic, was the revelation of God which He intended for the nations and which provided for that one festival which was most universalistic of the festivals of any nation, the Feast of Sukkoth.

Steps to Ketubah

We return now to the description of the biblical dynamic of the four aspects of the covenant: the marriage metaphor. This is the natural mystery of the Feast of Sukkoth. "As a consequence of this marriage symbolism Yahweh's love for Israel was often described in erotic terms."²

¹George Foot Moore, Judaism in the First Centuries of the Christian Era (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1927), Vol. I, pp. 22-23.

²Lindblom, op. cit., p. 328. Lindblom considers this marriage motif a prophetic phenomenon beginning with Hosea. Insofar as the northern kingdom with its tradition of redemption from Egypt and adoption in the wilderness (Horeb) is concerned, he is on solid ground. But when he attributes the popularity of the marriage motif to an eclipse

The natural mystery which inheres in this particular feast is truly a microcosm of the life of Israel, itself the ideal archetype for the nations of the world. The prototype of Israel's π is the feast for which Moses argues with Pharaoh in Exodus 3:18; 10:24ff.; et passim. We know little of that feast, save that it was to be celebrated three days journey into the wilderness with the whole of the people and their flocks. The people were to take jewelry of silver and gold, despoiling Egypt to obtain it. And we know, too, that this feast was the goal of the Exodus even as the Feast of the Passover was being inaugurated.

It is to this prototypical feast that Hosea refers in 12:8-9. Indications point to Israel's continuing some sort of service to and worship of their God, even in servitude. Did they go to the wilderness from time to time, after Joseph and before the oppressor Pharaoh, and keep the patriarchal feast, dwelling the while in tents or booths. The texts do not supply an answer.

When Israel despaired at the mountain of the Lord and abandoned the leadership of Moses, the great feast they held at the golden calf was nonetheless a feast to the Lord, apparently according to some prior custom (Ex. 32). But the giving of the Law changed the festal relationship, for

in covenant imagery, saying that the covenant was "pushed into the background" (p. 329) in pre-Exilic days, I suggest that he is mistaken, as shown above.

the principles of the covenant had changed--a qualitative change involving the changing of names. The feast was transformed from ritual obligation to an occasion of testimony to life. When Israel gathered for Sukkoth after they had entered the land, the feast there was a sign to the world that their Lord was the God of power and life; and it was also an intimate meeting of God with His beloved.

The entire Torah is the general statement, the history, regulations, accommodations, satisfactions, and every day provisions for the marriage. The Torah is, in the marriage metaphor, much like a Ketubah, and it is realistic and always very near at hand (Deut. 30:11 ff.); and it is capable of expansion and elaboration as the relationship continues and prospers.

M'kudesheth Li

Israel had to be brought to a place of free choice for the nuptials to be accomplished. From Ur, God led Abraham out to a land of promise and a place of free, unencumbered choice. Here God and Israel were at first betrothed. Yet Israel had to discover options from which they might choose, and Israel went into Egypt.

Metaphorically the Lover visited His beloved in Egypt (Ex. 3:16; 4:31), saw her distress, and remembered

His love for her. He brought her, with many signs and wonders, signs of His capacity and worth as Husband, to His place (Deut. 4:32ff.). At this place she, having once been redeemed from capricious lovers and once from a master who attempted to force her, chose the Lord as God, and was מקורסת לו. Thus it is said in Jeremiah 2:2ff.: "I remember the devotion of your youth, your love as a bride, . . . Israel was holy to the Lord, the first fruits of his harvest." Again it says: "I will betroth you (להם בריית // וארשתין לי) to me in righteousness and in justice, in steadfast love, and in mercy. I will betroth you to me in faithfulness; and you shall know (וידיעם) the Lord" (Hosea 2:21ff.). The Lord is come to Israel's bed, as it says, "I held him, and would not let him go . . ." (Songs 3:4). And again, "Upon a high and lofty mountain, etc." (Is. 57:7). Israel remembers the Lord (Is. 26:13), being as close to Him as a waistcloth about His private parts (Jer. 13).

The Lord calls Israel by names of intimacy: my people (Ex. 3:7 et passim), Yeshurun (Deut. 33:26),¹ my portion (Jer. 12:7ff.) a holy people (Ex. 19:6), a flock of His keeping (Jer. 23:1ff.), a fertile field (Jer. 12:10), a vineyard of the Lord's tending (Is. 5:7), an olive tree

¹Which is to say, the "pleasing," "straightforward" or "upright" nation.

(Jer. 11:16), a choice wine (Jer. 2:21). But most intimately, she is Israel (Gen. 32:28 and Hos. 12:4).

The Lord for His part sets His name upon His bride (Deut. 28:10 et passim) and says to her, "Behold, I make a covenant" (Ex. 34:10). He makes known to her His own, most personal and historic name (Ex. 3:14-15) through the mouth of His servant Moses; and she calls him "my husband" and not "my master" (Hos. 2:18). Thus she replies as one, as congregation (קהל), "We will do, and we will be obedient" (Ex. 24:7).

In the ketubah-like covenant, the Lord promises life to His bride, a life in which Israel will live in His presence, guided by the blessing of His facilitators, quickened and enlivened by land and children. And the Lord goes before and after His bride in cloud and fire, with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, glorious as the Lord of hosts to protect, preserve, keep, and establish His bride in their place (Deut. 3:22). He saves, redeems and protects His bride.

And when they come to that place, the place of their life together, this covenant is to be continually read and studied (Deut. 31:10ff.), taught to the children in its totality (Deut. 6:7), and taken to heart (Deut. 6:4ff.), so that husband and wife will forever remember the terms of

relationship. And the bride will sing continually, "Remember me, O Lord, etc." (Ps. 106:4-5).

And what does Israel the bride bring as dowry? Nothing, but a response. Having the choice, Israel's part is to respond by receiving the yoke of the Law--simply accepting the covenant. As Lindblom says:

Yahweh's love for Israel was irrational and paradoxical, spontaneous and unmotivated. Yahweh "found" Israel with the same joyful surprise as one finds grapes in the wilderness and the first figs on the fig tree (Hos. IX.10). Yahweh's love was not motivated by any merit on the part of the people; "When Israel was a child, I came to love him," Hosea says in Yahweh's name (XI.1).¹

And R. Matia b. Heresh, interpreting Exodus 12:6, said:

Now when I passed by thee, and looked upon thee, and, behold, thy time was the time of love" (Ezek. 16:8) .. This means, the time has arrived for the fulfillment of the oath which the Holy One, blessed be He, had sworn unto Abraham, to deliver his children. But as yet they had no religious duties to perform by which to merit redemption, as it further says: "Thy breasts were fashioned and thy hair was grown; yet thou wast naked and bare" (*ibid.*), which means bare of any religious deeds. Therefore, the Holy One, blessed be He, assigned them two duties, the duty of the paschal sacrifice and the duty of circumcision, which they should perform so as to be worthy of redemption.²

And again: "I [the Lord] have an easy commandment which is called sukkah; go and carry it out."³

¹Lindblom, op. cit., p. 336.

²Mekilta de R. Ishmael (Horovitz-Rabin ed.), Bo, Parashah 5, p. 14; (Lauterbach ed.), Vol. I, Tractate Pisha, pp. 33-34.

³B. Avodah Zarah 3a.

There is a technical vocabulary of the marriage relationship and the love between God and Israel. To know the specialized meanings of this otherwise less intimate vocabulary is helpful for us in recognizing texts that might pertain to the day of the Lord, the feast of Sukkoth.

Summary of the Four Aspects of the Life Covenant

We have seen in the discussion above a description of the covenant of life which the Lord God has made with Abraham and his seed forever. We must bear in mind that the great aspects of land, progeny, presence, and facilitator are arbitrary and, in fact, constantly overlap. The integrating principle of the biblical method, as we have seen, is not a theological one but the principle which Max Kadushin calls organismic thinking. He says of it:

What is the principle of coherence or order which governs the concepts [sc. Kadushin's four major governing value concepts]? We have to do here not with a fixed, static form of unity but with a dynamic process. It is a process of integration, on the one hand, in which the four fundamental concepts combine with each other and with the rest of the concepts so that each individual concept is always free to combine with any other concept of the complex; and it is also a process of individuation, on the other hand, in which any particular concept takes on meaning or character in the very process whereby it combines with the other concepts of the complex. What we have just described is an organismic process.¹

¹Max Kadushin, *The Rabbinic Mind*, op. cit., p. 24.

Now Kadushin has identified his four fundamental concepts or "vital organs" of the mental organism as God's justice (Middat Ha-Din), God's love or mercy (Middat Raḥamim), Torah, and Israel, each having its own subconcepts.¹ While I am convinced of the soundness of Kadushin's method, I do not necessarily agree with his identification of the four fundamental concepts; for in the final analysis they represent an arbitrary logical scheme which, while it is useful, is not absolute.² And I have offered my four great aspects as fundamental concepts to biblical, covenantal religion in the same spirit of method with the caveat against absolutizing.

¹Ibid., p. 15.

²Israel Bettan identifies three fundamental conceptions of Jewish belief: the majesty of God, the grandeur of the Torah, and the unique destiny of Israel, in Studies in Jewish Preaching (Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press, 1939), pp. 38-39. Solomon Schechter, in his introductory remarks to Some Aspects of Rabbinic Theology, states: "With God as a reality, Revelation as a fact, the Torah as a rule of life, and the hope of Redemption as a most vivid expectation, they [sc. the Rabbis] felt no need for formulating their dogmas into a creed. . .". Schechter then proceeds to discuss seventeen more chapters worth of value concepts, arbitrarily titled and categorized, which he admits are merely aspects of rabbinic theology ultimately defying orderly and complete systemization (pp. 16-17). Slonimsky, relying on Genesis R. 1:4 (and parallels in B. Pesahim 54a and Nedarim 39b), identifies "seven ideas which the Rabbis have distinguished for the high status of primeval forms or essence present before creation." They are: "Torah, the Seat of Glory, the Patriarchs, Israel, the Temple, the Name of the Messiah, and repentance. The first two he distinguishes as appropriate to God; the next four as sacred history from inception to culmination; and the seventh as the operative force (cf. Slonimsky, pp. 28-29).

What I do consider critical in this work is that the organismic principle be shown as equally applicable to biblical as to rabbinic literature; and that whatever might be the governing (or perhaps only descriptive) value-concepts, or great aspects, of the covenant of life, that it be manifest that they were transferred intact from the pre-destruction institutional period to the post-destruction period of re-institutionalization. In short, do the Rabbis continue or depart from the biblical process; and if they continue the biblical process, do they succeed in preserving that which has been fundamental (not institutional) to the covenant with Israel?

Of the first concern, Kadushin says:

The rabbinic complex, then, is a development out of the Bible, but its relation to the Bible goes even further. There is a living bond between rabbinic thought and the Bible. This can only mean that the character of rabbinic thought and the character of biblical thought are not essentially different.¹

And what Kadushin calls further development of biblical concepts in rabbinic literature,² I would prefer to

¹Ibid., p. 300. Affirmation of the bond between biblical and rabbinic literature establishes such an enterprise as Louis Finkelstein's, New Light from the Prophets (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1969) on solid ground, whether or not one can agree with the specifics of the work. Methodologically Finkelstein is quite right to look for the antecedents of Rabbinic Judaism in the Bible.

²There is in Kadushin's view a hint of the "progressively improving" or "onward and upward" view of history which runs contrary to the Bible's horizontally linear view

consider a re-institutionalization of the biblical categories. And thus we move to these re-institutionalizations of the themes of Sukkoth, the microcosm of the covenant, in the rabbinic literature.

of history, broken by regular impediments which must be overcome. Israel overcomes them by the melting and re-institutionalization of that which is most important (in Greek, the kerygma; in Judaism, the covenant of life). Christianity, however, follows a pattern of assimilation of impediments.

George Foot Moore in his chapter on the character of Judaism in Judaism in the First Centuries of the Christian Era, Vol. I, op. cit., p. 112, lapses into this same kind of historical "progressivism" in discussing the improvements of rabbinic Judaism over biblical religion. He, too, mistakes growth and progressive development for what is truly the reinstitutionalization of the unchanging covenant. This is despite the fact that he introduces the subject with a warning he himself proceeds to ignore. He says:

But whatever the sins or shortcomings of the people, however negligent or however zealous in the practice of their religion, religion itself was neither impaired nor improved. It was perfect from the beginning and therefore unalterable. Modern students approach Judaism with pre-possessions of so radically different an order that it requires an effort of imagination to put ourselves at this point of view. The idea of historical development in religion, as in science and in institutions--in civilization as a whole--so dominates us that it is hard to understand a religion to which it is a contradiction in terms. But it is idle to try to comprehend Judaism at all unless we are prepared to accept its own assumptions as principles of interpretation, and not substitute ours for them.

Moore could not have been more correct! It is unfortunate that he neglects to follow his own principle.

CHAPTER IV

THE COVENANT OF THE SECOND COMMONWEALTH

We have come now to the point at which we must examine the rabbinic literature on the Feast of Sukkoth. We will attempt to determine just how the covenant was conveyed from the time of the Second Commonwealth, through the dreadful impediment of the destruction of the Temple in 70 C.E., and finally to that time of re-institutionalization of the covenant aspects into that configuration called rabbinic Judaism.

If we are correct, that the fundamental tension in Israelite religion is that caused by the existence of two very different typologies, both designed to convey the relationship of the nation with YHWH, the Lord God of both Israel and Judah/Jerusalem, we will be sensitive to the possible continuation of that tension. It is likely that with the destruction of the two kingdoms the national expression of the tension was translated and re-embodied in terms more suited to the new circumstances of Israel's life.

It has been suggested that the liturgical calendar of Leviticus 23 does, in fact, represent a position formerly represented by the metaphor of Ephraim. The festival

calendar would thus suggest the canonical triumph of Gott
enthaltende Geschichte; of the priority of an essentially
 lunar festival and calendar; of the chosenness and adoption
 metaphors of the northern nation; of prophet over king; of
 Moses who is not only מֹשֶׁה but מֹשֶׁה as well; and of the
 separateness of a pure, holy, and undefiled people who by
 their very distinctiveness fulfill the obligation undertaken
 at Sinai.

Revelation Through Tension as a Rabbinic Method¹

Ephraimite typology's last word on the calendar
 does not mean, however, the obliteration of the southern
 idiom or practice. Textually the calendar in Leviticus has
 in no way decanonized earlier texts which, as we have seen,
 are still very much present in Pentateuchal and prophetic
 writings and which represent a southern and solar bias.

But more important than the texts themselves are
 popular traditions and usages which are most difficult to
 reorient regardless of the merit of any system of reforma-
 tion. As long as the Temple stood and the people inhabited
 the land, the ideals of reformation and the realities of
 popular practice were to be the subjects of friction and
 of accomodation. For even in the tension between the

¹Cf. the discussion above, at the conclusion of the
 preceding chapter, and in Appendix B.

godly ideal and the popular reality, the potential for revelation is broad indeed.

The presence of the Jerusalemite priesthood with its ancient and unbroken traditions and predilections for the southern idiom assured the continued tension of two very different approaches to the service of the Lord. Add to this enormous Temple institution the rise of the Hasmonean family, powered by truly populist support,¹ and the advantage cannot be granted to either tradition.

With the destruction of the Temple and the establishment of the rabbinical academy at Jabneh, we might expect the eclipse, if not the total disappearance, of southern institution and typology altogether. But this is not the case at all. The tension, albeit in a new formulation, persists beyond the destruction of the Temple.

The reformation begun by Ezra and Nehemiah did finally emerge victorious as normative Judaism, but the process was a long and complicated affair, much of which is totally unknown to us because of the paucity of texts from the period itself and the dubious reliability (or the prejudicial imbalance) of those accounts which do exist. We do know, however, that the principle of a holy and wholly separated people became the accepted solution to the problems

¹And perhaps confronted as well by the opposition of a group which ultimately triumphs.

of revitalization of the covenant. And apart from Christianity (which very soon took its parallel but quite separate position vis-à-vis Israelite religion), the opposition to rabbinic Judaism as the legitimate heir to the guardianship of the covenant was practically obliterated after 70 C.E.

Yet even as rabbinic Judaism emerged alone victorious in the struggle for authority to define and administer orthodoxy, the ancient and venerable tension of Israelite religious typology reappeared within the new orthodoxy itself.

We may guess (and only briefly at this point) that the typological tension persisted because it was crucial to the very operation of the covenant. The question has often been asked, most particularly by the faithful: "How do we perceive the revelation of the will of God?" And the answer, if it is to be an answer presupposing free will, must be: "We perceive and receive the revelation by choice." And if revelation comes by choice, there must be clear alternatives from which to choose.¹ What better way to provide alternatives than to possess a continuing tension that forever stretches and exercises the faithful sensibilities of God's beloved people.

¹Here we are not speaking of the choice of gods (cf. p. 100)--of the faith that precedes revelation--but choice as a means for the discernment of revelation once the relationship of faith has been established.

The difference between a disputation of Hillel and Shammai over the validity of one's sukkah¹ may seem somewhat removed from a testy disagreement between the Pharisees and the Sadducees over the water libation.² And this latter disagreement may seem small compared with the feelings of Jew and Samaritan for each other. But none of the foregoing seems nearly so profound as the rift between Jeroboam and Rehoboam, or the differences between the tribes of the Exodus/migration and the tribes of the settlement. The fact that a religion should be so greatly influenced by a calendar system may seem absurd to the outsider, but it is this very tension of calendar and typology that have provided these chosen people with a remarkable means for revelation from their God.

The ancient tension in typology within the community of those who have chosen to serve the Lord is the one thing that unites any and every age of Israel's history. The tension is the means whereby revelation is discovered, clarified, and assimilated; and this is as true of biblical literature as it is of rabbinic, post-canonical, and extra-canonical literature.³

¹M. Sukkah 2:7.

²B. Sukkah 48b.

³See Appendix B.

Thus we may observe the re-emergence of the typological tension in rabbinic literature with relief, for it is our assurance that rabbinic Judaism is the legitimate, competent heir and trustee of the covenant. The symbol of the tension, once typified by two kingdoms¹, is now the figure of the written and the oral law.¹

¹The New Testament story of the Transfiguration, although for the most part misunderstood by exegetes, is an outstanding haggadic concretization of the new symbol of the typological tension. Moses and Elijah appearing with Jesus in glory (or divine approbation) are not the respective types of the Law and the Prophets. They are the types of the written and the oral Torah; Jesus is a type of the renewed Israel which perceives the covenant revelation from both written and oral Torah.

Elijah has been typified as the darshan par excellence, probably as a result of the last verses of the book of Malachi. Elijah's metamorphosis from passionate, zealous prophet of the north to heavenly facilitator, precursor of the Messiah, and adjustor of all differences is wonderful indeed. The haggadic literature establishes a tradition about the prophet that he comes and will come to solve otherwise unresolved legal problems (cf. M. Eduyoth 8:7; B. Menahoth 45a; Aboth de Rabbi Nathan 34; Numbers R., Bemidbar 3:13; and JE., Vol. V, pp. 120-127). He is, in fact, likened to Ezra, the "ready scribe in the Law of Moses" (Ezr. 7:6) who also represents a figure of the Oral Torah. There is no reason to believe that these traditions about Elijah were not circulating at the time of Jesus. When Jesus says, "You have Moses and the prophets" (Lk. 16:29), he is making specific reference to the two-fold Torah. He understands the role of the southern, Jerusalemite prophets to be that of darshanim as well as court advisors and preachers. We have, therefore, a clue as to the understanding of a prophet's function in the time of the Second Commonwealth. It is furthermore significant that Peter's inclination to construct booths for Moses, Elijah, and Jesus (cf. Matt. 17:1-13// Mk. 9:2-13//Lk. 9:28-36) suggests a Sukkoth setting for the incident, for Sukkoth is the microcosmic image of the whole covenant of life.

We may now turn to the various aspects and categories of the covenant of life as represented in the Feast of Sukkoth, the microcosm of the covenant in operation. We will try to discover how the Rabbis combined these aspects and categories with each other to concretize the covenant from time to time and from place to place according to the needs of Israel. The dynamic of this process will be for them, as it was for their fathers, the imagery of Israel as the bride of the Lord (and secondarily, as the Lord's chosen son).

The Rabbis after 70 C.E. were confronted with a major obstacle in the path of the regular and unhindered movement of the covenant along the line of history. Yet the destruction of the Temple and Jerusalem was not altogether disastrous. There can be no doubt that this devastation was the source of great suffering for Israel, including the Rabbis. Yet the destruction of the Temple and the removal of Israel's religious life and authority to Jabneh provided a unique and singular opportunity for the implementation of reform in directions and proportions before unimagined.

The text that comes immediately to mind as a possible expression of the Rabbis' feelings about the Temple and its destruction is Genesis 50:19, one of the classic biblical texts evidencing Israel's early departure from a belief in fate and Israel's choice of the Lord God to be the author

and sustainer of covenant life. The text is: "But Joseph said to them (sc. his brethren), 'Fear not, for am I in the place of God? As for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today.'" The Rabbis commenting upon this very text resort immediately to the aspects of the covenant:

And Joseph said unto them: . . . And as for you, ye meant evil against me. . . . Now therefore fear ye not . . . and he spake to their heart (L, 19ff.). Can then a man speak to the heart? It means, however, that he spoke words which comfort the heart. Ye have been likened to the dust of the earth, he told them, and who can exterminate the dust of the earth? Ye have been likened to the beasts of the field (in Jacob's blessing), and who can exterminate the beasts of the field? Ye have been likened to the stars, and who can exterminate the stars. . . . R. Simlai said: [He assured them]: Ye are the body and I am the head, as it says, "Let the blessing come upon the head, [viz] Joseph" (Deut. XXXIII, 16): if the body is removed, of what use is the head? . . . Again, shall I become my father's opponent, my father begetting and I burying; or shall I become an opponent of God, God blessing while I diminish! Hence it says, "And he comforted them." Now does this not furnish an argument? If Joseph could thus comfort the tribal ancestors by speaking soothing words to them, how much the more when the Holy One, blessed be He, comes to comfort Jerusalem! Thus it says, "Comfort ye, comfort ye My people, saith your God" (Is. XL, 1).¹

This lengthy text is important for four reasons. First it shows the God-centered understanding of affliction: just as in a biblical case, so also in a rabbinic instance. Second, when catastrophe threatens or has

¹Genesis R. (Theodor-Albeck ed.), Vol. III, Vayechi, 100:19-21, pp. 1293-1294; (Soncino ed.), Vol. II, Vayechi, 100:97, pp. 999-1000.

occured, the Rabbis follow the biblical precedent and move directly to that which to them is most important--the covenant. Third, the Rabbis, just like the prophets, do not dismiss the suffering with an exhortation to bear the unbearable; neither do they leave the people with musar alone. Homiletic pronouncement of musar ends with n'hemtah, . . . comfort ye My people. . .". And finally this text takes advantage of a Joseph story to exalt, albeit with due subtlety, the north over the south; the purist and separatist view over the cosmopolitan, assimilationist view. It is an issue of authority, and the Rabbis know it.

Why, then, do the Rabbis retain or even permit the tension, when the circumstances of history would permit them to have done with it? In the first place they cannot. The removal of the Temple does indeed shift the entire balance of canonical and religious power to their side. They alone have the authority for institutionalization,¹ all other potential rivals having been removed by the Roman administration. But popular tradition and custom is not an organizing party or faction. It is a non-organized power deriving its authority from the generations; and it could never be any more than curbed or deflected without many years of constant reorientation.

¹Again excluding Christianity, which was never a serious contender in its Palestinian period.

It is a popular saying that law without popular approbation, if that law is imposed by overwhelming sanction,¹ is no law at all, but tyranny. The Rabbis, like their fathers the Pharisees, were populists; and populists, even populists totally absorbed by godly purpose, are not tyrants. The Rabbis relied on interpretation and exhortation to achieve reformation. But in certain instances, such as particular aspects of Sukkoth, the furthest extent of their proposed reformation was a compromise with the people.

In the second place the Rabbis maintained the tension within their monopoly purposively. Conscious as they were of the need for disputation to perceive revelation, the Rabbis openly encouraged and cultivated the tension which might otherwise have disappeared. The tension among themselves over interpretation, the tension between written and oral Law, and the tension between ideal reformation and popular tradition were sure signs of the continued presence of God in the midst of His people, even without the Temple.

It was said:

"A prophet . . . shall the Lord raise up . . . to him shall ye hearken" (Deut. XVIII, 15). Even though he bid thee transgress one of the commands ordained in

¹The Law of God is, of course, exempt from the argument; for even if it does not have popular and majority approbation, neither does it have overwhelming sanction. Free will stands in place of sanctions.

the Torah, as did Elijah on Mount Carmel, yet according to the need of the hour listen to him.¹

Or again:

Resh Lakish said: There are times when the suppression of the Torah (or cancellation of the Torah-- של חוריה בייסוליה) is the foundation (of the Torah), as it is written, (" . . . and I will write upon the tables the words that were on the first tables,) which thou didst break" (Ex. 34:1).²

We are aware, then, that the Rabbis are conscious of the usefulness of tension for discerning the revelation of God. And with this technique in mind, we must turn to one other matter of importance. The cognitive concept and its relationship to the aspects of the covenant, especially the covenant described in terms of Sukkoth, will provide us with an understanding of the independence of the aspects and categories from the institutions which form around and embody them from time to time.

Cognitive Concepts and the Feast

Two categories or themes of the covenant of life are the Temple in Jerusalem and the Feast of Sukkoth. In the time of the restoration and the Second Commonwealth, these categories were not only concretized as institutions, but

¹Sifre on Deuteronomy (Finkelstein ed.), Shofetim, Piska 175, p. 221. Cf. also B. Yebamoth 90b.

²B. Menahoth 99a/b.

were also what Kadushin would call cognitive concepts.¹ This is especially true of the Temple, as it is a tangible object of the senses, a denotative factor in the world. It is, in this sense, the environment or locus of the feast.

To a lesser extent, the Feast of Sukkoth was also a cognitive concept in that it is a rite involving specific objects unique to this feast alone. Like Kadushin's "round," the feast is more "shape" than "thing"--but nonetheless cognitive.²

¹M. Kadushin, op. cit., p. 50ff. Kadushin says of the cognitive concept that

It consists of terms we use in order to describe whatever we perceive through the senses, the terms which constitute the bulk of every man's everyday vocabulary. . . . The cognitive concepts refer to objective matter, such as "table," "chair," "tall," "round," and are therefore denotative. . . . Thus, cognitive concepts differ from value concepts in regard to the use of the conceptual terms. . . . When we use concepts referring to perceived things we do so by uttering the conceptual terms which stand for those perceived things. This is frequently not the case when we employ value-concepts.

Following Kadushin's suggestion, we may draw a distinction between a category or theme of the covenant of life and a cognitive concept which pertains to the covenant.

²While the device of Sukkoth as a cognitive concept for organizing the material is useful, it must always be kept in mind that this harvest feast, while it has had a fixed place in Israel's yearly calendar, has never really been fixed historically. Even the post-Exilic attempts to provide the newly lunarized feast with a narrative was never truly successful. It is possible to generalize that Passover is and has been a festival centered upon a narrative which is permanently fixed in history, but which is

We shall deal with the Temple and the feast as proper categories of the covenant at the appropriate place. It is, however, the cognitive aspects of these institutions and the tensions inherent in them that are useful to our study. Because the literature of the covenant represents the various concretizations of the organismic covenant, it threatens to overwhelm us unless we have some means of controlling it. These two cognitive concepts will provide such a control.

The choice is arbitrary of course, and the venture subject to several hazards. First, we shall never be sure that the construct which follows is the best means of organizing the material. It is nearly impossible to know just which points on the covenant organism to touch in order to give a fair and adequate representation of it. Our four great aspects and the themes or categories chosen will hopefully suffice. There is however no logical structure applied to an organism which could ever be called

not confined to a particular place of celebration. Sukkoth, however, has had no specific historical referrent beyond the continuing and historically undifferentiated thanksgiving for life.

But it is generally true that Asiph, or Sukkoth, has had a specific locus to which it is attached: the mahol for the maidens dancing in the fields, the temporary booths in the fields, or the local sanctuary. In early days there seems to have been only one thanksgiving feast in the year. But it required a pilgrimage to the Lord's presence at the central shrine. The altars at Jerusalem and at Shechem presented a further centralization, which became even more compelling after the Exile.

best: a translation, no matter how clever, cannot be called even good when measured against the original.

Second, the organism is a whole, and the temptation when descriptively touching the organism at several points is to draw the entire body through each point of contact. The danger of drowning in the literature at the opening of any window on the organism is a real threat, and great care must be used in selecting just the material to illustrate the point and leave off.

Finally our scheme is threatened by the fact that the catastrophe of 70 C.E., while it provides a useful watershed for a "before and after" analysis, is by no means an absolute point of division in history. We know that the Rabbis and their predecessors (whoever they were) had begun the process of reinstitutionalization soon after the return of Ezra and Nehemiah. It is not as though the destruction of the Temple left a heap of completely naked covenant categories which the Rabbis were required to suddenly reorganize and reclothe. The process which Johanan ben Zakkai moved to Jabneh, was a process begun some four centuries earlier.¹

¹The matter is very much analogous to Constantine's recognition of Christianity. Although the recognition and the attendant freedoms were sudden and the churches moved from catacomb to court almost overnight, Christianity had been quietly developing its institutions for centuries and was perhaps startled, but hardly unprepared for its new situation.

THE FEAST OF SUKKOTH IN RABBINIC

AND RELATED LITERATURE

A. Peter Burrows.

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Yet the use of our two categories, which at one point double as cognitive concepts, may offer some possibility of success. The Temple as cognitive concept is the denotation of the specific place of the covenant at this period in Israel's history. The Feast of Sukkoth as cognitive concept is the denotation of the time of the covenant at the designated place of God's presence and Israel's celebration. The sudden disappearance of the cognitive concepts in 70 C.E. will help us determine the real independence of aspects and categories of the covenant and will, furthermore, aid us in observing how the Rabbis (and others) quickly reworked and reinstitutionalized that which is permanent and unchanging, that the covenant organism might once more be re-embodied.

The present chapter will deal with the categories at the time when the cognitive concepts are functioning. The chapter following will examine the same categories as they appear after the Rabbis have re-worked them into what is called Normative Judaism.¹ The four great aspects and the dynamic of the covenant as they relate to the Temple as

¹I will, however, make no attempt at dating any of the literature, even in so non-specific a fashion as pre- and post-Temple literature. Critical work on these sources has come nowhere near such a refinement, and any division of the material on my part would be no better than guess work. An occasional hint in the text from time to time will, at this stage of criticism, provide our best and only hope for perspective.

place are: the source of creation (land--ראשית),¹ the place of seeing and quickening (progeny--ראיון), the place of revelation (presence--שכינה), the service of the Temple (facilitator--עבודה), and the working of the covenant (dynamic--השתלשלות-הברית). The Feast of Sukkoth as a cognitive concept becomes the day of the Lord (יום-החג). The categories and sub-categories of the covenant as represented in the Feast of Sukkoth will be grouped under these headings. We will turn now to the Temple feast before 70 C.E.

The Day of the Lord: יום-החג

The covenant is designed to be the eternal relationship of God with His people, i.e. the relationship is a day to day matter and confined to no particular time or season. But we have chosen the Feast of Sukkoth as a microcosm of the entire time of the covenant. This microcosmic look into the covenant workings will be a period of eight days of the year (or perhaps of seven years in the sabbatical, or even

¹ מקור ראשית: This nomenclature is of my own devising and not to be found in any of the sources. The familiar term מעשה ראשית might be more acceptable as having a value status comparable to שכינה; but it does not quite express the relationship of Temple to universe, or the relation of both these to the great covenant aspect of land. Even ראיון and השתלשלות-הברית are somewhat unfamiliar as rabbinic concepts; but lacking much theological baggage by reason of their obscurity, I trust they will convey the aspects readily enough.

fifty years in the jubilee). By concentrating in this chapter on the few days of Sukkoth as representative of the covenant time, we will be better able to understand the universalism and timelessness of Sukkoth and the covenant in the next chapter.

Much has already been said about the time of the Feast of Sukkoth, both time in the month and season in the year. We have no evidence that the Feast of Sukkoth deviated from its assigned position in the reformation calendar of Leviticus 23 from the promulgation of that lunarized calendar to this very day. In fact the Rabbis, or their predecessors, at some point confirmed the Leviticus 23 calendar and guaranteed for themselves the right to establish calendar systems and reckonings, as the midrash states:

"This month shall be unto you" (Ex. 12:1). The angels said before God: 'Master of the Universe: When art Thou going to fix the festivals?' For as it is written: "The matter is by the decree of the watchers" (Dan. 4:14). God replied: 'You and I will confirm what Israel decide when they intercalate the year,' as it says: "I will cry unto God most High; unto God that accomplisheth it for me" (Ps. 57:3). Hence it says: "These are the appointed seasons of the Lord; even holy convocations, which ye shall proclaim" (Lev. 23:4 and 37); There are no festivals before Me save these, whether ye proclaim them in their due season or not. God said to Israel: 'In the past this was done by Me,' as it says: "Who appointedest the moon for seasons" (Ps. 104:19), 'but from now and henceforth, it is handed over entirely to you. If you say "Yes" it will be "yes," and if you say "No" it will be "no;" In all cases, "this month shall be to you" (i.e., yours). Moreover, even if you wish to intercalate

a year, I will confirm it. Hence it is written "This month shall be unto you. . .".¹

This tension in time allowing for revelation seems to have been exactly the issue of calendar and authority over it.

We are aware, of course, of the attempts of various parties and factions in Israel to seek changes in the calendar or to substitute a different calendar altogether. Such attempts at calendar reformation customarily sought to lend support for their claims by attributing celebration of the proposed calendar to the ancient worthies in Israel. They, too, provided temporal tension which invited revelation.

Two such attempts to attribute the first occasion of the celebration of Sukkoth to biblical figures before Solomon (or even Moses, who received the legislation for festival celebration) are known to us. The Targum Yerushalmi on Genesis 35:14 attributes the first celebration of the Feast of Sukkoth to the patriarch Jacob, although the Targum seems to have no particular calendar reformation in mind.

And the Shekinah of the Lord ascended from him in the place where He had spoken with him. And Jakob erected there a pillar of stone in the place where He had spoken with him, a pillar of stone; and he outpoured upon it a libation of water, because thus it was to be done at the feast of Tabernacles; and he poured oil of olive thereupon. And Jakob called the name of the place where the Lord had spoken with him Beth El.²

¹Exodus R. (Soncino ed.), Bo, 15:12.

²John Wessly Etheridge, trans., The Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan ben Uzziel on the Pentateuch; with the

Earlier in this Targum it is said that when Jacob had built the altar at Bethel and named the place "to God, who made His Shekinah to dwell in Bethel," his name was changed to Israel and God revealed Himself as El Shadai. God told him: "spread forth and multiply; a holy people, and a congregation of prophets and priests, shall be from thy sons whom thou hast begotten. . .".¹

The first real attempt at calendar modification by attributing the celebration of Sukkoth to a pre-Mosaic figure is in the proposal of the pseudepigraphal Book of Jubilees. It is difficult to know when or by whom this work, with its proposed calendar changes, was composed; and the answers would not be entirely relevant to our discussion at any rate. Charles places the time of writing at the high point of the Maccabean period, somewhere between 109-105 B.C.E.² The internal evidence he cites is reasonable to support at least the Hasmonean era.

As to the author, the most we need say of him is that he is of the reforming tradition of Ezra and Nehemiah

Fragments of the Jerusalem Targum (London: Longman, Green, Longman, and Roberts, 1862), Vol. I, pp. 280-281.

¹R. H. Charles, ed. and trans., "The Book of Jubilees--Introduction," in The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament in English, ed. by R. H. Charles (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1913), Vol. II, p. 6.

²Ibid., p. 279.

and evidently much opposed to the lapses of purity, the breakdown of separateness, and the failure to keep the Sabbath on the part of God's holy nation. If he is indeed writing in the Hasmonean period, his concern is very probably that of creeping Hellenism. He is thus in the Ezra/Nehemiah reformation tradition some three centuries after that reformation's beginning.

At one point, however, this Jubilees author is in conflict with the author of the Leviticus 23 calendar, if indeed that calendar is a totally lunar calendar presupposing lunar feasts in a lunar year.¹ But whatever his

¹There is, however, no evidence that Leviticus 23 presumes a lunar year at all. Perhaps it only requires lunar feasts and celebrations of new moons within a solar year. In this case, the author of Jubilees, far from supporting the Pharisees, may be arguing for the traditional solar calendar of 52 weeks of 30 days and a separate New Year (Jub. 6:29-30). The intercalary days are the four new moons of the seasons (Jub. 6:23ff.) as in Ezekiel 46:6 and I Enoch 75:1-2; 82:11. Perhaps our author is writing in opposition to that group who wish to counter the vestiges of solar calendar by instituting a lunar year. We do know from B. Rosh Hashanah that the Rabbis did indeed succeed in establishing the much more complex lunar year.

Our Jubilees author could represent the last of the original Ezra-Nehemiah reformation thrust. For the former reformation was ultimately assumed and expanded by the separatists at the time of the Hasmonean authority. He seems to assert that if these "lunatics" have their way, the people will

forget the feasts of the covenant and walk according to the feasts of the Gentiles after their error and after their error and after their ignorance. For there will be those who will assuredly make observations of the moon--how (it) disturbs the seasons and comes in from year to year ten days too soon. For this reason the

calendar preference as to the reckoning of years, he is intent upon showing that the festivals of Leviticus 23 have their origins in patriarchal antiquity.

Jacob celebrates a seven day feast of joy and thanksgiving to God for fulfilling his vow in Jubilees, just as in the preceding Targum passage. This feast is held at Bethel from the 15th-21st of the seventh month.¹ But in Jubilees, it is the patriarch Abraham who, at the Well of the Oath (Beer Sheba), celebrates the first Feast of Sukkoth:

And we returned in the seventh month, and found Sarah with child before us and we blessed him (her), and we announced to him (her) all the things which had been decreed concerning him, that he should not die till he should beget six sons more, and should see (them) before he died; but (that) in Isaac should his name and seed be called (or and it would be designated his name and his seed): . . . For he should become the portion of the Most High, and all his seed had fallen into the possession of God, that it should be unto the Lord a people for (His) possession (treasure) above all nations and that it should become a kingdom and priests (a priestly kingdom / a kingdom of priests) and a holy

years will come upon them when they will disturb (the order), and make an abominable (day) the day of testimony, and an unclean day a feast day, and they will confound all the days, the holy with the unclean, and the unclean with the holy; for they will go wrong as to the months and sabbaths and feasts and jubilees (Jub. 6:35b-37).

¹Jubilees 32:4-11. Jubilees makes Jacob the first to celebrate the eighth day, the Shemini Atzereth, which he calls "Addition" (Jub. 32:16-17, 22, 27-29), and which seems to be occasioned by the changing of his name from Jacob to Israel. The incident is also connected with a rivalry between Bethel and the Levites there, and the Jerusalem Temple.

nation. . . . And he built there an altar to the Lord who had delivered him, and who was making him rejoice in the land of his sojourning, as he celebrated a festival of joy in this month seven days, near the altar which he had built at the Well of the Oath. And he built booths for himself and for his servants on this festival, and he was the first to celebrate the feast of tabernacles on the earth. . . . For this reason it is ordained on the heavenly tablets concerning Israel, that they shall celebrate the feast of tabernacles seven days with joy, in the seventh month, acceptable before the Lord--a statute for ever throughout their generations every year.¹

It should be noted that even in these few verses indicating the occasion of the first Sukkoth we can recognize three of the four great covenant aspects. The concern for Abraham's name and progeny as well as his deliverance are a reference to Abraham's life and progeny, the covenant life. The presence of the Lord is through the agency of angels in the text, whereas in the Targum text it is the Shekinah present.

In both Targum and Jubilees we see the patriarchs designated the first facilitators of the feast. And in both texts we find an emphasis on the holiness of the nation of kings and priests, the same kind of concern which we find at the beginnings of the reformation of Ezra and Nehemiah.²

The second attempt at calendar reform, to be considered, which may or may not have inspired the Book of

¹Jubilees 16:16-17a, 18, 20-21, 29.

²Cf. above, p. 88.

Jubilees, is the celebration of the Re-dedication of the Temple by Judas Maccabee on the 25th Kislev.¹ There is admittedly no change in the structure of the Leviticus 23 calendar at this time; in fact the arguments of Jubilees (drawing from the original source in II Ezekiel and in accord with I Enoch) seem to be aimed at those who would upset the solar year of Leviticus 23.²

Yet there is in this Hasmonean festival a disturbing modification of the Day of the Lord. The Feast of Hanukkah, which they celebrated on the very day of the month in which the Abomination of Desolation was placed in the Temple, is admittedly patterned after Sukkoth. This should not be exceptional, inasmuch as the Feast of Sukkoth was considered the prototype for all feasts of rejoicing. What is disturbing, however, is the date and the metaphor of the Hanukkah Feast.

¹But cf. above, p. 88ff for the question of whether Leviticus 23 presumes a solar or lunar year. By Hasmonean times, the probability is that the year continued to be solar, but with lunar feasts. Perhaps the break with the solar year comes with the ascendancy of the Pharisees at the death of Alexander Jannaeus and the reign of Salome Alexandra in 79 B.C.E.

²J. B. Segal, *op. cit.*, p. 39-41 with notes and pp. 248 ff., has made reference to one other document of the intertestamental period which mentions the Feast of Sukkoth. It is a fragment from Cave 4 at Qumran dated probably before 68 C.E. Units of time and the Hebrew festivals are its concern. It follows the normative calendar order, divides the year according to the priestly course set forth in I Chronicles 24:7-18, and reckons a solar year of 364 days. Segal believes it to be a Sadducean work. The feast is called here the *an*; but no practices are described.

The date for this pseudo-Sukkoth is the winter solstice, a return to a solar moment just when Sukkoth had been weaned from its own equinoctial moment to a lunar moment. Furthermore the one great theme of Sukkoth which the reformers had tried to suppress, the theme of fire/light, was now restored to this feast of popular celebration. This is not really calendar reform; it is calendar subversion. And it worked, even to this day, both in Judaism and Christianity.

As for the month of Tishri itself, it is as we might expect, in midrashic competition with Nisan as a sign of the continuing revelation. A case is made for the creation of the world, the birth of the patriarchs Abraham and Jacob, and the annunciation to Sarah in the month of Tishri (B. Rosh Hashanah 10b-11a). The dispute is between R. Eliezer (for Tishri) and R. Joshua (for Nisan). The passage about creation is useful:

It has been taught: 'R. Elizer says: Whence do we know that the world was created in Tishri? Because it says, "And God said, 'Let the earth put forth grass, herb yielding seed, and fruit-tree.'" Which is the month in which the earth puts forth grass and the trees are full of fruit? You must say that this is Tishri. That time was the season of fructification, and the rain came down and the plants sprouted, as it says, "And a mist went up from the earth."¹

This passage from B. Rosh Hashanah continues the list of significant events attached to the Feast of Sukkoth.

¹B. Rosh Hashanah 11a.

The annunciation to Sarah of the birth of Isaac is equally important, for it is on the Feast of Tabernacles that she ceases to be barren. Likewise the visitation and remembrance of the three mothers Rachel, Hannah, and Sarah, is connected with the first of Tishri by analogy (אניא) of פקד and זכר concerning these matriarchs with the same words in Leviticus 23:24. In all these cases of creation, birth annunciation, and visitation we have the covenant aspects of fructified land, the birth of progeny, and the creative and sustaining presence of God associated with the month or the feast of Sukkoth.¹

There is, finally, a dispute by Eliezer and Joshua (11b) over the time of the second redemption. Joshua holds it will occur in Nisan, as did the first redemption. Eliezer, however, claims it will occur in Tishri, and argues the case on an analogy in Psalm 81:4 and Isaiah 27:13.² We shall return to the implication of the calendation and final day of the Lord, the day of redemption in Tishri, in the last chapter.

Even by the beginning of the Second Commonwealth there had been significant changes in the concept of the day of the

¹The proof of the numbering of the equinoctial months is debated at length in Mechilta de R. Ishmael (Horovitz-Rabin ed.) Bo, Parasha 1, p. 6, line 18.

²We have already seen this same dispute about redemption between Joshua and Eliezer, above, p. 212f., n. 1.

Lord. While the feast began as a thanksgiving celebration at the turning of the year, celebrated on a very local basis, the establishment of an empire by Solomon and the dedication of a magnificent solar Temple at the center of a great trading area had moved the city in a cosmopolitan direction and expanded the scope of the feast from a local celebration to a great national--perhaps even international--event. Moreover, the shrinking of the empire did not deprive the feast of its tendenz towards universalism. Even in Isaiah's early Temple homily to King Ahaz there is an association of this day of the Lord with a far greater territory than just Jerusalem.¹

As the reign of God was conceived to include the nations of the earth, so was His great day expanded to become a day into which the significant events of all other days past, present, and future, could be drawn together. It was a day of unity when God would be one over all the

¹For the discussion of the southern court prophets and their function as preachers and homilists, cf. Appendix B. Isaiah's first homily to Ahaz about deliverance from the Syrian-Israelite invasion and the birth of a child (perhaps the crown prince Hezekiah) is the short piece from 7:10-7:24. The second preachment, very likely given at the 17 (Cf. 12:3-6), is a vision of the extension of the Lord's kingdom from Egypt to Assyria, i.e. the entire fertile crescent (19:23-24). The Davidic House is to be the vehicle of the establishment of this kingdom of God.

one, entire) world, as it says in Zechariah 14:9. Thus on Sukkoth, in the course of the seven days of the feast, there were seventy bullocks sacrificed in the Temple, according to the schedule of Numbers 29.

R. Eliezer (Eleazar) stated, To what do those seventy bullocks correspond? To the seventy nations. To what does the single bullock [of the Eighth Day] correspond? To the unique nation. This may be compared to a mortal king who said to his servants, 'Prepare for me a great banquet'; but on the last day he said to his beloved friend, 'Prepare for me a simple meal that I may derive benefit from you.'¹

This last celebration, the intimate meal, is the explanation for the awkward eighth day of a seven day feast; and it is a delightful accounting for an obvious anachronism. This feast of Shemini Atzereth was originally the New Year on the equinox, when Sukkoth began on the third of the month with a fast. It was then the day of great rejoicing. But with the forward shift of Sukkoth to the 15th, the eighth day lost its meaning; for the most solemn fast of the year was assigned to its former day, the 10th. A significant tension was introduced between the old New Year festival and the new festival of thanksgiving and rejoicing.

¹B. Sukkah 55b. A fuller statement of this midrash is found in Numbers R. 21:24, in which Israel complains that the nations of the world respond to Israel's sacrifices for them with hatred; "Sovereign of the worlds! Behold, we offer for them seventy bullocks and they ought to love us, yet they hate us," As it says: "In return for my love, they are my adversaries" (Ps. 109:4).

Thus the ingenious explanation: for seven days the proper concern of Israel is making atonement for the nations. But on the last day, the two lovers, God and Israel, have a small, intimate feast together. This midrash should not be construed as a statement of chauvinism on Israel's part; it is rather an affirmation of the need of the married couple to be alone together after the great work of hospitality is accomplished. Another explanation is offered:

"Thou hast increased unto the nation," As for the nations of the world; when you increase for them days of festival, they eat and drink and carouse and go to theaters and to circuses and provoke you by their words and deed--But Israel! You give them festivals and they eat and drink and rejoice and go to synagogues and houses of study, increasing the number of their prayers and increasing the number of their additional offerings, and increasing the number of their regular offerings. Therefore was it necessary for Scripture to say--"on the eighth (an additional) day."¹

The day of the Lord has a twofold thrust: it moves outward to include the nations of the world while it moves inward to remember the beloved. Another tension is thereby established. A most ingenious midrash to explain the assignment of the four feasts to the seventh month--an explanation that perhaps softens the popular dismay at the prescription of the favorite solar New Year--comments on Psalm 37:21:

Said Resh Lakish: You find that the Holy One, blessed be He, gives to a righteous man what had been sought of Him; He then returns and deals graciously with him

¹Pesikta de Rav Kahanna (Mandelbaum ed.), Vol. II, Piska 28:1, p. 422.

from what is His (i.e., even more). Hence it is written, "But the Righteous dealeth graciously, and giveth." Said R. Levi: Thus it occurred to the Holy One, blessed be He, to give to Israel a pilgrim festival in each month of the summer: in Nisan, Pesah; in Iyar, Pesah Katan; in Sivan, Pentecost. But on account of the transgressions and evil deeds attributed to their hands (i.e., the לַיָּד), He withheld three from them--Tammuz, Ab, and Elul. Then came Tishri, and He made up for their three: New Year, corresponding to Tammuz; the Great Fast, corresponding to Ab; and the seven days of the Feast corresponding to Elul. Then said the Holy One, blessed be He: It (Tishri) has compensated for the others, but it has not been compensated for itself. Give it its own and let it come and take its due. Therefore was it necessary for Scripture to say: "On the eighth day ye shall have [an additional] solemn assembly."¹

Yet another midrash explains not only the purpose of the extra day, but connects it to Sukkoth as a parallel to Pentecost's relationship to Passover.

"How beautiful are thy footsteps in sandals (ne'alim)": in two closings (ne'alim). R. Hana b. Hana said: It is as if two traders went into a town together, and one of them said to the other: "If we both offer our wares together in the town, we will bring down the price. So do you offer yours one week and I will offer mine the next." R. Hananiah the son of R. Ibi said: It is written here, "How beautiful are thy footsteps" not "in the sandal," but "in sandals." There are two closings: the closing of Passover and the closing of Tabernacles. Said the Holy One, blessed be He to Israel: "You close before Me at Tabernacles, and I close before you at Passover. You close your work before Me at Tabernacles (complete your pilgrimages) and I open the heavens and cause winds to blow and bring up clouds and make rain fall and cause the sun to shine and make plants grow and ripen produce, and provide each one of you with a table set out with his needs, and each body according to its requirements. And I close (the heavens) before you at Passover, and you go out and reap and thresh and winnow and do all that is required in the field and

¹Ibid., 28:2, p. 424.

find it rich in blessing." R. Joshua b. Levi said: By rights, the Eighth Day of Assembly should have followed Tabernacles after an interval of fifty days, as Pentecost follows Passover. But since at the Eighth Day of Assembly summer passes into autumn, the time is not suitable for travelling. (God was like) a king who had several married daughters, some living near by, while others were a long way away. One day they all came to visit their father the king. Said the king: "Those who are living near by are able to travel at any time. But those who live at a distance are not able to travel at any time. So while they are all here with me, let us make one feast for all of them and rejoice with them." So with regard to Pentecost which comes when the winter is passing into summer, God says, "The season is fit for travelling." But the Eighth Day of Assembly comes when the summer is passing into autumn, and the roads are dusty and hard for walking; hence it is not separated by an interval of fifty days. Said the Holy One, blessed be He: "These are not days for travelling; so while they are here, let us make of all of them one festival and rejoice." Therefore Moses admonishes Israel, saying to them, "On the eighth day ye shall have a solemn assembly" (Num. 29:35). Thus we may say, "How beautiful are thy footsteps in ne'alim."¹

Thus we see the Rabbis justifying (or at least explaining) the shift of the date of Sukkoth to conform with the lunar date of Passover as Leviticus 23 would have it.

The category of Day of the Lord was in fact retained on the tenth of the month. But this reworked day, far from representing the fulfillment and rejoicing of the coming in and going out of the year, was now invested with the imagery and purpose of decision. The proper tension for decision and revelation was achieved by setting Yom Kippur against Sukkoth. This new Day was a classic formulation of the new reformation: it called for separation from all defilement, for purification,

¹Songs R. (Soncino ed.), VII.2, § 2, pp. 278-279.

for הנבילה from the world. Israel was to be prepared and sanctified annually for its great responsibility for bearing the burden of the Lord God's glory into the world.

The concern of the day was essentially very similar to the concern of Haggai and the later prophets, i.e., what must be done to re-activate the covenant and to enjoy the presence of the Lord in His place in our midst? The answer, too, was the answer of both Haggai and Ezra/Nehemiah. God's presence presumes the Temple; but more than the Temple, it presumes a pure and holy people governed by a priesthood of exceptional preparation and sanctity. The high priest thus used to pray:

I pray, O Eternal! I have done wrong, I have transgressed. I have sinned before Thee, both I and my house and the children of Aaron Thy holy people. I pray, O Eternal! Forgive, I pray, the iniquities, and the transgressions, and the sins which I have wrongly committed before Thee, both I and my house and the children of Aaron Thy holy people, as it is written in the Law of Moses, Thy servant, "For on this day shall atonement be made for you to cleanse you from all your sins, before the Eternal shall ye be clean." And they responded after him, "Blessed be His Name, the glory of His kingdom is for ever and ever."¹

The collective personality of Israel resided in the high priest as it once inhered in the king. And by the high priest's own purification and sanctification, the people were refined and made fit to receive the presence of the

¹Mishnah (Blackman ed.), Yoma 4:2.

Lord in their midst. And so they responded with an affirmation of His presence: "Blessed be His Name, etc."

Whereas in the days of the king, the presence was assured by the rejoicing of Sukkoth and the New Year on the equinox, so now it was assured by reformation ideals on the same day. Sukkoth at this time was somewhat removed from its agricultural foundations and represented a rather more indirect rejoicing for the natural plenitude of land and life. Its major thrust was the thanksgiving for the sanctification offered and accepted on the Day of Atonement and the extension of that holiness by now making atonement for the nations of the world. At least this seems to have been the case in the Jerusalem Temple until 70 C.E.

It has been assumed¹ that the priestly religion of the Second Commonwealth was a dreary matter of self-recrimination and of self-condemnation. Much to the contrary, the religion was a reformation obsessed with the separation and sanctification of the people that they might be a fit dwelling place for the glory of God.

Israel took seriously the requirements of a holy nation and kingdom of priests; but not for holiness' sake.

¹by J. Wellhausen, *op. cit.*, and the source critics of the "Wellhausian School," whose observations on post-Exilic Judaism often seem more concerned with creating the proper environment for the birth of Christianity's new covenant than with the exegesis of the texts.

As the dwelling place of the glory, the nation had shouldered its responsibility in a spirit of universalism; and in this fashion, Israel could be more effectively a light to the nations, a facilitator of the covenant to the world.

The fundamental intent of the day of the Lord and the subsequent feast had been reformed. On the 10th the people were set apart; on the 15th-21st they did their missionary work on behalf of the nations; and on the 22nd they enjoyed an intimacy with the Lover whose Name they were determined to set upon the peoples of the world. Far from a time of self-condemnation, Tishri was the time, even in the Commonwealth, for the *נְרִיָּת-עַם* and the *יְחִוֵּד-הַשֵּׁם*. The old motifs of the covenant remained, as they usually do in liturgies; but the reformation was everywhere superimposed upon them.

The Temple was the outward and visible place, as Haggai had required; and Sukkoth was the appointed time, as it had always been. Yet already that which was essential to the covenant was breaking free from that which was only an institution (though much beloved), even as the meat of the nut separates from the shell when it is ripe for planting. The nature of Sukkoth was now designed to be that which Zechariah had intended; it was the time for the conversion of the nations.

The ramifications of this new purpose bound up with the old agricultural life themes were (and remain) de essentia to the religion of Israel. The Rabbis knew it, and while they were deferential to the activity of the Temple when it stood, they had already set in motion the themes and categories of the feast directed to the unification of the Name. On the Day of Atonement, the more purified and finely refined God's instrument for converting the world became, the more effective the employ of that instrument on the days of mission in Sukkoth. For on Sukkoth Israel was the very vehicle of the glory of the Lord in the world. While the Temple stood, the glory proceeded from it; but when the Temple was removed, Israel became the Temple. The words of Akiba are appropriate:

R. Akiba said, "Happy are ye, O Israel, before whom do ye cleanse yourselves and who cleanses you [from your transgressions]? Your Father that is in heaven;" as it is said (Ezek. 36:25), "And I will sprinkle clean water upon you and ye shall be clean." And it says again (Jer. 17:13), "The hope (מקוה) of Israel"--just as the ritual bath cleanses the unclean so does the Holy One, blessed be He cleanse Israel.¹

The fathers of the Rabbis knew they could not (nor were they inclined to) suppress the popular conception and celebration of Sukkoth as it had always been. But the overlay of the tensions of the reformation upon the feast

¹M. Yoma 8:9 (end). The abrupt beginning of Tractate Sukkah is not nearly so abrupt if one moves directly from Yoma, which is its natural antecedent and means of preparation.

continued to sharpen the aspects and categories of the covenant of life which were concretized in the feast. And this was so the mission of Israel, begun with Abraham and envisioned by the prophets, might begin to take on the universal proportions which God had intended for it.

Here is yet a further tension for revelation. The closer Israel can be to the Lord by reason of holiness and preparation, the further can Israel move out into the world as a testimony to יְחִיד-הָעַם, as it says: "Did any people ever hear the voice. . ." (Deut. 4:33). And again: "The Lord utters his voice before his army. . ." (Joel 2:11). And underlying even the reformation was always the subtle tension: "How long, O Lord, will the captivity of the land continue? When will the final and decisive הַבְּרִיָּה occur?"

This new relationship of the Day of the Lord and Sukkoth is expressed by the midrash:

"On the first day" (Lev. 29:40). The fifteenth day and you call it "on the first day!" R. Mana of Sha'ab and R. Joshua of Siknin in the name of R. Levi: It is like a province which owed arrears to the king and the king went to collect it. When he was within ten miles, the nobles of the province came out and praised him; and the king remitted a third of their taxes. When he was five miles from the province, the middle-class of the province came out and praised him; and the king remitted a third of their taxes. And then the king entered the province, all the children of the province came out and praised him. The king said to them: "What is past is past; from here and beyond we shall begin (a new) account." Thus Israel comes on Rosh Hashanah and makes repentance, and the Holy One, blessed be He, remits a third of their transgressions. There comes fifteen days of repentance, and the worthy ones afflict themselves and the Holy One, blessed be He, remits the majority of their transgressions.

And when the Day of Atonement comes, all Israel fasts, and the Holy One, blessed be He, forgives all their transgressions. R. Aha said, it is written: "For with Thee is forgiveness" (Ps. 130:4). Forgiveness is reckoned with You from Rosh Hashanah, And why all this (time)? "That Thou mayest be feared" (*ibid*). In order to give awe unto all your creatures. From the Day of Atonement to Sukkoth, all Israel is engaged in mitzvot: this one is busy with his sukkah and that one with his lulab. On the first day of the Feast of Sukkoth they take their lulabim and ethrogim in their hands and praise the Holy One, blessed be He; and the Holy One says to them, "I have already remitted you all your transgressions. From here and henceforth your transgressions will be reckoned. Therefore it says, "on the first day." What is the first day? It is the first for the work of the reckoning of transgressions--from the first day of the festival.¹

By Sukkoth, Israel is a fit instrument for יחוד-השם: they are once again קהל קדוש, and their testimony, even more than that of the Temple, is good for the world.

And do not suppose that only the Temple [was so great a boon]. In fact, were it not for Israel no rain would fall nor would the sun shine. For it is due to their merit that the Holy One, blessed be He, brings relief to this world of His. In the world to come when the idolators behold how the Holy One, blessed be He, is with Israel they will come to join them; as it is said, "In these days it shall come to pass, that the men shall take hold out of all the languages of the Nations, shall even take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying: We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you" (Zech. 8:23).²

And of Israel it says again:

Abraham blessed all, as it says, "And by thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed" (Gen. 12:3). Who blessed Abraham? The Holy One, blessed be He: "And the

¹Pesikta de Rav Kahana (Mandelbaum ed.), Vol. II, Piska 27:7, pp. 412-413; and Leviticus R. (Margulies ed.) Emor, 30:7, pp. 704-706; (Soncino ed), pp. 389-390.

²Numbers R. (Soncino ed.) Bemidbar, 1:3.

Lord blessed Abraham in all things" (Gen. 24:1). Moses was Israel's banner, as it says, "Why strive ye with me? wherefore do ye make me a banner before the Lord" (Ex. 17:22)? and who was Moses' banner? God, as it says, "And Moses built an altar, and called the name of it Adonai-nissi" (Ex. 17:15). David was Israel's shepherd, as it says, "Those shalt shepherd My people Israel" (I Chron. 11:2); and who was David's shepherd? God: "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want" (Ps. 23:1). Jerusalem is the light of the world, as it says, "And nations shall walk at thy light" (Is. 60:3); and who is the light of Jerusalem? God, as it is written, "But the Lord shall be to thee an everlasting light" (ibid. 19).¹

The Temple as Place

The Source of Creation: מקור-בריאת

The Temple is a cognitive concept, an objective institution subject to perception. As a cognitive concept it will help us in organizing the themes of Sukkoth as they cluster round the House of the Lord, taking form themselves around this center of the world and providing the typological tensions for revelation to Israel. It is as though the Temple were a great wheel revolving through the seasons, from Sukkoth to Sukkoth, from one day of the Lord to another. And as the wheel continually turns, the covenant at its center is forever still--immutable.

¹Genesis R. (Theodor-Albeck ed.), Vol. II, Chayye Sarah, Parasha 59:4, p. 634; (Soncino ed.), 59:5, p. 519.
Genesis R.

From the center of the wheel--from the stillness and unchangingness of the covenant--proceed the four spokes which are the great aspects of the covenant. And the wheel turns because it is on the throne of God. The Temple is indeed a cognitive concept; but more than this, it is a concretization of a covenant theme itself.

Both as a cognitive concept and a concretized theme of the covenant, the Temple was, for the Rabbis, a microcosm of Israel, of man, and of the world. As the microcosm of the world, it was the appropriate place for the recording and recitation of the חולדות, the generations of creation, of Israel, and of famous men and events. It says in the Tanhuma: "The Temple corresponds to the whole world and to the creation of man who is a small world (המשכן שקול כנגד) ¹ (כל העולם, וכנגד יצירת האדם שהוא עולם קטן וגו')."

Furthermore, as the center of the world, or as the world in microcosm, the Temple was the natural point of contact between the world above and the waters of chaos below the earth--the Tehom or the Deep. There are many midrashim which play on the theme of the Temple as the entrance to the Tehom. Many of these midrashim involve David, who first took the city and its mount for a center of Israel; it was David who dug the Pits (שיחין) to the Deep:

¹Midrash Tanhuma, ed. and comm. by Ch. Zondel (Vienna, 1863; Jerusalem: Lewin-Epstein, 1965), Par. Pegude, § 3, p. 132b.

When David dug the Pits, the Deep arose and threatened to submerge the world. "Is there anyone," David enquired, "who knows whether it is permitted to inscribe the [Ineffable] Name upon a sherd, and cast it into the Deep that its waves should subside?" There was none who answered a word. Said David, "Whoever knows the answer and does not speak, may he suffocate." Whereupon Ahitophel adduced a fortiori argument to himself: "If, for the purpose of establishing harmony between man and wife, the Torah said, 'Let my name that was written in sanctity be blotted out by water,' how much more so may it be done in order to establish peace in the world!" He, therefore, said to him, "It is permitted!" [David] therefore inscribed the [Ineffable] Name upon a sherd, cast it into the Deep and it subsided sixteen thousand cubits. When he saw that it had subsided to such a great extent, he said, "The nearer it is to the earth, the better the earth can be kept watered," and he uttered the fifteen Songs of Ascents and the Deep reascended fifteen thousand cubits and remained one thousand cubits [below the surface].¹

Not only do we learn from this the connection of the Temple with the Tehom of creation and the function of the Shetiyyah stone in restraining the waters, we also learn that the Temple was not a place of cosmic magic for the Rabbis,² but a place in which the Name of God was present

¹B. Sukkah (Soncino ed.), 53 a/b. We shall have more to say about the waters, the Songs of Ascent, and the Pits. The Pits, according to B. Sukkah, were a connection between the altar and the very abyss of the world and had existed as a natural formation from the six days of creation, fashioned by God Himself. "The School of R. Ishmael taught: Bereshith; read not bereshith but bara shith (He created the pit of the altar)." B. Sukkah 49a/b.

²The great cosmic battle between the great god and the forces of chaos is perhaps the underlying myth here. But magic has been so far suppressed in Israel that even the Name of God on a sherd is sufficient to control creation. The "tensions" of mythology provide a kind of Aristotelian catharsis; but catharsis is no revelation. Mythology does not immediately involve man and need not communicate with him.

and sufficiently powerful to exercise complete control of the creation. No matter what the mythical antecedents might have been, the Temple in Jerusalem was now the *בְּרֵאשִׁית* *מקור* only because it was the chosen dwelling place of the Lord.

And not only were the lower waters controlled by the Temple, but also the upper waters:

Nevertheless you find that for forty days of every year they (the great rains) did great damage in the world until Solomon came and built the Temple; whereupon the forty day torrents ceased.¹

And finally, in the Letter of Aristeas, we read of an idyllic Temple structure of great quiet and efficiency, in which the waters of the deep are perfectly controlled and the Pits (cisterns) arranged in such a way that the blood drains from the altar to the Deep in a "twinkling of an eye."

The whole of the floor is paved with stones and slopes down to the appointed places, that water may be conveyed to wash away the blood from the sacrifices, for many thousand beasts are sacrificed there on the feast days. And there is an inexhaustible supply of water, because an abundant natural spring gushes up from within the temple area. There are moreover wonderful and indescribable cisterns underground, as they pointed out to me, at a distance of five furlongs all round the site of the temple, and each of them has countless pipes so that different streams converge together. . . . They led me more than four furlongs outside the city and bade me peer down towards a certain spot and listen to the noise that was made by the meeting of the waters, so that the great size of the reservoirs became manifest to me. . . .²

¹Tanhuma (Buber ed.), Noah, 22a.

²Herbert T. Andrews, ed. and trans., "The Letter of Aristeas," in The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old

It is evident that this Temple was itself a microcosm of the earth.

R. Patai has suggested that in other places the temples sat upon mounds which rose up above the waters of the Tehom.¹ The imagery of the Temple mount as Omphalos or Navel of the Earth is an imagery shared with many of Israel's neighbors. Of the rock, or Shetiyyah stone, in the Holy of Holies in Jerusalem, Patai says:

In the middle of the Temple, and constituting the floor of the Holy of Holies, was a huge native rock which was adorned by Jewish legends with all the peculiar features of an Omphalos, a Navel of the Earth. This rock, called in Hebrew Ebhen Shetiyyah, the Stone of Foundation, was the first solid thing created, and was placed by God amidst the as yet boundless fluid of the primeval waters. Legend has it that just as the body of an embryo is built up in its mother's womb from its navel, so God built up the earth concentrically around this Stone, the Navel of the Earth.²

The foundation stone is also explained in the Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer:

And Jacob gathered together the stones (sc. for the altar at Bethel where his vision of heaven occurred), and he found them all (turned into) one stone, and he set it up for a pillar in the midst of the place, and oil descended for him from heaven (cf. Matt. 3:16 for the Spirit of god descending like a dove from heaven in the narrative of the baptism of the Founder

Testament in English, ed. by R. H. Charles (Oxford : Clarendon Press, 1913), Vol. II, pp. 88-90, 91b.

¹Raphael Patai, Man and Temple in Ancient Jewish Myth and Ritual (New York: Ktav Publishing House, Inc., 1947), p. 101, note 100.

²Ibid., p. 85.

of Christianity), and he poured it thereon, as it is said, "And he poured oil upon the top of it" (Gen. 28:18). What did the Holy One, blessed be He, do? He placed (thereon) His right foot (cf. Is. 66:1), and sank the stone to the bottom of the depths, and He made it the keystone of the earth, just like a man who sets a keystone in an arch; therefore it is called the foundation stone, for there is the navel of the earth, and therefrom was all the earth evolved, and upon it the Sanctuary of God stands, as it is said, "And this stone, which I have set up for a pillar, shall be God's house" (Gen. 28:22).¹

The association of the foundation stone with Jacob is important for several reasons. We have already seen in the Targum and the Book of Jubilees that Jacob celebrated the great Temple dedicatory feast, the Feast of Sukkoth, on the occasion of his dream at Bethel; and we can see the interconnection of Temple, creation, the תולדות narratives, the waters of the Deep,² and Sukkoth itself. We shall see on several occasions later on, how Jacob is the archetypal facilitator for the Temple and the feast, just as he is the father of the tribes who cluster about this holy place.³

¹Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer, comm. by David Luria (Warsaw, 1852; New York: Om Publ. Co., 1946), Perek 35, p. 82b; Pirkê de Rabbi Eliezer, trans. and annot. by Gerald Friedlander (New York: Hermon Press, 1916, repr. 1970), Perek 35, p. 266.

²We shall return to the waters of the deep and God's watering of Israel via the Temple in the section on הנריית השחלשלות.

³There are a great number of other sources which claim variously that the center of creation is Palestine, Jerusalem, the Temple, or the Foundation Stone itself. These sources are listed by Louis Ginzberg, The Legends of the Jews (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1968), Vol. V, pp. 14-15, note 39. Most intriguing

While the southern Temple typology was never as firmly grounded in the Gott enthaltende Geschichte as was the northern idiom, the writing and recitation of epic-type history, particularly concerned with creation and God's

is the record of M. Yoma 5:2 that the Foundation Stone was in place at the time of the early prophets (presumably during the empire) and remained even when the Ark disappeared at the time of Exile.

The Ark seems to have preferred some resting place connected with stone (cf. I S. 6:18); threshing floors (also probably flat stones, cf. II S. 6:6; 24:18ff.); and hills (II S. 6:3). (Cf. also I Chronicles 21:18ff., where the ark is absent but the threshing floor and altar are in conjunction). Note in II Samuel 24:18ff. the requirement that David build an altar at the threshing floor to avert a plague (which is to progeny what famine is to land) among the people. His demand to buy the threshing floor from Araunah when it is offered as a gift reminds us of Abraham's purchase of the cave of Machpelah for a burying place. The parallel claim of a person upon a land and the claim of an altar upon a land suggests a certain personality inherent in the altar. It, too, must have a patrimony. We shall explore this possibility when discussing the altar.

The most intriguing story of the origin of the Foundation Stone is that based on II Samuel 24:16ff. and I Chronicles 21:26. Ginzberg says:

It is accordingly probable that שֹׁהַיִּיתָ is the same as אֶשְׁחִייתָ, and שֹׁהַיִּיתָ "א" is to be translated "fire-stone," i.e., meteor. We have here, therefore, a tradition based upon II Samuel 24:16, seq., and I Chronicles 21:26, according to which a meteor fell down at this place (note that the Mishnah [sc. M. Yoma 5:2] does not read הָיָה נִחוּן), where subsequently the holy of holies was situated. Hadar on Exodus 19:19 quotes Targum Yerushalmi ad loc., in which אֶשְׁחִייתָ is employed in the sense of meteors (Ginzberg, ibid.).

Such a notion would also explain the fire of the Lord consuming sacrifices, as with Elijah on Carmel and elsewhere. Ginzberg also tells of שֹׁהַיִּיתָ being connected with "loom," and creation being woven from the loom of the founding rock.

cosmic workings, was still a Temple function. The prototypes are the priestly narratives in Genesis and, of course, the Psalms. The Levites were accustomed to commemorate creation in the daily Psalms.

It has been taught: 'R. Judah said in the name of R. Akiba: On the first day [of the week] what [psalm] did they [the Levites] say? [The one commencing] "The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof" (Ps. 24:1), because He took possession and gave possession [Rashi: "gave possession: of the world to its inhabitants"] and was [sole] ruler in His universe. On the second day what did they say? [The one commencing], "Great is the Lord and highly to be praised" (Ps. 48:2), because he divided His works and reigned over them like a king. On the third day they said, "God standeth in the congregation of God" (Ps. 82:1), because He revealed the earth in His wisdom and established the world for His community. On the fourth day they said, "O Lord, Thou God, to whom vengeance belongeth" (Ps. 94:1), because He created the sun and the moon and will one day punish those who serve them. On the fifth day they said, "Sing aloud to the God of our strength" (Ps. 81:2), because He created fishes and birds to praise His name. On the sixth day they said, "The Lord reigneth, He is clothed in majesty" (Ps. 93:1), because He completed His work and reigned over His creatures. On the seventh day they said, "A psalm, a song for the Sabbath day" (Ps. 92:1), to wit, for the day which will be all Sabbath.¹ [for the time to come, for the day which shall be wholly Sabbath and rest for everlasting life.]²

The historical narrative in these psalms is truly secondary to the affirmation of the creative power and absolute sovereignty of God. Segal says, "It was a short step from the recital of epics of Creation at the New Year festival to the recital of the story of the community that performed

¹B. Rosh Hashanah (Soncino ed.), 31a.

²Variant ending in Songs R. (Soncino ed.), IV 4, § 6, p. 193.

the ritual."¹ The midrash continues, commenting on Song of Songs 2:14b, "Let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice, for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is lovely."

R. Elijah interpreted the verse as referring to the festival pilgrims, "Let me see thy countenance:" this refers to the festival pilgrims, of whom it says, "Three times in a year shall all thy males be seen, etc." (Deut. 16:16). "Let me hear thy voice:" this refers to the melodious reciting of Hallel. When Israel recite Hallel, their voice ascends on high; and so the proverb says, 'The Passover in the house and the Hallel break the roof.' "For sweet is thy voice:" this refers to the song. "And thy countenance is comely:" this refers to the priestly blessing.²

And the connection with the Temple is in the verse preceding:

R. Tanhuma said: They [R. Huna and R. Aha] interpreted it, following R. Meir, as referring to the tent of meeting; I too will interpret it, following the Rabbis, as referring to the Temple: "Let me see thy countenance: as it says," Then Solomon assembled, etc." (I K. 8:1), etc.³

The songs of praise, then, were not only for Passover, but for Temple dedication/Sukkoth as well. The prescription for the singing of the Hallel (Ps. 113-118)⁴ on both Sukkoth and Hanukkah are found in B. 'Arakin 10 a/b (cf. also B.

¹J. B. Segal, op. cit., pp. 149-150.

²Songs R., II.14, § 7.

³Ibid., II.14, § 6b (to the end).

⁴The Mishnah gives the requirements of the Hallel for Sukkoth in M. Sukkah 3:10, 11; 4:1, 8. There is a connection between the recitation of the Hallel and the Simha, at least in the number of days they are required. A possibly deeper relationship will be discussed in the section on p. 381 below.

Ta'anith 28b and B. Berachoth 14a). These psalms were sung in their entirety to the tune of at least two flutes for the entire eight days of the Feast of Sukkoth (although the playing flutes on the Sabbath for the Water Festival was forbidden--B. Sukkah 50a). Passover merited only one day of recitation because its sacrifices were the same every day. Sukkoth, with a different sacrifice on each day, and Hanukkah, because of the miracle that occurred (in the land, unlike Purim), both merited the full daily recitation of the Hallel.

L. N. Dembitz in the JE,¹ says this Hallel is called the "Hallel of Egypt" and was to be sung on occasions of thanksgiving (according to the verse: "This is the day which the Lord hath made, etc." Ps. 118:24). Dembitz suggests that the psalms were written for the Feast of Hanukkah on the basis of an Aramaism and other internal narrative evidence. The Rabbis, by giving the Hallel a special benediction, gave the recitation of it the force of Scripture (B. Sukkah 39a).²

The first and last verse of Psalm 118 (the הוֹדוּ) are much older than the rest of the psalms, perhaps dating

¹L. N. Dembitz, "Hallel," Jewish Encyclopedia, 1905 ed., VI, pp. 176a-177a.

²The benediction is: "Blessed art thou, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, who hast sanctified us with thy commandments, and hast commanded us to read the Hallel." H. Adler, Service of the Synagogue, "Tabernacles," p. 96.

before the destruction of Solomon's Temple. The verse was so well known to the people that it was frequently used as the people's antiphonal response to the reader's recitation of the whole song. The Hallel is the logical extension of the narrative and historical recitations in the Temple. In the Palestinian Talmud, R. Abun (Abin) assigns historic value to the divisions in the Hallel. They are:

- 1) "When Israel came out of Egypt": times past
- 2) "Not to us, O Lord. . .": the present generation
- 3) "I love the Lord because He has heard": the days of the Messiah
- 4) "Bind the an with branches": the days of Gog and Magog
- 5) "Thou art my God": the future days.¹

The Hallel seems to be a far more successful expression of Israel's special kind of history than does the historicization of Leviticus 23:42-43.² The closing benediction of the Hallel (in places where it is customary to recite it) summarizes the non-specific but ever-extending inclusiveness of the thanksgiving of Israel at Sukkoth:

May all Thy works, Lord our God and Thy pious and godly servants who perform Thy will, and all Thy people of

¹Talmud Yerushalmi ("Jerusalem/Palestinian Talmud"), Krotoschin edition, 1866 (New York: Shulsinger, 1948), Tractate Meggilah II.1, 73a; Talmud Yerushalmi o Talmud Hama'arav weyesh Qorin lo Talmud Erets Yisra'el (Vilna: Romm, 1922; reprinted in Tel Aviv: Israel American Offset, 1960), Vol. IV, Tractate Meggilah II.1, 18b. The text is found also in Leviticus R. (Margulies ed.), Emor, Vol. 3, 30:5, p. 700ff., in which #4 is: "All nations compass me about" (Ps. 117:10); and in Pesikta de Rav Kahana, op. cit., Piska 27:5, p. 410.

²The association of the Hallel with the lulab and the hosha'anoth will be discussed further on.

the house of Israel, praise Thee in song, giving thanks, blessing, praise, glorious exaltation, reverence and hallowing to Thy Kingly name, O our King. For it is good to give thanks to Thee and becoming to sing praises to Thy name; from everlasting to everlasting Thou art God. Blessed art Thou, O Lord, divine King adored in psalms of praise.¹

It is as though time and event proceeded from this center of the earth, just like then *מַעֲשֵׂה בְרָאשִׁית* was said to have sprung forth and grown up round the Foundation Stone of the Temple. In fact the creative Word of God which spoke and all things were is perhaps the motive force for this continuing narrative proceeding from the Temple.²

We have seen it as the prophets spoke their homilies from the Temple porches. We can see the creation of the land, the extension of the kingdom, the call for the establishment of the Kingdom of God from the river Euphrates to the Brook of Egypt (Is. 27:12) and beyond.

¹David DeSola Pool, ed. and trans., The Traditional Prayer Book for Sabbaths and Festivals (New York: Behrman House, Inc., 1960), p. 232.

²The creative Word of God is also the subject of the hymn of creation at the beginning of the Gospel according to John (John 1:1-5, 9-14). This Christian midrash on the *מַעֲשֵׂה בְרָאשִׁית* seems to be much less a Greek hymn than is usually imagined. It is of importance for us here on several counts. First, it introduces a gospel that is built on a festival framework. Second, it is an introduction to a specific God-involved history using the pattern of the Creation story in Genesis. Third, it has much to say of the primeval light which will be discussed later on. And finally in 1:14 it uses Sukkoth Temple and prophetic imagery: "And the Word became flesh and tabernacled (*סָכַן* = *ἐσκήνωσεν* --cf. II Cor. 5:1) among us; we have beheld his glory. . . ." (the connection between the sukkah and the divine glory will also be noted further on, as will the literature pertaining to the New Testament use of tabernacles and tabernacling).

In the recitation of the priestly narratives, the prophetic homilies, and the pilgrim Hallel, it is as though God were joining with His people Israel to form a shittuf, so that an 'erub might be established from the Temple into the world (cf. B. 'Erubin 1a-4a, and the halachah for the sukkah and the Hekal discussed there) through which God's holiness might move undefiled in His Kingdom.

This creation is a movement outward from the source of creation to the ends of the earth; it is the story, the spinning out of the creative Word. The psalmist sings of it:

The heavens are telling the glory of God; and the firmament proclaims his handiwork. Day to day pours forth speech, and night to night declares knowledge. There is no speech, nor are there words; their voice is not heard; yet their voice goes out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world (Ps. 19:1-4).

And as the Word burst forth from past to present; from now to the day of the Messiah; from Messiah to the days of Gog and Magog; and from that battle until all the kingdoms of the earth become the Kingdom of God, so the Lord God Who dwells in thick darkness in His exalted house is the source of that life-giving, life-moving narrative, the history of the land. And even the history of the land is a tension, for on the one hand it is the narrative which focuses inward upon the land towards the city and to the Temple. On the other hand it is a history that looks outwards and which sees with Zechariah the extension of God's involvement in all history.

Yet another theme associated with the Temple and Sukkoth as *מקור בראשית* is the image of the primeval light, the first work of God's creative Word. The solar themes of Solomon's Temple and the calendar associated with that edifice have been discussed. But despite the attempt of the post-Exilic reform to suppress the solar themes, many persisted, though modified, in the liturgy of the people.

The Pesikta Rabbati records a struggle of God with the Ruler of the Dark in much the same way as He struggled with the forces of the Deep in connection with the stone.¹ In this case also the tension is developed to clearly reveal God as sole Creator of the universe; but the imagery is shared with many other peoples of the area. The midrash makes an important connection with Israel:

The Prince (sc. of Darkness) asked: "Master of the universe, the sign for light--what is its name?" "The Ram." "And my sign in the Zodiac--what is its name?" "The Bull." "Why?" "Because it is usual for lambs to be white and usual for bulls to be black. Moreover, the ram suggests Israel: 'A flock of rams, so scattered' (Jer. 50:17). And being white as lambs, Israel will study Torah which is light, and by means of Torah they will see light, as it is said "For with Thee is the fountain of life; in Thy light we will see light" (Ps. 36:10).²

¹Pesikta Rabbati, ed. by Meir Ish Shalom (M. Friedmann), (Vienna: Selbstverlag des Herausgebers, 1880), p. 203a; ed. and trans. by William G. Braude (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968), Vol. II, Piska 53, p. 885ff.

²Ibid., (Braude ed.), p. 887.

And of this light created on the first day of the בראשית we read:

R. Berekiah said in R. Isaac's name: The light was created from the place of the Temple, as it is said, "And, behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the east; and His voice was like the sound of many waters; and the earth did shine with His glory" (Ezek. 18:2). Now 'His glory' is naught else but the Temple, as you read: "The throne of glory, on high from the beginning, Thou place of our sanctuary" (Jer. 17:12).¹

In this text, the primordial light first came from the place of the Temple, and the Temple is God's glory. In the preceding text the connection is drawn between the light and the Torah, which is life. Therefore we may understand that at the beginning of creation, the light of the Torah shone forth from the Throne of Glory which is in the Temple and enlightened Israel, giving them life. Even the windows in the Holy of Holies were constructed "'broad' without and 'narrow' within,"² since the light shone from inside the Temple to the outside.

It is quite possible that when we read in M. Sukkah of the great golden candlesticks in the Temple Court of the Women, which, when they were lighted, assured that "there was no courtyard in Jerusalem that was not lit up with the light at the Libation Water-Well ceremony,"³ we

¹Leviticus R. (Margulies ed.) Emor, 31:7, p. 726; (Soncino ed.), p. 21. Cf. also Genesis R. 3:4.

²B. Menahoth 86b.

³M. Sukkah 5:2-4.

have here (at least in part) an allusion to the primordial light of creation that shines forth from the Temple. And while the many references to the golden decorations and accoutrements of the Temple may be simply a description of the splendor of the place, or even a sign of the sun, this golden House in the city of gold may also be a representation of the light of creation which shone from the Temple to illuminate the world.¹

We have also a text from the apocalyptic midrash of the New Testament which associates the primordial light of the Temple with a universalism characteristic of Zechariah's description of Sukkoth:

And I saw no temple in the city (sc. the new Jerusalem), for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb. And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine upon it, for the glory of God is its light, and its lamp is the Lamb. By its light shall all the nations walk; and the kings of the earth shall bring their glory into it, and its gates shall never be shut by day--and there shall be no night there; they shall bring into it the glory and the honor of the nations. . . . And night shall be no more; they need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they shall reign for ever and ever.²

And this theme of primeval light at creation associated with the creation is stated in James:

Every good endowment and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights with whom there is

¹The parable in Matthew 5:14ff., "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hid . . ." may also have had the city of gold and the Temple as referrent.

²The Revelation to John 21:22-26; 22:5.

no variation or shadow due to change. Of his own will he brought us forth by the word of truth that we should be a kind of first fruits of his creatures.¹

The New Testament text which most closely associates the primal light with the Feast of Sukkoth is the story of the Transfiguration. Here Moses and Elijah appear with Jesus, illuminated with the heavenly light and overshadowed by the cloud of glory, the Shekinah; and the response of Peter is the suggestion to build booths.²

In all these accounts of the primordial light of creation associated with Sukkoth and the Temple, there is great tension. It is the general tension of the creation epics everywhere: who will rule and who or what must be overcome in order to rule. In the case of Israel the tension is never between the forces of the parts of creation, as in light versus darkness or water versus dry land. Doubtless it was at one time.

The tension in Israel's creation epics as we read them in the texts of the Commonwealth is the tension of God's control over the unruly things which He Himself has created, and which are forever striking out on their own to exceed their appropriate limits. It is perhaps best

¹James 1:17-18.

²Matthew 17:1ff.//Mark 9:2ff.//Luke 9:28ff. (where it occurs about eight days after the sayings about the Son of Man). John is filled with references to Jesus and light, and that gospel is, as noted before, built around a Jewish festival calendar.

expressed as the tension of the finite which seek infinity:
and the revelation is that of their Creator Who reminds them
of Himself and their place. Thus we read:

"And God called the dry land eretz--earth" (Gen. 1:10).
Why eretz? Because she conformed (razethah) to His
will (razon). R. Nathan commented in R. Aha's name,
and R. Berekiah in R. Isaac's name: "I am El Shaddai--
E.V. 'God Almighty'" (Gen. 17:1). It was I who said to
the earth, 'day' (enough), and to the world 'day'.
For had I not said 'day' to the heaven and 'day' to the
earth they would have continued to extend even until now.¹

There are two creatures which pertain to this pri-
mordial light and which will play a future role in the
celebration of Sukkoth. They are Leviathan and Behemoth.

"And God created the great sea-monsters--taninim" (Gen.
1:21). R. Phinehas said in R. Idi's name: Taninam is
written, referring to Behemoth and Leviathan, which
have no mates. Resh Lakish said: Behemoth has a mate,
but it has no desire, for it is said, "The sinews of
his thighs are knit together" (Job. 40:17).²

And the Targum interprets Genesis 1:20:

And the Lord created the great tanins, the lev-ya-than
and his yoke-fellow which are prepared for the day of
consolation. . . .³

The many tales and legends of Behemoth and Leviathan
are related in B. Baba Bathra 74a/b.⁴ We must know only

¹Genesis R. (Theodor-Albeck ed.), Vol. I, Bereshit
5:8, pp. 37-38; (Soncino ed.), pp. 38-39. Cf. also Genesis R.
46:3; and B. Hagigah 12a.

²Ibid. (Theodor-Albeck ed.), Vol. I, Bereshit 7:4,
p. 52; (Soncino ed.), p. 51.

³J. W. Etheridge, op. cit., Vol. I, pp. 159-160.

⁴The etymologies of the names these two creatures is
very uncertain, as is their own connection with the celebration

that they represent an aspect of creation far more powerful than man, yet subject to the Creator Who, in the time to come, will make them serve the righteous. A sukkah will be made of Leviathan's hide for the great feast at the end of time.

There remains one last theme of the Temple which belongs to the מקור בראשית. Mishnah Sukkah 5:4 at the end states:

of Sukkoth in Temple times. One is tempted to see in Leviathan a serpentine-like dance (as with the New Year dragon dance in China) if the word comes from לוי I: to join/ he joined; or III: to turn, twist, or wind, as in a wreath. The connection with Egypt or southern Judah is remote, but cf. BDB, pp. 97a and 531a for some suggested meanings.

Ginzberg, op. cit., Vol. V, pp. 42ff., notes 124-127, gives a rather exhaustive study of the haggadic material regarding these two beasts. Of one thing we can be certain. The tension here represented is, as in all the wisdom literature, the stance of creation with regard to the Creator. Since much of the literature is based on Job 40ff. and Psalm 50:10-11, we may assume that this concern for the creation's knowing its proper place before the Almighty is applicable to Behemoth and Leviathan. Ginzberg says on p. 43,

"It is noteworthy that the tannaitic literature does not contain anything concerning Leviathan and Behemoth (the remark in Sifra 11:10 that Leviathan is a clean fish has hardly anything to do with the view that it will be eaten at the Messianic banquet, compare also Hullin 67b3 and note 137, beginning), nor concerning the Messianic banquet.

The medieval and contemporary fascination with dragons, monsters, sea-monsters, and snow beasts must be a sign of man's awe for enormous power in creation, power that is beyond man's ken or control. The message of the Bible and the Rabbis both would thus be that even this mysterious and gigantic power is of creation and is answerable to God alone, Who will make it serve the righteous in due time (cf. Is. 27:1; Ps. 104:26; and B. 'Abodah Zarah 3b).

They kept up prolonged blasts and proceeded until they reached the gate that led out to the east; when they arrived at the gate that led forth to the East they turned their faces to the West and said, "Our ancestors when they were in this place turned 'with their backs unto the Temple and their faces towards the East and they prostrated themselves eastward towards the sun' (Ezek. 8:16), but as for us our eyes are turned to the Eternal." R. Judah says, They used to repeat the words "We are for the Eternal and to the Eternal our eyes are turned."

This narrative is, of course, a portion of the celebration at the Beth Hasho'ebah, the Place of Water Drawing. Only one feature of the narrative concerns us at this point: the affirmation of the pilgrims that they have now forsworn any possible worship of the sun.

As we have seen elsewhere, Solomon's Temple was very much involved with rites and metaphors solar. And we have also seen that this solar aspect of the Temple cult at Jerusalem was cultivated to excess and became a favorite homiletic subject of such prophets as Isaiah and Jeremiah.

It would seem that one item on the agenda of the reformers of the Restoration under Ezra, Nehemiah, and the Assembly was the suppression of these very solar excesses which seemed to have been the source of much grief for Israel. One of the most overt solar practices seems to have been the procession to the great Eastern Gate on the day of the autumnal equinox, the New Year festival, and there to face the east awaiting the rising of the sun over the Mount of Olives.¹

¹This practice is recorded in Ezekiel 8:16-17, where

Since the occasion had been preceded by seven days of revelry, much of it to do with fertility, it does not require too much imagination to guess what the hours before dawn included. B. Sukkah 53b says, "'Their backs were toward the Temple of the Lord?'" It teaches that they uncovered themselves and committed there a nuisance (מטה). (שהיו פורעין עצמן ומתריזין כלפי

There is no reason to suspect that the Mishnah is telling anything but the truth when it says that the custom of later times--probably by the time of Leviticus 23--was to avoid this solar rite. Segal has said that he does not believe the word חג is connected with the sacred dance or that it has anything to do with the harvest. He says:

It is perhaps to be distinguished from the root hwg in that the latter describes a circle in space rather than in time. Nevertheless, hag probably has, like hwg, the significance of 'circuit'--not only a professional circuit by celebrants (as assumed by most scholars), but also the revolution or circuit of the tropic year. The procession by the worshippers may have been in primitive times the ritual representation of the motions of the sun.¹

it is one of the cultic rites current in Jerusalem and condemned by God as an abomination. Verse 17 may be a circumlocution for a popular tradition concerning the lulab which has been carried to Bacchanalian excess.

¹J. B. Segal, op. cit., pp. 128-129.

Segal goes on to say that this celebration of the revelation of the tropic year entails fixed date, fixed shrine, sacrifice, eating, drinking, music and rejoicing, and drunkenness. But he sees no connection at all with agricultural offerings. He then sets forth a list of the solar parallels from the cultures of the world which would substantiate this limited definition of the *an*.

R. Patai, on the other hand, is transfixed by the theme of water, and especially the agricultural need for water in the land of Israel. He therefore proceeds to analyze our Mishnah according to its various rain-inducing ceremonies and metaphors; and like Segal he parades out every parallel that comes to his attention. What must be said, lest we be caught in the crossfire (or flood), is that both these scholars are correct in discovering important themes in Israel's celebration of Sukkoth in the Temple.

Neither of them, however, has explained the action of the Mishnah as the Rabbis want us to remember it. There is a tension in it, but it is not the tension of sun versus rain. The real tension is between the reformation ideal of the purity and holiness of the people versus what the people will tolerate by way of a changed tradition. The fact would seem to be that the people were willing to compromise on matters of solar importance, especially since the

technicalities of calendation were more within the aegis of the priests than the farmers anyway. But the people were not willing to compromise on matters affecting the weather, the rainfall, and the crops; nor were they willing to tolerate the tampering with traditions that might interfere with the very fructification of the land that gave life to them and their progeny.

Under this heading of the Temple as the source of creation we must give Segal his due. There are indeed some remnants of solar imagery left in the celebration of Sukkoth. He is not on the most solid ground when he conflates the two roots חגג and חג (he seems to have forgotten חגה). As it happens, the solar New Year and the Feast of Asiph with its water-libation themes did at one time occur at about the same time, and both roots would have been appropriate. It is irresponsible, however, to exclude harvest themes from the חג by the conflation of two roots.

Segal's point about the celebration of the circuit of the tropic year at Sukkoth is reasonable at several points. First, the very forswearing of solar worship by the people recorded in the Mishnah is ample grounds to believe with II Ezekiel, that they once did direct their festal and worshipful attention to the sun in some fashion. Other small remembrances of a former rite are still extant. Most notable, perhaps, is the circumambulation of the altar

with the willow branches (M. Sukkah 4:5). The verb $\eta\pi\eta$ (= $\eta\pi\eta?$) is the same word used in Exodus 34:22 to designate the time of year when the Asiph is to be celebrated. It is also connected in I Samuel 1:20 and Psalm 19:7 with the finished circuit of the sun. The narrative of Joshua circumambulating Jericho according to a seven-fold scheme may also be pertinent (the sun was even held back for Joshua in Joshua 10:12ff.; but $\eta\pi\eta$ can also have the force of $\eta\pi\eta$, as in the siege of a fortress). Perhaps Segal is correct, then, in seeing the $\eta\pi\eta$ as a re-enactment of the sun's zodiacal journey. But in the narrative of the Mishnah, this interpretation of Segal's is already an anachronism--rather the rite has been invested with new meaning.¹

Dr. Thackeray, in the second of the Schweich Lectures of 1920, commented upon one of the haphtoroth for Sukkoth from the Septuagint text. The Septuagint reading is supportive of Segal's own point. In Solomon's dedicatory prayer ("canto") of I Kings 8:12 (LXX vs. 53), commenting on the cloud's descent on the House, Thackeray finds the Septuagint closer to the original intent of the

¹The Rabbis were obviously as skilled in using solar reckonings as they were with the lunar ones (cf. for example, B. 'Erubin 56a/ff.). The simple fact is that with regard to the festivals, they avoided the solar motif.

passage than the MT. The easier Lucianic reading (ἔστησιν) is rejected by Prof. Burkitt, "The Lucianic text of I Kings viii.53b", (JTS X (1909), p. 439) and the harder reading, ἐγνώρισεν, established as the translator's true word.

שׁוֹנֵה represents ἐγνώρισεν in the Hebrew, which neither Burkitt nor Thackeray can accept as appropriate to the context. Thackeray's solution is to substitute a ש for the ש = "shine". His translation reads:

"The sun of glory is beclouded in the heavens; JHWH hath said He will dwell in darkness."

Thackeray then comments:

Editors and translators realized well enough the Jews' besetting temptation, among heathen neighbours, to sun-worship, and were suspicious of passages, especially in the mouth of a polytheist like Solomon, where the sun was placed in juxtaposition or comparison with JHWH. Thus in Ps. lxxxiv (Gr. lxxxiii) 12, the Alexandrians scented danger in the innocent words 'For the Lord God is a sun and shield' and freely paraphrased 'For the Lord God loveth mercy and truth' (perhaps selecting ἔλεος from its resemblance to ἥλιος). In the present instance, the drastic action of the editors is intelligible if, rightly or wrongly, they saw in the canto a relic of paganism and read it as a solar charm or invocation for the feast of the equinox.¹

The concern for things solar would surely be appropriate to those in the tradition of Leviticus 23.

We may suspect that there were many popular traditions associated with solar feasts in Israel. Nor is it

¹H. S. Thackeray, The Septuagint and Jewish Worship (London: H. Milford, Oxford University Press, 1921), p. 78.

impossible that some solar themes were indeed retained in the Temple Feast of Sukkoth described in the Mishnah, themes of great antiquity that were shared with many other nations and peoples. Finally, it is very unlikely that the Temple, as a microcosm of the creation, would be totally without imagery of the sun.

But three particular points must be made about the solar theme and the covenant after the Exile. First, the reformers had effectively changed the date of Sukkoth in Leviticus 23, so that no day of solar import pertained to the feast. Second, the popular solar traditions which survived the reformation were, for the most part, transferred to the pseudo-Sukkoth, the Feast of Hanukkah, and did not inhere in Sukkoth by the time of the zenith of the Temple's function.¹ And finally, the Mishnaic account of the recitation at the East Gate seems almost to be a popular oath of allegiance to the principle of reform which these later post-Exilic pilgrims had inherited from their reform-minded fathers.

The reformers and their disciples after them were populists. They were sensitive to how much reform the

¹The Rabbis seem to have fairly well confined the solar rites of the winter solstice, the Hanukkah Feast, to two rather harmless traditions in B. Shabbath 21a/ff. These are the "kindling" of the lamp, and the remembrance of the nes, the miracle of the oil. The Menorah, or Great Golden Candlestick itself has, I believe, another function to be described later.

popular tradition could sustain at any given time. With the help of the Oral Torah they had begun the process of disentangling the covenant from the cognitive concept of the Temple. The Temple may have been, as it was designed to be, a microcosm of creation. But somehow, perhaps with the failure of Zerubbabel's Temple, the reformers were able to look for a new microcosm of creation; a new concretization of the covenant concept of the land; a new center for the rejoicing of Sukkoth. And they fixed upon man, the righteous Israelite, as the potentially new concretization of place. For if every place to which one of God's holy people went could, by his presence there, become a holy place, the possibilities for the extension of God's kingdom, implicit at Sinai and made explicit by the later prophets, were definitely enhanced.

So long as the Temple stood, there would be tension between those who viewed the Temple as continuing in its role as source of the work of creation and those who had begun to see the possibilities for a more portable source of the creative Word of God. These latter ones would and did support the Temple while it stood; but they continued to develop their alternatives. As an Israelite walked from the Temple to the world, he could carry the first aspect of the covenant of life with him. And where he settled, the land aspect could be concretized in that place, and the

Kingdom of God would be extended that much further. So long as he was a righteous Israelite, having undertaken to bear the yoke of the Torah as the reformers had made it available to him, he could celebrate the Feast of Sukkoth in any place; for his presence made God's presence possible, and the land upon which he stood became a portion of the Kingdom of God.

The Temple melted as an institution, but the *בראשית* *מקור* remained intact. And how was the *בראשית* *מקור* to be re-institutionalized? The midrash tells us:

"Then I was by Him, as an amon; and I was daily all delight" (Prov. 8:30). 'Amon' is a workman (uman). The Torah declares: 'I was the working tool of the Holy One, blessed be He.' In human practice, when a mortal king builds a palace, he builds it not with his own skill but with the skill of an architect. The architect moreover does not build it out of his head, but employs plans and diagrams to know how to arrange the chambers and the wicket doors. Thus God consulted the Torah and created the world, while the Torah declares, "In the beginning God created (*ברא אלהים* *בראשית*), " "Beginning" referring to the Torah, as in the verse, "The Lord made me as the beginning of His way" (Prov. 8:22).¹

If God created through the Temple, He also created through the Torah; and the Torah can move with Israel. Revelation is in the tension between the Written and the Oral Law.

The Place of Seeing and Quickening: *ראיית*.

Israel's obligation regarding the festivals is that "three times in the year shall all your males appear before

¹Genesis R. (Theodor-Albeck ed.), Vol. I, Bereshith, 1:1, p. 2; (Soncino ed.), p. 1.

the Lord your God, the God of Israel" (Ex. 34:23). We have discussed earlier the second great aspect of the covenant: the progeny of Israel. By means of progeny Israel's life is projected forward in history and Israel's name is established forever. And as Israel is the people or children of the Lord God, then they are, in a profound sense, God's own assurance that His great Name will be projected forward in history and established in the world forever.

The concept of seeing and being seen has been discussed under the aspect of the presence of God, the Gilluy Shekinah. It was appropriate at that place to speak of the covenant from God's standpoint. It is equally appropriate here to apply the concept to Israel at the feast, for Israel goes up three times a year to participate in the "seeing." It would, in fact, be correct to say that Israel as a people becomes alive or is quickened from generation to generation at the feast.

While the Temple was standing, Jerusalem was the place at which Israel's life was stretched forward from one year to the next. The tension of revelation was the tension of whether or not Israel would continue to live in the world --whether Israel's progeny would continue from generation to generation to appear in Jerusalem before the Lord. Perhaps this is the significance of the story in Exodus in which Pharaoh kills all the male children of Israel. In the

presence of this tyrant--the god-man of Egypt--there is death. But the one who escapes is the one who happens on the presence of the Lord on Sinai and who ultimately confronts Pharaoh with the Lord's demand: "Let my people go that they may hold a feast to (for) me in the wilderness" (Ex. 5:1). God visited this generation and saw their need to be made alive.

Israel wants to be ראוי before the Lord at all times. Indeed the purpose of the reformation of Ezra, Nehemiah, and the Assembly was to insure Israel's fitness and worthiness to serve the Lord in each generation. This concern for the ראוי of Israel even made provision for a special day of preparation, to be observed before the feast of seeing even began. Thus the midrash states:

"When you make your ingathering from your threshing floor and your wine press. . .". (Deut. 16:13). Said R. Eliezer bar Marion, 'Why do we make a sukkah after Yom Kippur?' To teach you that at the outset of Rosh Hashanah, the Holy One, blessed be He, sits in judgment upon the world; and on the Day of Atonement He seals the judgment lest the judgment of Israel go out for exile. And because of this they make a sukkah and go out, גלה (as with גלות), from their houses to the sukkah, and the Holy One, blessed be He, counts it for them as though they (actually) were gone out to Babylon, as it says, "Writhe and groan, O daughter of Zion, like a woman in travail; for now you shall go forth from the city and dwell in the open country; you shall go to Babylon. There you shall be rescued, there the Lord will redeem you from the hand of your enemies." (Micah 4:10).¹

¹Pesikta de Rav Kahana (Mandelbaum ed.), Vol. II, pp. 457-458.

The tension implied is, in this case, a life and death proposition; for exile means loss of land and disruption in the covenant because of Israel's sin. Therefore the judgment against Israel is paid for by the significance of exile, i.e. the temporary departure from the home to the "not home."

Yet there is a great deal more to the idea of atonement than an escape from punishment. The atonement is purposive for Israel as Israel is to be purposive for the world. Gaster says it well:

Into the ancient, time-honored ceremony Israel read a new meaning. The essential thing about it became the fact that it had to be performed "in the presence of the Lord." This meant that it was no longer a mere dispatch of impurity. The people had now to be cleansed not for themselves but for their God: "before Jehovah shall ye be clean" (Lev. 16:30). Sin and corruption were now regarded as impediments not merely to their material welfare and prosperity but to the fulfillment of their duty to God and of their obligations under the Covenant. . . . For a loss of holiness, or moral turpitude, was now no longer a matter of mere personal and communal degeneration nor was its consequence more personal misfortune; it was a crime against the Kingdom of God (underlining mine).¹

Gaster makes too much of the difference between ancient practice and the new meaning. Israel's covenant is unchanging; the means of concretizing are the variable. But his central idea is correct. Israel's purification was not preparation for reward. This drive for

¹Theodor H. Gaster, Festivals of the Jewish Year (New York: William Morris and Co., Inc., 1952), pp. 144-145.

purification and sanctification was a drive to improve the instrument for the proclamation of the Kingdom of God. The knife is sharpened not to be admired and praised, but to cut. The reformers sought to provide Israel with a time of atonement for themselves so that they could be about the Father's business of opening the nations of the world to His righteousness and rule.

"And God called the light day" (Gen. 1:5) symbolizes Jacob; "And the darkness He called night," Esau; "And there was evening"--Esau; "And there was morning"--Jacob. "One day" [teaches] that the Holy One, blessed be He, gave him one [unique] day: and which is that? the Day of Atonement.¹

The reformers saw this new idiom of the equinox as far more consonant with Israel's function in the world. The tension was not between success or failure to receive reward. The truly revelatory tension rested on whether or not Israel would be a fit instrument of mission for the Kingdom of Heaven.

If there are overtones of Christianity here, it is due to a common purpose. Jesus' own message seems not so much different from that of the reformers in Judaism. He comes out of the wilderness preaching repentance and the Kingdom of Heaven. He, like so many before him, was concerned for the *צור* of the people. And he taught them, often in the Temple precincts, saying:

¹Genesis R. (Theodor-Albeck ed.), Vol. I, Bereshith, 2:3, p. 16; (Soncino ed.), pp. 16-17.

Seek ye first his kingdom and his righteousness; and do not seek what you are to eat and what you are to drink, nor be of anxious mind. For all the nations of the world seek these things; and your Father knows that you need them" (Matt. 6:33; Lk. 12:29).

This is not other-worldliness; nor is it the promise of a payoff. It is a plain statement of Israel's responsibility to be holy so that the Lord God might be better served.

The same responsibility is taught by Antigonus of Socho:

Antigonus of Socho received [the tradition] from Simon the Just. He used to say, "Be not like servants that minister to the master on the condition of receiving a reward, but be like servants that minister to the master without the condition of receiving a reward; and let the fear of heaven be upon you."¹

This preparation is the first step in celebrating Sukkoth; Israel is to be יראי in the sight of God. And there is even a midrash, too long to be included here, about how God cheats on the scales when weighing Israel on the Day of Atonement as Satan's back is turned.² And why does He cheat? Because He needs righteous progeny in the world.

"And a people that shall be created shall praise the Lord" (Ps. 102:19): Is another people still to be created? The Rabbis said: These words refer to those generations that are guilty because of their wicked deeds, but who come and repent and pray before Thee on New Year's Day and on the Day of Atonement, and thereby scour off their deeds, so that the Holy One, blessed be He, creates them anew, as it were. And what are they to do then? They are required to take into their hands their citrons and their palm branches, the willows

¹M. Pirke Aboth (Blackman ed.), 1:3.

²Pesikta Rabbati (Friedmann ed.), Piska 45, pp. 185b-186a.

of the brook and the myrtles, and praise Thee. Hence "And a people that shall be created shall praise the Lord."¹

By this we know that the preparation of Israel is preparation to praise the Lord; and by this we have some definition of the function of Sukkoth itself. It is Israel's time to appear before the Lord and praise Him--in the sight of the nations. The children make the father known by singing his praises and obeying his will.

Implicit in this praise of the children is their quickening. Israel comes alive most particularly at the feast.

R. Levi said: It is written, "For they kept the dedication of the altar seven days and the feast [sc. Tabernacles] seven days" (I Chron. 7:9). Now the seven days before the Festival must include the Sabbath and the Day of Atonement, yet during [all] these seven days the Israelites ate, drank, rejoiced and lit lamps. Subsequently, however, they were smitten with remorse, saying, 'Perhaps we have done wrong by desecrating the Sabbath and eating on the Day of Atonement?' "In order to tranquilize them and assure them that the Holy One, blessed be He, had approved their actions, there came forth a heavenly voice and declared to them, 'Ye are all worthy of the Hereafter.' The last blessing was greater than the first; hence it says, "And they went unto their tents joyful and glad of heart" (I K. 8:66). R. Isaac observed: "Joyful," because they found they found their wives clean, and "glad of heart" because they conceived male children."²

¹Midrash Tehillim or Schocher Tob ("Midrash on the Psalms"), ed. by Salomon Buber (Wilna: Romm, 1891), Mizmor 102, p. 431; The Midrash on Psalms, ed. and trans. by William G. Braude (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1959), Vol. II, p. 155.

²Genesis R. (Theodor-Albeck ed.), Vol. I, 35:3, p. 331; (Soncino ed.), p. 285. Sukkoth was traditionally the day of

And from this we learn that if Sukkoth is praise, an aspect of that praise is rejoicing and gladness defined by the bearing of children.

Now the bearing of children is the second great aspect of the covenant of life, and we would expect to find it as an integral part of the feast. The antecedents of the aspect of progeny connected particularly with the harvest festival are most likely the field celebrations in Canaan. It was then that the people, grateful for the completion of the harvest and hopeful for continued success, paused for refreshment.

We learn from several older biblical narratives that such celebration was in fact the case in ancient Israel. The dancing of the maidens in Shiloh (Jud. 21:19ff.) on the yearly feast of the Lord must be considered in our definition of rejoicing at the feast.¹ The same motif of celebration is evident in the drinking bout of Gaal b. Ebed and his kinsmen at the house of their god in Shechem after grape harvest. There, in a bout of drinking and feasting, they bad-mouthed Abimelech (Jud. 9:26ff.). The story of Hannah's

the conception of Isaac, when God opened Sarah's womb (cf. Gen. R. 47:5).

¹Cf. the comment on this agricultural festal practice above, p. 42f and note. For a complete analysis of the tradition and its anachronistic appearance at a later time on Yom Kippur, cf. J. Morgenstern, "Two Ancient Israelite Agricultural Festivals," JQR (n.s.) VIII, pp. 13-78.

prayer for a child at Shiloh and Eli's suspicions of her drunkenness make the picture of festal celebration and rejoicing even clearer (I S. 1:13ff.). And in that same story we learn of the practice of celebrating the festival by eating in the presence of the Lord God, Who makes His place at the sanctuary in Shiloh. Knowing this eating and drinking practice at Shiloh helps us to understand the passage in Exodus 24:11: "And he did not lay his hand on the chief men of the people of Israel; they beheld God, and ate and drank." Coming into God's presence on Sukkoth, at least from biblical testimony, involves seeing Him, eating, drinking, dancing, wife selection and joyfulness. Could this be anything less than a wedding feast? Not only must Israel be יְאִי for the benefit of the nations of the world; but Israel must also be יְאִי for the bridegroom.

There is a temptation at this point to describe the many fertility rites of other cultures. And there is, of course, an abundance of material on the rites of Dionysus, Adonis, Bacchus, and the Eleusinian mysteries to provide a great many parallels to our biblical accounts. Plutarch gives an account of Sukkoth in Jerusalem, describing it as though it were actually a Bacchanalia:

In the first place, the time and manner of celebrating their greatest and most perfect feast is quite appropriate to Dionysus. For in celebrating the so-called fast in the vintage season they set out tables with all sorts of autumn fruits under tents and huts woven

out of sprigs of vine and ivy. And they call the first day of the feast, "Tabernacles." But a few days later they celebrate another feast which they call, not by symbols merely, but explicitly, the Feast of Bacchus. And they have also a festival which is a sort of carrying of the twigs (κραδηφορία) and of the thyrsis, during which they carry thyrsi into the temple. What they do when they have gone in we do not know, but they probably perform the rites of Bacchus. For they use little trumpets, as the Argives do at the Dionysiac festivals, to call upon God. Others go before them playing on lyres, people whom they call Levites, an appellation deriving from Lysius [i.e. "The saving God," applied to Dionysus] or rather Evius [likewise Dionysus].¹

Another comment comes from Tacitus, who believes the Jews to be worshiping Liber pater because the priests in the Temple, wearing ivy garlands, led the people in the feast with chanting and music of pipes and cymbals. He reports, too, that the Temple was decorated with a great vine of gold, a fact substantiated by Josephus (Ant. XV.11:3), which suggested to Tacitus a type of Dionysus symbol. But he also believes the Jews to be too backward and decadent to have a pure and flourishing rite of Liber pater.²

Hellenistic influence on the feast is also indicated by the requirement in Jubilees 16:30 of wearing head

¹Plutarch, "Quaestiones convivales," in Plutarchi: Scripta Moralia ("Πλουτάρχου : Συγγραμμάτων Τόμος Τετάρτος"), ed. and trans. by Fredericus Dübner (Paris: Editore Ambrosio Firmin-Didot, 1872), IV, vi, 2 (671d-f).

²Cornelius Tacitus, Historiarum Libri ("Histories of Tacitus"), ed. by W. A. Spooner (London: Macmillan and Co., 1891), V:5, pp. 459ff.; The Complete Works of Tacitus, ed. by Moses Hadas, trans. by A. J. Church and W. J. Brodribb (New York: Random House, 1942), p. 660.

wreaths,¹ and we have already seen the use of the Greek word thyrsus by Josephus (Ant. XIII 13:5) and II Maccabees (10:7) to represent the lulab. Josephus (Ant. III 10:4) also calls the lulab an eiresione (εἰρεσιῶνη), a festal wand sacred to Apollo. E. Goodenough has listed a number of rites shared by Jews and Hellenists and believes the rites to have come into the Feast of Sukkoth from Hellenism.

The only hypothesis which will make room for all these peculiar features of the feast is that at some time, probably in the days before the Maccabees and their reforms, Tabernacles had been elaborated to draw in the most desired features of the pagan autumn festival of Dionysus (or Dionysus-Zeus-Helios-Apollo) for probably local Syrian amplifications were represented.²

Dr. Goodenough is surely correct in observing the movement of rites (not ideologies) from Hellenistic to Jewish practice, but if it be true that the Maccabean rise to power brought with it a return to popular solar imagery that had been suppressed by the Great Assembly until the reign of Antiochus IV, then we must question his concept of Hasmonean reform. If these rites did enter from Hellenism, they probably did so in the Hasmonean period.

Furthermore there is little doubt that some of the origins of the biblical narratives are to be found in the Canaanite counterparts to these fertility rites. Morgenstern

¹Cf. A. Büchler, "La fête des cabanes chez Plutarque et Tacite," REJ XXXVII (1898), pp. 181-202.

²Erwin Goodenough, Jewish Symbols in the Greco-Roman Period (New York: Pantheon Books, 1954), Vol. IV, p. 158.

suggests a relationship of the dancing maidens with the rites of rejoicing for the risen Adonis, whose death had been mourned with great lamentation a short while before. He is also reminded of "the ancient Babylonian Succaea-festival, also celebrated in honour of Ishtar, the virgin-goddess. . .".¹ But origins are very difficult to discern, especially when the texts are non-scientific and the authors frequently unreliable; and the search for origins is hazardous, since any proposed parallel from antiquity does not always provide an accurate description of the purpose of a later tradition, and may be, in fact, completely misleading.

We have said that biblical narrative differs from mythology in that it purports to be a history of man and the relationship of God with man in that history. Whether or not maidens danced in the fields at Shiloh because YHWH at that time had all the features of a Canaanite Adonis or Dionysus is not the particular interest of the biblical author. He uses this old narrative as a vehicle to describe a religious truth of his own time. The issue is still life--the continuing life of the tribe of Benjamin. But the issue is equally ethical--the attempt of Israel to behave

¹J. Morgenstern, "Two Ancient Israelite Agricultural Festivals," op. cit., pp. 53-54. His source for these parallels is Fraser's Golden Bough.

according to their ethical responsibilities, which were the direct result of having chosen an ethical God.

By the time of the Temple in the Second Commonwealth, the issue was still life. In fact, the girls were still dancing, but they were now dancing on Yom Kippur.

Rabban Simon ben Gamliel said, "There were no happier days for Israel than the fifteenth of Ab and the Day of Atonement, for on them the daughters of Jerusalem used to go out dressed in white garments which were borrowed in order not to shame the one who had none. All the garments required immersion. And the daughters of Jerusalem used to go forth to dance in the vineyards. And what did they say?--'Young man, lift up thine eyes and see what thou wilt select for thyself; set not thine eyes on beauty but fix thine eyes on family, etc.'¹

But there is no blasphemy intended. For Yom Kippur is the day of preparation for the joy of Sukkoth, and if Sukkoth is intimately related to the joys of life through progeny, what better preparation than the choosing of a wife.

The Temple itself, beyond its function as the source for creation, seems also to have played a role as bridal chamber in the husband-wife motif in the covenant.

"Behold it is the couch which is Solomon's" (Songs 3:7). And why was the Sanctuary compared to a couch? Because just as this couch serves fruitfulness and multiplication, even so the Sanctuary and everything that was in it was fruitful and multiplied.²

¹M. Ta'anith (Blackman ed.) 4:8. For a discussion of this tradition as an anachronistic relic of an era with a different calendar, cf. J. Morgenstern, "Two Ancient Israelite Agricultural Festivals," *op. cit.*, pp. 31-54.

²Tanḥuma (Buber ed.) *Naso*, 16a/17a.

Or again:

R. Bibi in the name of R. Eliezer expounded the verses as applying to the priestly benediction. "Behold, it is the litter of Solomon" (Songs 3:7). 'Litter' alludes to the Temple; as the bed serves primarily for the purpose of enabling one to be fruitful and multiply, so all that was in the Temple used to be fruitful and multiply; as it says, "And the staves grew long" (I K. 8:8).¹

Therefore the Siphra asks concerning the solemn assemblies at the first and eighth days, "How do you sanctify them? By eating, and drinking, and (wearing) festal garments."²

Israel appears before the Lord as His bride: Therefore Isaiah comforts [Israel] saying: "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in God" (Is. 61:10). R. Berekiah said: In the following ten places in Scripture God refers to Israel as a bride: "Come with Me from Lebanon, my bride" (S.S. 4:8); "I am come into my garden, my sister, my bride" (ib. 5:1); "Thou hast ravished my heart, my sister, my bride" (ib. 4:9); "How fair is thy love, my sister, my bride" (ib. 10); "Thy lips, O my bride, drop honey (ib. 11); And as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride" (Is. 62:5); "The voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride" (Jer. 7:34); "Thou shalt surely clothe thee with them, like a bride" (Is. 49:18); And as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels" (ib. 61:10).³

¹Numbers R. (Soncino ed.), 11:3, pp. 424-425. Cf. also B. Yoma 39b for the Temple producing sprouts like a forest. Furthermore, the Ark of the Covenant, when it remained in the home of Obed-Edom, was the source of special blessing to him--he was blessed with children; cf. Numbers R. (Soncino ed.), 4:20, p. 130. And cf. also Chapter V of this thesis for a more complete exposition of this theme.

²Siphra or Torath Cohanin, ed. by Isaac Weiss (Vienna: Jacob Schlossberg's Buchhandlung, 1862), Emor, Parashah 12:4, p. 102a. The invitation to a wedding feast and the proper attire for it are the subject of two parables in Matthew 22:1ff.

³Debarim Rabbah ("Deuteronomy Rabbah"), comm. by Issachar b. Naphtali (Jerusalem: Lewin-Epstein, 1969),

Once adorned, Israel appears at the wedding ceremony, which occurred only once at Sinai, but is remembered annually in the private chamber of the Temple.

"In the day of his espousals" (Songs 3:11). This alludes to the revelation at Sinai which was, as it were, a wedding ceremony; as is borne out by the text, "Betroth them ('sanctify') today and tomorrow" (Ex. 19:10). "And in the day of the gladness of his heart" (Songs, loc. cit.). This alludes to the giving of the law, as may be inferred from the text, "And He gave unto Moses, when He had made an end (kekallotho) of speaking with him . . . the two tables," etc. (Ex. 31:18), for the written form is 'kekallatho' (as his bride). Another explanation is that "In the day of his espousals" alludes to the Tent of Meeting, while "In the day of the gladness of his heart" alludes to the permanent Temple."¹

Thus it is in the context of the rejoicing at the wedding feast that we read the Mishnah's account of the activities in the Court of Women in the Temple.

At the close of the first Holyday of the Festival of Tabernacles they went down to the Court of the Women where they had made an important rearrangement.²

Before continuing, we must clarify this rearrangement. The Tosephta says:

In the early days of it (sc. the Feast of Tabernacles) when they used to watch the rejoicing in the Beth HaShoebah, the men watched from the inside and the women watched from without. But when the Beth Din saw that they were lapsing into empty frivolity, they made three

Vol. II, Vaethchanan, 2:26; ed. by H. Freedman and Maurice Simon, trans. by J. Rabbinowitz (London: The Soncino Press, 1939), Vol. VII, Vaethchanan, 2:37, p. 65.

¹Numbers R. (Soncino ed.) Naso, 12:8, p. 475.

²M. Sukkah (Blackman ed.) 5:1a.

galleries in the Court, opposite three, three widths, so that the women might sit there and watch the rejoicing at the Beth HaShoebah, and they would not be involved.¹

And we read in M. Middoth:

Aforetime [the Women's Hall] was not overbuilt, and [later] they surrounded it with a balcony (gallery) so that the women should look on from above and the men were down below in order that they should not intermingle.²

And the Talmud explains it:

Originally [the walls of the Court of the Women] were smooth, but [later, the Court] was surrounded with a gallery, and it was enacted that the women should sit above and the men below. Our Rabbis have taught: Originally the women used to sit within [the Court of Women] while the men were without, but as this caused levity, it was instituted that the women should sit without and the men within. As this, however, still led to levity, it was instituted that the women should sit above and the men below.³

The Rabbis attribute this undue levity in the Temple to the Evil Inclination; it was more likely caused, however, by the very nature of the festival. This gallery in the Court of Women evidently represented the compromise between the reformers and the popular tradition--once again a tension between the requirements of holiness and the requirements

¹The Tosefta, ed. by M. S. Zuckermann (2nd ed.: Jerusalem: Bamberger and Wahrman, 1937), Seder Moed, Tractate Sukkah 4:1; ed. by Saul Lieberman (New York: The Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1962), The Order of Mo'ed, Tractate Sukka 4:1, p. 272.

²M. Middoth (Blackman ed.) 2:5, p. 513.

³B. Sukkah (Soncino ed.) 51b.

of life,¹ or perhaps a tension between celebration of life itself and the purposiveness of life for Israel.

The separation of men and women (separation seemed to be a standard procedure of the reformers) did not seem to dampen the overall spirit of celebration, however. The Mishnah goes on to tell of the great golden candlesticks and the four priestly lads who filled the candle bowls. Patai raises a useful point about children at the feast as being representative of the life-thrust signified by progeny.²

These young priests are referred to as being כהונה מפרחי, "from the flowers of the priesthood." Theirs it was to see to the illuminations of the nightly festivities. Elsewhere other children played a role. Following the beating of the altar with palm twigs on the seventh day of the feast,³ the children threw away their lulabim and began to eat their ethrogim.⁴ Patai shows that what really

¹There are midrashic stories of the destruction of the Evil Inclination at one time by the Men of the Great Assembly. But it soon became apparent that the business of life would cease without this Inclination, and the Assembly prayed to have it returned. Cf. for example, Genesis R. (Theodor-Albeck ed.), Vol. I, Bereshith, 9:7, p. 72; B. Yoma 69b.

²R. Patai, Man and Temple, op. cit., pp. 161ff.

³M. Sukkah (Blackman ed.) 4:6.

⁴Ibid., 4:7.

emerges from this account is the picture of many children in the city for the feast having ethrog-fights and generally engaging in their own kind of rejoicing. Nor does this joyful behavior seem to be too far removed from their parents' own activities.

The account is given in the Mishnah (4:9) of the priest (king, Sadducee--the texts vary) who became the target of the pilgrims' ethrogim when he spoiled the water libation.¹ What is more, the story in M. Sukkah 4:4 tells of how the free-for-all, when the lulabim stored for the Sabbath were returned to the people by the superintendants of the Temple, was so violent as to cause the Beth Din to change the requirements. Again this was a case of enthusiasm and a part of the people's rejoicing. For as we shall see, these lulabim were of great significance. Fertility of families as well as fields was a concern expressed on "the day of beating the palm twigs" described in M. Sukkah 4:6.

And there was dancing too, as it says: "Pious men and men of good deeds (wonder-workers) used to dance before

¹Josephus reports the incident as occurring when Alexander Jannaeus, arch-foe of the Pharisees, was preparing to make the sacrifice. The people had accused him of being unfit, by heredity, to perform the rite (which indeed he was). He had, moreover, killed some six thousand of them and built a barrier around the Temple and altar for protection (Josephus, Antiquities, XIII:13,5). Josephus describes the controversy as between the populace and the king whose lineage makes him unfit for the offices he holds. The rabbinic account declares the controversy to be between Sadducee and Pharisee over a differing opinion on the water libation ceremony. The incident will be explained more fully in the next chapter.

them with burning torches in their hands and sang before them songs and praises" (M. Sukkah 5:4). The question was raised by Beth Shammai whether the festivities (celebrating --חול) was permitted on a Yom Tob. Beth Hillel raised the same question about the Sabbath. The answer in both cases, derived from a superfluous word in Scripture (נא), is yes.¹ In fact, the rejoicing, together with the Hallel, were the two features of the Feast of Sukkoth that continued for all eight days (M. Sukkah 4:1), and that without debate in the Talmud.

The dancing (רקד), the singing, and the celebrating were exciting and elaborate. The Levites provided music on the harps, lyres, cymbals, trumpets, and other instruments while standing on the 15 steps (M. Sukkah 5:4). The lyrics of a few of the songs they sang, the less rowdy ones at least, have come down to us. They sang, "Happy is the man who has not sinned, but everyone who has sinned He will pardon"; or "Happy (fortunate) was my youth which has not disgraced my old age" (these are the men of good works); or "Happy are you, my old age, for you atone for my youth" (these are the penitents).² We lack other titles, but the nature of these songs can be guessed.

The dancing included acrobatic performances. R. Shimon b. Gamliel accomplished impressive feats of juggling

¹Sifra (Weiss ed.) Emor, Perek 15:5.

²T. Sukkah (Lieberman ed.) 4:2, p. 272.

with torches and one particular form of prostration called Ḳidah which, when Levi tried to do the same feat, lamed him for life. R. Joshua b. Ḥanania described a pilgrim's day at Sukkoth:

When we used to rejoice at the place of the Water-Drawing, our eyes saw no sleep. How was this? The first hour [was occupied with] the daily morning sacrifice, then the prayers to the additional sacrifice, then to the House of Study, then the eating and drinking, then the afternoon prayer, then the daily evening sacrifice, and after that the Rejoicing at the place of the Water-Drawing [all night].¹

And the Rabbis taught:

He who has not witnessed the rejoicing at the place of the Water-Drawing has never seen rejoicing in his life. He who has not seen Jerusalem in her splendour, has never seen a desirable city in his life. He who has not seen the Temple in its full construction has never seen a glorious building in his life.²

What, then, is this rejoicing? We are told that

A man is duty bound to make his children and his household rejoice on a Festival, for it is said, "And thou shalt rejoice in thy feast, [thou and thy son, and thy daughter, etc." Deut. 12:14]. Wherewith does he make them rejoice? With wine. R. Judah said: Men with what is suitable for them, and women with what is suitable for them. "Men with what is suitable for them": with wine. "And women with what?" R. Joseph recited: In Babylonia, with coloured garments; in Eretz Yisrael, with ironed linen garments. It was taught, R. Judah b. Bathyra said: When the Temple was in existence there could be no rejoicing save with meat, as it is said, "And thou shalt sacrifice peace-offerings, and shalt eat there; and thou shalt rejoice before the Lord thy God" (Deut. 27:7). But now that the Temple is no longer in existence, there is no rejoicing save with wine, as it is said, "and wine that maketh glad the heart of man" (Ps. 104:15).

¹B. Sukkah (Soncino ed.) 53a.

²Ibid., 51b.

We are reminded of Melchizedek, King of Salem, and of the elders of Israel who have seen the Lord. Eating and drinking seem to be an important part of "rejoicing." Eating is a fundamental, life-sustaining function; eating together can be a sharing in life and thus joyful; and eating and drinking together in the presence of the Lord, the Giver of life, must then be the most joyful of all. The Feast of Sukkoth as a microcosm of the life covenant will represent life concentrated; and this "rejoicing," beginning with the communal meal before the Lord and extending to other expressions of man's life and the joy he takes in that life (Deut. 12:7), is a kind of brilliant bursting of the life-concentrate.

Rejoicing at the feast is not really descriptive or denotative. It is a category of the covenant which becomes concretized in many different ways. And as category it has the potential of tension. For at certain times and places it is difficult to institutionalize rejoicing. But no matter what the impediment to rejoicing, it is a permanent category of Israel's life, a positive commandment that overrides even the Sabbath. For חַיֵּינוּ is life of the present which saves the past from Miss Havisham's wedding breakfast and the future from the stalking terror of a Grendel or the illusion of a Godot. The tension is one of life or death, the choices clear. In the Beth HaShoebah

one does not read Echa or Daniel. And even when in later times the Temple was gone and they read Koheleth in the synagogue, it was like the wine without the meat, i.e. only half a feast. But in Temple times, when men slept dozing on one another's shoulders from sheer exhaustion, it was the rejoicing of life present.¹

Who comes to this great feast, when, and for what purpose? This question has been answered in part already; more of it will be answered later. But what of ראיִון? Israel goes to the feasts for quickening, for renewal, for restoration. It is not as though God is present only at the festival, but at the festival there is concentrated and reconstituting life.

There is something determinative about direct confrontation, and every nation must return from time to time to its point of constitution. With Israel this point of constitution is wherever the Lord God establishes Himself to be there. Israel must go to His place, for they were not a nation until He called them into being, and their life's thrust forward into history as progenitor of the covenant for time to come required their appearance.

¹A glance at Jastrow's definitions of שמחה and שמח and the usages he cites should be sufficient to convince us that the technical meaning of the word is tied to matrimony--whether the wedding of a son and daughter of Israel, or the marriage relationship between God and Israel. And those references not referring directly to a wedding or the festival are references to the life aspects of the covenant, viz. "the joy over the birth of a male child" (Y. B. Bath. 9, 16d bot).

The midrash, commenting on Deuteronomy 6:4, says:

"Hear, O Israel." From here they learn that he who recites the קריית שמע and does not make his ears to hear does not fulfill the obligation. "The Lord our God," why is it said: for has it not already been said "the Lord alone?" Especially upon us has He made His name to rest. Similarly, "Three times a year shall all thy males appear before the Lord God, the God of Israel." What is the purpose of this ("the God of Israel")? For has it not already been said "before the Lord God?" Why does Scripture say "the God of Israel?" (Because) upon Israel especially has His name been made to rest, etc.¹

But Israel did not always enjoy this distinction of peoplehood:

"In the third month, when the children of Israel were gone forth out of the land of Egypt, the same day came they into the wilderness of Sinai" (Ex. 19:1). This is what is written in Scripture. "Her ways are ways of pleasantness. . ." The Holy One, blessed be He, wished to give Torah to Israel when Israel went forth from Egypt. But they were bickering with each other and saying, "Let us make a captain, and let us return to Egypt." What is written? "And they departed from Succoth and encamped at Etham." For they moved in strife and camped in strife. [But] when they came to Rephidim they were all of one mind and were made a single bundle [as in the וְהָיָה]. And whence do we know that they were made a single bundle? As it says, "And there Israel encamped before the mount." And וַיִּתְּנוּ (pl.) is not written there, but וַיִּתֵּן (sing). The Holy One, blessed be He, said, "The Torah is all peace;" and to whom shall I give it? To the nation which loves peace. Therefore "and all her paths are peace."²

But when they encamped at the mountain and Moses offered them the covenant,

¹Siphre on Deuteronomy (Finkelstein ed.) Vaethchanan, Piska 31, p. 53.

²Tanhuma (Buber ed.) Yithro, 37b.

And all the people answered (together); they were as one (together); they answered without apostasy and took no counsel one with another but united their hearts as one. And they said, "All which the Lord has spoken we will do." (Ex. 19:8). We take it upon ourselves.¹

Therefore Israel is commanded:

"Three times thou shalt keep a feast unto Me" (Ex. 23:17). This applies only to such as can travel on foot [pun on רגל]. "Shall be seen." This excludes the blind [as though the verb read "shall see"]. "Thy males." This excludes women. "All thy males." This means to exclude the strangers [they are not "thy"], the tumtum and the hermaphrodite [not truly זכר]. "Thou shalt read this law before all Israel" (Deut. 31:11). This excludes strangers and slaves. "In their hearing" (*ibid.*) This excludes the deaf ones. "Thou shalt rejoice" (*ibid.* 16:11). This excludes the sick one and the minor [an expansion on the command to rejoice]. "Before the Lord thy God" (*ibid.*). This excludes any person who has become defiled. In this connection the sages said: All are under obligation to appear in the Temple except the deaf and dumb, the insane, the minor, the tumtum, the hermaphrodite, the lame, the blind, the sick, and the aged.²

Thus when Israel goes up for the festival, the people go up to see and be seen; to be reconstituted as a host of the Lord; to go into the world on His behalf; to be reaffirmed as a קהל, a bundle tied together as one people, like the lulab:

"The fruit of the hadar tree" (Lev. 23:40) symbolize Israel; just as the ethrog has taste as well as fragrance, so Israel have among them men who possess learning and good deeds. "Branches of palm trees" too applies to Israel; as the palm tree has taste but not fragrance, so Israel have among them such as possess

¹Mechilta de Rabbi Shimon b. Jochai (Epstein/Melamed ed.) Yithro, 19:8, p. 140.

²Mechilta de Rabbi Ishmael (Horovitz/Rabin ed.) Mishpatim, Parasha 20, p. 333; (Lauterbach ed.), Tractate Kaspa, Vol. III, pp. 182-183.

learning but not good deeds. "And boughs of thick trees" likewise applies to Israel; just as the myrtle has fragrance but no taste, so Israel have among them such as possess good deeds, but not learning. "And willows of the brook" also applies to Israel; just as willow has no taste and no fragrance, so Israel have among them people who possess neither learning nor good deeds. What then does the Holy One do to them? To destroy them is impossible. "But," says the Holy One, blessed be He, "let them all be tied together in one bond and they will atone one for another. If you have done so [says God], then at that instant I am exalted." Hence it is written, "It is He that buildeth His upper chambers in the heaven" (Amos 9:6). When is He exalted? What time they are made into one band; as it says, "When He hath founded His band (lit. vault) upon the earth" (ibid). Accordingly Moses exhorts Israel: "And ye shall take you on the first day the fruit. . ." (Lev. 23:40).¹

Even though the positive commandments of Sukkoth were not obligatory for everyone, as we have learned from the Mechilta, yet the idea of the congregation, the קהל, of Israel was the dominant theme, as much after the Temple times as before. Thus we read of the debate over Queen Helena's sukkah in Lydda, whether or not it was too tall to be valid. There is the argument that she was a woman and not obligated, and the question is never really settled in the Gemara; but that the question is even considered suggests the inclusive bent of the feast.² Furthermore the Mishnah itself states that "a minor who no longer needs his mother is bound to observe the Sukkah."³ And again, "a

¹Leviticus R. (Margulies ed.) Emor, 30:12, pp. 709-710; (Soncino ed.), pp. 392-393.

²B. Sukkah 2bff.

³M. Sukkah (Blackman ed.) 2:8. Cf. also M. Hagiga 1:1.

minor who understands how to wave it must use the Lulab."¹

And there is recorded the charming story of Shammai the Elder who, at the birth of his grandchild during Sukkoth, proceeded to rip off some ceiling plaster, cover the hole with s'kak, and create a small sukkah for the child.²

Though the case was not accepted for a general ruling, it is again indicative of the desire of the Rabbis to bind all Israel into the congregation which is quickened at the Feast of Sukkoth. Finally in B. Rosh Hashanah it says:

R. Zera also asked: Does this rule of 'not delaying' apply to a woman? Do we reason that she is not obliged to appear [at Jerusalem on the festivals] or perhaps do we reason that she is enjoined to rejoice [which implies partaking of the peace-offerings, y. Pes. 109a, and as she must go to Jerusalem for this purpose, she must also 'not delay' the vow]--Abaye replied: Is not the answer provided by the fact that she is enjoined to rejoice? But could Abaye say this, seeing that Abaye has said that a woman is made joyful by her husband? Abaye was answering R. Zera on his own premises.³

Here the tendency is again to be inclusive at the festival (and we also have a remez regarding the true meaning of rejoicing). The tension in all these cases is between separation and inclusion; the revelation is the Lord's inclination to quicken his people.⁴

¹Ibid., 3:15.

²Ibid., 2:8.

³B. Rosh Hashanah (Soncino ed.), 6b.

⁴But for the Rabbi's inclination towards leniency regarding attendance, cf. Sifra (Weiss ed.) ad Leviticus 23, Emor, Perek 15:3 and 4, p. 102b.

In the Mishnah it is said that there was a blowing of trumpets (חצוצרות) at dawn, following the first night of the rejoicing in the Beth HaShoebah. Two priests came down from their elevated positions at the Upper Gate and made their way through the courts to the gate leading to the east. It was at this point that they turned their backs on the rising sun (which would no longer be rising in its equinoctial position relative to the gates, it being the 15th of Tishri and not the 10th) and declared the sin of their ancestors with their own fidelity: "As for us our eyes are turned to the Eternal," or according to R. Judah, "We are for the Eternal and to the Eternal our eyes are turned (אנו ליה וליה עינינו).¹

The number of trumpet blasts were increased for festivals, and there were as many as forty-eight on the eve of the Sabbath in the intermediate days of the feast. Twelve of these were directly related to the feast itself: the procession at the eastern gate, the water-drawing, and the Hosha'anoth. In later times, when the Temple no longer stood, the category of trumpets in Tishri was reconcretized to represent God's attribute of Mercy.

¹M. Sukkah (Blackman ed.) 5:4. It would appear that the original purpose of the trumpets at the gate was in some way to herald the New Year as the equinoctial sun rose (when New Year was still on the 10th of Tishri). The great care with which the Mishnah states the renunciation of this practice is further evidence of its origins.

Judah son of R. Nahman opened his discourse with the text "God is gone up amidst shouting, the Lord amidst the sound of the horn" (Ps. 47:6). When the Holy One, blessed be He, ascends and sits upon the Throne of Judgment, What is the reason for this statement? "God (אלהים) is gone up amidst shouting," But when Israel take their horns and blow them in the presence of the Holy One, blessed be He, He rises from the throne of Judgment and sits upon the Throne of Mercy--for it is written, "The Lord (יהוה) amidst the sound of the horn" --and He is filled with compassion for them, taking pity upon them and changing for them the Attribute of Justice to one of Mercy. When? "In the seventh month" (Lev. 23:24).¹

The tension of the trumpets, then, is not whether Israel will attend, but whether God will attend. As with His presence in the Temple, wherein He is not obligated to reside simply because of its existence, so with His presence at the festival. Israel blows the trumpet asking to be remembered, be it at the feast in Jerusalem or, as in the above midrash, at His Throne of Mercy (the reconcretization of the trumpet theme of זכר).

Israel knows full well that the initiative rests with the Lord. They are in the position of response.

"On the eighth day ye shall have a solemn assembly" (Num. 29:35). This bears on what Scripture says: "Thou hast increased unto the nation, O Lord" (Is. 26:15). The Community of Israel said to the Holy One, blessed be He, 'Sovereign of the Universe! It is for Thee to give us the festivals, and for us to offer sacrifices before Thee in a fitting manner.' "Thou art honoured" (Is. 26:15). 'Thou has given us New Moons and we offer sacrifices unto Thee;' as it says, "And in your new moons ye shall present a burnt-offering" (Num. 28:11).

¹Leviticus R. (Margulies ed.) Emor, 29:3, p. 674; (Soncino ed.), pp. 371-372. Cf. also Genesis R. 12:15.

'We offer sacrifices unto thee on Passover, on New Year we offer sacrifices unto Thee. On the Day of Atonement we offer Thee sacrifices. So too on the Tabernacles Festival. We have not neglected even a single season. It is for Thee,' says the Community of Israel to the Holy One, blessed be He, 'to add to our festive seasons, and it will be our duty to offer sacrifices unto Thee and to honour Thee.' "Thou hast increased unto the nation; Thou art honoured unto the farthest ends of the earth" (Is. 26:15). The Holy One, blessed be He, answered them: 'By your lives! I shall not withdraw any festive days from you but shall give to you additional seasons in which you may rejoice': as it says, "On the eighth day ye shall have a solemn assembly" (Num. 29:35).¹

Increasing the nation had nothing to do with territory. To increase the nation was to increase the possibilities of confrontation with God, for He is the One Who quickens and enlivens. And even when the Temple was gone, and it seemed that the Temple feasts might go with it, God, in effect, says, "The principle of increase is the projection of Israel's life in history; it is not the city or the Temple or the territory. Therefore I will increase the nation by not only retaining the festivals, but by increasing your life with yet another day of *ראיין*. And by assuring your progeny, I assure My own honor, My own life in the world." And to Wellhausen's evaluations of post-Exilic Judaism's bankrupt, empty, legalistic, priestly shell of a religion, it is said:

A heathen addressed a question to R. Akiba. He said to him: 'Why do you celebrate festive seasons? Did not the Holy One, blessed be He, say to you, "Your new moons

¹Numbers R. (Soncino ed.) Pinchas, 21:23, pp. 850-851.

and your appointed seasons My soul hateth" (Is. 1:14)?' Said R. Akiba to him: 'If He had stated, "My new moons and My appointed seasons My soul hateth" you might have spoken as you did. But He only said "Your new moons and your appointed seasons"! That was in reference to those festive seasons which Jeroboam¹ ordained, of which it says, "And Jeroboam ordained a feast in the eighth month, on the fifteenth day of the month, like unto the feast that is in Judah" (I K. 12:32). "And he went up unto the altar which he had made in Beth El on the fifteenth day in the eighth month, even in the month which he had devised of his own heart; and he ordained a feast for the children of Israel, and went up unto the altar to offer" (ibid. 33). Our festive seasons, however, will never be abolished, neither will the New Moons. Why? Because they belong to the Holy One, blessed be He; as it says, "These are the appointed seasons of the Lord" (Lev. 23:4), and similarly, "These are My appointed seasons" (ibid., 2); so also, "Moses declared unto the children of Israel the appointed seasons of the Lord" (ibid. 44). Consequently they will never be abolished, and of them it says, "They are established for ever and ever, they are done in truth and uprightness." (Ps. 111:8).²

The melting of the institution of the great aspect of the covenant is no sign of its demise. Rather it is the sign of flexibility of means, so that the end might be preserved.

¹Jeroboam seems here to become the symbol of the minim, who keep Israel's feasts, but in an irregular, non-normative fashion. Samaritans lived where Jeroboam once had established his Temple. The Christians, also, seemed to flourish in the north.

²Numbers R. (Soncino ed.) Pinchas, 21:25, p. 852. Some haggadic tales of how God protects the possessions of the pilgrims when they attend the festival (a sort of "seek ye first the kingdom of heaven and its righteousness" and the rest will be cared for) are to be found in Songs R. (Soncino ed.), VII:2,1, and in the Siphre on Deuteronomy (Finkelstein ed.), Piska 52:25, p. 119. There is an opinion in the Y. Megilla, Perek 1 Hallacha 7, (Krotoshin ed.) 70b col.d., of R. Johanan and R. Shimon b. Lakish, that in the future all festivals except Purim will pass away.

Jesus summarized the principle in his prophetic (apocalyptic) homily at the close of the three synoptic gospels:

"Truly I say to you: . . . Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away."¹

One last category would follow normally at this place in our discussion of the Feast of Sukkoth. The category of the sukkah itself, after which the tractate is named and which gives the feast its particular title as opposed to the simple common designation החג, the Feast. But for reasons that will become clear later, the discussion of the concretization of this category will be deferred to the next chapter.

The Place of Revelation: גלוי שכינה

Much has been said already concerning the revelation of God, for in the foregoing discussion of Israel's appearance we have seen that the appearance, the "seeing," is a mutual affair. Many of the midrashim that apply to Israel's presence before the Lord at the festival are likewise applicable to God's presence at the feast for Israel's sake.²

¹Matthew 24:35//Mark 13:31//Luke 21:32.

²Max Kadushin, op. cit., should be consulted on the presence of God as a matter of "normal mysticism," and on the normal and extraordinary (mystical) experience of God. His discussion is to be found in Chapter VI, pp. 194-272.

A most useful statement about the Lord's presence at the feast is attributed to the Hillel the Elder:

It was taught: Of Hillel the Elder, it was said that when he used to rejoice at the Rejoicing at the place of the Water-Drawing, he used to recite thus: 'If I am here, everyone is here; but if I am not here, who is here?' He also used to recite thus: 'To the place that I love, there My feet lead me: if thou wilt not come to My House, I will not come to thy house, as it is said, "In every place where I cause My name to be mentioned, I will come unto thee and bless thee" (Ex. 20:21).¹

The presence of God at the Beth HaShoebah is the subject of several midrashim. The attempt of the Rabbis is to find some Scriptural warrant for the water-libation ceremony by interpretation of the texts.² A commentary on Genesis 29:2 is as follows:

"And behold a well in the field" symbolizes Zion; "And lo three flocks of sheep"--the three festivals;" For out of that well they watered the flocks"--from there they imbibed the Divine spirit; "And the stone . . . was great"--this alludes to the rejoicing of the place of the water drawing. R. Hoshaya said: 'Why was it called the rejoicing of the place of drawing [water]?' Because from there they imbibed the Divine spirit. "And thither were all the flocks gathered"--they all came, "From the entrance of Hamath unto the Brook of Egypt (I K. 8:65). "And they rolled the stone from the well's mouth, and watered the sheep;" from there they imbibed the Holy spirit; "And put the stone back upon the well's mouth in its place: it was left lying for the next Festival."³

¹B. Sukkah (Soncino ed.), 53a.

²Cf. Peter Schäfer, Die Vorstellung vom Heiligen Geist in der Rabbinischen Literatur (Munich: Kösel-Verlag, 1972), pp. 84ff., for a collection and commentary on these midrashim pertaining to the presence of God at the Beth HaShoebah.

³Genesis R. (Theodor-Albeck ed.), Vol. II, Vayetze, 70:8, pp. 806-807; (Soncino ed.), pp. 641-642.

"ר' יהודה בן בחירה ור' עקיבא מצאו רמז בחורה, Albeck says, and by רמז they resort to Gematria.¹ "לניסוך המים

'R. Judah b. Bathyra says: On the second day of the Feast one [begins] to make mention.' What is R. Judah b. Bathyra's reason?--It has been taught: R. Judah b. Bathyra says, Of the second day of the Feast, Scripture says, we-niskehem (Num. 29:18) ["and their drink offerings"] and of the sixth day, u-nesakeah (*ibid.* 31) ["and its drink offerings"] and of the seventh day, kemishpatam (*ibid.* 33) ["according to their rule"]. Note [the letters] Mem, Yod, Mem which form the word mayim ['water']. Here you have the biblical allusion to the Libation of Water.²

Similar to our first midrash in adducing the water libation from Scripture are three other sets of midrashim, both equating the water of the libation with the Holy Spirit.

"My soul thirsteth for God . . . of the living: When shall I come and appear before God" (Ps. 42:3)? Israel asked Him: Master of the universe, when wilt thou restore to us the glory [which was ours] when during the three festal pilgrimages we would go up and see the face of the Presence? Indeed R. Isaac used to say: As it is said that they went up to Jerusalem to appear before God, so it may also be said that they went up to see Him, for the verse may be read "When shall I come and see" (note--a slight change in vowels brings about the change from the passive to the active of the verb "see"). [In regard to such experience of God] R. Joshua ben Levi used to say: "Why was the festive procession on the second evening of Tabernacles called the procession for drawing water? Because thence, [out of the Temple in Jerusalem], the children of Israel drew and imbibed the holy spirit."³

¹Albeck, מבוא למסכת סוכה, סדר מועד: ששה סדרי משנה, p. 255.

²B. Ta'anith (Soncino ed.) 2b; cf. also Pesikta de Rav Kahana (Mandelbaum ed.), Piska 28, p. 420 and Piska 28, אחר, 8, p. 432 for the same midrash used to explain the addition of the eighth day to the feast.

³Pesikta Rabbati (Friedmann ed.), Piska 1, p. 1b; (Braude ed.), Vol. I, p. 39. Cf. also Y. Sukkah, Perek 5 Halachah 1 (Krotoshin ed.), p. 55a col. a.

And commenting on the verse in Ruth 2:9:

"And drink of that which the young men have drawn" refers to the Festival of Water-Drawing. And why is it called 'Drawing'? For from there they drew the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, as it is said, "Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation" (Is. 12:3).¹

And finally, connecting the Holy Spirit with the rejoicing of the Beth HaShoebah and the music of the place, we read:

R. Jonah used to say: Jonah ben Amittai was one of the pilgrims who used to attend the Rejoicing in the Beth HaShoebah, and the Holy Spirit would rest upon him; this is to teach you that the Holy Spirit will only rest upon the joyful heart. Whence do we learn this? "And when the minstrel played, the spirit of the Lord came upon him (Elisha)" (II K. 3:15).²

"To David, a Psalm" (Ps. 24:1) intimates that the Shechinah rested upon him and then he uttered [that] song; "A Psalm of David" intimates that he [first] uttered [that particular] psalm and then the Shekinah rested upon him. This is to teach you that the Shekinah rests [upon man] neither in indolence nor in gloom nor in frivolity nor in levity, nor in vain pursuits, but only in rejoicing connected with a religious act, for it is said, "But now bring me a minstrel, etc." (II K. 3:15).³

¹Ruth Rabbah, comm. by Issachar b. Naphtali (Jerusalem: Lewin-Epstein, 1969), Vol. III, 4:8; ed. by H. Freedman and Maurice Simon, trans. by L. Rabinowitz (London: The Soncino Press, 1939), Vol. VIII, 4:8, p. 57. The Talmud Yerushalmi turns to II Samuel 23:16 and David's request for water from Bethlehem for Scriptural warrant for the libation. Though David was parched, he poured the water on the ground, and the Talmud says he did this because "it was the Feast (of Sukkoth)." Y. Sanhedrin, Perek 2 Halachah 5 (Krotoshin ed.), 20b col.c. B. Sukkah 44a states that the water-libation was given to Moses upon Mt. Sinai, thus side-stepping the whole issue by resorting to Oral Law. The rite was forgotten in the Exile, so it is said, and re-instituted by the prophets acting according to divine command. Cf. also Ruth R. 2:9; B. Baba Kamma 60b., and R. Patai, "The 'Control of Rain' in Ancient Palestine," HUCA XIV (1939), pp. 251-286.

²Y. Sukkah, Perek 5 Halachah 1 (Krotoshin ed.), 55a col.a.

³B. Pesahim (Soncino ed.) 117a; Cf. also Midrash

It is perhaps Hillel's concern that the rejoicing of the Beth HaShoebah was becoming misguided and misdirected so that it did not properly fulfill the religious obligation. The Rabbinic attempt to find some Scriptural support for the Water Libation is indicative of several tensions. First, as with Hillel, the Rabbis of the reform were concerned about the degeneration of aspects of the feast (as with the women and men mingling in the Temple court) and were yet in sympathy with the people's long-standing agricultural custom. They had suppressed, within limits, the solar excesses. The attempt in this case is not to suppress, but to control and to discover the divine presence in the tradition even when Scripture does not make specific provision for it.

The second tension is with the Sadducees, who were not willing to interpret Scripture and find any warrant for the ceremony at all. Thus we have the story of the Sadducee who poured the water on his feet rather than on the altar in contempt for the tradition and was pelted with ethrogim. It became, then, the custom for the officiant to indicate his good intentions at the altar by raising his hand at the people's demand:

To him who performed the libation they used to say,
'Raise thy hand!' for on one occasion he poured it

Tehillim (Buber ed.) Ps. 24, p. 204; (Braude ed.), p. 338.

over his feet and all the people pelted him with their citrons.¹

Nor was this the only dispute between Pharisees and Sadducees regarding the presence of God in the Temple. There was a grave dispute over the way in which the high priest brought the incense into the Holy of Holies on the Day of Atonement. The Sadducees were wont to carry the smoking censer into the Holy of Holies; the Pharisees required that no incense be placed on the coals until the high priest was already in the Holy of Holies.

Lauterbach points out that the issue was not between Oral and Written Law, but over the theological understanding of the two parties of just how the divine presence was manifested in the Temple. He says:

The Pharisees, on the other hand, were the progressive literal [sic! liberal?] group of lay teachers, the spiritual successors of the prophets, with a purer God conception and less regard for the sacrificial cult. While not entirely opposed to the sacrificial cult as such, they sought to reform it.²

If our suggestion is correct, that the Pharisees represent the most conservative faction of the Great Assembly at the time of the Maccabean rise to power and broke with them over the restoration of solar practices (among other

¹M. Sukkah (Blackman ed.) 4:9. Cf. also F. Josephus, Jewish War (Loeb ed.), II:xix, 1.

²J. Lauterbach, Rabbinic Essays (Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press, 1951), p. 73. The midrashic passages are M. Yoma 5:1 and B. Yoma 39 a/b.

things), their attitude about the "cloud of glory" in the Holy of Holies would most certainly be in just this opposition to the Sadducean practice. This would be particularly true if the smoke and the sunlight had, at one time (on the autumnal equinox), been viewed as the visible manifestation of the Shechinah. The New Testament makes a point of describing the ripping in two of the curtains (or does it mean a drawing back of the two פרוכות?) at the time of the crucifixion.¹

Perhaps the most profound tension then, implicit in all the above, is the tension of the reformation: particularism versus universalism. Israel must be a witness to the nations, but Israel cannot witness unless Israel is holy--a nation apart. And the Pharisees were determined that the particularism of the Sadducees, which Lauterbach calls "primitive notions both about God and the purpose of the service offered to Him in the Temple,"² would not represent their own conception of particularism. The Pharisees saw separation as a means to prepare Israel for

¹Matthew 27:51//Mark 15:38//Luke 23:45 (there is much to be explored in Luke's account). The Pharisees could never have been as unhappy about this event as the Sadducees. But Jesus' Temple teachings were always like that of the Temple prophets and Pharisees anyway, and his attitudes toward the Temple little different from Lauterbach's description of the Pharisaic attitudes.

²J. Lauterbach, op. cit., p. 72.

mission, not to be an archaic oddity among the nations of the world. Particularism served universalism in the Pharisees' theology.

The issue of the presence in the cloud of glory is the subject of many midrashim, though not reported as relating directly to Sukkoth. But there is a מָן in the following:

"Go thy way forth by the footsteps ('ikebe) of the flock" (Songs 1:8). . . . R. Akiba said: (we interpret this) From the way in which I surrounded them with clouds of glory, as it says, "And the Lord went before them by day . . . the pillar of cloud departed not by day," you may know what I will do to them subsequently (be-ekeb), and so it is written, "And there shall be a pavilion (סוכה) for a shadow in the day time" (Is. 4:6).¹

And in a debate between Akiba and Ishmael in which Akiba follows his normal practice of making symbols from signs, we read:

"To Succoth" (Ex. 12:37), to the place where they actually put up booths, as it is said: "And Jacob journeyed to Succoth, and built him a house and made booths for his cattle" (Gen. 33:17)--these are the words of R. Eliezer. But the other sages say: Succoth is merely the name of a place, for it is said: "And they journeyed from Succoth, and pitched in Etham" (Num. 33:7). Just as Etham is the name of a place, so also Succoth. R. Akiba says: Succoth here means only clouds of glory, as it is said: "And the Lord will create over the whole habitation of Mount Zion, and over her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night; for over all the glory shall be a canopy. And there shall be a pavilion for a shadow in the daytime" (Is. 4:5-6).²

¹Songs R. (Soncino ed.), p. 64.

²Mechilta de Rabbi Ishmael (Horovitz-Rabin ed.) Bo, Parashah 14, p. 48; (Lauterbach ed.), Vol. I, p. 108.

And as for the possibility that the Rabbis made a close tie of the visible presence of God and the priesthood, so that when the latter died the former disappeared, it is hinted at in the following:

Furthermore, did I not assign to you three special tutors, Moses, Aaron, and Miriam? . . . Moreover, it was due to the merit of Aaron that I set clouds of glory about you; as it is said, "He spread a cloud for a screen (סֶמֶל)" (Ps. 105:39). . . . Whence do we know that the clouds of glory were due to the merit of Aaron? When Aaron died, what does Scripture say? "And the soul of the people became impatient because of the way" (Num. 21:4), because the sun beat down fiercely upon them.¹

The tension of the Pharisees and the Rabbis to affirm the distillate presence of the Lord at the Temple feasts while attempting to subdue the older traditions, evidently cultivated by the Sadducees, that God's presence was visible through certain cultic rites and ceremonies, was surely the cause of much of the controversy between these two parties. And as long as the Temple stood, the Pharisees were constantly confronted by the cognitive concept of the Temple which tended to break down the barrier between the Creator and the created. The whole mythos of the place, because of the marriage implications of it, lent itself to an intimacy that always came close to an intrusion upon God's holiness.

The Christians tended towards this same kind of mixing: the holy with the creature. The account, mentioned

¹Numbers R. (Soncino ed.) Bemidbar, 1:2, pp. 3-4.

before, of Jesus' transfiguration with Moses and Elijah on the mount, involved the visible cloud of glory and the heavenly voice.¹ Thus the Gemara discusses the boundary of holiness when it discusses the minimum height of the sukkah:

. . . and it has been taught, R. Jose stated, Neither did the Shechinah ever descend to earth, nor did Moses or Elijah ever ascend to Heaven, as it is written, "The heavens are the heavens of the Lord, but the earth hath He given to the sons of men" (Ps. 115:16--the Hallel psalm referring to the present!) etc.²

In addition to the cloud of glory, the Rabbis were able to find other ways of symbolizing or concretizing the divine presence without trespassing their self-imposed limits of propriety. Thus we see the presence of God institutionalized in the lulab, for example.

"The fruit of the hadar (הדר = glory) tree" (Lev. 23:40). Hadar symbolizes the Holy One, blessed be He, of Whom it is written, "Thou art clothed with glory and majesty--hadar" (Ps. 104:1). "Branches of palm-trees" likewise symbolises the Holy One, blessed be He, of Whom it is written, "The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree" (Ps. 92:13). "And the boughs of thick trees" symbolises the Holy One, blessed be He, of Whom it is written, "And he stood among the myrtle-trees" (Zech. 1:8). "And willows ('arbe) of the brook," too, symbolises the Holy One, blessed be He, of Whom it is written, "Extol Him that rideth upon the skies ('araboth), whose name is the Lord" (Ps. 68:5).³

¹In fact, there are a good many themes in the gospels, in Acts of the Apostles, and in Josephus' account of James of Jerusalem that need further investigation as to whether the Jerusalem Christians might indeed have been more Sadducean than Pharisaic.

²B. Sukkah 5a.

³Leviticus R. (Margulies ed.) Emor, Parashah 30:9, p. 707; (Soncino ed.), p. 391.

The water libations in which the Rabbis discovered the Holy Spirit of the Lord, were brought from the pool of ^(Siloam) Shiloah in a golden flagon to the altar, and there poured out into a silver bowl on the west side of the altar. Simultaneously a flagon of wine was poured into a silver bowl with a bigger spout on the altar's east side.¹ R. Judah said the basins were of plaster, not silver, but both were blackened from the wine (since the libations could be switched). These bowls were pierced and emptied into gutters which ran along the altar to the Pits which were sunk, as we have seen, into the very Tehom itself. The Tosephta justifies the libation with the passage from Numbers 28:7: ". . . in the holy place you shall pour out a drink offering of strong drink to the Lord."²

The altar is one of the focal places of the divine presence of the Lord in the Temple at Sukkoth. Upon it were poured the libations, and there were the offerings made. If it were not for Hillel's statement earlier, which teaches us of the post-prophetic, oblique method of the early Rabbis in conveying the word of the Lord, we might think that the altar had a personality of its own. But we may surmise that what appear to be addresses to the

¹M. Sukkah 4:9.

²T. Sukkah (Lieberman ed.), Perek 3, 14-15.

altar were in fact addresses, very possibly by name, to the Lord God Himself.

The patriarch Jacob, who builds the altar at Beth El becomes, in much of the literature, the archetypal altar-builder. And with the altar comes the revelation, for he it was who first saw the heavenly Temple in his vision.

R. Isaac commenced: "An altar of earth shalt thou make unto me . . . in every place where I cause My name to be mentioned I will come unto thee and bless thee" (Ex. 20:24). If I bless him who builds an altar in My name, how much the more should I appear to Jacob, whose features are engraved on My throne, and bless him. Thus it says, "And God appeared unto Jacob . . . and blessed him." R. Levi commenced: "And an ox and a ram for peace-offerings . . . for to-day the Lord appeareth unto you" (Lev. 9:4). If I appear to him who offered a ram in My name and bless him, how much the more should I appear to Jacob whose features are engraved on My throne, and bless him. Thus it says, "And God appeared unto Jacob . . . and blessed him."¹

The first address to an altar is made to the altar of Jeroboam set up at the place of Jacob, at the Beth El. It is no praise that is extended in the passage, however, but a condemnation:

And the man cried against the altar by the word of the Lord and said, "O altar, altar, thus says the Lord: 'Behold, a son shall be born to the house of David, Josiah by name; and he shall sacrifice upon you the priests of the high places who burn incense upon you, and men's bones shall be burned upon you'" (I K. 13:2).

The obvious difficulty here is the conflict of revelatory methods. Whereas in the south the altar was the place

¹Genesis R. (Theodor-Albeck ed.), Vol. II, Vayyishlach, 82:2, p. 978; (Soncino ed.), p. 752.

of revelation--or Urim and Thummim--the legitimate revelation in the north, despite Jeroboam's best efforts, remained the prophetic, "Thus says the Lord. . .".

The next instance of altar address is recorded in our Mishnah and Gemarah, relating to the perambulations of the altar on the first six days of the feast with the willow branches.¹ The prescribed festal shout for the Hosha'anoth at these occasions was "נא: אֵנָה ה' הַצְלִיחָהּ נָא" from Psalm 118:25. We shall discuss the activity and the unusual placement of this verse in the Hallel shortly, but the issue at this point is the address of the petition. There is nothing too remarkable about the address in the Psalm; it is a straightforward petition to YHWH. What is remarkable is the variation of R. Judah. He used to say: "אֲנִי וְהוּ הוֹשִׁיעָה נָה".

Much study and speculation have been expended on the address of R. Judah. The אֲנִי וְהוּ seems to make no sense nor have any precise parallels in any of the literature. We cannot treat the subject here with the careful examination it deserves. Yet it is an address at/to the altar, and something must be said of it as it pertains to the divine presence. We have spoken before about Hillel's use of the אֲנִי and אֵינִי sayings in B. Sukkah 53a, and the same genre

¹M. Sukkah 4:5.

of sayings by Jesus, usually introduced (though not always) with the formula "אמן, אמן, I say unto you"--אני again.¹

And Hillel has used the same formula elsewhere: אם אין אני לי מי לי? וכשאני לעצמי מה אני? ואם לא עכשיו אימתי?¹

This latter saying of Hillel is usually given an ethical meaning, and undoubtedly has one. But the commentary on it in the Aboth de Rabbi Nathan includes the saying: "He used to say: If thou wilt come to My house, I shall come to thy house; for the place My heart loves, My feet lead Me."³

¹The Gospel according to John is the best source for these sayings. The most obvious of them all (and thus the one most abused) is the saying in John 8:58: "Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was--אני, I am." The message is clear enough. There are those who consider lineage from Abraham sufficient to fulfill the requirements. Jesus reminds them that even before Abraham (and the covenant) the Lord God is, and His free will is not removed because of the covenant with Abraham. The fact that the audience began to throw stones is good evidence that Jesus spoke the Tetragrammaton in the form in which it was then known. He is, of course, in no way associating himself with it or making any such impious statement about himself.

²Pirke Aboth 1:14.

³Aboth de Rabbi Nathan ("The Fathers according to R. Nathan") ed. by Solomon Schechter (Vienna, 1887; reprinted in New York: P. Feldheim, 1945), p. 28a; The Fathers according to Rabbi Nathan, ed. and trans. by Judah Goldin (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1955), p. 69. The commentary continues with an interpretation of "My House as synagogue followed by another comment of note: To the place My heart loves, My feet lead Me; what is that? It is a reference to those men who leave their silver and gold and go up on pilgrimage to greet the presence of the Shekinah in the Temple: the Holy One, blessed be He, watches over them while they are in their camps, as it is said, "Neither shall any man covet thy land, when thou goest up to appear before the Lord thy God" (Ex. 34:24), p. 70.

Now this is the same statement which we find in B. Sukkah 53a following the 'אני statement. Are we too far afield if we suggest at least a connection between the 'אני statement in the Babli and the 'אני saying in the Aboth? And if the former is a kind of prophetic statement, perhaps we must look again at the latter for further meaning.

Furthermore, the Gemara's comment on the Mishnah is very terse and cites several sayings of Hezekiah from R. Jeremiah from R. Shimon b. Yohai. At least two of the sayings are as cryptic as Hillel's, the last one dealing with "I and my son"--אני ונהי? Our exploration must be left at this point for the moment,¹ though there are other altar sayings.

Two other addresses to the altar are mentioned in the literature which suggest that this place is at least the מקום of revelation of the presence, or that point at which certain people seem to be able to address the presence.

¹Other sources which may be pursued as an introduction to this problem are Rashi ad loc.; Leviticus R. (Margulies ed.) Bechukkothai, Parashah 35:1, with notes, p. 817ff.; Pesikta Rabbati, Piska 33, p. 153a; H. Loewe's comment on the passage in C. Montefiore and H. Loewe, A Rabbinic Anthology, op. cit., p. 13ff.; and particularly the short but most helpful article by Shalom Ben-Chorin "Ich und Er"--Eine Liturgische Formel" in Zeitschrift für Religions- und Geistesgeschichte, II (1959), #3, pp. 267-269. His allusions to Exodus 34:10 and Deuteronomy 32:39 are noteworthy. The study must ultimately lead into the Zohar, of course.

Our Rabbis taught, It happened that Miriam the daughter of Bilgah apostatized and married an officer of the Greek kings. When the Greeks entered the Sanctuary, she stamped with her sandal upon the altar, crying out, 'Lukos! Lukos! (Λύκος, "Wolf") How long wilt thou consume Israel's money! And yet thou dost not stand by them in the time of oppression!'¹

And finally we read, again in the Aboth de Rabbi Nathan:

"Let not the foot of pride overtake me" (Ps. 36:12) refers to the wicked Titus, blast his bones! For wand in hand he kept striking upon the altar, crying, "Lycos, Lycos, thou art a king and I am a king; come and wage war with me! How many oxen have been slaughtered upon thee, how many birds have been put to death upon thee, how many wines have been poured out over thee, how much incense has been burned upon thee! Thou art he that lays waste the whole universe!" As it is said, "Ah, Ariel, (in the sense of "altar," cf. Tg. on Isaiah, ad loc.), Ariel, the city where David encamped! Add ye year to year, let the feasts come round" (Is. 29:1).²

The presence of the Lord at the festival is, as we have indicated, a matter of His choosing to inhabit this House and choosing to behold there His people upon whom He places His Name. He is husband to Israel and chooses Israel, especially at this time and place, to be His consort.

R. Judan b. R. Simon said: In the past, Israel had a name like all the nations, [for instance] "And Sabta, and Raamah, and Sabteca" (Gen. 10:7); henceforth they are called solely "My people," thus "Hear, O My people, and I will speak": Whence have ye merited to be called

¹T. Sukkah (Lieberman ed.), Perek 4:28, pp. 277-278; B. Sukkah (Soncino ed.), 56b. Cf. also Genesis R., 99:1 for another interpretation of the altar's name.

²J. Goldin, op. cit., p. 9. In note 38, p. 176, we are informed that "wand" is a euphemism for "phallus." The confrontation seems to be between two royal husbands, for Titus is to become an imperial Father of Rome.

"My people"? From the time of "and I will speak," from that which ye uttered before Me at Sinai and said, "All that the Lord hath spoken will we do, and hearken" (Ex. 24:7). . . . R. Simeon b. Yoḥai taught: I am God to all the inhabitants of the world, but I have associated My name only with my people Israel. I am not called the God of the nations, only the God of Israel. "God, thy God, am I (!אני)" (Ps. 50:7).¹

And being the people bearing His name, He visits them and takes an accounting of them at the festival; for He sees them there as His קהל and His צנה²--His son; but particularly His wife. And as for the wife,

R. Joshua b. Levi said: The Israelites yearned passionately for the Shechinah, as it says, "Let my beloved come to his garden (le-ganno), as much as to say, to his bridal chamber (le-ginuno)."³

R. Berekiah said: In the following ten places in Scripture God refers to Israel as a bride: "Come with Me from Lebanon, my bride: (Songs 4:8); "I am come into my garden, my sister, my bride" (ibid. 5:1); "Thou hast ravished my heart, my sister, my bride" (ibid. 4:9); "How fair is thy love, my sister, my bride" (ibid. 10); "Thy lips, O my bride, drop honey (ibid. 11); "And as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride" (Is. 62:5); "The voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride" (Jer. 7:34); "Thou shalt surely clothe thee with them all as with an ornament, and gird thyself with them, like a bride"

¹Ruth R. (Soncino ed.), I (Proem), pp. 1, 3.

²Cf. J. B. Segal, op. cit., pp. 136-138 et passim, on the census as both military and religious privilege, and the use of the special word קנא to designate this accounting and beholding of the Lord's presence. Cf. also E. A. Speiser, "Census and Ritual Expiation in Mari and Israel," BASOR, No. 149 (Feb. 1958), pp. 21ff.

³Songs R. (Soncino ed.), I:4, §3. Cf. also Numbers R. Naso, 13:2 for a lengthy but beautiful midrash on the text, "Awake, O north wind; and come, thou south wind, etc." (Songs 4:16), in which the relationship of Israel as bride and Shekinah as groom is spun out.

(Is. 49:18); "And as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels" (*ibid.* 61:10). And corresponding to these ten Israel adorn God with the following ten garments: "I put on righteousness, and it clothed itself with me" (Job 29:14); this makes two; "And He put on righteousness as a coat of mail" (Is. 59:17); "And He put on garments of vengeance for clothing" (*ibid.*): this makes five; "His raiment was as white as snow" (Dan. 7:9); "Wherefore is thine apparel red" (Is. 63:2); "The Lord reigneth; He is clothed in majesty; the Lord is clothed, He hath girded Himself with strength" (Ps. 93:1); "Thou art clothed with glory and majesty" (Ps. 104:1); this makes ten.¹

"Now Moses was keeping the flock" (Ex. 3:1). It is written: "But the Lord is in His holy Temple" (Hab. 2:20). R. Samuel b. Nahman said: Before the Temple was destroyed, the Divine Presence dwelt therein, for it says: "The Lord is in His holy Temple" (Ps. 11:4); but when the Temple was destroyed, the Divine Presence removed itself to heaven, as it is said: "The Lord hath established His throne in the heavens" (*ibid.* 103:19). R. Eleazar says: The Shechinah did not depart from the Temple, for it is said: "And Mine eyes and My heart shall be there perpetually" (II Chron. 7:16). So it also says: "With my voice I call unto the Lord, and He answereth me out of His holy mountain, Selah" (Ps. 3:5); for although it was laid waste, it still retained its holiness.²

And when they return in the future, the Shekinah, as it were, will return with them, as it is said: "That then the Lord thy God will return with thy captivity" (Deut. 30:3). Note that it does not say: "The Lord will bring back" (veheshib), etc., but it says: "He will return" (ve-shab). And it is also said: "With me from Lebanon, my bride" (Songs 4:8). Was she really coming from Lebanon? Was she not rather going up to Lebanon? What then does Scripture mean by saying: "With me from Lebanon?" Merely this: You and I (אני ואנך), as it were, were exiled from Lebanon; you and I will go up to Lebanon.³

¹Deuteronomy R. (Soncino ed.) Vaethchanan, 2:37, pp. 65-66.

²Exodus R. (Soncino ed.) Shemoth, 2:2, pp. 47-48.

³Mechilta de Rabbi Ishmael (Horovitz-Rabin ed.) Bo, Parashah 14, p. 52; (Lauterbach ed.), Vol. I, p. 115.

The Service of the Temple: ענין

The fourth great aspect of Israel's covenant of life is that of the facilitator, the comforter of Israel (or, as we shall see, Israel the comforter). The particular designation of the facilitator and indeed the whole activity of facilitation at the Feast of Sukkoth is ענין, the Temple Service.

Simeon the Righteous was among the last of the men of the Great Assembly. He used to say: On three things the world stands--on the Torah, on the Temple Service, and on acts of loving-kindness.¹

It is said, appropriately enough, about the Temple Service:

So long as the Temple service is maintained, the world is a blessing to its inhabitants and the rains come down in season, as it is said, "To love the Lord your God, and to serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul, that I will give the rain of your land in its season, the former rain and the latter rain . . . and I will give grass in thy fields for thy cattle" (Deut. 11:13-15). But when the Temple service is not maintained, the world is not a blessing to its inhabitants and the rains do not come down in season, as it is said, "Take heed to yourselves, lest your heart be deceived . . . and He shut up the heaven, so that there shall be no rain" (Deut. 11:16-17).²

There is something reminiscent here of the idea of the Temple as the center and starting point of creation.

¹Pirke Aboth 1:2. Blackman says that this Simon is either Simon ben Onias I (High Priest 310-291 B.C.E.) or, more likely, his grandson Simon II (High Priest 219-199 B.C.E.). The latter would have been in office shortly before the Hellenistic incursions of Antiochus IV.

²J. Goldin, The Fathers According to Rabbi Nathan, op. cit., p. 33.

The very world itself and its fertility depend upon this House of the Lord. And there is also a reminder of Haggai's hortatory remarks about rebuilding the Temple that the land might once again give forth its increase according to the covenant. The three foundations of Simon are altogether a succinct statement of the Assembly's reformation.

For Zerubbabel, the rebuilding of the Temple and restoration of its services was to be the guarantee of the covenant relationship. For Ezra and Nehemiah, the requirement for covenant revival included the Temple Service, but extended beyond it to the sanctification of the people (in this case, the Torah as the revelation of God's requirements for holiness) and a universal thrust of proclamation of the Lord God to the world (which may well be the extended meaning of גמילות חסדים). Simon, as one of the last of the Assembly, could thus summarize the great reformation in these three short statements, for the covenant was indeed viable and the reformation, to his time, a success.

By the time of Shimon ben Gamliel, the three foundations of the world had changed, and the new situation of Israel after the time when the Temple Service had ceased is reflected in his words: "By three things is the world sustained: by judgment, by truth, and by peace, as it is said,

"execute the judgment of truth and peace in your gates" (Zech. 8:16).¹ The quotation from Zechariah is from a section concerned with God's restoration of Jerusalem. By Shimon ben Gamliel's time, the Temple Service was no more, and a new phase of the reformation had begun. The concretizations of the Rabbis had replaced those of the Assembly.

There have been facilitators of every description in Israel's history. Jacob is, as we have seen in Jubilees, the Targum, and the rabbinic midrashim, the prototypical facilitator of the covenant as the covenant relates to the Temple and its altar. He was among those who brought the Shechinah back to earth (to the Sanctuary) after the presence had withdrawn to the seventh heaven for the sins of the evil men of the nations.² In his vision at Beth El, it is said that Jacob was given a vision of the Temple, its glory and its destruction,³ and furthermore, that he slept at the very place upon which the Temple was to be built in the future.

R. Judah b. R. Simon said: This ladder stood on the Temple site, while [the top of] its slope was over Beth-el. What is the proof? "And he was afraid, and

¹Pirke Aboth 1:18.

²Numbers R. (Soncino ed.) Naso, 13:2, p. 504.

³Genesis R. (Theodor-Albeck ed.), Vol. II, Vayetze, 69:7, p. 797; (Soncino ed.), p. 634.

said: How full of awe is this place--And he called the name of that place Beth-el" (Gen. 28:19).¹

And it is also said of Jacob:

Jacob rose up early in the morning in great fear, and said: The house of the Holy One, blessed be He, is in this place, as it is said, "And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place! this is none other but the house of God" (Gen. 28:17). Hence thou canst learn that every one who prays in Jerusalem is (reckoned) as though he had prayed before the Throne of Glory, for the gate of heaven is there, and it is open to hear the prayers of Israel, as it is said, "And this is the gate of heaven" (ibid.).²

Because of this vision and Jacob's response, he becomes an almost archetypal altar-builder for it was he who first established relationship with the Lord at this place which was to be the throne of God; and as he slept, God promised that the ground upon which he slept would belong to his seed forever. And God folded all Palestine and placed it under him that night.³ And thus R. Isaac commented on the verse, "An altar of earth shalt thou make unto me . . . in every place where I cause my name to be mentioned I will come unto thee and bless thee" (Ex. 20:24):

If I bless him who builds an altar in My name [says God] how much the more should I appear to Jacob whose features are engraved on My throne, and bless him.

¹Ibid.

²Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer (Warsaw ed.), p. 82a/b; (Friedlander ed.), pp. 265-266.

³Genesis R. (Theodor-Albeck ed.), Vol. II, Vayetze, 69:4, pp. 793-794; (Soncino ed.), p. 632; B. Hullin 91b.

Thus it says, "And God appeared unto Jacob . . . and blessed him."¹

And not for Jacob only, but for his children forever:

R. Tabyomi said: When Jacob was about to depart from this world, he summoned his sons and told them: "Know ye that God will one day command your children to erect a tabernacle; see ye, therefore, that all its requisites are ready in your hands," for it says, "Behold, I die; and God will be with you" (Gen. 48:21). Can this possibly mean that when Jacob our ancestor lived God was not with his sons? Of course not; but what Jacob told them was this: "He will one day say to you: 'And let them make me a sanctuary,' and He will descend and cause His Shechinah to dwell in their midst," as it says, "And let them make me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them" (Ex. 25:8).²

Jacob is the ideal facilitator of the Temple, it being the place where land, progeny, and presence coalesce in the patriarch.

Solomon is the facilitator of the Temple as it is established in the one place where God chooses to have His Name there. Zechariah is a facilitator of the Temple who sees it as the center of the universal worship of the Lord God of Israel. Zerubbabel, Nehemiah, and Ezra are facilitators of the Temple as it is reconstructed as the center of the covenant's life-giving activities, the particular place of God's presence in the midst of His holy people. Moses, Elijah, and Jesus (from the account of the

¹Genesis R. (Theodor-Albeck ed.), Vol. II, Vayyishlach, 82:2, p. 978; (Soncino ed.), p. 752.

²Exodus R. (Soncino ed.) Terumah, 33:8, p. 424.

Transfiguration) are types of the facilitator of the covenant as it extends forth from the covenant in the Written and the Oral Torah. The Temple, as itself a category of the covenant, moves from the particular to the universal. The facilitator in this outward movement of the concept of the Temple as the place of the covenant life is, of course, Israel itself. It is Israel who becomes the place and the time of the covenant in the world. And as Israel moves outward from the Temple and the Feast, the life of the covenant moves outward towards every place, every time, and every nation.

This movement of the Service of the Temple from particular to universal began, according to the Rabbis, with Abraham himself. The midrash, repeated in many texts, describes the service (or hospitality) of Abraham as the guarantor for the success of the covenant, not only in the land of Israel (and presumably its center, the Temple at the Feast), but in the age to come as well:

"And said: My Lord, if now I have found favour in Thy sight" (Gen. 18:3). R. Hiyya taught: He said this to the greatest of them, viz, Michael, "Let now a little water be fetched" (ibid. 18:4). God said to Abraham, 'Thou hast said, "Let now a little water be fetched." I swear that I will repay the children (in the wilderness, in inhabited country [the Land-Eretz Israel], and in the Messianic future).' Thus it is written, "Then sang Israel this song! Spring up, O well--sing ye unto it" (Num. 21:7)--that was in the wilderness. Where do we find it in the Land [sc. Eretz Israel]? "A land of brooks of water" (Deut. 8:7). And in the Messianic future? "And it shall come to pass in that

day, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem" (Zech. 14:8). 'Thou hast said: "And wash your feet": I swear to thee that I will repay thy children.' "Then washed I thee in water" (Ezek. 16:9) refers to the wilderness. In the Land? "Wash you, make you clean" (Is. 1:16). In the Messianic future? "When the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion" (*ibid.* 4:4): 'Thou hast said: "And recline yourself under the tree": by thy life, I will repay thy children.' "He spread a cloud for a screen" (Ps. 105:39)--that was in the wilderness. In the Land? "Ye shall dwell in booths seven days" (Lev. 23:42). In the Messianic future? "And there shall be a pavilion for a shadow in the day-time from the heat" (Is. 4:6). 'Thou didst say, "And I will fetch a morsel of bread" (Gen. 18:5): I swear that I will repay thy children.' Thus: "Behold, I will cause to rain bread from heaven for you" (Ex. 16:4)--that is in the wilderness. In the land? "A land of wheat and barley, etc." (Deut. 8:8). In the Messianic future? "He will be as a rich cornfield in the land" (Ps. 72:16). 'Again, thou didst run after the herd: I swear that I will repay thy children.' Thus: "And there went forth a wind from the Lord, and brought across quails from the sea" (Num. 11:27), that is in the wilderness. In the Land? "Now the children of Reuben and the children of Gad had a very great multitude of cattle" (*ibid.* 32:1). In the Messianic future? "And it shall come to pass in that day, that a man shall rear a young cow, and two sheep" (Is. 7:21). As a reward for "And he stood by them" (Gen. 18:8). "And the Lord went before them" (Ex. 13:21)--there you have the wilderness. In the Land? "God standeth in the congregation of God" (Ps. 82:1). In the Messianic future? "The breaker is gone up, before them . . . and the Lord at the head of them" (Mic. 2:13).¹

¹Genesis R. (Theodor-Albeck ed.), Vol. II, *Vayera*, 48:10, pp. 486-488; (Soncino ed.), pp. 411-412. Variations of the midrash are to be found in *Exodus R.* 25:5; *Numbers R.* 14:2; *Koheleth Rabbah* ("Ecclesiastes Rabbah"), comm. by Issachar b. Naphtali (Jerusalem: Lewin-Epstein, 1969), Vol. III, xi.1, §1; *Ecclesiastes Rabbah*, ed. by H. Freedman and Maurice Simon, trans. by A. Cohen (London: The Soncino Press, 1939), Vol. VIII, xi.1, §1, pp. 288-289. An abbreviated form of the narrative is found in B. *Baba Mezi'a* 86b.

The service of Abraham to the visiting angels in this narrative is a concretization of *עונות* as a category. The connections of themes in this midrash and the themes of Sukkoth in the Temple Service are apparent, and demonstrate the real independence of any category from a particular concretization.

Patai, in speaking of facilitators, has said:

To turn now to the Jews, the belief that the orderly functioning of nature and the welfare of the people depend on a central personality is discernible in biblical as well as in talmudic times.¹

He then goes on to identify those protagonists whom we have discussed earlier: kings and prophets. Patai continues by telling of some facilitators (or pseudo-facilitators) of the covenant associated with the Temple and Sukkoth. In a sense, these figures of rabbinic legend² functioned much as the kings did. They were involved in the Temple's intricate connection with creation and the influence upon the weather.

Patai first identifies the "whisperers," whose muttered charms, incantations, and secret words--perhaps the name of God itself--gave them a certain technical power over nature. Patai says of them that they did not have power by reason of their moral qualities, but of their secret knowledge.³

¹R. Patai, Man and Temple, op. cit., p. 177.

²Cf. B. Ta'anith 8a.

³R. Patai, Man and Temple, op. cit., pp. 183ff.

The "whisperers" exercised their powers for healings, prophylaxis (especially in cases of snake and scorpion bite), and of course rain.¹ Their position as facilitators of the covenant are at best marginal, for they verge on the magician. But the Rabbis gave credence to their power (Elijah himself was given the Key to Rain), though R. Akiba condemns them as having no portion in the world to come.²

A second group are the "pious men of the generation," whose intercession is often effective when the "whisperer" fails.

But if he has whispered and was not answered, what is his remedy? Let him go to the most pious man of that generation that he may intercede abundantly for him.³

The third group were perhaps the more normative facilitators of Temple times. They are the "Righteous

¹Regarding their power to influence rainfall, Patai cites the following:

If you see a generation over whom the heavens are rust-coloured like copper as that neither dew nor rain falls, it is because that generation is wanting in whisperers. What then is the remedy? Let them go to someone who knows how to whisper (B. Ta'anith 8a).

²M. Sanhedrin 10:1. Jesus is accused of casting out demons by the power of Beelzebul, prince of demons, in Matthew 12:22ff.; Luke 11:14ff; et passim. The connection between spitting in the eye to cure blindness and whispering is found in Leviticus R. 9:9 and Mark 8:22ff.

³B. Ta'anith 8a.

Ones," the Tzaddiqim, and in B. Ta'anith 8a, R. Ammi says that "rain falls only for the sake of the men of faith." Some of these are perhaps to be found among the "men of piety and good deeds" who dance in the Beth HaShoebah on Sukkoth (M. Sukkah 5:4) in the rejoicing connected with the water libations.¹

In these protagonists of the feast we can already begin to see the separation of theme from concretization. Many of their activities are indeed performed in or around the Temple; yet the emphasis is not so much on the Temple as on the piety of the men themselves. And the Pharisees themselves, if they are not included in this last category, are beginning to emerge as facilitators of the covenant by reason of their oral interpretations of the written law. They, like the old Jerusalemite prophets, lead and exhort the people in the ways of righteousness, holiness, separation, and mission. And they will become the Rabbis--the protagonists of Israel--in the years to come after the destruction.

As the facilitators become less dramatic as individuals, the Service of the Temple, which is, after all,

¹A most notable example of "men of faith" are Honi the Circle-Maker and his grandchildren, who used to "trouble heaven" in order to stimulate the covenant. Stimulation of the covenant was usually in the form of rain petitions, but the real issue was, as usual, the fructifying of the land by the presence of God.

the service of the Lord, begins to become the responsibility of individuals in Israel. This individuation of responsibility is one of major points of the reformation itself, and it is cultivated particularly by the Pharisees. Since Israel stood at Sinai and accepted the yoke of the Torah, the obligation of every individual in the community of Israel was to obey the laws, statutes, and precepts inherent in the covenant. At the time of the Second Commonwealth, it was becoming clear that this individual responsibility, while it drew its enthusiasm from the community gathered at the feast, could be exercised in regions far from the Temple.

While the Temple stood, the obligation for pilgrimage continued as well. The Israelite was required to come to the Temple three times in the year:

R. Samuel said: (God) was like a king who had an orchard in which he planted rows of nut-trees, apple-trees, and pomegranate trees. He handed them over to his son, saying, "My son, I do not require anything of you, only when these trees yield their first fruit, bring it to me and let me taste, so that I may see the work of my hand and rejoice in you. "So the Holy One, blessed be He, said to Israel: "My sons, I require nothing of you, only when a first son is born to any one of you, let him sanctify him to My name. . . . And when you go up to celebrate the festival, bring him and all your males to appear before Me."¹

And the Sifra states clearly:

(Concerning Num. 29:39) may one infer that the festival is optional? Scripture says, "These you shall offer

¹Songs R. (Soncino ed.) VII.2, §3, pp. 280-281.

to the Lord in your appointed seasons." If it is to be free (from the obligation), it is already free. But if so, why is it said, "These you shall offer to the Lord in your appointed seasons"? To establish the obligation to come to every festival.¹

And again concerning the offerings:

"And none shall appear before me empty" (Ex. 23:15). That is, without sacrifices. You interpret it to mean without sacrifices. Perhaps this is not so, but it means without money? Behold, you must reason thus: Rejoicing is mentioned with reference to man and rejoicing is also implied with reference to God. Just as in the former it means with sacrifices, so also in the latter it means with sacrifices, etc.²

Yet with these requirements, the fact is that all Israelites could not come up to the Temple three times in the year. For the children of Israel were, at this time, dispersed throughout the known world. This is perhaps the time of the growth of the synagogue--the House of Study and the House of Prayer. The Tosephta records a description of the great synagogue of Alexandria with its seventy-one cathedrae of gold, the reserved sections for the guilds, and the hazzan on the central bema waving a scarf so that the people might know when to respond to the blessings. R. Judah mentions this edifice as the "glory of Israel" in the same context as the rejoicing in the Beth HaShoebah.³

¹Sifra (Weiss ed.) Emor, Perek 15:1, p. 102b.

²Mechilta de Rabbi Ishmael (Horowitz-Rabin ed.) Mishpatim, Parasha 20, p. 333; (Lauterbach ed.), Vol. III, p. 183.

³T. Sukkah 4:6. Cf. also B. Sukkah 51b.

Perhaps this is the time when the אנשי-מעמר and the משמרות in Jerusalem began to be matched with comparable groups in the villages and towns of the land.¹ We cannot know any of the details for certain; but we can see the process of the melting of the Temple as a category of the covenant, and we can suspect that this melting began well before the Roman threat and the final destruction.

Certainly one of the requirements of the Feast of Sukkoth, namely the reading of the Law every seven years "at the Feast of Booths" (Deut. 31:11), provided a category of the covenant which had implications, not only for revelation, but also for the very separation of the feast from the cognitive concept of place, i.e., the Temple. If the reading of Torah was a theme of the feast, and if there were an ever-increasing number of people who could no longer make the regular pilgrimages, what better means could there be to export a festal theme to the places where Israel found itself. While the reading of the Law in the synagogue was not comparable to the rejoicing at the Beth HaShoebah, it was nonetheless a bridge between the place of the feast and the places of Israel's life as it was

¹The "Watches," or "Courses" of priests are mentioned in M. Sukkah 5:6-8. Blackman has a brief but useful note of explanation on both the משמר and the מעמר, P. Blackman, Mishnayoth, Vol. II, p. 517, note 17.

becoming flung out across the world.¹ We shall see in the next chapter what other means were employed to retain Sukkoth in another place.

The specific requirements of God, the concretization in Israel's history of the halachic requirements of the covenant, are as variable as any institution in Israel. It is the category, the value-concept of the halachah, which must be observed. The form of observance will change; the statute, ordinance, or law will remain forever. And the obligation will not exceed the means of Israel to fulfill it. Thus it says:

"Command the children of Israel" (Num. 28:2). This is interpreted by what is written, "As for the Almighty, we cannot find Him out; He is excellent in power, etc." (Job 37:23). Yet it is also written, "Behold, God doeth loftily in His power" (Job 36:22). How can these two texts be reconciled? Only this way: When He gives anything to Israel, He gives them according to His own means; but when He requires something of them, He requires it only according to their means. . . . When He asked of them He asked only for what was within their means; as it says, "And ye shall take you on the first day the fruit of goodly trees" (Lev. 23:40). But He gave them in accordance with His own means; as it says, "I will plant in the wilderness the cedar, the accacia-tree, and the myrtle, and the oil tree" (Is. 41:19). "Instead of the thorns shall come up the cypress (ibid. 55:13).²

Perhaps the most extraordinary requirement of Israel at the Feast of Sukkoth, and oftentimes surely the most

¹Cf. F. Josephus, Ant. (Loeb ed.) IV:viii, 1, 12.

²Tanhuma, Pinhas 14, p. 92b; Cf. Also Numbers R., Pinhas, 21:22.

difficult, were the sacrifices offered during the seven days of the feast. According to the sacrificial schedule in Numbers 29, seventy bullocks were to be sacrificed in the course of the feast.

R. Eleazar stated, To what do those seventy bullocks correspond? To the seventy nations. To what does the single bullock [of the Eighth Day] correspond? To the unique nation. This may be compared to a mortal king who said to his servants, "Prepare for me a great banquet"; but on the last day he said to his beloved friend, "Prepare for me a simple meal that I may derive benefit from you."¹

No work is permitted at the time of festival according to Leviticus 23:35-36 and Sifra,² either on the first day or on the eighth day. We might think that the intent of the prohibition of servile work on the feasts has only the force of the Sabbath rest. While the idea of rest is surely present and is an integral part of the rejoicing of the feast, there is also a motive to the prohibition beyond simple rest. The prohibition of servile work is attached closely in Scripture to the declaration of the holy convocation, the מקרא-קודש.³

¹B. Sukkah (Soncino ed.), 55b. Cf. also Tanhuma (Buber ed.), Pinhas, p. 78b.

²Sifra (Weiss ed.) Emor, Parasha 12:5; 12:6 provides that work can be done on the intermediate days of the feast.

³The holy convocation is, in every instance in Leviticus 23, accompanied by a prohibition of servile labor.

The Lord's summons of a holy convocation is not, it would seem, simply an offer to rest from labor. It is, rather, a holy calling together of the congregation of Israel with a purpose. Rather than Israel's working for its own gain on these occasions, the holy convocation seems to be a summons by God to work for Him: to be עֲבוּדָה on these particular occasions. The עֲבוּדָה of the Temple is to completely override the עֲבוּדָה of daily life. And the holy work, the עֲבוּדָה of Sukkoth, is particularly a work of intercession for the nations.

We have said that the reformation was both particularistic and universalistic, but that it is particularist in order to be universalistic. From Sinai onwards, Israel has been called to God's service in missionizing the world. Abraham's name will be the ideal of blessing among the nations (Gen. 12:3). When Solomon dedicated the Temple, he asked that God respond favorably to the foreigner who seeks the Lord there (I K. 8:41-43) so that they too might know and fear God's name. And Zechariah envisions all the nations of the earth going up to Jerusalem to celebrate Sukkoth (Zech. 14). And when Israel is called away from עֲבוּדָה כל-מלאכה at Sukkoth, it is a call to עֲבוּדָה-יְי, the work of the facilitator.

A man said to me, "My master, why do the Gentiles enjoy this world?" I replied, "My son, this is their reward because God separated Israel from among them. It is like a king who found that one man, out of a large

family, did his will. The king sent gifts to all the members of the family for the sake of that single man who did the king's will. So it is with the Gentiles. They enjoy this world as a reward that God separated Israel from among them.¹

And again it is said:

It is written, "I separated you from the nations" (Lev. 20:24). Had it said, "I separated the nations from you, there would have been no hope for the nations. But it says, "I separated you from the nations, to be for me and for my name for ever." R. Aḥa said: Hence we learn that God bade the nations repent, that He might bring them under His wings.²

Just as the sacrifices atone for the sins of Israel, so Israel undertakes the responsibility for being the sacrifice for the whole world.

As the dove atones for iniquities, so Israel [likened to the dove in Song of Songs 1:15] atones for the other nations, since the seventy bullocks which they offer on Tabernacles are only for the sake of the seventy nations, so that the world should not be made desolate through them; and so it says, "In return for my love they are my adversaries; but I am all prayer" (Ps. 109:4).³

Israel moves through history both needing facilitators of the covenant to assure the proper working of the covenant and needed as a facilitator by the nations of the world. Just as Israel has received some of their

¹Seder Eliahu rabba and Seder Eliahu Zuta (Tanna d'be Eliahu); Pseudo-Seder Eliahu Zuta, ed. by Meir Ish Shalom (M. Friedmann), (Vienna, 1900, 1904; Jerusalem: Wahrman, 1969), p. 174.

²Songs R. (Soncino ed.), V.16, §5, p. 254. Cf. also Pesikta Rabbati (Friedmann ed.), Piska 15, 69b; (Braude ed.), Piska 15, p. 312.

³Songs R. (Soncino ed.), I.15, §2, p. 86. Cf. also B. Sukkah 55b.

facilitators with gratitude, so at times the nations have received Israel with gratitude as the means for establishing a relationship with the Lord, the King. And just as Israel has at times ignored, rejected, or even persecuted the protagonists of the covenant, so has the world caused Israel's service to be for them a suffering.

Yet it should always be clear that the fourth great aspect of the covenant is facilitator, not sufferer. If Israel suffers, it is not a suffering for its own sake. Suffering is neither aspect nor category. Suffering, unlike rejoicing, is but the by-product of Israel's mission as a light to the nations.¹

Israel's greatest tension in history is, as it has been since Abraham raised the knife or saddled his ass,

¹S. Schechter does point out the efficacy of suffering for all the generations of Israel. The sanctification of the Name does become a value-concept in rabbinic thought as that which makes atonement when the Temple is gone. Schechter says:

"This readiness to sacrifice oneself for Israel is characteristic of all the great men of Israel, the patriarchs and the Prophets acting in the same way, whilst also some Rabbis would, on certain occasions, exclaim, 'Behold, I am the atonement of Israel.'" (S. Schechter, op. cit., p. 309-311).

The merit of the fathers, זכות אבות, is associated with this vicarious suffering. The essential difference between Schechter's explanation of the merit of suffering and that of Pauline Christology is perhaps the greatest distinction separating Judaism from Christianity. Suffering in Israel, even to the death, is Israel's suffering for God's sake, for the יחוד השם. Christological suffering and death

whether Israel will choose to serve the Lord God as protagonist of the covenant to the world, or whether Israel will not choose to serve. The tension of עבודה will always be the greatest tension of all, for the stakes are so very high. But having chosen, the revelation is one of life--the life of the covenant.

The Working of the Covenant: השתלשלות הנרית

The four great aspects of the covenant were bound together and motivated by a dynamic which is best described by the husband-wife motif of the southern, Jerusalemite tradition. This dynamic can be seen in operation in the microcosm of the covenant which is Sukkoth. Many of the themes or categories which are an integral part of the dynamic have been discussed above as they related to the great aspects of the covenant at the feast. In this section, we shall confine ourselves to that one most overt representation of the matrimonial dynamic--the fructifying waters and the rites connected with them.

It must be made clear at the outset that while the upper and lower waters are a sign of the relationship,

is exactly the opposite conception; for in Christology, God suffers and dies for man's sake. What purpose is served if the end is destroyed to preserve the means? There is an answer to the question, but it is written in Greek.

they remain only signs and must not be interpreted mythologically or allegorically.¹

The dynamic of the covenant in terms of water and feast is most beautifully stated in Psalm 42:

As a hart longs for flowing streams, so longs my soul for thee, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When shall I come and behold the face of God? My tears have been my food day and night, while men say to me continually, "Where is your God?" These things I remember, as I pour out my soul: how I went with the throng and led them in procession to the house of God, with glad shouts and songs of Thanksgiving, a multitude keeping festival. Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you disquieted within me? Hope in God; for I shall again praise Him, my help and my God (Ps. 42:1-6a).

The psalmist is perhaps undergoing some kind of penitence or feeling of separation from God.² The longing for reconciliation is expressed by a thirst--a need for water--and a libation of the soul in order to achieve it. The psalmist's tears are like the rains which water the

¹Which is not to say that those who utilized the signs at the time of the Temple did not interpret them mythologically or allegorically. Philo certainly employed the latter method, and there are sufficient archeological treasures to suggest symbolic usage verging on the mythological (cf. E. Goodenough, op. cit., Vol. III, for the evidence). The Rabbis seem to have steered a course more or less in between, however.

²H. St. J. Thackeray, in the second of his Schweich Lectures (1920), The Septuagint and Jewish Worship, pp. 72ff., considers the author a priest or Levite banished to the upper Jordan region and longing for the feast in which he was at one time a leader. Thackeray provides no evidence for his somewhat odd conjecture, however.

earth. And in what idiom does the psalmist express the fulfillment of his desire? It is the festival: the time of procession, shouting, singing, thanksgiving, and moving with rejoicing through the multitude.

And to what may this longing be likened? It is like the longing that is between the waters above the earth and the waters below the earth for each other.

R. Levi said: The upper waters are male while the lower are female, and they say one to the other: "Receive us; you have been created by the Holy One, blessed be He, whilst we are His messengers." Immediately they receive them; thus it is written, "Let the sky pour down righteousness; let the earth open" (Is. 45:8)--like a female who receives the male; "That they may bring forth (we-yifru) salvation (ibid.)--in that they are fruitful (parim) and multiply; "And let her cause righteousness to spring up together; I the Lord have created it" (ibid.): this refers to the fall of rain. "I the Lord have created it": I have created it for the benefit and stability of the world.¹

And Rabbi Hama bar Hanina says of this dynamic: "The day when rain falls is as great as the day on which the heaven and earth were created."² R. Joshua b. Levi observes:

"In the hour when rain falls the cattle seeks [to fulfill] its task, that is, mates."³

¹Genesis R. (Theodor-Albeck ed.), Vol. I, 13:13, p. 122; (Soncino ed.), pp. 107-108. Bereshith,
^

²B. Ta'anith 7b. Bereshith,

³Genesis R. (Theodor-Albeck ed.), Vol. I, 13:6, p. 117; (Soncino ed.), p. 103. ^

Using the male and female rains as analogy, it is this very relationship which is expressed in the covenant by the husband-wife motif. And at the Feast of Sukkoth, it is precisely rain that is the operative metaphor; and it is in the Temple celebration of the feast that the metaphor is evident. In fact, the rain and water-drawing themes are the governing themes in Jerusalem at the great feast.¹

It was perhaps only by coincidence that the solar, equinoctial New Year feast in Jerusalem came at the very time in which the people began to have concern for the rains and the waters. Whatever the origin of the connection, it developed as a tradition, at least among the Pharisees, that the world is judged for water on the Feast of Sukkoth.²

We may pay careful attention, however, to the fact of judgment. For judgment of the world for rain is a statement which reasonably and fairly precludes the whole concept of magic. The giving of water after Sukkoth is an act of God and motivated by His free will alone. God says to Israel:

Bring (offer) a libation of water at Sukkoth in order that you might bring upon you the blessing from the rains, as it is written, "And it shall be, that whose of the families of the earth goeth not up unto

¹Cf. above, pp. 200.

²M. Rosh Hashanah 1:2.

Jerusalem to worship the King, the Lord of Hosts, upon them there shall be no rain, etc." (Zech. 14:17).¹

The provisions for what Israel is to do should the rains fail to come is a good indication of the absence of magic from the water libation ceremony. The fast, according to M. Ta'anith, is the appropriate response to a failure of the waters to come, which is, of course, tantamount to a malfunctioning of the covenant. The fast in Israel is the substitute for magic, for it presumes the necessity for a greater measure of holiness and sanctification on the people's part than it does some failure in God's power to provide the necessary rains, which failure might be corrected by the manipulation of powers by men. Petition has replaced magic in Israel.

There are a number of categories or themes which have bearing on the petition for rain that have been discussed above. It will be useful to present here, by way of example, the two major themes of the water concern of Israel, the lulab and the Hosha'anoth, which have not yet been dealt with. The lulab is a cluster of tree branches and boughs which, together with the ethrog, or citron, provides Israel with one of the major festival objects of Sukkoth having a direct relationship with the rains. The lulab is also, as we shall see, the source of one of the major controversies connected with the Feast of Sukkoth.

¹T. Sukkah (Lieberman ed.), 3:18, p. 271.

The first mention of any boughs or fruit trees connected with Sukkoth is the narrative in Nehemiah 8:15ff. Here the people, when they hear the reading of the Law and the obligation to celebrate Sukkoth, go out into the hills and gather olive branches, wild olive, palm, myrtle, and boughs from other leafy trees. We are told that the people returned to make booths for themselves from the materials they had gathered. We have assumed,¹ then, that Ezra had read to them from the Deuteronomic Code, which requires that all who are in Israel, including families, servants, Levites, the fatherless and widowed, and even the sojourner, are to "keep the Feast of Sukkoth seven days." The people seem to have understood that the observance and celebration of this festival might assure the productivity of the land and the work of their hands. Surely the neglect of the festival had done nothing to further the covenant relationship.

If it is true, as we have suggested, that these people returned to Jerusalem from the Exile to find the city and the province in great trouble and the covenanted promises in eclipse, it is quite likely that they made haste to correct the situation according to the instruction that had been given to them. The Torah said to make/do (עָשׂוּ) Sukkoth so that God's blessing might be obtained; and this

¹Cf. above, p. 81 .

they did. It was not the time for experimentation with new legal codices or constitutions; it was time for a quickening of the relationship. And Deuteronomy states clearly that sukkoth (whatever they were) and blessing go together.

Nor should we think that these returned exiles were confronted with the requirements of Leviticus 23. The occasion was not appropriate to anamnesis; the occasion called for speedy implementation of revelation that had already been given. Nor is there a hint of gaiety in this festival of Nehemiah 8. They simply dwell in booths--as they and their ancestors had not done since time out of mind--with great rejoicing (which is in no way to be construed as frivolity).¹ The situation seems to have been that if they could but once restore the balance of the covenant, the feast could, in the future, be celebrated in the more gala fashions of the New Year festivals of former times. But this first feast was a most serious matter of righting the covenant and re-assuring the divine presence.

If Leviticus 23 had existed in its present form, these people would have been in violation of its requirements. They gathered different kinds of boughs and

¹If it is possible, though not proveable from the text, that "great rejoicing" meant appropriate and relatively abundant offerings and sacrifices.

celebrated on the wrong days of the month to have fulfilled the specifics of Leviticus 23. They did not and could not have known Leviticus 23, for it was surely not yet written.

Why is Nehemiah 8 important at this point? To answer the question: "Whence the lulab?" There is nothing in Deuteronomy 16 to even suggest the waving or weaving of a lulab. On the other hand, there is nothing to suggest the building of booths either. The obligation is to keep (עשה) the feast (חג) of booths (הסוכה). We can only conjecture that a people recently returned from Babylon, suddenly confronted with a law which they had neither seen observed nor entirely understood, made the best of the situation on this first occasion. The people who still lived and farmed in the areas around Jerusalem would surely have been able to tell them what a booth was. Thus they went out and gathered סוכים of any sort to make booths. And it is probably a fair statement to say that no one had ever seen anything like it since Israel came out of the wilderness. The effect was probably not much different from the "tabernacles" described by Plutarch: "they set out tables with all sorts of autumn fruits under tents and huts woven out of sprigs of vine and ivy."¹ Here we have rather large pavilions and sunshades, a kind of extended market-place (the suk in Arabic) under which the people brought their offerings and,

¹Plutarch, op. cit.

eating and drinking together, fulfilled the requirements of rejoicing at the π . These pavilions were set up in the public squares and on roof-tops of houses. Some were set up in the court of the House of God, but what that means about the state of the building is unknown. The altar remained, to be sure.

It is possible, as we have said concerning the legislation in Deuteronomy, that π π π (16:13) was intended in the northern kingdom to be a ritual exodus at the autumnal equinox by which the Israelites were released from the ordinary restraints of discipline and social conventions. The exodus would involve dwelling in booths of some sort, the whole tradition being patterned after the π that Israel was to make into the wilderness from Egypt.¹ Such a tradition was never followed in the south, since the Exodus motif, at least at the time of the empire, was not a part of the southern idiom, except insofar as David imported it with the cult. Likewise, there was no specific legislation about "booths" in the southern New Year rites.

Now, when the exiles return and hear Deuteronomy read to them, they are confronted with the dilemma of a

¹I am again indebted to J. B. Segal, *op. cit.*, pp. 153ff., 179ff., 210ff., for this explanation of the π in the north. His account is all the more reasonable if it is viewed in the light of my suggestion concerning the origin of Deuteronomy.

commandment which they must immediately observe, but which is, in its rites and technicalities, unknown to them. So they keep to the letter of the law and build pavilions in the city. And they undoubtedly celebrated with festal garlands and bouquets as well, though again in an ad hoc fashion. And in their celebration, they set precedent for the reformation which is reflected, albeit hesitantly, in Leviticus 23.

We learn also from Ezra 3:4, that the appropriate sacrifices were offered during the feast at the time of Zerubbabel. We might suppose that the "great rejoicing" of Nehemiah 8 meant to describe the offerings that were made during the feast. But for at least this aspect of the festival there was precedent.

We have suggested that Leviticus 23 represents a portion of the final canonical legislation of the Great Assembly, or whatever council was responsible for the reformation begun at Nehemiah's time. The legislation in 23:40 is still of very little help in determining the use to be made of the four kinds. Only the four kinds of flora have been (somewhat vaguely) designated, but the obligation is simply *ולקחתם לכם* and *ושמחתם לפני-י*. The reforms have made only the "taking" normative, assuming perhaps that popular tradition would dictate, as it had done since Nehemiah and Ezra's first feast, what to do with

the kinds once taken. The attempts at historicization are equally vague, since the reformers had as much idea of the religious significance of these booths as we do--i.e. they are doing their best to describe in the rubric what the people had made traditional in their initial ad hoc efforts to celebrate the feast properly. The issue of either building a booth/pavilion or making a lulab was of little concern to the authors of the legislation. The interpretation of the legislation would become controversial only at that time when Pharisee and Sadducee parted company. It was the very vagueness of the legislation that provided the Pharisees with the possibilities of oral interpretation and set the stage for one of the most significant tensions and subsequent revelations in Israel's history, as we shall see in the next chapter,

Goldberg, in his study on Karaite worship,¹ finds it odd that the Karaites abolished what he believes was an old established Jewish custom of carrying the lulab, a custom over which there was no particular controversy in Talmudic literature insofar as he can determine the facts. Anan the Karaite maintained that no festive wreath was ever intended in Nehemiah 8 and that Leviticus 23 could be harmonized with Nehemiah to show that no lulab was intended in

¹p. S. Goldberg, Karaite Liturgy and its Relation to Synagogue Worship (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1957), pp. 120-126.

that passage either.¹ He maintained that the "kinds" were for building booths only. Other Karaites were in various stages of agreement or disagreement with Anan, but they seem generally to hold to the position that booths and not wreaths were intended by Scripture.²

The rabbis derive the lulab from the words "You shall take you . . .", which means, to them, in the hand.

"And you shall take for yourselves," R. Judah says, "It is stated here "taking" and again further on it is stated "taking" (Num. 13:20). Just as "taking" refers elsewhere to "a bunch" (Ex. 12:22), so here "a bunch." The Sages add, "Except where it is not a kosher bunch."³

R. Judah, in partial agreement with the Karaite position (or is the position older and of greater proportions?), maintains that the materials used in the sukkah must be those listed in Leviticus 23. But his argument is based on a faulty קל וחומר, and his opinion is not accepted.⁴

A midrash in Leviticus, however, gives some suggestion that the Rabbinic rulings were never on altogether solid footing:

¹Anan, Gan Eden, 65a/b, cited in P. S. Goldberg, ibid.

²For a request (order) for a supply of the "four kinds" by Simeon Bar Kokhba, after the destruction of the Temple, cf. Y. Yadin, Bar-Kokhba: The Rediscovery of the Legendary Hero of the Second Jewish Revolt against Rome (New York: Random House, 1971), p. 129.

³Sifra (Weiss ed.) Emor, Perek 16:1, p. 102b.

⁴Ibid., Perek 17:10. Cf. also B. Sukkah 36b/37a. He finally concedes that since only the roofing is really vital to the sukkah anyway, the walls can be made from anything.

"And ye shall take you on the first day," After all the wisdom ascribed to Solomon--"Wisdom and knowledge is granted unto thee" (II Chron. 1:12), And Solomon's wisdom excelled" (I K. 5:10), "For he was wiser than all men" (*ibid.* 11)--he sat wondering about the nature of the four species. For it says, "There are three things which are too wonderful for me" (Prov. 30:18), the "three things" being the Paschal lamb, unleavened bread, and bitter herbs; "Yea, four which I know not" (*ibid.*) are the four species comprised in the lulab wreath, the nature of which he sought to comprehend. Thus: "The fruit of goodly trees." Who can say, he argued, that it is the ethrog? All trees bear goodly fruit! "Branches of Palm-Trees." The Torah commanded: Take [at least] two branches of palm trees with which to offer praise [to God], yet one takes only the lulab, the core of the palm tree! "And boughs of thick trees." Who shall say that this signifies the myrtle? Does it not say in another passage, "Go forth unto the mount, and fetch olive branches, etc." (Neh. 8:15)? "And willows of the brook." All trees, he argued, grow in water! Hence, "Yea, four which I know not." He subsequently refers to them again; for it says, "There are three things which are stately in their march, yea, four which are stately in going" (Prov. 30:29). "Four" alludes to the four species which every Israelite hurriedly goes and purchases for the purpose of praising the Holy One, blessed be He, and though they seem little in man's eyes, they are great before the Holy One, blessed be He. Who explained to Israel that the four species referred to are the ethrog, lulab, myrtle, and willow? The wise men; as it says, "They are exceeding wise" (*ibid.* 24).¹

There are several possible etymologies given for the word lulab, which would pertain to their use on the festival. Jastrow suggests a root לנה, "to be bright," from which לננל, "to bloom or sprout." Another possibility is לנלל (לנלל), "to shout."² As for the ethrog, Jastrow suggests

¹Leviticus R. (Margulies ed.) Emor, 30:15, p. 712-713; (Soncino ed.), pp. 394-395.

²M. Jastrow, A Dictionary of the Targumim, the Talmud Babbli and Yerushalmi, and the Midrashic Literature (New York: Pardes Publishing House, 1903), Vol. I, pp.

the root חרג, which in the hiphil means "to give oranges to eat" or "to make bright"; or אָרָר (cmp. Arab. sharku ortus solis, lux solis), light, lamp.¹

The festal wreath is mentioned also in Jubilees 16:30-31:

And to this [sc. feast] there is no limit of days; for it is ordained for ever regarding Israel that they should celebrate it and dwell in booths, and set wreaths upon their heads, and take leafy boughs, and willows from the brook. And Abraham took branches (heart--לֵב) of palm trees, and the fruit of goodly trees, and every day going round the altar with the branches seven times [a day] in the morning, he praised and gave thanks to his God for all things in joy.²

The lulab is mentioned as being carried on the celebration of the first Hanukkah, in II Maccabees 10:7: "So bearing wands wreathed with leaves and fair boughs and palms. . .". Josephus describes them as "a branch of myrtle, and willow, and a bough of the palm tree, with the addition of the pomecitron";³ and the gospels refer to festal branches and palms on the occasion of Jesus' triumphal entry into

688b, 689a/b, 698a. B. Yoma 39b uses לָלַךְ to designate the Temple.

¹Jastrow, Vol. II, p. 1628a.

²Wisdom of Solomon 2:8-9 suggest wreaths upon the head in the sense of "gather ye rosebuds. . .", and here is a connection, however vague, with the later appointed reading of Koheleth on the Feast of Sukkoth. Wreaths worn as crowns were also characteristic of weddings.

³F. Josephus, Ant. (Loeb ed.) III.x, 4.

Jerusalem.¹ The decision to include the lulab in the festival processions and to interpret Leviticus 23:40 as referring to the lulab seems to have developed naturally enough. The Mishnah requires that they be waved every day of the seven in the Temple (if the first day of the feast was the Sabbath; otherwise only six), but only one day outside the Temple.² Even a minor is required to wave the lulab. The four kinds must not be stolen, dry, from a grove (for an idol), or from a condemned city. The palm must be over 3 1/2 inches long and must be tied with its own kind, there being no interposition.

Before explaining the rite of the lulab, we must say just a bit about the willow branches. The willow branches were collected from a place below Jerusalem called Motsa. They were in fact young trees of about eleven cubits. They are not to be confused with the willows of the sukkah; for

Abba Saul says, 'Willows [in the plural means] two, one for the lulab and one for the Sanctuary. And whence do the Rabbis deduce [the law of the willow] for the Sanctuary?--They had this as an accepted tradition; for R. Assi said in the name of R. Yohanan, 'The laws of ten plants, the willow branch and the water libation were given to Moses upon Mount Sinai.'³

¹Cf. D. Peter Burrows, "Palm Sunday: The Christian Feast of Tabernacles," Christian News from Israel, XXIV #1 (13), (Summer, 1973), pp. 16-24 for the connection with Sukkoth.

²When the Temple was destroyed, R. Yohanan ben Zakkai ruled that the lulab should be waved all seven days in remembrance of the Temple. (M. Sukkah 3:12).

³B. Sukkah (Soncino ed.), 34a.

These young straplings were brought to the altar and there set upright with their tops bent over the mensa of the altar (M. Sukkah 4:5). The days of the rite of the willow-branch were the same as those for the lulab. The willow itself came to be known by the name of its ceremony --the hosha'na.

Both the lulab and the willow rites are called מצוה. It is not the cult object that is important here in describing the השתלשלות הברית, but the action--the מצוה-לולב and the מצוה-ערבה. The action is the concretization of the dynamic of the festival. This is the rite of the Hosha'anoth and the Hosha'na Rabbah. The dynamic of the festival (and thus of the covenant), described in terms of the husband-wife motif and concretized in the upper and lower waters, seems to come to a point of great perception in the Hosha'anoth.

The Mishnah points out that the processions around the altar at the Hallel, involving both lulab and willow, reach a high point when Psalm 118:25 is recited. M. Sukkah 3:9 indicates that the waving occurs at the הוֹדוּ (Ps. 118: 29) and at the beginning and end of the hoshia'na (Ps. 118: 25a). M. Sukka 4:5 requires that the circumambulations of the altar occur at the same time, except on the seventh day of seven circumambulations, when they added a praise to the altar (Lord?) as they left the place. It is also recorded

that "They used to bring palm twigs and beat them on the ground at the sides of the altar, and that day was called 'The day of beating the palm twigs.'"¹

The purpose of the branches, the beatings, the lulabim, and the psalm was to assure water; for water was the sign of covenant favor, the sign of God's fructifying the earth and of establishing His people. These processions are in the very bedroom of Israel's covenant house and lie at the very feet of God's love for Israel.

The processions of the people with their lulabim and willow branches, together with the dancing, the goings-on at the Beth HaShoebah, and the other features of the feast have been likened to the rites and orgies of the Bacchanalia, the feast of Dionysus, who taught the world to cultivate vineyards and make wine.² These Bacchanalia were

feasts in ancient Rome in honor of Bacchus, the god of wine and fertility. They were characterized by licentiousness and revelry. In the processions were bands of Bacchantes, who wandered about rioting and dancing. At first these feasts were celebrated only by women, but in later years men were admitted also. They were clothed in fawn skins, crowned with ivy, and bore in their hands thyrsi (spears), entwined with ivy or with pine cones stuck on the points. The Roman Senate abolished the feasts in 186 B.C.³

¹M. Sukkah (Blackman ed.) 4:6.

²Cf. the description of Sukkoth as a Bacchanalia by Plutarch, above, p. 303.

³"Bacchanalia," Encyclopedia Americana, 1966, III, 10-11. Cf. also James George Frazer, The Golden Bough (I Vol., Abridged Edition: New York: The Macmillan Company, 1963), pp. 448-456.

The god was known in Egypt as the dying and rising Osiris.

There is no denying that some of the institutions of the Feast of Sukkoth resemble those of the Bacchanalia. The orgiastic rites with emphasis on fertility; the wine, dancing, and reeling; the festal thyrsi; the custom of performing dramatic pieces (comparable perhaps to the recitations of Israel's legends and narratives); and the general din and confusion are shared by the two festivals to an extent. Insofar as Noah is the first vinedresser and husbandman of a sort, and as Jubilees attributes him with the first observance of Sukkoth in language much like the description of a Bacchanalia, we might well be at least suspicious that some sharing of metaphor by Israel and the nations does occur. I. M. Casanowicz says of this possible likeness:

The assumption--drawn from the fact that Plutarch ("Symp." iv.6, 2) and Josephus ("Ant." xiii.13, §5: "for it is the custom among the Jews for each to have on the Feast of Booths a thyrsus of palms and citrons"; comp. also II Macc. x.7) refer to the lulab as "thyrses" (θύρσος), and the latter, in "Ant." iii, 10, §4 ("carrying in their hands a bunch of myrtle, willow-branches, palms, and citrons"), as εἰσεσιώνη--that the carrying of the lulab was connected with the Bacchic celebrations, or with the Pyanepsia and Thargelia, ignores the spirit and tendency of the Judaism of the Maccabean period. It is repudiated, in his manner, even by Tacitus ("Hist." v.5).¹

Casanowicz overstates the repudiation of the connection. There can be no doubt that the pressures of

¹I. M. Casanowicz, "Lulab" in JE, VIII, pp. 206b-207a.

Hellenization upon Jewish culture at the time of the Has-moneans was great. It is indeed remarkable that Jerusalem did not capitulate to these pressures more than it did. And yet we do know of certain popular activities and traditions of an Hellenistic nature that were introduced in Israel at the time, even though they were later suppressed. Furthermore, we cannot ignore the fact that agricultural celebrations in every place partake of many of the same themes, whether there is cultural overlap and influence or not.¹

What we must say is what Kaufmann, Speiser, Sandmel and others have said about parallels, particularly between the traditions of Israel and the nations. Israel has borrowed many traditions and forms from its neighbors throughout centuries. It would be naive to deny it. But Israel also developed traditions and forms of its own which, while they look like foreign imports, are very much indigenous to Israel. And of greatest importance: whether Israel borrowed or created forms and metaphors, they came into Israel's religion to serve the covenant, and it is by the covenant that they must be measured. One does not ask, "How is Israel's religion eclectic and assimilative?" Rather one asks, "How does Israel utilize forms, both domestic and foreign, to express the covenant of life?"

¹Cf. a most useful comment by R. Patai, "Control of Rain in Ancient Palestine," op. cit., p. 269, note 88.

Finkelstein says of the water ceremonies in Israel:

The talmudic record, according to which the ceremony of beating the willow branches against the ground originated with "the Prophets," seems correct. So primitive a rite would scarcely have been invented by the sophisticated Proto-Pharisees of the fourth and third centuries B.C.E. Moreover, the High Priest of the Persian and Hellenistic ages would not have permitted the custom to become prevalent had it been of recent origin.

The rite of water-libations therefore must have originated with the leaders of the market place in Jerusalem in the First Commonwealth, or they may have been preserved as custom originating in an earlier wilderness tradition.¹

Finkelstein also describes the conflict between Pharisee and Sadducee over the propriety of water-libations and ceremonies at the Feast of Sukkoth. He sees the tension as one of patrician delight in wine and plebian morality which preferred water. He also describes the tension as the result of a fear on the Sadducees' part that their own special Day of Atonement would be considered less important than the Pharisees' Sukkoth festival of water-libation and God's judgment on the world at this time for (or against) rain. Blessings for Israel were won by the high priest on Yom Kippur, not in the rites of Sukkoth.

At any rate, there is evidence in what has been said of a profound disagreement between Pharisees and Sadducees in regard to the meaning of Sukkot. For the Pharisees it was the season of sacrifice, prayer

¹Louis Finkelstein, The Pharisees (3rd ed.: Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1962), Vol. II, p. 704.

and water-rites; for the Sadducees it was the feast of ingathering and nothing more.¹

Finkelstein is correct in discovering the tension. But he is far from discovering the real and profound polarities. He is perhaps correct in observing that the priests were overworked on this pilgrim festival because of the added sacrifices. There were perhaps tensions concerning which days were efficacious for obtaining Israel's benediction from God. There is truth, too, in the tension between patrician Sadducees who were not so much concerned for the rains as were the farmers and these farmers with their mentors, the Pharisees. Yet all these are but peripheral tensions and conflicts.²

We must remember in all this, that Sadducee and Pharisee both spring from a reformation in which both parties were united in the common cause of assuring the viability of the covenant. It is perhaps incorrect to stigmatize the Sadducees as the oppressors of the common people. They, as much as the Pharisees, were concerned for Israel's relationship with God; and they too were obeying Torah in the Temple rites and ceremonies which they carried out at Sukkoth.

Returning now to the rite of the Hosha'anoth, is it certain that these themes are related to water at all? Dr. Petuchowski has identified the scholarly confusion and

¹Ibid., Vol. I, p. 114.

² Rather, cf. p. 430f.

disarray on the subject of the Hosha'anoth, the festal cry in Psalm 118:25.¹ Finkelstein has observed the problem as well. Why should a great festival psalm, or group of psalms (the Hallel), continue to express throughout the pilgrim's joy and thanksgiving, then suddenly insert a verse: "Save us, we beseech Thee, O Lord! O Lord we beseech Thee, give us success!" (Psalm 118:25)? The answer to this question is the basis for the claim that the dynamic of the covenant of life is expressed in the husband-wife motif, which at Sukkoth is concretized in the water-rites.

Dr. Petuchowski points out that for all the rejoicing and thanksgiving on this day,

Yet withal, there is in it too the sombre element of judgment, undoubtedly a remnant of its earlier identity with the New Year's Festival. It is, according to Mishnah Rosh Hashanah i 2, one of the four times in the year when the world is to be judged; to be specific: it is the time when God is deciding the coming year's water supply (ubhehag nidonin 'al hamayim) surely a matter of life and death for Palestinian society.²

In short, Dr. Petuchowski has made the point that this cry of need in an otherwise festal chant is not at all out of place when it is seen as a petition for rain. And we can properly continue the point to say that the cry for rain is in reality a cry for fertility, and so for life.

¹Jakob J. Petuchowski, "Hoshi'ah Na' in Psalm CXVIII 25,--A Prayer for Rain" in VT, V (July, 1955), 266-271.

²Ibid., p. 268.

Israel's song at the feast is a song of thanks and praise for her husband and his goodness. And Israel's song at the feast includes a verse in which the wife again asks to be remembered and visited with the fructifying rains which assure the continuation of the covenant.

The Hosha'anoth were accompanied by music, especially the flute, which seems in many cultures to be the instrument of invitation to procession--the instrument of beckoning (cf. Is. 30:29 and B. 'Arakin 10b). A midrash relates the music to the lulab:

"And Ahio went before the ark" (II S. 6:4). From here it has been inferred that Ahio went before and Uzzah behind the ark. When they had brought it up, ninety thousand elders advanced in front, the priests helped to carry it and the Levites played music, while all Israel made merry, one holding a lulab, another a timbrel or other musical instrument; hence it is written: "And David and all the house of Israel played before the Lord with all manner of instruments . . . and with sistra, etc." (ibid. 5). The latter denotes the lulab, which one shakes.¹

And R. Eliezar said: "The four species (sc. of the lulab) are used only to procure water. For just as these four species cannot exist without water, so the world cannot exist without water."²

The Mishnah itself assumes the waving of the lulab, though there is no stated requirement that it be waved.

¹Numbers R. (Soncino ed.) Bemidbar, 4:20.

²B. Ta'anith (Soncino ed.) 2b.

The Gemara comments on this assumption of the Mishnah and indicates how the waving is to be done: to the four corners of the world, to the heaven, and to the earth.¹ The lulab is furthermore connected with the altar and set in the midst of the an.

R. Abbahu citing R. Eleazar stated, 'Whosoever takes the lulab with its binding and the willow branch with its wreathing is regarded by Scripture as though he had built an altar and offered thereon a sacrifice'. For it is said, "Bind the festival (an) with myrtle branches even unto the horns of the altar" (Ps. 118:27). R. Jeremiah citing R. Simeon b. Yohai and R. Johanan citing R. Simeon of Maḥoz who had it from R. Johanan of Makkuth stated, 'Whosoever makes an addition (a binding) to the Festival by eating and drinking is regarded by Scripture as though he had builded an altar and offered thereon a sacrifice.' For it is said, "Make an addition to (bind) the Festival with fat cattle, even to the horns of the altar."²

The petition of Psalm 118:25 is set squarely and appropriately in an. The an can only be described as the totality of movement at the feast of thanksgiving and rejoicing in the covenant of life. It cannot be isolated as one particular theme or action; it is the totality of the action, the lovemaking between God and Israel.³

While this meeting of God and Israel in visitation and

¹B. Sukkah 37b.

²B. Sukkah (Soncino ed.) 45a/b.

³Yet the word an is applied to the sacrifice alone in B. Hagigah 10b. The root has nuances of meaning, including the dance, the merriment, the pilgrim festival itself, reeling, and drunkenness. Cf. Appendix C.

presentation was characteristic of all the pilgrim festivals, it was most apparent at Tabernacles, when the covenant-tokens of harvest and life were most evident. Modern attempts to confine and categorize the thematic thrust of the אָן as covenant renewal, the solemn recitation of creedal formulas or the Torah, the dancing and circum-ambulating, annual enthronement of God as king, or any other specific theme are but scholarly schemes of describing the annual moment of intensified interaction by this God and His people. It is generally difficult to classify lovemaking techniques, and the festal relationship is no exception.

Thus this petition for rain and water is set in the midst of the אָן , the metaphor par excellence of the covenant feast par excellence of God's beloved people. Petuchowski suggests that the petition of Psalm 118:25 was composed with the water-libation ceremonies in mind:

May we, then, not assume that the rain-making ceremonies were already in existence at the time when the liturgy of Ps. cxviii was compiled, and that the words of verse 25 were included on purpose, and with this procession in mind, in the joyous liturgy of thanksgiving?! Surely for the people of Palestine an adequate and timely rainfall has always been a question of both yeshu'ah and hašlahah!¹

The promises of water as the fulfillment of Israel's salvation are to be found everywhere, as it says, "Blessed are the people who know the festal shout" (Ps. 89:15a);

¹J.J. Petuchowski, "'Hoshi'ah na' in Psalm CXVIII 25,--A Prayer for Rain," op. cit., p. 271.

Ezekiel and Isaiah and Zechariah have waters running from Jerusalem to water all the holy land and beyond. The New Testament, especially John and the Revelation of John, see this same abundance of water as the life symbol. The Tosephta (Sukkah 3:3-12) speaks of water from the altar and the well in the wilderness. Israel's sin causes the rain to be withheld,¹ but the rains fall on the world because of Israel.² The water-libation ceremony was indeed devised to bring forth this water:

When on the Feast of Tabernacles the water-libations are carried out, Deep says to Deep, Let thy waters spring forth. I hear the voice of two friends (namely, the water and the wine poured on to the altar).³

Whether or not the Hosha'anoth as they have come to us now are a feature of the Hasmonean Temple, they are an expression of the very dynamic of the covenant, and as a value-concept or category of the covenant, find their origin with Abraham himself. Certainly the Rabbis believed the Hosha'anah Rabbah to be of greatest import to Israel. As Dembitz says:

Many of the exercises (sc. of Sukkoth) were in conflict with the Sabbath or even with a feast day (Suk. v.i, "the flute-playing lasts five or six days"); but although with the destruction of the Temple nearly all these exercises had fallen into disuse, yet in framing the

¹B. Baba Bathra 25b.

²B. Yebamoth 63a.

³B. Ta'anith 25b and Rashi loc. cit.

new Calendar about 361, the patriarch Hillel and his advisers deemed Hosha'anah Rabbah so important and so much in conflict with the Sabbath that, to prevent Hosha'anah Rabbah falling on a Sabbath, they would not allow the New Moon of Tishri to occur on a Sunday. All the ceremonies or services of praise or prayer which belonged to the other middle days of the feast while the Temple stood, or which belong to them now . . . belong also to Hosha'anah Rabbah.¹

The waters are like the cherubim in the metaphor of the covenant.

Rabbi Qattina said: Whenever Israel came up to the Festival, the curtain would be removed for them and the Cherubs were shown to them, whose bodies were intertwined with one another, and they would be addressed: "Look! You are beloved before (לפני המקום) God as the love between man and woman."²

And because Israel is so beloved,

R. Berekiah in the name of R. Levi said: For the merit of the performance of the commandment, "Ye shall take you on the first day," [says God], I shall reveal Myself first to you, I shall inflict punishment for you upon the "first," namely, the wicked Esau, of whom it is written, "The first came forth" (Gen. 25:25). I shall build for you the "first," namely the Temple, of which it is written, "Thou throne of glory, on high from the first, Thou place of our sanctuary" (Jer. 17:12), and shall bring to you the "first," namely the King Messiah, of whom it is written, "The First unto Zion will I give: Behold, behold them, and to Jerusalem a messenger of good tidings." (Is. 41:27).³

So it is with Israel and the nations of the world. The latter come and bring accusations before the Holy One, blessed be He, on New Year and we do not know which has won. But by reason of the fact that Israel go forth from the presence of the Holy One, blessed be He, bearing

¹L. N. Dembitz, "Hosha'anah Rabbah," JE, VI, 475b-476a.

²B. Yoma (Soncino ed.) 54a. Cf. ibid. a/b.

³Leviticus R. (Margulies ed.) Emor, 30:16, pp. 712-713; (Soncino ed.), p. 395.

palm-branches and their citrons in their hands we know that it is Israel who are victorious, that Israel were successful in the judgment and that their iniquities were pardoned, and the nations exclaim: 'Israel are victorious!' As it says, "And also Israel is victorious; he will not lie nor repent" (Is. 15:29).¹

¹Leviticus R. (Margulies ed.) Emor, 30:2, p. 694; (Soncino ed.), pp. 383-384. Cf. also The Revelation to John 7:9ff.

CHAPTER V

THE COVENANT RECONCRETIZED

Destruction of the Temple

We have chosen as vantage point for this study one of the great impediments in the flow of the covenant history, viz. the destruction of the Temple in 70 C.E. We have chosen the Feast of Sukkoth as the microcosm of the covenant itself, and we have discerned the four great aspects of the covenant in the feast. We have finally to observe the effect of the Temple's destruction upon the feast to discover if the covenant emerges from the trauma of this impediment intact, and if intact, with what new forms or concretizations.

We cannot for a moment deny the sorrow and the pain deriving from the Temple's destruction--a sorrow and affliction that fell upon every Jew, of whatever sect or party, who looked to Zion as the center of the world, at least insofar as Israel was concerned. Yet there is a midrash which gives perspective to the event. The midrash is not really a rationalization, nor a defence, nor can it be said to be a statement of hopelessness and despair. It is ambiguous, and it treats the Temple as ambiguous. In it there is the hint of Israel's genius: the ultimate

willingness and ability to let loose of institutions when they are no longer useful as vehicles for that which is of ultimate importance--the covenant.

"And He hath kindled a fire in Zion" (Lam. 4:11). It is written, "A psalm of Asaph. O God, the heathen are come into Thine inheritance" (Ps. 79:1). The text should have used a phrase like, 'Weeping of Asaph,' 'Lament of Asaph,' 'Dirge of Asaph'; why does it say, "A psalm [song] of Asaph"? It may be likened to a king who erected a bridal-chamber for his son which he plastered, cemented, and decorated; but his son entered upon an evil course of living. The king forthwith ascended to the chamber, tore the curtains and broke its rods; but [the son's] tutor took a piece of rod which he used as a flute and played upon it. People said to him, 'The king has overthrown his son's chamber and you sit playing a tune! He replied to them, 'I play a tune because the king overturned his son's chamber but did not pour out his anger upon his son.' Similarly people said to Asaph, 'The Holy One, blessed be He, has caused Temple and Sanctuary to be destroyed, and you sit singing a Psalm!' He replied to them, 'I sing a Psalm because the Holy One, blessed be He, poured out His wrath upon wood and stone and not upon Israel.' That is what is written, "And He hath kindled a fire in Zion, which hath devoured the foundation [but not the people--the covenant] thereof."¹

It is difficult not to think of the tutor and Asaph as

R. Johanan ben Zakkai.

The Sukkah

In the previous chapters we have covered the literature relating to as many of the themes of Sukkoth as seemed

¹Lamentations R. (Soncino ed.), IV.11, §14, p. 224.

relevant for the development of a whole picture of the feast and thus of the covenant. But there is one theme not yet touched upon. It is the theme which gives the feast its name, but which was not pertinent to this study, oddly enough, until the conclusion. We must now turn to the sukkah itself, for in the sukkah will be found the answer to our questions about the immutability of the covenant and the transitory nature of the concretizations of the covenant aspects and categories.

The sukkah, like the Temple, is not only a category of the covenant, it is also a cognitive concept. It is denotative and objective like a table or a chair. Yet it is also connotative, a category of the covenant of life. There is, however, a significant difference between the Temple and the sukkah. Insofar as the cognitive Temple was the concretization of the four great aspects of the covenant, the cognitive sukkah is not nearly so reliable an institution, for it seems that no group, sect, or party in Israel made it entirely clear what was meant by a sukkah from one time to the next. The sukkah is ambiguous, not only as a value-concept, but as a cognitive concept as well.

It is by reason of the sukkah's ambiguity that it is useful to us as a control (much as we utilized the Temple concept in the previous chapter) in discussing the post-destruction of the Temple phase of the covenant. For while

the Temple's very existence in Jerusalem signified and even demanded a kind of unity in the complex institutionalization of Israel from Nehemiah/Ezra to the destruction, the sukkah draws our attention to the atomization of Israel's religion when the great House of the Lord was destroyed. Therefore we can pose the question to the sukkah: "What do you signify?"; and in each instance we will be admitted to yet another חנוכה and its own conception of how the institutionalization of the covenant should proceed. The tensions within parties and the tensions between parties may become apparent, together with the potential for revelation inherent in every tension.

We must confine this study to only a few of the parties in Israel claiming to have the more useful institutions for bearing the covenant. The victors in this struggle, i.e., the Pharisees and their heirs, will claim most of our attention. But it will become apparent that even among the Pharisees and the Rabbis there is no monolithic uniformity. We have learned that they discovered early the revelatory potential in tension and utilized disputation for discerning the will of God when the written Torah was too obscure, laconic, or untimely.

There are also the Saducees and Boëthusians, the Hellenistic and Philonic Jews, the Christians of several sorts, the Samaritans and Karaites, and the popular

tradition which frequently defies categorization or reasonable explanation. We must ask the question of the sukkah of them as well, though in this study without the detail they deserve. Win, lose, or draw, each left a legacy to the new configuration before they died, departed, or were absorbed. Sometimes their legacy is apparent, especially in the case of popular tradition, for one is never sure on occasion whether the Rabbis are guiding or deferring to tradition. But more often than not, these legacies are tucked away, hidden, and obscured by the majority so that the very search for them has become another facet of the study of the literature.

The Time of the Feast: The Day of the Sukkah

We turn first to the time of the feast, the אָנ אָנ. The biblical halachic requirements for the time of the feast were left unchanged by the Rabbis.¹ "On the fifteenth day of this seventh month and for seven days is the feast of booths to the Lord" (Lev. 23:33). Leviticus 23

¹Philo states in one place that the feast was held at the autumn equinox (Philo, De Specialibus Legibus, Book II ["On the Special Laws"], Vol. VIII of The Loeb Classical Library: Philo, trans. by F. H. Colson [12 vols.; Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1939], XXXIII: 204, pp. 435ff.), but the intent of his statement is to make two moral points more usefully tied to the equinox than to the lunar dates. Elsewhere he states that the feast is held on the 15th of the seventh month at the full moon (*ibid.*, Book I, XXXV: 189, pp. 207ff., and Book II, XXXIII: 210, pp. 437ff.).

is the final canonical statement about the feast. That is the חורֶה שֶׁנֶּכְחַב, and so far as Sadducees and Samaritans were concerned it was sufficient while the Temple stood. Immortality was as of great concern to the Sadducee as to any other member of the covenant community to whom it had been said, as to father Abraham: "I will multiply you exceedingly . . . I will give to you and your descendants after you the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be your God" (Gen. 17:2, 8). For the Sadducees and others this was enough; for them the covenant time, the day of the Lord, was the great day of the Temple and its dedication.

The time of the feast, the time of the sukkah, had been expanded beyond this minimal requirement from earliest times by the facilitators of the kingdoms. Because of the Exodus, the children of Israel knew of an event not tied to time. And every year, by anamnesis, every generation was able to participate in the redeeming event of the Passover. And as they learned of past events brought into present reality by anamnesis, so they learned to bring the perfected tempus clausum, the hoped-for fullness of the covenant from the future into present rejoicing by prolepsis.

This tradition of a Gott enthaltende Geschichte became a part of the חורֶה שֶׁנֶּכְחַב and was transmitted to the Rabbis via the prophets, much expanded and refined.

And when the Temple and its day were gone, the Rabbis had an institution for the covenant time well-suited to their ultimate goal, the *יחוד השם* and the *מלכות שמים*. The organic covenant remained unchanged; but the Temple time, the fixity of history was destroyed as a concretization with the Temple. Therefore the Rabbis, relying on the Oral Torah and its traditions, trifurcated history.

Anamnesis of Sukkoth became *זכר למקדש*, and "Rabban Johanan ben Zakkai ordained that the lulab should be used in the provinces the whole of the seven days in remembrance of the Temple" (M. Sukkah 3:12; Rosh Hashanah 4:3). That which Leviticus 23:43 had attempted to accomplish for Sukkoth could not be realized until the destruction. Yet it was not the wilderness experience that was ultimately remembered: it was the Temple (cf. M. Sukkah, from 4:1 to the end, et passim).

The present remained the present, the *עולם הזה*, with all of its suffering and toil and all of its joy. And what is the time of the sukkah in the present? It is temporary (M. Sukkah 1:1) in its construction, yet a permanent abode for the seven days of the feast. The positive prescription for the present time of the Sukkah is to rejoice,--as one is to rejoice at a wedding--no matter what the inclination to do otherwise. As T. S. Eliot has Archbishop Thomas à

Becket say: "Human kind cannot bear very much reality,"¹ and the reality of the world is very often suffering.

Therefore in this new division of time, the present was a time for Israel to go into the place where one petitions God for life, and to pray. At the time of the Temple, those who could go to the feast in Jerusalem, did so. And there they prayed and participated in all the rites and ceremonies described above, which had as their goal the assurance of some aspect of life--the life which the covenant promises.

For those who could not go to the Temple or who lived after 70 C.E., what of them? The time of the sukkah was universalized by the Rabbis, even in the present, through an institution which began to flourish even before the Temple's demise. The institution was the synagogue, and the particular means of extending the concerns for life at Sukkoth was the Shemoneh 'Esreh, the Tefillah.²

¹T. S. Eliot, Murder in the Cathedral (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., 1935), p. 69.

²We cannot enter here into a protracted discussion of the sources, age, dating, and other problems of the Tefillah--or of the synagogue (though of the latter institution we shall say more later on. Joseph Heinemann, "Amidah," EJ, 1971, II, 838-845, has indicated the customary use of the Eighteen Benedictions of the weekday Amidah by the close of the period of the Second Temple, though he doubts that their wording and present order had by that time been fixed. The three opening benedictions of Shebahim and the three final benedictions of Hoda'ot are mentioned in M. Rosh Hashanah 4:5, and were included in the daily prayer of the priests (cf. M. Tamid 5:1;

Two of the benedictions are of particular importance to the Sukkoth theme. The first is the second benediction, the Geburot (cf. M. Rosh Hashanah 4:5 and Genesis R. 13:16) in which God is addressed as Ba'al Geburot and in which there is a recitation of the powers of God, particularly His sustenance of the living and the resurrection of the dead. In fact, the benediction is also called Tehiyyat haMetim, and the association between the resurrection and rainfall having been made by the Rabbis (cf. B. Ta'anith 2a), it was to this benediction that the mention of rainfall was added in due (winter) season, after Sukkoth¹ (M. Berachoth 5:2; B. Berachoth 33a).

The other benediction, the regular recitation of which in the synagogue extends the timely concerns of Sukkoth, is the ninth benediction, the Birkat haShanim, in the middle, or Bakhashot portion of the Tefillah (cf. B. Megillah 17b). In this benediction there is the petition that the year be fruitful.² And as the mention of rain is

L. Zunz, Die Gottesdienstlichen Vorträge der Juden ((Frankfurt a/M: J. Kauffmann, 1892)), p. 380 assigns them to the time of the High Priest Simon). The antiquity of the Tefillah is attested to in the rabbinic literature in B. Megillah 17b/18a; Sifre on Deuteronomy, Piska 343; and B. Berachoth 33a.

¹The interpolation follows the words "Thou revivest the dead (מְחִיָּה מֵמֵיִם), thou art mighty to save," and is said from the day after the Atzereth (now Simḥath Torah) to the eve of Passover. The insertion reads: "Thou causest the wind to blow and the rain to fall," and this phrase constitutes mention of, rather than prayer for rain.

²E. G. Hirsch, "Shemoneh 'Esreh," JE, 1905, XI, 270-282, suggests the antiquity of this benediction, saying: "Of

made in the second benediction, so to this benediction are added the words "and grant dew and rain for a blessing," from Sukkoth¹ to Passover (B. Berachoth 33a).

The present time of the sukkah became, then, a continuing time, not confined to the feast alone in terms of the Sukkoth themes. Rather, in terms of the categories of the feast, it became appropriate to recognize and petition God for the specifics of life inherent in the covenant at all times, with specific references to the Temple concerns of rain and the water-libation ceremony to be made from Sukkoth to Passover.

Nor are the themes of Sukkoth confined to these two benedictions only. Because the Feast of Sukkoth is a microcosm of the entire covenant, each of the benedictions as they pertain to one or another of the covenant aspects and categories, may be regarded as in some way pertinent

to Suk
the middle benedictions, No. ix, the blessing for the year, discloses a situation such as prevailed before the disruption of the state, when agriculture was the chief occupation of the Jews. It must for this reason be credited with being one of the oldest parts of the "Tefillah" (ibid., p. 280).

¹Actually, according to Rabban Gamliel, the prayer for rain is not inserted until the seventh of Heshvan, fifteen days after Sukkoth, to give those returning to Babylon time to reach the Euphrates without being hindered by the rains (M. Ta'anith 1:3). The accepted practice, however, is to wait sixty days after the autumnal equinox (9 Kislev) before inserting the phrase. The Sephardim separate the prayer into two parts, the first for the dew and the second (in the rainy, winter season) for rain.

to Sukkoth. More particularly we might mention the first benediction (the recitation of creation epics and patriarchal narratives), the thirteenth (the righteous or pious men who were wont to dance at the Beth HaShoebah), the fourteenth (for the place of God's presence), the fifteenth (concerning the Messiah), and the seventeenth (for the Temple service). It would be possible, I suspect, to classify each of the benedictions according to one of the great aspects of the covenant and to show thereby that the particular life-giving themes of the covenant formerly concentrated in the celebration of the Feast of Sukkoth, are now in the Amidah extended to the whole course of the year.

The special days of the Feast of Sukkoth are by no means forgotten in this extension of the time of the sukkah. But the special days are integrated with and made a part of the greater scheme. It is perhaps best stated by saying that the cost of protracting the time of the sukkah was paid for by a significant decrease in the intensity of the feast itself.

Of course the seven days and the Atzereth continued to be times of greater significance than most. In addition to the traditions of the Temple that were retained (to be dealt with below), these festival days had special liturgical variations in the Tefillah itself. As with the

Sabbath, the festivals include a "sanctification of the day" in several parts, one of which recalls the feast by name and description (as in "this day of the Feast of Sukkoth, the day of our rejoicing"; cf. other details in B. Berachoth 29a). In addition to these special prayers of sanctification in the Amidah for the festival ("Thou hast chosen--וַתִּבְחַרְתָּנוּ"; "And thou hast given us--וַתַּחֲתֵן-לָנוּ"; "May our remembrance come and be accepted--וַיָּבֵא"; and "Bestow upon us--וְהַשִּׁיאוּנוּ"), the Mussaf for festivals includes two other prayers. The first, "But on account of our sins we were exiled--וּמִפְּנֵי חַטֵּאֵינוּ", connects the Exile to the sins of Israel and requests the restoration of the sacrifices. The second, "מֶלֶךְ רַחֲמִין", is a prayer of supplication for the rebuilding of the Temple, with reference to Deuteronomy 16:16-17.¹ At the Mussaf for Sukkoth, the sacrificial schedule for each day from Numbers 29 is recalled.

Once the special themes of Sukkoth became a part of daily prayer² and the coming of the feast no longer

¹At least one of these prayers and festal remembrances, the וַתַּחֲתֵן-לָנוּ, goes back to Talmudic times. The rabbinic use of anamnesis and prolepsis is evident throughout these special festival prayers, and it is the refinement of this approach to time that elevates the festival days to special importance, even given the universal extension in time of the Sukkoth covenant themes, once so closely associated with the Temple feast.

²And as with the second and ninth benediction interpolations, a part of daily prayers for half the year.

meant a change of venue or a radical change in life style, the time of the sukkah would naturally lose the qualities and the excitements that 'alliyah once held for the pilgrim. But for the Rabbis' purpose, the re-institutionalization of the time of the sukkah in the Tefillah of the synagogue provided a means of extending the Kingdom of Heaven in time--that is, making it a daily experience as well as a yearly observance--that the Temple service of Sukkoth, for all its splendor, could not provide.

The future time of the sukkah was the greatest rabbinic refinement of all, though it too is a refinement built upon precedent. The formula "in that day" became more and ever more deferred, from the day of visitation in Egypt to "the day when you pass over the Jordan to the land" (Deut. 27:2); from the day of musar to the day of restoration; and from the day of Sukkoth to the day when "the Lord will become king over all the earth. . . ." (Zech. 14:19). This is the day of the ביום ההוא--עולם הנא; and by a further refinement of prolepsis, the Rabbis have made it the day of resurrection, i.e., the immortality of the future drawn to the present, and the individualism of the present projected to the future.

The signs of the resurrection were the signs associated with the water-libation rites in the Temple and (in much restricted form) in the sukkah. The chief symbol of

the resurrection is, of course, the rain (Genesis R. 13:6); and it is possible, though by no means certain, that the incident related in the Mishnah (Sukkah 4:9) and in Josephus (Ant. XIII:xiii,5) of the Sadducee (or the King Alexander Jannaeus) pouring the water libation on his feet and being pelted with the people's ethrogim concerns a controversy over resurrection. While the Sadducees, or their forefathers, may have had no quarrel at all with the customs of lulab and libation, they might well have split with the Pharisees (and the people) over the interpretation of this traditional activity as specifically signifying resurrection.¹

The playful tale of the min and R. Abbahu in B. Sukkah 48b (if the min is truly some kind of Christian) is

¹J. Hochman has suggested that the priest was in fact performing a Greek libation and was, for this blasphemy, attacked by the pious (J. Hochman, "Jerusalem Temple Festivities," Diss., Heidelberg [1909?], 88, cited in E. Goodenough, op. cit., Vol. IV, p. 151, n. 31). Patai ("Control of Rain in Ancient Palestine, op. cit., p. 276) calls the act a mistake, the people being angered by the potential threat to their rain supply, since that rain was directly connected with the water being poured out on the altar which in its leafy decor symbolized the earth. Goodenough (op. cit., p. 151), citing Moore (Judaism, op. cit., II, p. 44), calls the ceremony a late, Hellenistic addition (especially the wine libation) for which the Sadducees held contempt. The water-drawing ceremony Goodenough designates both magical, mystical, and possibly connected with a belief that the dead in Sheol depended upon these libations. Finally, Josephus (Ant. XIII:xiii,5), who identifies the Sadducee of the Mishnah with Alexander, claims that the people attacked the king for performing the ceremony at all, since he was of improper lineage, his grandmother having supposedly been a slave (ibid.: x,5). Josephus, then, has no record of a ritual act.

an indication that both believed in the resurrection and the world to come but debated who was to enjoy it. And there is no doubt that those responsible for the grave-markers and other symbolically inscribed stones reproduced in Goodenough's collection¹ drew a direct connection between the imagery of Sukkoth and resurrection. Since most of Goodenough's illustrations are from post 70 C.E. diaspora synagogues, there is good reason to believe that they represent some Pharisaic/Rabbinic success in universalizing the Temple imagery of Sukkoth as they interpreted it.²

In summary, the time of the sukkah is the time of the celebration, thanksgiving, petition, and affirmation of life, and this time has been much extended by the Rabbis to infuse the life themes of Sukkoth into the entire year, or large parts of it. The sectarian divisions over the understanding of time and their particular emphases on certain aspects of life do not seem to alter the fundamental intention of this liturgical moment. One can say that such and such a symbol was a late innovation, or that that group

¹E. Goodenough, op. cit., Vol. III, especially such figures as #711-731, et passim.

²Whether these symbols are representative of rabbinic tradition itself (or of a particular diaspora rabbinic symbolism) is difficult to know. Whatever their source, they do represent Temple imagery, exported to the גליות, and made to signify immortality, and perhaps even resurrection.

understood the meaning of the feast as a fertility rite, as opposed to another group's apprehensions of an ancient agricultural or a much later resurrection rite. Any attempt at choosing one interpretation of the *יום החדש* over another is fruitless, unless the overriding point is clearly stated: all interpretations are particular facets of the larger context which is the life of the covenant.

The day of the sukkah, the day of the Lord, is a great panoply of life-giving, life-sustaining, and life-confirming themes now, then, and thereafter. The arguments, debates, and disputations are over the details, not the general intent.¹ When the Temple was destroyed, it was the Rabbis and their interpretation of Sukkoth that prevailed; but theirs was a logical extension and expansion of what the day had always been, and no great departure.²

The dangers inherent in the rabbinic understanding of the time of the feast should be evident. Too much of

¹When Christianity dropped Sukkoth as a major festival after the Temple's destruction, as we shall see that they did further on, a radical change in theme did occur for Christians. Most of the life-images were shifted to Easter, causing a confused and overburdening overlay of redemption and fulfillment metaphors. The remaining Sukkoth imagery was scattered irregularly to such observances as Advent I, Christ the King (very late), Rogation (particularly in the Church of England), and most importantly (though it remains still a liturgical mystery to the Church), Palm Sunday.

²We have already noted the rabbinic methods of extending the time of the sukkah in the present. A rabbinic explication of resurrection and the world to come (i.e. the extension of the future time of the sukkah) is to be found in B. Sanhedrin 90a ff.

the past becomes static and irrelevant; too much of the present can be either too overburdened with the letter or, alternately, with antinomian excess and carelessness; and too much of the future can become reward-oriented insensitivity to the mission of the present. All are life-defeating, and the Rabbis attempted to preserve a careful balance to achieve an almost God-like perspective on history--the liveliness of the past, the transitoriness of the present, and the permanence of the deferred. From this three-fold tension they sought the revelation of life.

The Place of the Sukkah: מלכות שמים

The place of the sukkah¹ in the four aspects of the covenant is our next concern; and we must, in each aspect,

¹It is not our intent to equate the place of the sukkah with the whole configuration and institution which remained after the destruction of the Temple. The Temple was the center of the covenant operation before 70 C.E., and the sukkah could not possibly have sustained or contained the manifold themes, values, aspects, and concepts pertaining to the great House of God (even though Sukkoth was the Temple feast par excellence). The use of this phrase, "the place of the sukkah," means only that those particular themes, aspects, values, categories, and the like which once pertained to the Temple were, after 70 C.E., transferred to that place which the sukkah represents or signifies for the seven days, namely the home and the synagogue, particularly the former.

If the Feast of Sukkoth is, as we believe, a microcosm of the covenant, then the "place of the sukkah" is only a microcosmic concretization of the new "place of the covenant," viz. the home and the synagogue. The Feast of Sukkoth itself is only a tiny portion of the covenant relationship between God and Israel; we have simply chosen it as a

remember the trifurcation of time of the Rabbis. The place of the sukkah, as the Rabbis developed the idea, might best be summarized in the value-concept of the מלכות שמים, the Kingdom of Heaven, as it is the process or reality of the בריית עם and the יחוד השם.

As with the time of the sukkah, the sukkah place has as precedent the idiom of the Temple until 70 C.E. In the previous chapter we have seen that the Temple was the chosen dwelling place of the Lord, His משכן. The Feast of Sukkoth, the חג, was the Temple feast, defined in terms of the Temple. With the Temple's destruction, the process which had actually begun at Nehemiah and Ezra's reform, namely the gradual separation of feast from institution, was almost totally accomplished. Jacob's stone was freed, and that which pertained to the Temple and its feast was atomized.

Centralization was maintained, but in the Rabbis' special understanding of time, the point of centralization was simply removed from the present and firmly established at the end of time. Nor is this really an abstraction; it is the concrete deferred, but always within proleptic recall. That which remained of the Temple was its idiom:

miniatured representative of the covenant in its entirety. The feast is not the covenant; it is our window upon the covenant.

rite and symbol of Zion and Jerusalem as the wife of God (later, the Matronit) and the mother of Israel.

Land Extended: The Sukkah and Universalization

In this atomization of place, the Rabbis were again well-grounded in precedent. Patai summarizes well the two thrusts of this atomization:

This shift from Temple to man was correlated with that type of midrashic thought which elaborates on the idea that there is a structural as well as functional similarity between the world, the Temple and man. The Temple is simply the world on a small scale, and man is the world on an even smaller scale, a microcosm. But if this is so, it becomes immediately clear that the function formerly filled by the Temple could be taken over by man: there was no reason to suppose that the sympathy between the world and man was smaller or weaker in any way than that between the world and the Temple.¹

The atomization is two-fold; the Temple responsibility inheres in every Jew, and it goes with him on a universal mission. The scheme is but a refinement of the particularism for universalism initiated at Sinai and restimulated by the post-Exilic reformation. The individual Jew is the particular, and the world is the new place of the covenant, that Israel's mission might be more effectively accomplished: "For from the rising of the sun to its setting my name is great among the nations" (Mal. 1:11).

Again it must be said that the Sadducees could not have been unaware of the particularism and universalism in

¹R. Patai, Man and Temple, op. cit., p. 224.

Israel's responsibility. They differed not in the concept of the mission, but in the means and orientation for achieving it. The high priest Simon the Just said the world rested on three things: Torah, [divine, Temple] service, and the practice of charity.¹ This foundation is the revelation of God as King over all the earth, the implementation of the kingdom, and the activity of the subjects of the King. After 70 C.E., the second foundation was shifted from the temple to a new concretization and a new context of עבודה.²

¹Pirke Aboth 1:2.

²Other sects were more or less Temple oriented before 70 C.E. The Essenes seemed to be devoted to the category of the Temple, but not to its concretization in their time. The source of their disaffection with the Temple administration is unclear, but it would be as incorrect to set them in opposition to the Temple as category, as it would be to make the same assertion about the pre-Exilic prophets.

The Zealots and other political activists saw the military potential of the House and used it as fortress in the second war with Rome.

The Christians were surely ambivalent about the Temple. Jesus himself, if the gospel record is accurate, functioned in the Temple much as Isaiah and Jeremiah did; and his vision for it seemed to be in the universalizing tradition of Zechariah and Malachi. Jesus' brother James, first caliph/patriarch of the Jerusalem church, was devoted to the עבודה of the Temple, and seemed to be in some mysteriously positive communication with the Sadducees (cf. Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History, Vol. I of the Loeb Classical Library, trans. by Kirsop Lake [2 vols.; Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1926], XXIII:4-14, pp. 173ff.), or at least with those who did not believe in resurrection. Eusebius says: "The sects mentioned above did not believe either in resurrection or in one who shall come to reward each according to his deeds, but as many as believed did so

For the Rabbis, this new context of עבודה, the land of the covenant, had begun to become the place where a Jew was at the time of Exile. It was the message of the prophets like Jeremiah (29:7 for example), that furthered the idea of the usefulness of dispersion. Granted, the return under Zerubbabel created pressures, cultivated by Haggai and others, to rebuild the Temple. But when Ezra read the Torah, and the people celebrated what had heretofore been a Temple feast in a fashion that had little, if any, connection with the Temple, the melting of the Temple institution from the great aspect of land had begun.

There are two institutions which filled the vacuum created by the Temple's destruction (or, while it stood, its inaccessibility to those in the Diaspora). The home and the synagogue were appropriate and viable institutions to house the new reality of the covenant's place. The individual Jew on his universal mission required an accessible locus for his responsibility and his enjoyment of the four great aspects of the covenant.

If the source, the place of life, was to be in any place and in all places, that which was formerly fixed in

because of James" (*ibid.* 10). Eusebius indicates that it was for the martyrdom of James that the Temple was destroyed (*ibid.* 19). The Gospels, on the other hand, imply that the destruction is a punishment of the Jews for Jesus' crucifixion (cf. Mark 13:1-3; 14:58; 15:38 *et passim*). Pauline and Hellenistic Christianity could only have gained strength with the Temple's destruction and the disestablishment of the Jerusalem patriarchate.

the Temple on Zion would have now to be portable and available to him wherever he might find himself. Therefore we find accomodation:

"The altar of wood three cubits high . . . and he said to me, 'This is the table that is before the Lord'" (Ez. 41:22). [Now the verse] opens with "altar" and finishes with "table"? R. Johanan and R. Eleazar both explain that as long as the Temple stood, the altar atoned for Israel, but now a man's table atones for him.¹

And as in the home, so in the synagogue:

God says, "Who has ever come into a synagogue, and has not found my glory there?" "And not only that," said R. Aibu, "but if you [individually] are in a synagogue, God stands by you." Whence this? For it is said, "God standeth in the congregation of God" (Ps. 82:1). God said: "Not merely do you receive the Divine Presence in the synagogue, but you also leave it laden with blessings," Whence this? For it is said, "'For whoso findeth Me findeth life,' and obtaineth favour of the Lord" (Prov. 8:35).²

The Individual and the Sukkah: Progeny Universalized

Again, when the Temple stood or was accessible, the second great aspect of the covenant, the place of seeing and quickening--מקדש--was the Temple itself (extended, of course, to the city). But now the Jew, the individual Jew, conscious of the immediacy of life and of the fact that he was himself the progeny assuring the continuity of Israel

¹B. Berachoth (Soncino ed.) 55a.

²Deuteronomy R. (Soncino ed.) Ki Thabo, 7:2, pp. 133-134.

and Israel's God in the world, required a re-concretization of the aspect of ראיין.

Therefore the home and the synagogue became the place of seeing and quickening. The list of concretizations for this aspect is long indeed. We may mention only a few by way of example. The synagogue is house of prayer and house of study. No longer do the nations of the world have to look to Jerusalem to see the people of God going up to see and be seen. Every day the nations see the Jew in all corners of the world as he goes daily to see and be seen--to pray and to study.

The quickening of Israel, its ראיין, is individual, universal, and immediate. And, because it is so accessible, it is particularly hazardous. For while there were risks involved in being seen three times a year going up to Jerusalem, how many more risks are entailed in this new concretization? Therefore the suffering of the collective servant, Israel, spoken of by Isaiah becomes a personal suffering and willingness of the individual Israelite to suffer for the sake of atonement, both for Israel and the world--and for the sake of the ראיין. "Beloved is suffering, for as sacrifices are atoning, so is suffering atoning."¹

Yet suffering is but one of the many categories pertaining to ראיין in this new concretization. We have

¹Cf. Sifre (Friedmann ed.), Vaethchanan, 73b and B. Berachoth 5a/b.

mentioned prayer¹ and should mention Torah² (study and teaching), mitzvot, deeds of loving-kindness, and so many more.³ Perhaps this midrash summarizes the point:

"That ye may remember, and do all my commandments" (Num. 15:40). This may be illustrated by the case of one who has been thrown into the water. The captain stretches out a rope and says to him: "Take hold of this rope with your hand and do not let go, for if you do you will lose your life!" In the same way the Holy One, blessed be He, said to Israel: "As long as you adhere to the commandments, then, 'Ye that did cleave unto the Lord your God are alive every one of you this day' (Deut. 4:4). . . . 'And be holy unto your God' (Num. 15:40). When you perform the commandments you are sanctified and the fear of you lies upon the idolators. But if you part from the commandments you become profaned."⁴

The third aspect of the covenant, the presence of the Lord or the *גלוי שכינה*, was also affected generally by the movement from Temple to the place where Israel dwells. The precedent for the movement of the Shechinah had been set in the Exile. Now, as the universalization of the individual occurs, we find also the atomization of the Jew's perception of the divine presence, both in the individual

¹Cf. B. Ta'anith 2a, the "Service of the Heart" explained, and the connection between prayer and rain.

²Cf. for example, Mechilta de R. Ishmael (Friedmann ed.), 98a.

³S. Shechter, op. cit., pp. 199-218, classifies all these under the two headings Kedusha (holiness) and Chasiduth (saintliness).

⁴Numbers R. (Soncino ed.) Shelach Lecha, 17:6, p. 707.

home and in the synagogue. No great explanation is required; the same re-concretization occurs with this aspect as with the others. The example which serves both for individual and collective (in the synagogue) perception of the presence is in B. Berachoth 6a:

Rabin b. R. Adda says in the name of R. Isaac: How do you know that the Holy One, blessed be He, is to be found in the Synagogue? For it is said: "God standeth in the congregation of God" (Ps. 82:1). And how do you know that if ten people pray together the Divine Presence is with them? For it is said: "God standeth in the congregation of God" [and a congregation consists of not less than ten; cf. B. Sanhedrin 2b] (*ibid.*) . . . And how do you know that even if one man sits and studies the Torah the Divine Presence is with him? For it is said: "In every place where I cause My name to be mentioned I will come unto thee and bless thee" (Ex. 20:21).

It should be evident that the flexibility of the presence is due in great part to the portability of the Torah and the universal possibility of Tefillah.

Finally we must speak of the facilitator of the covenant, the fourth great aspect of the covenant. When the Temple stood, the עובדי of the Temple served, together with the particular protagonists we have mentioned, as the means of abetting the relationship. As Israel moves toward the individual in the world, there is a reinstitutionalization of the facilitator as well. The facilitator in the synagogue had been in preparation since the Exile. While the Temple stood, we know these facilitators as Sopherim, Pharisees, and finally Rabbis.

The tension between Sadducee and Pharisee is not surprising at all. The former represented that concretization of עבודה which was the Temple. They held to that Torah which resided in and was intimately tied to the Temple, viz. the חזקת שכתב, the written, established, immutable revelation. The Pharisees, while devoted to the Temple, were not dedicated to its stasis. The covenant for which they were protagonist, was an expansive, inclusive covenant, and their methods were geared to the realization of their concept. The program of individual preparation for universal mission was theirs, and they were to become the protagonists of the Diaspora. The expansive עבודה which became the responsibility of every Jew in every place was the fruit of their labors. The Torah which travelled was their שבעל פה חזקת, the oral interpretation of the revelation that made it possible for the individual Jew to remain a fit and worthy representative of Israel and Israel's God, no matter what the exigencies of time and place. For as we have said, in the final reckoning, Israel--the individual in his home and in his synagogue--was to be the facilitator of the covenant of life for the world. The Rabbis would help, but ultimately all Israel were to be prophets.

R. Isaac said: "The Prophets drew from Sinai the inspiration of all their future utterances, for God spoke 'with him that stands here with us this day' (Deut. 29:15), that is, with those who were already created, 'and also with him that is not here with us this day'; these are

the souls which are destined to be created. So, too, it does not say, 'the burden of the Lord to Malachi' (Mal. 1:1), but 'by the hand of Malachi', to show you that the prophecy was already in his hand at Mount Sinai." So, too, in Isaiah 48:16, it says: "From the time that it was, there am I"; that is, "From the hour when Torah was given, I received this prophecy." Not only to the prophets alone does this apply, but to all the sages that are destined to arise in after days, for the Decalogue is described in Deuteronomy 5:22 as "One great voice," and this was divided into seven, and then into seventy, tongues for all mankind.¹

And finally, every Jew will be the facilitator of the covenant to those nations in his own place and time:

"Ye shall diligently keep all these commandments" (Deut. 11:22). All are equal before the Law. The duty of observance is for all. For the Law is "the inheritance of the congregation of Jacob" (Deut. 33:4). It does not say "priests" or "Levites" or "Israelites," but "the congregation of Jacob."²

The dynamic of the covenant, as it was discussed in the previous chapter, was described by the metaphor of marriage. The destruction of the Temple in 70 C.E., resulted in the ruin of those very concretizations (as well as the cognitive concepts) through which the metaphor operated. Therefore not only was it necessary to re-concretize the four great aspects with their categories, it was also necessary to discover the means of integrating and motivating the aspects in their new forms, i.e. in the home and in the synagogue.

¹Tanhuma, Yithro, 11, p. 96a.

²Sifre on Deuteronomy (Finkelstein ed.) 'Eḳeb, Piska 48, p. 112.

The metaphor of marriage was not abandoned by the Rabbis in their reformation. It was, rather, translated from the Temple to the new categories established by the Rabbis. Again it would be inappropriate for this work to give detailed analyses of the various instances of this translation of the metaphor. A few examples will suffice to demonstrate the possibility that the metaphor might also have been transferred to the sukkah and to the feast.

There are instances in the literature of the Torah as bride:

How do we know that the Tent of Meeting symbolised a wedding? Because it is written, "And it came to pass on the day that Moses had made an end (kalloth) of setting up the tabernacle" (Num. 7:1); the written form is kallath (bride of) and the verse means, "on the day when the bride [i.e. the Torah] entered the bridal chamber."¹

Thus Israel's beauty, while it was in the splendor of the Temple festivals, is now in Israel's keeping the Law.

"Thou art beautiful, my love" (Songs 1:15). "Thou art beautiful" through the commandments, both positive and negative, beautiful through loving deeds, beautiful in thy house with the heaven-offerings and the tithes, . . . beautiful in the law of circumcision, beautiful in prayer, in the reading of the Shema, . . . in the law of the lulab and ethrog; beautiful, too, in repentance and in good works; beautiful in this world and beautiful in the world to come.²

The Sabbath, too, is treated like a bride (though here the metaphor is reversed), and we find a Talmudic passage to that effect:

¹Numbers R. (Soncino ed.) Naso, 12:8, p. 475.

²Songs R. (Soncino ed.), I.15, §1.

R. Hanina robed himself and stood at sunset of Sabbath eve [and] exclaimed, "Come and let us go forth to welcome the queen Sabbath." R. Jannai donned his robes on Sabbath eve and exclaimed, "Come, O bride, Come, O bride."¹

Mention has been made already of Israel herself designated the bride of God.² It is this particular simile that suggests an explanation for the very strong argument by R. Akiba that the Song of Songs be established in the canon among the Writings. It says in the Mishnah:

R. Simon ben Azzai said, "I have heard a tradition from the seventy-two elders on the day when they appointed R. Elazar ben Azariah [head] of the academy that the Song of Songs and Ecclesiastes render the hands unclean." R. Akiba said, "God forbid! No man in Israel ever contended regarding the Song of Songs [to say] that it does not render the hands unclean, [for all the ages of] the world are not worth the day whereon the Song of Songs was given to Israel, for all the Hagiographa is sacred, but the Song of Songs is the most sacred [of them all]. . . ."³

Why the hyperbole of R. Akiba? There are any number of possibilities just from what we know of his life and work⁴ to explain his great attachment and outspoken support for this book, so unlike any other in the canon. One possibility commends itself in this study, and it is as follows: Akiba lived in the time of the Temple's destruction. He "deserves

¹B. Shabbath (Soncino ed.) 119a.

²Cf. Deuteronomy R. (Soncino ed) Vaethchanan 2:37, p. 65; Songs R. IV.10, § 1; and IV.12, § 2.

³M. Yadayim (Blackman ed.), 3:5, p. 764.

⁴Cf. Louis Ginzberg, "Akiba ben Joseph," JE, I (1905), 304b-310a.

to be called the father of rabbinical Judaism (Jer. Shek. iii. 47b, R.H. i, 56d," says Ginzberg.¹ Akiba's unique hermeneutic system was such that he found relevance in the least particle of a word in Scripture. And he was committed to the vigorous development of Judaism and the unchangeableness of Holy Scripture.

Given this information about Akiba, and bearing in mind the times in which he lived, is it possible to suggest that Akiba saw in the Song of Songs another concretization, a written concretization, of the value-concept of the Temple's husband-wife motif? Is it possible that he wished to preserve the covenant of the marriage relationship between God and Israel, and that he realized that with the Temple's destruction one of the most useful concretizations, especially for rabbinic Judaism, was a written document? Such a work in the canon would be available to the rabbinic method of interpretation and would serve, then, to preserve the dynamic of the covenant in its marriage metaphorical form, while providing a rich source for interpretation to serve a growing and dynamic Judaism. Surely it was not Akiba's only reason. But in our study of Sukkoth, in which the Temple imagery played such an important role until the destruction, it is at least conceivable that Akiba's purpose was to re-institutionalize that very aspect of the

¹Ibid., p. 304a.

covenant that once was made concrete and evident in the Temple--the love of God for Israel. If this were the case, Akiba's argument for the book was no hyperbole at all, but a keen awareness of the covenant which, in a new circumstance, was to require new formulation.

From the general we must move to the specific of the Feast of Sukkoth, recalling that the feast is but one small fragment of the entire covenant enterprise; yet it is a potential microcosm of the larger covenant relationship. What follows is a comment on the place of the sukkah according to the four great aspects of the covenant. We shall speak of the sukkah as though it were a much more important concretization than in fact it is. But it is in this careful examination of the microcosm that we might discover something of importance to the whole.

While the Temple of the Second Commonwealth stood, the sources have little to say about the building of booths. The legislation in Leviticus 23 requires all that are native in Israel to dwell in booths for seven days as a commemoration of the wilderness experiences of Israel. But beyond this requirement and explanation (the latter appearing to be little more than a rationalization for popular tradition after Nehemiah's time), little is known of the significance of these sukkoth. We know from Anan¹

¹Anan the Karaite, in P. S. Goldberg, Karaite Liturgy, op. cit.; and Leon Nemoy, Karaite Anthology (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1952), pp. 178ff.

that the Karaites held that the four kinds were to be used for building booths and not for fashioning lulabim. We might infer from this that the Sadducees held to the same principle, though what the booth meant to them beyond the annual recapitulation of the practice recorded in Nehemiah 8 is a mystery. As for the Pharisees, we know only from the Mishnah and Tosephta, that they participated in the Temple festivities of Sukkoth and were of the opinion that the four kinds were appropriate to the lulab and ethrog as well as to the sukkah. And we may suspect that there was a contention on this point between Pharisee and Saducee.¹

The Mishnah and Tosephta present a particularly intriguing possibility of the rabbinic understanding of the sukkah's significance after the Temple. Briefly stated, the possibility is this. At the time of the Second Temple, the sukkoth were, even as Plutarch describes them,² pavilion-like affairs, constructed in the city for the festival as temporary shelter for the pilgrims, and for protection from the elements (even as Josephus says--cf. Ant. III:x,4--

¹R. Judah (cf. Sifra [Weiss ed.] ad Leviticus 23:42 and B. Sukkah 36b) seems to represent at least some ambivalence among the Rabbis as to the meaning of וּלְקַחֵם לָנֶם. His solution is a compromise: the kinds apply to the roofing of the sukkah only, which is that part of the booth most critical in any case.

²Cf. above, p. 303.

although he would have the booths built at home and the lulabim confined to Jerusalem) in the squares and market places.¹ When the Mishnah (M. Sukkah 3:1ff.) and Tosephta (T. Sukkah 2:5ff.)² speak of the celebration of the feast in Jerusalem, they make no reference to dwelling in booths at all; in fact, it is implied at several points that the celebration in Jerusalem provided no time for the dwelling in booths.³

¹Appendix C will indicate that the meaning of סוכה in Scripture, a meaning which in almost every case assumes the existence of the Temple, is far different from the value given in the Mishnah and Tosephta. The bridge is very probably Nehemiah 8, but even there the metaphor of a pavilion like God's pavilion is predominant. The sukkah of the Mishnah has little Scriptural warrant (cf. Appendix C) and seems to presume the absence of the Temple, or at least if Josephus is correct, the absence of the Jew from Jerusalem for the feast.

²A case could also be made, I believe, for the halachah of the lulab in both sources; but at this point the example of the sukkah is sufficient.

³In all likelihood they make no mention of sukkoth beyond these points simply because they have moved in orderly fashion from one subject (the sukkah) to the next (the lulab). Yet we should not overlook the following details. M. Sukkah 4:1 and 4:8 have no reference to Jerusalem at all. That Shammai made a sukkah covering for his grandchild (ibid. 2:8) has no particular bearing on the Jerusalem celebration, and indicates only that sukkoth were known and the tradition observed in Shammai's time. But where and for what purpose is not revealed. M. Sukkah 2:7 recounts a story of Hillel's encounter with R. Johanan b. Hahoroni in his sukkah. Since we have no knowledge of whether the latter's house was in Jerusalem, we cannot know if the incident is a recollection of a sukkah in the city or elsewhere. The testimony of R. Joshua b. Hanania about a pilgrim's day in Jerusalem (B. Sukkah 53a) is but one indication of the peripheral status of sukkoth as festal objects in Jerusalem during Temple times. Midrash

Now certainly the plain fact that the Mishnah from 1:1 to 2:9, and the Tosephta from 1:1 to 2:5 are concerned with the detailed halachoth of the construction and inhabiting of sukkoth during the feast cannot be overlooked in the search for intriguing possibilities. We should, in fact, be surprised to find anything else in the first two chapters of the Mishnah and the comparable portions of the Tosephta but the positive legislation and technical explanation of the size, shape, material, and measures of validity or non-validity of the sukkoth (as in Chapter I, Mishnah), or the detailed requirements of inhabiting--eating, sleeping, and so forth--the sukkah and the exceptions of certain persons from the requirements (as in Chapter II, Mishnah). In most cases of the Mishnah and Tosephta legislation, we would be satisfied with the tradition received; and it is quite likely that even in our Mishnah and Tosephta tractates we must be content to move from the thorough explication of one aspect of the feast to the next, viz. the lulab.

Furthermore, there is no reason for the first two chapters of our Mishnah or the first portion of our Tosephta to make any connection with the chapters following,

Tehillim (Buber ed., Psalm 42, p. 133b) says the sukkah of that Psalm (vs. 5) is a litter with shades in which the pilgrims rode up to the feasts.

which deal with the celebration of the feast in Temple times in Jerusalem. These first portions are the למעשה הלכה for a period after the destruction of the Temple and have no reason to make any connection with the Temple and Jerusalem at all.

But having said all this by way of preface, the intriguing possibility still does not disappear. Granted that there are plentiful examples of historical and narrative material elsewhere in the Mishnah. Granted, too, that we have little measure of their historical reliability or usefulness. Such passages are most likely bits of remembrance and embellished tradition that were so closely identified with the actual fulfillment of the obligations to which they have become attached, that they have passed down in the tradition as haggadic supplements to primarily halachic texts.

But in the case of our Mishnah and Tosephta, how do we explain the editorial method of placing such a large portion of this haggadic material, with no immediate or apparent relevance to the halachic portions which precede it, at the end of the tractate? Why do the halachoth of the sukkah and lulab appear as they would in any other tractate, to be followed by three lengthy chapters in the Mishnah (and an equivalent amount of material in the

Tosephta) that mentions the sukkah peripherally only twice (in the Mishnah's case: 4:1 and 4:8) and are primarily the record of a rite in a place that no longer exists; of a cult toward which there was a certain measure of hostility; and of an institution which had been but was thankfully no longer in opposition to the rabbinic institution, namely the synagogue? The question might well be asked: Since the sukkah has been dealt with in the first part, why bother to treat of it in the second? But a second question follows: Having dealt with the positive requirements of the sukkah and the lulab in the first section, why the addition of so much seemingly irrelevant material with no evident connection--illustrative or otherwise--with the halachoth preceding?

Perhaps the Tannaitic midrashim pertaining to Sukkoth bring the problem into sharper focus. They state the halachoth for the sukkah and the lulab, but they have none of the appended historic and haggadic material.¹ We say, "Because they were concerned only with the הלכה for the post-70 C.E. period and had no reason to connect the sukkah with the Temple and Jerusalem." There is, then, all the more reason to ask: why are the Mishnah and Tosephta הלכה for the post-70 C.E. period, which likewise have no reason to connect

¹A survey of the word "sukkah" in the Midrash Rabbah confirms the suspicion that the booth is regarded in most cases as a mitzvah to be observed, for the observance of which there is merit, but no explanation of the significance of the sukkah (cf. for example, Leviticus R., Emor, 30:7 and 32:1).

the sukkah with the Temple and Jerusalem, followed by this very haggadic connection--a connection of impressively protracted material?

Perhaps it is due to an arbitrary editor. Perhaps the feast of feasts, even when the Temple was long gone, had sufficient popular appeal to require the insertion of a lengthy anamnesis at this point. Perhaps the great importance, complicated ritual, and popular requirements of this feast prevented the re-concretization of all the old traditions in the space of 130 years, so that those portions which had not yet been converted to halachah (as many were subsequently converted in the Talmuds) were left in raw narrative form, awaiting further legislation.

The explanation which recommends itself most logically to me, although it is an argument from silence, is that the sukkah--the halachic sukkah of the Rabbis--became a primary feature of the feast in Jerusalem only after the destruction, and that its significance lies in its being a portable surrogate for the Temple (that is, for those portions of the Temple institution directly pertaining to Sukkoth) once that great House was destroyed. The narrative portions are purposive and in fact quite necessary to the halachoth. They are the answer to the questions of the sukkah!

The proposal for the construct of the tractate would thus be as follows: a) the mitzvoth pertaining to the sukkah

in the normal halachic fashion of the Mishnah and Tosephta (but with no explanation of the significance of the sukkah); b) the mitzvoth pertaining to the lulab (again with no explanation, but with the understanding that the lulabim were, at least for the Pharisees, an integral part of the Temple rite; c) the narrative passages about the Temple rites and traditions as they were celebrated in order that you might know the significance of the new sukkah and lulab concretizations of home and synagogue that have now replaced the Temple. Thus the Temple remembrances are more than anamnesis; they are also implicitly the explanation of the festal purpose, regardless of the institution which now concretized the value concept.¹

¹The significance of the sukkah would then be the re-institutionalization of the festival category of the Temple in the new configuration of Israel's covenant. The sukkah is the individual's concretization of the place of the feast, namely his own home. For where the Jew goes, he builds a sukkah for the feast, and that which was once tied to one place is become universal. In fact, for the seven days of the feast, the sukkah is the Jew's home; and it might be said that the Temple has been domesticated via the sukkah.

In like manner, the categories concretized in the Temple lulab are now re-institutionalized in the lulabim, the prayers, thanksgivings, rejoicings, and petitions for rain in the synagogue. And in its small way, it could be said that the lulab translated the sanctity of the Temple to the synagogue on Sukkoth.

Since this significance is nowhere spelled out in the halachic sections, we can only guess that the importance of the Temple at the feast, the interrelationship of the Temple with the feast were so well known that the recollection of what used to happen in the Temple and why it happened as recorded in the Mishnah and Tosephta, were already sufficient information for signifying the festal, cultic meaning of the sukkah to the people.

What does the sukkah signify and what is its dynamic? The answer appears plain enough. Whatever the Temple signified for the pilgrims in Jerusalem on Sukkoth, the sukkah now signifies to you, the individual Jew, at your home on Sukkoth. And likewise whatever the lulab meant for those in the Jerusalem Temple on Sukkoth in the days of pilgrimage, the lulab now means to you, the individual Jew in your synagogue at Sukkoth. The Rabbis have taken an ambiguous category, the sukkah, and in their genius have shaped it to become the concretization of the universalized Sukkoth aspects of the Temple now that the Temple is inaccessible.

The matter might be likened in some ways to the synagogue. It is not a determined fact that synagogues existed in the diaspora during the time of the Temple, but there are indications that they existed, not only in the diaspora, but in Jerusalem itself.¹ As long as the Temple stood, synagogues were secondary to the great House; but when the Temple was destroyed, those functions of the Temple that could be translated (or had been already translated) to the synagogue were carried on in these local centers without much interruption. As for the rites peculiar to the Temple,

¹Louis I. Rabbinowitz in his article, "Synagogue: Origins and History," EJ, XV (1971), 579a-583b, has provided a useful summary of the scholarship and sources on the synagogue to the present time. One should not overlook W. Bacher's "Synagogue," JE, Vol. XI (1905), 619b-628b as a useful reference.

such as sacrificing, they were re-institutionalized for the synagogue. Insofar as these synagogues were the establishment of the Rabbis, the Temple's demise, while a terrible event, could not have but helped the rabbinic cause of universalizing the covenant.

The same might well have been true for the sukkah. In those areas remote from Jerusalem, the sukkah achieved a significant status for the celebration of the great Temple in when the people could not, by reason of the enormous impracticalities involved, make the thrice yearly pilgrimage to the city. The sukkoth in the city of Jerusalem, however, were of secondary importance--a traditional accoutrement from the time of Nehemiah--to the Temple celebrations. But when the Temple was destroyed, that which was secondary and peripheral became, with some exegetical (the Oral Torah) adjustments in Leviticus 23, Israel's festival temple wherever Israel dwelt.¹

¹It should be added that E. Goodenough's collection of symbols (E. Goodenough, Vol. III, op. cit.), while they are Temple symbols for the most part, are just as adaptable to the sukkah and the lulab, as these are the festal representations of the home and the synagogue--the new "place of the covenant"; and in all likelihood they were so adapted--and by the Pharisees/Rabbis. The sukkah never appears in the symbolism, and Goodenough does not see the significance of the Rûbe (ibid., Vol. IV, pp. 146ff.), stating that as a distinct object, it is "not attested at all." In all probability the Rûbe is the Temple and/or the sukkah extension of the festival home or synagogue. And metaphorically, the Rûbe is the womb which Israel enters for life-giving watering and annual regeneration. The attendant symbols are the lulab and ethrog, the former

The effect of this transfer of Temple feast idiom to the sukkah accomplishes two things with respect to the land. For the individual Jew it provides the place of the feast wherever he is, requiring only acknowledgement of the Temple site as the deferred place of the source of creation, the locus of David's fallen sukkah¹ (the city of Jerusalem) which will, at the culmination of all things, be restored.

And for the lands to which the Jew migrates, the sukkah brings the life-giving and life-sustaining effect of the once immobile Temple. The Temple is extended out into the world, just as in so many of the Sukkoth texts the symbolic waters gush forth from the altar in Jerusalem, rendering holy an ever-expanding area stretching from Jerusalem to the ends of the earth (cf. Zech. 14 particularly).

The special theme of Sukkoth is Israel's responsibility for the nations; and what could be more universalizing than carrying the Temple itself, the house of prayer for all people, into every corner of the world. And in the

usually inserted in the Rûbe, and the latter often connected with the lulab. The whole picture is one of a heart-shaped figure with a branch emerging from it, sometimes with the ethrog connected to the branch and sometimes to the side. It is not so different from the modern images of Cupid's heart with the arrow through it. The midrashic interpretation of the Rûbe is described in B. Sukkah 49a, with an interpretation of Song of Songs 7:2.

¹Cf. Appendix C.

world to come, the place of the sukkah is the sukkah made for the righteous from the skin of leviathan and under which they will feast on his flesh.¹

The covenant aspect of land and of progeny are difficult to separate at this point, for the people of the sukkah are the very ones who carry the sukkah into all the world, the subjects of the Kingdom of Heaven. Where once the "seeing and being seen" was accomplished only at Jerusalem, this visibility was extended by the Rabbis to all places where a Jew builds a sukkah for the feast.

The tension between Pharisee and Sadducee in the matter of the covenant aspect of progeny is not to be found in some villainous desire of the Sadducee to obstruct the forward thrust of Israel's life out of some upper-class greed or self-aggrandizement. Both parties were committed to Israel's covenant life. The issue was rather one of interpretation of covenant requirements. The Sadducee, as inheritor of the Temple institution, viewed the Temple, with its cult and its festival system, as sufficient for assuring the continuity of Israel's life. Israel was called into being as *לֵךְ* in the feast, and it was from the Temple that Israel moved into the world. This was the Scriptural requirement, and further interpretation seemed

¹Cf. Pesikta de Rav Kahana (Buber ed.), Piska 29, pp. 188a/b; B. Baba Bathra 75a/ff.

to the Sadducees not only a fruitless enterprise, but a perverse manipulation of and tampering with the canonical Torah.

The Pharisees, in the instance of progeny as with land, were in process of atomizing the covenant. The קהל was being scattered through the world, unable to return for reconstitution. If the covenant aspect of progeny was to continue viable, the concretizations of it would have to be suited to this great scattering throughout the world. Drawing upon the post-Exilic reformers' tradition of holiness and separation, the burden of the covenant was directed from the Temple to the individual Jew. The individual was to be both priest and Temple, a complete microcosm of the congregation of Israel. It was his personal status before the Lord God that mattered. Therefore he was armed in the present with the signs of Israel, with circumcision, with Torah, with mitzvot, and with the requirements of גמילות חסדים. In the individual Jew the world saw the entirety of Israel and Israel's covenant relationship with the Lord God.

As for the Feast of Sukkoth, it was a matter of and for the individual. He could not build a sukkah or weave a lulab from that which was stolen (M. Sukkah 3:1-3, 5) or even, on the first day of the feast, with a borrowed lulab (ibid. 3:13). The rite or ceremony of the lulab and willow

became the מצות לולב ומצות ערבה. The halachah for the individual's dwelling in the sukkah replaced the spontaneity of the חג in the Temple court; the requirement of a temporary structure replaced the permanent edifice on Zion. And like the patriarchs in Canaan or the children of Israel in the wilderness, the congregation moved out to make the world ראוי before God by their presence in it.

The future of the individual was, as we have noted, a refinement of immortality which defined the continuation of life as a personal experience,¹ a resurrection. But this is not to say that the immortality through progeny is abandoned, or that the life of Israel is not bound up by the Lord in His own lulab-like bundle.² For in the same legislation where it is written that one cannot fulfill his obligation in the sukkah of his fellow, it is also written: "'All that are homeborn in Israel shall dwell in Sukkoth' (Lev. 23:42), which teaches that all Israel are able to sit in one Sukkah."³ And again:

¹There is ultimately something very ancient even in the notion of personal immortality defined by the Pharisees as resurrection. Samuel's appearance to Saul as a discreet, recognizable individual (I S. 28:3ff.) is not far removed from the Pharisees' understanding of the resurrection as a possibility.

²Cf. Y. Sukkah (Krotoshin ed.), Perek 3 Halachah 1, p. 53b col. c, where it says, "A dry lulab is not permissible. R. Abun in the name of R. Yudah bar Pazzi said: Because it is written, 'The dead praise not the Lord' (Ps. 115:17).

³B. Sukkah (Soncino ed.), 27b; Siphre (Friedmann ed.) ad Leviticus 23:40, Piska 140, p. 102.

R. Judah in the name of R. Simeon b. Pazzi opened his discourse with the text, "Hear, O my son, and receive my sayings" (Prov. 4:10). I have commanded you [says God], concerning many acts of taking, in order to make you worthy of divine reward. . . . On this occasion also, when I told you, "Ye shall take you on the first day," it is in order to make you worthy of divine favour, so that I may bring down rain for you. For this reason Moses exhorts Israel: "And ye shall take you on the first day."¹

The Presence of the Lord and the Sukkah

We turn now to the divine presence, the third great aspect of the covenant of life, and its connection with the sukkah. In the days of the Temple, the divine presence chose the Temple for His residence, and He was most particularly there for occasions of confrontation in festival. There was no particular conflict among Pharisee, Sadducee, Christian, or Zealot over the locus of the divine presence. Nor was there great dispute by this time over God's universal presence or His willingness to reveal Himself outside the Temple, the city, or the land.

And as long as the Temple stood there were few among Jews who did not look to the Temple as the prime dwelling place of the presence of the Lord, the place where the Shekinah came closest to earth. Even Paul, the Christian evangelist to the Gentiles, was drawn back to the city and

¹Leviticus R. (Margulies ed.) Emor 30:15, pp. 710-711; (Soncino ed.), pp. 393-394.

its Temple as the center of the divine activity.¹ And it was, as we have seen, at the Temple feast, the day of the Lord, that Israel came into the presence of the Lord most particularly, and there to rejoice and give thanks before Him.

With the Temple's destruction came a great controversy over the presence and where to look for the Lord's new choice of the place and manner of His revelation. If Israel was atomized by the destruction of 70 C.E., for the Pharisees and Rabbis it stood to reason that the presence might follow Israel into the Diaspora, as the Shechinah had gone with Israel into Exile.

From the time that Ezra read the Torah, the possibility of the willing mobility of the presence became manifest. Thus the great controversy between Pharisee and Sadducee was not so much over the fact of interpretation as the authority for interpretation. That the Pharisees succeeded finally in imposing their doctrine of Scripture as defiling the hands should be taken as a sign that the authority for interpretations was effectively wrested from those who suffered most (perhaps alone) from sacral defilement, viz. the Sadducees.²

¹The Essenes, while they had only the greatest contempt for the Temple administration, were not to be excluded from those Jews who looked to the Temple as the place of the distillate presence. Presumably the Jews in Egypt connected with the temple of YHWH at Heliopolis could be counted among those few who did not look toward Mt. Zion to behold the presence of the Lord.

² Cf. M. Yadayim 4:6.

Even while the Temple stood, the method of oral disputation of Torah for discerning revelation, especially in the synagogues and houses of study, was an evidence that the Shechinah was already in process of attending the places of prayer and study, or even visiting the individual at prayer or study, far from the Holy of Holies on Zion. The transfer of the septennial reading of the Torah in the Temple at Sukkoth to the regular reading and study of Torah in the synagogue posed no great problem.¹

With particular reference to the feast we have suggested above that the sukkah became the new concretization of the Temple category at Sukkoth.² In that case we would expect to see the primary metaphors of the Temple feast required at the sukkah. M. Sukkah 3:12 requires that the lulab be used seven days in the provinces after the

¹The Midrash Tehillim (Buber ed.), Psalm 42, p. 113b; (Braude ed.) Vol. I, p. 442, makes a peculiar connection in vs. 5, "a multitude keeping festival (חולל)," between the Hebrew and the Greek agogos, an aqueduct. "Thus, like the water of an aqueduct which has no definite limit, there was no limit to the multitude of the children of Israel as they came up to the festivals" (ibid.). Can the commentator be making some obscure connection between ἀγωγός and συναγωγή? The much later celebration of Simhat Torah is a logical extension of the seven year reading of the Torah on Sukkoth as well as the tradition of the recitation of creation epics at the Temple feast.

²The statement is predicated upon the argument above, that the narrative portions of the Mishnah tractate give the significance to the mitzvah of the sukkah prefixed to the tractate under the figure of the Temple itself.

Temple's destruction, and we have observed above that the Hosh'ana Rabbah was so important that the calendar of 361 C.E. was arranged to prevent a Sabbath from ever overriding it. The synagogue prayers are adjusted at Sukkoth to make mention of rain, life, and resurrection. In fact, the entire synagogue liturgical practice and the halachoth of the sukkah are so obviously designed to preserve the essential categories of the aspect of the presence at Sukkoth as to make further comment superfluous.

In the present, the sukkah provides the universalized touchstone for the Shechinah, and in the future the universal presence of God, proclaimed in Zechariah 14:9, will become a reality. The righteous will eat the banquet in His presence as the elders, having beheld Him at Sinai, ate and drank (Ex. 24:9-11). The same banquet theme, including a marriage motif, is described in the Revelation to John 19:1-10 in the wedding feast of the Lamb, the messianic banquet.

Israel: The Collective Protagonist

The fourth great aspect of the covenant is the facilitator or protagonist. With reference to the Temple, the עבודה or Temple service was, in its time, the abettor of the relationship between God and His people.

The priests and Levites were the officiants of the Temple service, and in that sense they might all be considered facilitators, minor facilitators without whose collective effort the covenant relationship via the Temple could not have proceeded. Occasionally one of these priests became a notable protagonist of the covenant. Such a man was the high priest Simon the Just, one of the last men of the Great Assembly and about whom Ben Sira wrote his great poem (50:1ff.). Individual facilitators of the Second Commonwealth, both in and outside the Temple, have been identified in the previous chapter.

But it should be evident by this point that the activity of this covenant aspect had been gradually shifting from individuals to groups or parties. And even beyond this, the responsibility of protagonist of the covenant was becoming particularized, incumbent upon every Jew in the collectivity (קהל) of Israel. For the choosing of Israel at Sinai entailed the obligation that Israel should be facilitator to the world.

What does Israel's role as facilitator mean in terms of the sukkah? When the Temple was destroyed, Israel continued to need facilitators, especially those protagonists who could re-institutionalize the categories, molten and traumatized by the awesome events which had ripped the root from its place and flung the fruit with its seed into every

corner of the earth. God had promised Israel a prophet like Moses (Deut. 18:15ff.), a facilitator who would in every generation make the final arrangement of the relationship when the people were afraid. But this figure of Moses was become, in the Temple service, a symbolic, almost archetypal person. The fear was assuaged by the surety of the regular and reliable עבודה in Jerusalem. The Sadducees cultivated the concept, for to them the Temple provided all things necessary to the smooth workings of the covenant.

The Pharisees, again from the precedent of the prophets and the experience of the Exile, saw the need of weaning the aspect of facilitator from the fixity of the Temple institution. As land, people, and the divine presence were atomized, it became necessary to prepare facilitators to move wherever Israel might be or go. The sages and the Pharisees, the Rabbis, and the academies went with Israel into the dispersion, taking with them the halachah¹ and haggadah for Israel's strength and comfort. They took also the liturgy of the synagogue and prayer to be the עבודה of the dispersion.² Such was the service for Israel.

¹A midrashic identification of halachah with the Temple (as Lebanon) is to be found in Songs R. IV.15, §1, using the verse "And flowing streams from Lebanon."

²Cf. Midrash Tehillim (Buber ed.) on Psalm 5, p. 27a, 7; Pesikta de Rav Kahana (Buber ed.), Piska 25, p. 158a.

Yet the true facilitator of the sukkah is really Israel as a whole. Just as the sacrifices in the Temple made atonement for the nations of the world, so now the prayers of Israel in the synagogue, especially on Sukkoth,¹ in fact Israel's very willingness to build sukkoth in homes throughout the world and to wave the lulab in synagogues in every land, is life-giving to the nations. As Israel fulfills the mitzvoth of the sukkah, Israel prepares in every place a point at which the life-giving Shechinah can descend for the life and well-being of the world. The midrash on the verse "The Lord will open unto thee His good treasure" (Deut. 28:12) is instructive:

"Peace also comes only on account of your merit [says God to Israel], Whence this, For it is said, "And give thee peace" (Num. 6:26), that is, on account of your merit [לך]. It is related that once a Gentile put a question to R. Johanan b. Zakkai, saying: "We have festivals and you have festivals; we have the Calends, Saturnalia, and Kratesis, and you have Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles; which is the day whereon we and you rejoice alike?" R. Johanan b. Zakkai replied: "It is the day when rain falls." For it is said, "The meadows are clothed with flocks; the valleys also are covered over with corn; 'They shout for joy, yea, they sing'" (Ps. 65:14). What follows immediately on this? "A Psalm. Shout unto God, all the earth" (ibid. 66:1). Thus the Rabbis say: God said to Israel: "All the benefits that come upon the world come on account of your merit. . . ." ²

¹Cf. the connection between rain and life and rain and prayer in B. Ta'anith 2a, Rabbah b. Shila commenting especially on Deuteronomy 11:13.

²Deuteronomy R. (Soncino ed.) Ki Thabo, 7:7, p. 139.

On Sukkoth Israel makes petition for rain: rain is life; and Israel fulfills the mitzvoth of the sukkah, the lulab, and the Hasha'anoth for the world.

The facilitator of the future, the proleptic protagonist of the sukkah, is the King Messiah. The promise of Isaiah 9 and 11 had prepared the way for this figure, for he is the promised facilitator who, at any given time, has not yet come but who is looked for when the times are such as to strain the covenant in some way. The Messiah is called son of David, for he will have that facility for ensuring the covenant--of securing land and progeny--as had David the King. He is called son of Joseph, for he will secure the relationship of Israel with the Lord as David's son will do for Judah.¹ He is called Bar Nafle (B. Sanhedrin 96b/97a), for he will come with the clouds (Dan. 7:13) and will raise up the sukkah of David that is fallen [ha-nofeleth] (Amos 9:11).

The tension between the Rabbis and the Christians was not so much over the existence of the Messiah as it was over his identity and later, his function. Confining

¹Notice that the tension between northern and southern typologies exists well into the rabbinic period. Numbers R., Naso, 14:1 suggests two, and possibly even a third (for the Moabites--Ezekiel's third city?);*with the southern Temple. Shiloh is assigned to Joseph and Jerusalem to Benjamin. The third Messiah is, from the former citation, the Moabite (Davidic, through Ruth) one.

* Numbers R., Naso, 14:8 declares the equality of the northern sanctuary

ourselves strictly to the control of the sukkah, the identifiable figures in Israel are Elijah, who according to Malachi, will announce his coming; the ushpizin of the Zohar,¹ who assure the proper observance of one's sukkah by their presence to participate in the hospitality offered (particularly Abraham, the paradigm of hospitality); the son of man in Daniel who comes in clouds of glory reminiscent of the biblical concept of the sukkah; and finally Israel itself, insofar as the nations are concerned; for in Zechariah 8:23 the coattail of the Jew is commended as a means for the nations to come up to the Lord God at Sukkoth.²

Finally the King Messiah seems to serve one further function in connection with the sukkah. In the midrash, in several instances, concerning the verse Isaiah 10:34, "And Lebanon shall fall by a mighty one," the Temple is identified with Lebanon.³ And in a second text, immediately

¹The seven biblical guests of the sukkah: Abraham (the perfect host), Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Aaron, and David. Their presence assures the sheltering of the sukkah beneath the wings of the Shekinah; cf. Zohar, Emor.

²The Christian understanding of the sukkah and its Messiah is to be found in Appendix C. It is useful to make the point here that for Israel, the Messiah was a means to the End, Who is God. Thus the King Messiah is generally a figure who participates in history. The Messiah and God are not confused in Judaism, as they probably were not in early Christianity (in that community which held Jesus to be the Messiah).

³Cf. B. Gittin 56b; B. Yoma 39b; Lamentations R. I.5, §31.

following the first, the Messiah is said to have emerged at the very time in which the Temple was destroyed, for it says: "And there shall come forth a shoot out of the stock of Jesse . . . And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him. . ." (Is. 11:1-2). The following midrash could not be clearer:

But surely it is written, "And it came to pass [the midrash is attempting to prove that every use of wehaya signifies joy], when Jerusalem was taken" (Jer. 38:28)? He said to them: That too does not denote trouble but joy for on the very same day the Comforter [Messiah] was born, on that same day Israel received a full quittance for their sins.¹

There are other indications in the sources of a consecutive connection between Temple and Messiah, so that we might at least guess that upon the destruction of the Temple, Messiah and sukkah share the metaphorical responsibility of the Temple in the time until the end.² I have found no passages equating the one with the other; but that they are both concretizations of the same category is beyond doubt.

¹Numbers R. (Soncino ed.) Naso, 13:5, p. 516. The text Isaiah 11:1-2 is used with reference to the Messiah again in B. Sanhedrin 93b.

²Perhaps the menorah on so many of Goodenough's illustrations (E. Goodenough, op. cit., Vol. III) emerging from the three-footed world womb/Temple pit/sukkah, and the palm frond emerging from the so-called Rûbe, which I take to be the place where the seed of Israel are watered (be it world womb, Temple, or sukkah), are messianic symbols of the shoot of Jesse and the Tree of Life. Again it would be incorrect to say messiah or resurrection or fertility, since they both signify life continuing.

Perhaps the lack of equation is purposive. The sukkah of halachah and mitzvah is a concretization of the covenant life aspects in the present, as the biblical sukkah is, for the most part, equivalent to the place of the presence and of meeting in the Temple of the past. The Messiah is the future concretization who will come to rebuild the Temple, and restore the fallen Sukkah of David (Amos 9:11).¹ The Messiah is no collectivity, for he must represent not only the life of the future but the individual life of the world to come.

The goal of this particular covenantal aspect is to come to that point at which there will be no facilitator at all. In that day, the last fear of Israel for the Lord will be removed, and the Lord's people will all be prophets (Num. 11:29), so that the need for prophecy will be done away (Zech. 13:3). Israel will no longer need to be the protagonist of the covenant, for all nations will come up to Jerusalem to celebrate Sukkoth--to be quickened and to give thanks (Zech. 14). The tensions in history which have always been the means for discouraging the revelation will

¹H. N. Richardson's recent article, "SKT (Amos 9:11); 'Booth' or 'Succoth'?" JBL XCII (Sept., 1973), pp. 375-381, hopes to prove that David's booth is in fact David's military outpost in the town of that name. There is no need to go so far. Jerusalem is the royal city, the lair and the glory of the king. Perhaps the royal dwelling is thought of or referred to as the royal pavilion. It is surely not the Temple's but the city of David--Jerusalem (cf. Appendix C).

vanish, for the Lord's Will will be apparent to all, and they all will be prophets.

Until that day, the work of the covenant will continue and the organism of that relationship which God and Israel enjoy together will continue its inexorable journey through history, changing in institution, but forever unchanged.

APPENDIX A

There are two listings of priestly families in Nehemiah 12. The first is a list of priests returning with Zerubbabel (12:1-7). Jeshua is high priest and there are twenty-two courses under him (which is two priestly courses per month except for the two half-months of the equinoctial festivals. These two festivals, because of the large number of sacrifices required and their special importance, would have required more priests than one course for the half-month could provide). The second list (12:12-21) is that of the courses restored by Nehemiah. Joiakim was the high priest, and there are twenty definite names given, descendants of the people whose names appear on the first list with some minor spelling changes, suggesting the authenticity of the documents. Two names are missing, but this is not disturbing. The 14th course is simply defective in the text, reading "... of Miniamin, _____." The descendent's name has simply dropped--or was unknown. The seventh course is a greater problem. Hattush (12:2b) simply does not appear in the second list. Whether the whole name, "of Hattush, _____," was omitted accidentally after that of "of Malluchi, Jonathan; . . ." in 12:14, or on purpose is unknown to us.

Perhaps the half-month of Pentecost was later added to the list of festivals requiring more than one course's efforts, and the course of that half-month was dropped. In the absence of any textual variants, it is the most likely explanation.

The ranking of the priestly orders in Nehemiah 12:44-47 is noteworthy. Ellis Rivkin, op. cit., argues for a conscious and effective proscription of the prophetic institution in toto, with the reconstruction of Israel under Nehemiah and the priests. He proposes that the excesses of the pre-Exilic prophets and the hazards involved in having no means for discerning a true prophet from a false one, brought the whole institution of prophecy into disrepute in the new order.

I can agree with Dr. Rivkin's point insofar as the evidence indicates the disappearance of prophets with the official title (נביא) with the person of Malachi; for indeed the Rabbis taught: "When Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi died, the Holy Spirit departed from Israel (B. Sotah 48b)." However, I do not believe that the compilers of the Pentateuch were at liberty, particularly in the case of Deuteronomy, to add a prohibition of prophecy to a canonical text. The overt restraints on prophecy in that book are not interpolations, but the original attempt of Jeroboam to curb the enormous political power of the northern prophets.

There is furthermore no sudden disappearance of prophets in the Second Commonwealth, just as there is no sudden appearance of a new and all-powerful priestly class (by whatever name). Those who divined the will of God by direct contact with the Spirit returned with a different title but with an unbroken tradition extending back well before the Exile. Although I do not necessarily agree with Finkelstein (New Light from the Prophets, op. cit.) when he discovers and identifies specific, pre-Exilic prophetic halachoth in the rabbinic literature, I do believe his assumption of the direct connection between pre-Exilic prophets (I would call them "southern court prophets") and post-Exilic Pharisees is correct. The link, although proof of its existence rests with the usually discredited testimony of the Rabbis themselves, is the Great Assembly.

The Jerusalem Temple prophets, or "southern court prophets" (not the northern prophets, although one of them, Elijah, became the symbol of oral Torah in the south) were traditionally interpreters of the written code of the pre-Exilic kingdom. They gave rulings on Torah, which were expansions of written Torah, to accomodate immediate popular need.

The festival homilies of these southern court prophets were preached at the Temple during festival times, and these midrashic expositions and exhortations were

written and preserved by the scribes of the prophetic schools to become what we now call the books of the literary or classical prophets. But unlike the festival homilies, the expansive legal rulings which the prophets gave were for the most part verbal and not recorded (but cf. Is. 8:16; Hag. 2:10ff.; Zech. 1:6; 7:2-7; 7:8-10).

Here is the oral Torah tradition in operation from well before the Exile. These prophets were populists, and their popular appeal sometimes brought them into open debate with other Zadokite priests and hakamim who also interpreted the Torah, but more as an exercise in non-specific, legal speculation. The non-prophetic priests divined the expansions and elaborations of Torah by the cultic method of Urim and Thummim and by speculative meditation; the prophets, on the other hand, divined by direct contact with the Spirit of the Lord.

The ethical exhortations of the non-prophetic priests were in the form of the proverb/mashal and reflective considerations of general questions regarding the relationship of God with man (as in the study of retributive justice in Job). The ethical exhortations of the prophets, on the other hand, were specific halachoth, immediately applicable, by direct authority of the Spirit of the Lord, and often supportive of the economically and socially deprived.

Both parties were correct and necessary in their respective areas of concern, but their very different

methodology at discerning continuing revelation brought them frequently into open disputation with each other. One can imagine the prophet's immediate response to a legal question with a "Thus says the Lord: . . .", and the non-prophetic priests' response: "But you must consider the larger implications of the case." One preaches at the feast; the other performs the cultic rites. Both are crucial in facilitating the relationship with God. Both have pre-Exilic precedent, both are bound by canonical Scripture, and both are concerned with immediate development and extrapolation of timely halachoth from a laconic canonical tradition which is in their custody and within the realm of their responsibility.

Both priest and prophet went into Exile, and both returned with the same goal: Israel must be re-established as a vehicle of the covenant and as a testimony to Israel's God in the world. Both were equally dedicated, each in his own way, to the unification of the Name, according to Israel's responsibility chosen at Sinai.

The Zadokite priests returned with Zerubbabel and again with Ezra, prepared to restore the ancient worship of the Lord in His place. The southern court prophets returned also, exercising their responsibilities as darshanim and sopherim, prepared to divine the will of the Lord.

The priests, at their return, differed functionally in only one respect from the pre-Exilic priests. Where

once there had been a resident monarch involved in the operations of the cult, there was now a non-resident and non-Yahwist monarch upon the throne, ruling very obviously at the pleasure and by the will of the Lord God. One priestly family, the high priestly course or family, acted as a kind of locum tenens for the royal cultic authority in Persia (or wherever that royal authority came to be). The king was, as he had always been, a functional operative in the cult of YHWH. But now the king was in Persia and could not take his designated place or role in the festivals. This lot fell to the high priest, acting on the king's behalf and by his leave. (Thus high priests were established and removed at the king's pleasure, for they were his men).

The prophets of the return seem to differ in only two respects. They are not called נביא in any canonical source we have after Ezra; rather they are described by their function as darshanim and sopherim. And their function as agents of direct revelation from the Spirit of the Lord is somewhat tempered by their membership in the Great Assembly, which body gave assent and authorization to revelation only by the principle of the ויב. The non-prophetic priests seem also to have belonged to the Assembly, a fact which altered the ויב and introduced restraints which had not existed in the days of "Thus says the Lord: . . .".

APPENDIX B

There is a natural temptation to identify the tension of typology in its many phases of Israel's history as a pre-Hegelian dialectic of revelation. We may at least suspect that Hegel's system is an inheritance from Israel, whether conscious or unconscious. But it would be wrong to read Hegel back upon Israel's great gift by which it discerns revelation. The tension of typology, being a function of the organismic religious process, has no clear or logical theses, nor are there any apparent contradictions in the organism itself. The apparent contradictions in concretizations or institutionalizations of the covenant are due, as Kadushin has made quite plain,¹ to "the organismic organization of the value-concepts which renders each statement embodying the concepts an independent entity."

Revelation discerned by this tension of typology differs from the modern dialectic process. Since the only measure of revelation is that of real versus imagined revelation (or actually revelation versus no revelation), the characteristics of synthesis, viz. better, greater, higher form of truth, etc. are simply not applicable to

¹M. Kadushin, op. cit., p. 76.

revelation. It is possible to say that one revelation is more timely, more complex, easier comprehended, or of greater magnitude than some other revelation; but there is here no scale of merit--that timely or relevant revelation is better revelation of a higher sort. Revelation is either true, or is not revelation.

There are, in fact, no syntheses in Israelite religion, for the covenant is immutable. Israel has a relationship with God, never a synthesis. And within Israelite religion there are overlays of categories and countless combinations of aspects and categories in unique concretizations and institutionalizations. But these are only descriptive of the organism; they never alter the whole organism, much less improve it or raise it to a higher form of truth. The history of the generations is a straight line; and the covenant moves along that line, challenging every generation with the same choices.

This principle of tension is not unrelated to history because it is non-Hegelian, however. Israel's covenant is not extra-historical, and if revelation informs the covenant, it must come into history. It is the very principle of tension to discern revelation that makes Israel's history so unique in fact. It may be explained as follows.

History may be defined generally in terms of time and place. From Israel's covenant perspective, place is

represented by land and time by progeny. Together this land and progeny are Israel's immortality: their continuing history. In fact, the fundamental tension of Israel is life and death: land or no land; progeny or no progeny. The tension in time is the means for revelation, and the tension of place is a means for revelation. And for Israel only God can give life--that is the revelation.

Two examples will clarify the explanation. The classic example of revelation given to Israel through the tension of time is the story of the Akedah, the binding of Isaac. Since Isaac was his father's assurance of time continued, of immortality, the binding of Isaac represents a superb tension. For as Abraham raises the knife to kill his time forever onwards, the question is: "Shall I obey God, and in so doing destroy my future? Or shall I sheathe the knife and free the child, assuring my time as I perceive it, and in so doing replace God with myself?" Will the Lord be God or will man be god? Only in the tension of the knife raised can there be revelation, for the most useful choices are made only when alternatives are clearest. And the god-choice is man's most profound and awesome task.

The revelation given to Israel through the tension of place is also according to the model of father Abraham. We are told that Abraham lived in Ur of the Chaldees. It is his home, his patrimony, his place of life. And the

Lord comes to him and says, לך לך! Abraham has the choice of going to a land not his own, away from all that is familiar, apart from that which is his life's security. Again there is excellent tension. "Shall I choose this God and risk death in a foreign land? Or shall I stay and be sustained by my own power?" The tension is exquisite, for the alternatives are very clear and the stakes are high.

APPENDIX C

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SUKKAH IN THE TEXTS

I have suggested in the text that the post-destruction meaning and significance of the sukkah is a value which the Rabbis assign to a traditional, but secondary cult object. The sukkah of the Mishnah as the portable surrogate of the Temple is not the sukkah of the Bible. The Rabbis did not, of course, give an entirely new meaning to the sukkah; but they did extend the significance of the word to meet the needs of the post-destruction circumstances.

I shall try to give groupings of the texts which use the word or a form of the word in somewhat the same way. I shall also indicate the significance of the sukkah in the post-biblical, non-rabbinic texts.

I. The roots $\sqrt{\text{קט}}$ ^{II}, $\sqrt{\text{קט}}$ ^{II}, and $\sqrt{\text{קט}}$ ¹

These roots have the general meaning "to weave" or "to weave together." The basic meaning seems to be a plaiting of something, as in Judges 16:13-14 the derivative קט is used to refer to the weaving of Samson's hair into a web, as one might weave with a loom. The figure is extended to signify a protective bed covering (which is useless)

¹In the cases of the biblical uses of the word, I have used BDB, although I have not accepted the translation there in every case.

in Isaiah 28:20 and an undesirable, woven or webbed covering over the nations which God will remove in Isaiah 25:7. This covering or web, a ^אקִטְּוֹ is also used figuratively to describe the intrigue of negotiations with the Egyptians in Isaiah 30:1. The same image of weaving together or knitting is found in Job 10:11, as Job describes God's putting him together, bone and sinew. The same imagery is used by the Psalmist in Psalm 139:13, viz. a child knit together in its mother's womb.

A similar image is that of the natural thicket or covert, ^א weaving of leaf and branch which provides a lair for the lion. This is the meaning of the ^אקִטְּוֹ in Job 38:40. The same meaning is intended even when the lion is a figure for the Lord Himself, as in Jeremiah 25:38 (and perhaps Jer. 4:7), or a figure of the wicked man, Psalm 10:9. The nuance of the secret covert is used in Psalm 27:5 to indicate a hiding place for the Lord's treasure and a secure and concealed protection for the treasure of His faithful servant (^אסֵכָה is here used in // with אֶהְיֶה, His tent). A similar use is found in Psalm 31:21. This idea of prophylaxis appears in Nahum 2:6, where a ^אבִּקְוֹ seems to be some type of shelter for those storming a city (LXX = τὰς προφυλάκας).

A man-made thicket or woven booth is an extension of the naturally occurring lair. Thus booths are built by

the farmers in their fields, as in Isaiah 1:8, but they are known to be temporary, both in construction and in duration of habitation, as with the booth of the wicked man in Job 27:18. Such booths, in the sense of temporary habitations, are also constructed for cattle (Genesis 33:17), although in this text the significance of the word may be obscured by the author's attempt at explaining the origin of the name of the town Succoth. Jonah (4:5) builds such a booth against the heat of the day.

In yet another sense the sukkah is to be understood as a shelter, with a nuance of the dignified, the royal, or the sacral. The appropriate translation might be pavilion. In the most concrete sense we find the word used in I Kings 20:12, 16 to signify the field pavilions on the battlefield, probably the royal tents. The Ark of the Covenant also sat under one of these pavilions when taken out for battle, II Samuel 11:11. By extension, and undoubtedly with many additional nuances, the "fallen sukkah of David" in Amos 9:11 signifies the extended military, royal, and sacral pavilion of the archetypal king, and should probably be identified with the city of Jerusalem, the idealized sukkah of David. Even more specifically, סוכה is // with מקונו, signifies the dwelling place of God in Salem and in Zion, namely the Temple (Ps. 76:3) and is, in this one instance, a synonym for מִשְׁכָּן. The equation with the Temple is even

more explicit in Lamentations 2:6, where God's sukkah is in parallel with the place of his appointed feasts (מַעֲדָו).

The imagery of the Lord's habitation in the heavens, usually in conjunction with cloud and storm, is signified in II Samuel 22:52//Psalm 18:12, where thick darkness is a heavenly pavilion for the Lord. The sukkah is almost synonymous with the clouds in Job 36:29.

It is perhaps a combination of the weaving imagery and the festival connection of the sukkah with the Temple that accounts for the use of the word in Psalm 42:5 (which, with Ps. 43, is an appointed psalm for Sukkoth in the liturgy). The word is without biblical parallel, and the LXX reads $\gamma\beta\alpha$ or $\eta\beta\alpha$ ("in a booth") for the MT $\gamma\beta\alpha$ ("with the throng"). Based upon my understanding of the practice and celebration of the feast in Nehemiah's time, I would offer the following, tentative translation: "... thus I used to pass through the pavilioned market place (sug) as I made my way joyfully to the House of God. . .".

The following designations of the feast itself by name I would attribute to the Deuteronomist and the imagery of the three-day an into the wilderness each year, during which time the people dwelt in the temporary booths of wilderness remembrance (cf. J. B. Segal, op. cit., to whom I am indebted for this explanation of a northern tradition of sukkoth, as opposed to a Temple mas in Jerusalem):

Deuteronomy 16:13, 16; 31:10 (the septennial Torah reading); possibly Leviticus 23:34 (inserted in Josiah's time); and Zechariah 14:16, 18, 19 (the first restoration's attempt at implementing Deuteronomy and the proleptic celebration of its success in the prophet's sermon. In these cases, a sukkah is a temporary dwelling outside the urban area. There are no prescriptions of any sort as to the composition or ceremony of the sukkah itself, for it was peripheral to the function of the feast itself.

The post-Exilic references to the sukkah which, in Nehemiah at least, describe the people constructing the booths, are still references to in-city festival pavilions such as one might use to shade long picnic tables. They are not the sukkoth of the Mishnah. These references are: Ezra 3:4; Nehemiah 8:14, 15, 16, and 17; and II Chronicles 8:13. The festal legislation that canonizes the traditions originating in Nehemiah is Leviticus 23:42-43. Even in the latest legislation, the halachah concerning the booth is vague; the name of the feast comes from the custom of constructing sukkoth during the feast. Their significance is discussed in Leviticus 23:43, and in this verse alone is there the possible remembrance of the original northern tradition before the Exile.

II. The roots $\sqrt{\text{סכ}}^{\text{I}}$ and $\sqrt{\text{סכ}}^{\text{I}}$

The general meaning of these roots is to screen, cover, or overshadow. In usage they appear in natural and in cultic situations. The emphasis varies as to whether the one hidden is being protected from danger without the screen or whether the one outside the screen is being protected from the danger/power within the screen.

In a natural use the word is used as a euphemism in I Samuel 24:4 and Judges 3:24. In Job 40:22, the lotus trees shade Behemoth.

The single most important use of סך as a screen or covering is in Exodus 33:22, where Moses is allowed to look upon God only after the Lord has screened off Moses' face from beholding His face head on. This particular text explains, perhaps, the tradition following, in which the vision of God must be cut off from human view, lest the looking upon God result in the death of the person.

In cultic use the cherubim and their wings provide a covering of the Ark; screens are set up before the Ark (the three screens of the Tabernacle, viz. at the gate of the court, at the entrance of the tent, and the ארן itself);¹ and God covers His righteous ones under His wings (Ps. 91:4), in the day of battle (Ps. 140:8), or with His cloud of glory (Ps. 105:39). The Lord can also remove His protection (Is. 22:8) or hide Himself in His cloud covering (Lam. 3:43-44).

¹BDB should be consulted for the many instances of the roots used in this way.

The Rabbis, Akiba versus the Sages,¹ argue over the Sukkoth of the Exodus. Akiba considers them clouds of glory, the glorious and divine canopy over Zion in the last day (based on Is. 4:5-6). The Sages hold that Sukkoth is simply the name of the town. No one seems concerned with suggesting the sukkoth defined by the Mishnah; and that concern was probably just beginning to emerge in Akiba's day.

A third root, $\sqrt{\text{שכח}}$, appears as a noun, שכוי, in Job 38:36. The meaning is obscure, but its use in // with סחח and the possible connection with a celestial appearance or phenomenon (a meteor?) indicate that it should at least be included here. The other nouns derived from the root do not appear to be relevant.

III. The roots $\sqrt{\text{שכר}}$ ^I $\sqrt{\text{שכר}}$ ^{III} $\sqrt{\text{סיר}}$ / $\sqrt{\text{סיר}}$ ^{II}
and $\sqrt{\text{שכר}}$ ^{II}.

These roots are mentioned only to indicate their existence as homonyms of the relevant roots. The meaning of the first three is generally to hedge in or shut out--protective or obstructive. The fourth root signifies brushwood of some fashion, but it is not connected with the four "kinds."

IV. The root $\sqrt{\text{שכר}}$ ^{IV}

¹Mechilta de R. Ishmael (Horowitz-Rabin ed.) Bo Parashah 14, p. 48; (Lauterbach ed.), Vol. I, p. 108.

The root is used to form two nouns: קֶרֶךְ ("thorn") in Numbers 33:35 and קֶרֶךְ ("barb" or "spear") in Job 40:31. The latter word is relevant, for the Targum on Job uses the word to signify a sukkah with reference to Leviathan and the sukkah to be made of its skin in the world to come.

V. Two proper names, סִכּוֹת נִנּוּחַ and סִכּוֹת

The first appears in Amos 5:26 and is perhaps an epithet of Saturn or Adar-Ninip. There is the remote possibility of a connection between this proper name of a foreign divinity and the name of the feast which, as I hold, is first named Sukkoth in a D Code which originates early in the northern kingdom. The same holds true for סִכּוֹת נִנּוּחַ in II Kings 17:30, a deity worshipped by Babylonians in Samaria (Ishtar, wife of Marduk?). Both texts are corrupt and little can be made of them.

VI. The roots $\sqrt{\text{סִכַּח}}$ / $\sqrt{\text{סִכַּח}}$ and $\sqrt{\text{סִכַּח}}$

These roots are included only because they bear resemblance to the roots signifying the sukkah and because, in their meaning of "pour out," "anoint," "make libation," etc., they are descriptive of an action which pertains to the Feast of Sukkoth--namely, the water-libation rites. Whether there is a remote connection between "anointing," $\sqrt{\text{סִכַּח}}$ / $\sqrt{\text{סִכַּח}}$, "to set" or "install" as prince, king $\sqrt{\text{סִכַּח}}$ / $\sqrt{\text{סִכַּח}}$ ^{III}

√יִסַּר, and the Messiah √מִשַּׁח or not, it is at least interesting that the roots for libation and royalty should so clearly resemble the other roots pertaining to the name of the feast itself.

VII. The root √שָׁכַן

The root meaning "to dwell" must be included here for two reasons. First, it is the root appropriate to the Lord's presence--His מִשְׁכָּן, the שְׂכֵינָה, etc. When Solomon dedicates the Temple, he speaks of God's dwelling in thick darkness, לִשְׁכַּן בְּעֲרֵפֶל. When Scripture speaks of God's dwelling, this is the verb to describe it. Second, the dwelling of God is rarely referred to by any form of the verb "to tabernacle," from the sukkah roots. We have listed the metaphorical exceptions--the lion's lair, the clouds of glory, the screened places. Yet the dwelling of God is best described by שָׁכַן. The use of סָכַן etc. is generally confined to men. Israel dwells in booths; God visits Israel as they dwell in booths. God Himself does not normally inhabit the sukkah (but cf. Genesis R. 56:10, R. Berechia).

VIII. The Greek verb σκηνοῶ and the nouns σκηνή, σκήνος, and σκηνοπηγία in the New Testament

Although the Feast of Sukkoth has not been preserved intact by the Christian Church, there are references to

sukkoth in the New Testament that indicate the Church's celebration of the feast at one time. These sources also suggest the causes of the disappearance of the feast and a certain tension that arose between church and synagogue over the issue of the booth.

The noun σκηνή, "tabernacle," is used three times in a predictable context. The incident is the Transfiguration, most likely a Sukkoth incident,¹ at which time Peter suggests building sukkoth for the three transfigured characters. I have no better explanation for Peter's statement than that which Riesenfeld offers; yet I am not entirely satisfied with it either.

On two occasions the sukkah is used to represent the body of man. In Pauline fashion, the sukkah is then something to be cast off and to be replaced with a heavenly body. The references are σκῆνος in II Corinthians 5:1, 4, and II Peter 1:13, 14.

Twice the sukkah (or the verb "to tabernacle") refers to God's presence in the midst of men. In John 1:14, the divine and creative word "became flesh and tabernacled among us." And in the Revelation to John 21:3, it is said, "Behold, the dwelling (tabernacling) of God is with man. He will dwell (tabernacle) with them, and they shall be his people. . .".

¹Cf. H. Riesenfeld, *Jésus Transfiguré* (København: Ejnar Munksgaard, 1947), pp. 256ff., et passim.

In just the opposite way, the sukkah designates man's heavenly habitation in Luke 16:9, and the Revelation to John 12:12 and 13:6. Elsewhere in the Revelation (15:5) the reference is to the heavenly temple and (7:15) to the protective shelter of God's presence. The earthly tabernacle and Temple are indicated by σκηνή (Acts 7:44) and σκηνωμα (Acts 7:46).

On three occasions, reference is made to the sukkah of the Hebrew Bible, two quotes from Amos (Acts 7:43 and 15:6) and one reference to the Feast of Sukkoth by name (John 7:2).

Finally there is the consistent use of the word σκηνή in the Epistle to the Hebrews (with a single exception in 11:9, where it refers to the tents of Abraham). The author of this epistle equates the sukkah or σκηνή, with the Temple. Though his method is Neo-platonic and his explanation of the Temple directed to an audience that seems to know only the general features of the Temple (he is obviously writing to Jewish Christians in the Diaspora, and may well be one himself), his equation of sukkah with Temple is not found elsewhere. Did the Jews of the Diaspora (Christian and other) make such a connection even before the Temple's destruction?

Finally it seems useful to include the one Ante-Nicene Father who uses the image of the sukkah. Methodius (d. c. 311 C.E.) writing on "The Banquet of the Ten

Virgins," testifies to the Jews' building sukkoth of the sort described in the Mishnah. His judgment on the Jewish observance of Leviticus 23 is as follows:

Here the Jews, fluttering about the bare letter of Scripture, like drones about the leaves of herbs, but not about flowers and fruits as the bee, fully believe that these words and ordinances were spoken concerning such a tabernacle as they erect; as if God delighted in those trivial adornments which they, preparing, fabricate from trees, not perceiving the wealth of good things to come. . . .¹

Methodius urges the allegorical interpretation of the legislation by which chastity becomes the chief ornament of the true tabernacle. He equates the true Feast of Tabernacles with the day of resurrection (in the seventh month); and the tabernacle is man's body, which will be set up again on that resurrection day. He would thus have his tabernacle, his body, adorned with good works. The citron is the fruit of faith available in the Church, which the resurrected person must bring on the first day of the final feast before Christ's seat of judgment. The palm branch is attentive meditation upon and study of Scripture; the leafy bough is charity; the willow is righteousness; and the Agnos tree's bough is chastity. The festival-allegorical process of Methodius is interesting. He sees himself, like Israel, escaping the Egypt of this life; and

¹Methodius, The Banquet of the Ten Virgins, in The Ante-Nicene Fathers, ed. by Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson, VI (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1899), p. 344.

coming first to the resurrection, which is the true Feast of Tabernacles, he sets up his previously adorned tabernacle for the judgment of the first day of the feast, and so celebrates with Christ the millenium of rest--the seventh day, the true Sabbath. From the impermanence of the tabernacle he moves upward to the very house of God.

In Methodius' allegory, the sukkah is the body/soul which, on the Feast of Sukkoth, will be set up once more, resurrected. The purpose of life now is so to adorn the sukkah of the body with good works, that the resurrected sukkah (body) may participate in the true rejoicing of the feast.

IX. The sukkoth of Philo and Josephus

Philo interprets the σκηναίς, the tents of Leviticus, in two ways. First they represent a haven from the rigors of the ingathering into which one comes, having completed the harvest, "to seek a more weatherproof mode of life and hope for rest in place of the toils which you endured when labouring on the land."¹

A second significance of the booth is its value as a remembrance of the journeyings of the Exodus. The moral message in this instance is to remember, for the sake of virtue and gratitude, one's former poverty even in the midst of one's wealth.

¹Philo, De Spec. Leg., II: 207, p. 217.

Josephus, as we have mentioned in the text, regards the sukkoth as tents set up in apprehension of the winter's cold by the people of the Exodus. Josephus seems to say that once established in the promised land, the sukkoth of the wilderness were to give way to the pilgrimage to the Temple in their metropolis.¹

¹Josephus, Ant., III:x,4.

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