

myths', and linked with nourishment 'on the words of the faith and of the good doctrine' (1 Tim. 4: 6-8). Faith (personal trust) and *the* faith (the body of truths, academically appreciated, which form the grounds of personal trust) are inextricably linked; so that, in succeeding verses (1 Tim. 6: 11, 12), come commands to 'aim at faith' (as well as 'righteousness, godliness, love, steadfastness and gentleness') and to 'fight the good fight of *the* faith' Timothy must 'do the work of an evangelist' (2 Tim. 4: 5) in communicating the gospel, while remaining an academically irreproachable workman who 'rightly handles the word of truth', or, as Arndt and Gingrich suggest, 'guides the word of truth along a straight path' (2 Tim. 2: 15).

This whole approach faithfully mirrors the teaching method of Jesus. His training of the disciples was far from being non-academic. If the primary aim of teaching theology is to educate rather than indoctrinate, then Jesus was a theological lecturer *par excellence*. It was His custom to answer questions by raising others. Even the full implications of the parables were not immediately obvious, and we hear of special supplementary teaching seminars when He further unravelled the meaning of His public ministry. During these times with their Lord, the disciples' minds were stretched, not strait-jacketed. But this academic

tuition was not conducted in an artificially 'world-tight' atmosphere. What they learned, they were encouraged to communicate, as teaching and practice sometimes coincided and sometimes alternated. (It surely cannot be long before more ministerial training follows the example of colleges of education in building into its academic pattern complementary opportunities for field work.) Devotionally, too, there was no hiatus. Teaching passed naturally into worship, and Paul is only reflecting his Lord's teaching methods when he finds doctrine leading naturally into doxology.

These, then, are some of the problems of integration, and a little of the light Scripture throws upon them. There are no 'pat' solutions. It is really more a case of being aware than of mastering a technique — crossing a mine-field rather than storming a barbed-wire entanglement. But no Christian student of theology can afford to take full integration of this kind for granted, or to belittle its importance. Anything less is virtually a denial of the biblical function of theology, which is as inextricably bound up with worship and proclamation as the gospel itself is involved in the total message of divine revelation. It was the academic theologian, James Denney, who wrote: 'I haven't the faintest interest in any theology which doesn't help us to evangelize.'

The Missionary View of the Old Testament

At the 1968 meeting of the Scottish Tyndale Fellowship at Dunblane the theme for study was 'The History and Theology of Mission'. The following paper was read by the REV. JOHN R. PECK, who is a tutor at the Bible Training Institute in Glasgow.

There is not a large body of literature on a missionary theology of the Old Testament. H. H. Rowley's two books *Israel's Mission to the World* (1939) and *The Missionary Message of the Old Testament* (1945) are outstanding contributions, and these deal more with the content of the message than the nature of the very idea of mission itself. This

article is an attempt to trace this idea to its theological roots in the Old Testament. We shall not, perhaps, expect to find the fully-fledged, explicit urge to communicate a message as is built into the New Testament *euangelion*, but the foundational, germinal ideas can be expected there, whose logical and practical development would most naturally correspond with what we find in the New Testament.

For our purpose the Old Testament can be treated as a whole. There is, of course, a development of thought, resulting from an unfolding revelation; but the purpose here is to consider the subject as preparatory to the more specific theology of mission to be seen in the New Testament. New Testament

missionary ideas are not simply a linear development from the Old Testament, but come to a large extent from its total impact upon the life of Judaism in the first century AD, and of the Christian church which was cradled in it. Even if we were to consider the Old Testament developmentally, I believe the particular ideas dealt with here can be reasonably demonstrated to belong naturally to Israel at all stages of her religious history. For example, in the matter of universalism her early faith was not nearly so territorially, racially circumscribed as some scholars have suggested, nor her intertestamental life so fanatically exclusive as, for instance, Dobbie asserts in his article on the subject in *International Review of Missions*, April 1962.

The main Old Testament ideas germane to our subject will be dealt with here as follows: 1. The unique universality of Israel's idea of Yahweh as Creator. 2. The revelatory function of man as he was created. 3. The special position of Israel before God. 4. The implications of Israel's position for her greatest representatives. 5. Aspects of her Messianic hope which anticipate New Testament missionary ideas.

YAHWEH AS UNIVERSAL CREATOR

In the austere narrative of Genesis, Yahweh is presented as the only God. By contrast, the Babylonian account tells of Apsu as first of the gods, but Tiamat is a consort, and progenitor of the gods. But Babylon belongs to Marduk, who rules by appointment from an assembly of gods (similarly Molech and Chemosh for Moab and Ammon, etc.). Furthermore, the deities of Babylon were personalized elements of what Genesis 1 refers to as the creation of Yahweh.

The utter isolation of Yahweh's Creatorhood leads necessarily to His Lordship equally exercised over all nations, as the rest of the Old Testament affirms repeatedly (Gn. 14: 19-22; 2 Ch. 16: 9; Is. 10: 15; Ps. 103: 19-22; 104: 4; Pr. 21: 1; Dn. 4: 35) and assumes continually, as in the story of the Flood and of Babel. Von Rad remarks that there 'the idea expresses with a clarity unparalleled in the ancient world the thought of the unity of mankind given in creation . . . so in her beliefs about Creation there was nothing that distinguished Israel from the nations' (*Old Testament Theology*, pp. 157-164).

The idea continues: Abraham is allocated a foreign territory (Gn. 12: 1, 7) and the Abrahamic covenant said that all nations would worship Abraham's God (Gn. 12: 1 (J); Gn. 7: 41 (P); Gn. 22: 15 (E)); heathen kings are reproved on his account (Gn. 20; cf. 26: 6; Ps. 82); Egypt's gods, as well as nature itself, are subdued by the plagues (Ex. 12: 12; cf., for Israel's task of resisting other gods, Ex. 24: 24 (E) and Ex. 15: 14ff. (J)). And the purpose of this is expressly stated to be that of showing Yahweh as 'Lord of the whole earth' (Ex. 7: 17 (J); Ex. 6: 7 (E); Ex. 8: 22 (P)).

The same idea is seen in the judgment on the Philistines' use of the ark (1 Sa. 4-6); it was a favourite subject of the Psalms (82: 8; 93; 94; 96-100; 105, etc.) and it was implicit in the way that the prophets saw themselves called to act for Yahweh towards other nations (e.g. anointing Hazael, 1 Ki. 19: 15).

The writing prophets develop the same theme, probably on such Deuteronomic texts as Deuteronomy 32: 21; 32: 8, 9. So God whistles for the nations like hunting dogs (Is. 5: 26); Assyria is a weapon of His (Is. 10: 5), His hired razor (Is. 7: 20). The universalism of Isaiah 40-66, questioned by some scholars (N. H. Snaith, *Studies in Old Testament Prophecy* (1950); P. A. H. de Boer, *Second Isaiah's Message* (1956)), is surely already only a logical development of all this, and is expressed clearly even in the earlier Isaiah in 17: 7: 'In that day men who have treated Israel brutally and worshipped idols regard their Maker and look to the holy One of Israel.'

But Isaiah is not unique: Amos, Jeremiah, Habakkuk, Daniel (chapter 4), Ezekiel (chapter 30) and, outstandingly, Jonah demonstrate that the idea was common currency, if rather difficult to pass on. We are thus presented in the Old Testament with a God before whom, in some cases, all nations, including Israel, are equal, and who is determined to exercise His supremacy over them.

MAN'S FUNCTION AS YAHWEH'S CREATION

The creation account has its special way of regarding man. He was not like the rest of living creatures, enjoined merely to self-perpetuation. He is not merely a plastic version of a mental image of Anu with a job to do. His creation in the divine image means that it was deliberately made possible to find in Adam some idea of what God was like. The

gift of 'dominion' meant that this idea was to be conveyed to the created world. Man's Fall resulted in natural disorder (Gn. 3: 15ff.), and (whatever we take to have been the sources of these chapters!) the story moves inescapably on to a history of God at work to counteract the disaster.

Other references to this doctrine are sparse, but Psalm 8 testifies to its continuance, and it is the background to the prevailing Old Testament doctrines first, that man ideally is to be like God (Lv. 19: 2) and second, that man is responsible to God for what he does on the earth. There is an eschatological aspect, too, in the vision of a restoration of nature accompanying man's acknowledgment of Yahweh (anticipated in miracles of redemption; Is. 55: 12f.; 65: 17 with 66: 18 and 59: 18f.). Even the dramatic appeals of the prophets to nature (e.g. Is. 1: 1ff.) seem to support this Old Testament idea that man was created with a mission, to reveal the character and Lordship of God in and to nature.

OLD TESTAMENT CONCEPT OF A NATION CHOSEN FOR A MISSION

Von Rad and others have pointed out that the call of Abraham is a sequel to the repeated failure of man to serve God. Thus, Israel's origin lies in an election which was redemptive in character. Her ancestral head participated in a covenant that 'nations shall bless themselves in him' and it can be shown that Old Testament history depicts God as determined to use Israel as a means of Self-revelation to the nations. (In the nature of the case this inevitably spoke of judgment, but as Snaith has made so clear, this carries implicates of salvation; see especially Ps. 98: 2f. = Is. 45: 22; 52: 10. As often, Isaiah makes explicit what other prophets imply.)

Rowley connects election and mission in commenting on Isaiah 49: 3ff.: 'the mission is based on the election' (*The Rediscovery of the Old Testament*, p. 138). This seems to come to a head in Isaiah's Servant of Yahweh. Although W. Zimmerli, in Kittel's *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, V, p. 669, rejects the missionary conception of the Servant, Mowinckel says that the portrait 'clearly denotes some kind of active missionary calling' (*He that Cometh*, p. 207). Israel is thus a nation 'sent' among the nations with a mission from God. The outworking of this can be seen in three ways:

a. *Holiness in Israel: the principle of*

conservation for the task. Isaiah (43: 21) quotes Yahweh as claiming Israel for Himself: '... that they might declare my praise'. Compromise dishonours God among the nations (Lv. 20: 3; Ezk. 39: 7; 36: 17ff.; cf. Am. 2: 7; Je. 34: 16; even Ps. 23: 3b). (It is noticeable, in passing, that Israel's culture could accept some of her neighbours' religious behaviour without a qualm; but some of it was firmly repudiated. Study of the principles behind this might prove instructive for modern missionary policy.)

Israel has a central role among the nations: restored to her distinctive place, she will be the focus of the restoration of all peoples to the law and true worship (Je. 3: 17; Ezr. 6: 10; Ezk. 33: 9; Is. 2: 2, cf. Dt. 4: 6 and 8: 16). So her choice out of the nations implies negatively a concern for them.

b. *Receptiveness in Israel: the principle of universalism.* Von Rad quotes Dahl appositely here: 'A thorough-going belief in election paradoxically presupposes a universalistic view of history.' Within Israel provision was always found for the foreigner; he was deliberately given equal rights in law (Ex. 12: 49 (E)). Rahab and Ruth, though foreigners, came within the covenant. Both Jeremiah (12: 16; 16: 19) and Zechariah (2: 11) offered a way of repentance for individuals of other nations. Above all the covenant principle, as a bound not essentially local or racial, was potentially universal, making possible the vision of a covenant of the heart (Je. 31: 31, etc).

There seem to be cases, though rare, of the idea of Israel sharing divine blessings on equal terms with other nations (Is. 20 especially, and perhaps even less than equal, Mal. 1: 11). The most interesting example of this universalism is the book of Jonah, where the conflict with exclusive nationalism is played out dramatically. Jonah is hardly a missionary of the New Testament type: he goes forth, not on principle, but under specific instructions; Nineveh's repentance is not primarily an individual response, and there is no effort to incorporate Nineveh into a redemptive community. But the principle of 'outreach' is patent, and even nature is involved ('cattle', Jon. 4: 11). Here, almost uniquely in the Old Testament (see Ps. 145, especially verses 8f.), is briefly unveiled the divine compassion for all men which figures so largely in the mission of Jesus.

Cross-sectioning these two poles of the outworking of Israel's mission is a

similar polarity in the method of its fulfilment. There are a few references to the Gentiles having Yahweh's blessing brought to them. But the bulk of the testimony speaks of them being brought into the elect community (a principle not without significance for missionary method). Rowley says that Gentile conversion is a 'corollary of the prestige of the Jews . . . which is still further enhanced' by it (*The Rediscovery of the Old Testament*, p. 139). But this is surely an overstatement; the dominant idea is the glory of Yahweh's name. A close discussion of the subject is given by R. Davidson in 'Universalism in Second Isaiah', *Scottish Journal of Theology*, June 1963.

c. *The concern of individual Israelites for God's reputation, His 'name'*. This point is dealt with under the fourth of our main headings.

IMPLICATIONS OF ISRAEL'S POSITION

Men of prophetic insight saw clearly that not only the spiritual but also the material welfare of Israel affected God's reputation, even when Israel languished under divine chastisement. It has been suggested that Jonah felt that sparing Nineveh called in question God's Self-consistency. Certainly this theme appears unexpectedly often. Moses' intercession is an obvious case (Ex. 32: 9 (E) and Nu. 14 (J)).

References like Nu. 20: 14 suggest that Yahweh's fame was considerable, making the vow of Nu. 14: 21 a realistic possibility. But Abraham's response to the king of Sodom (Gn. 14: 23, cf. 13: 17) implies a similar concern. Joshua also sees this (Jos. 7: 10, after Ai) and Habakkuk, too (1: 13, cf. Job; and Ps. 73 on the general principles of theodicy. Other references are Pss. 58; 74: 10; 79: 9f.; Je. 14: 7, 21.) Isaiah cites God's concern likewise for His name (48: 11, etc.). The best of Israel's spirits knew that whether the nation cared or not, the fate of Israel in some sense determined God's reputation, and this was of paramount importance.

Before considering the last section, the significance of Israel's possession of a written revelation is worth noting. This fact, of records preserved for others and available for scrutiny, a revelation conserved for communication, might lead us to ask whether there could be such a thing as a missionary religion without a Book. The later existence of the synagogue for its exposition, and of the LXX as interpreting it to the *gōyyim*

shows the true instinct of intertestamental Judaism here. She was by no means so exclusive and 'non-missionary' as some common notions suggest. (See Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible*, revised ed., on 'Proselyte' and Martin Achard's reply to Prof. Dobbie in *IRM*, October 1962. Van Unnik (in *HDB*) asserts that a new proselytizing urge appeared in Judaism in the third century BC.)

OLD TESTAMENT MESSIANISM

A unique feature of the Old Testament is its theological conception of history as moving to a *teleion*. That Old Testament Messianism had a universalistic reference goes without saying, and is, as we have seen, implicit in the Abrahamic covenant; such visions as in Isaiah 40: 5 have lesser expression elsewhere. But one aspect of Messianism has particular significance for the missionary vision.

There is a line of thought in the Old Testament which envisages Israel as one day becoming a nation of prophets. Moses' ideal and longing is on record for later Judaism to ponder (Nu. 11: 29). Its possibility of realization is implied in the fact that the prophetic office could never be confined to a single group, nation, class, or school. Ezekiel hints at such a prospect (39: 29). Jeremiah looked for the prophetic message to belong to all Israelites (31: 33f.) and it is explicit in the Pentecostal prophecy of Joel 2.

Now supremely in Israel the prophets were people sent with a mission to others: in that sense they were missionaries (Ex. 3; Is. 6; Je. 1: 1, etc.). They bore a divine message of judgment, mercy, redemption: they were preachers. Elsewhere in the Old Testament the unit of election is the nation; but here alone we find that idea of *individual* election and mission which reaches its climax in the Servant concept of Second Isaiah. If a missionary is an individual appointed and sent out with a message, then the Old Testament missionary vision is of an age when all Israelites would be missionaries (cf. Is. 66: 19)!

Out of this study one dominating idea emerges. It is an idea of such dimensions that a theology of the Old Testament might fruitfully be constructed upon it. It is, simply expressed, the glory of the name of Yahweh. Put in human terms, this becomes liable to misunderstanding for it means that the Old Testament confronts us with a God who, in the face of human sin, is passionately concerned with the preserva-

tion of His reputation in His creation.

Sin misrepresents God: the serpent said 'Did God say . . .?' In man's history after the Fall, God works for the renewed manifestation of His glory and the restoration of His name, choosing human messengers for the task. The divine purpose, 'they shall know that I am the Lord', runs like a refrain through the Old Testament. The glory, 'the physical or ethical manifestation of the greatness of God' (*HDB*, p. 322), refers on the one hand to God's true nature, but on the other hand to the way in which His creation knows Him — His 'character', but in the added sense of reputation.

Alongside this, referring less to the actual content of that reputation, is the idea of the name of God. The Old Testament represents God as taking the

matter of His reputation with deadly seriousness. This smacks at first thought uncomfortably of human pomposity. But this is because man, a sinning creature, in doing this, is attempting that which is only proper to God. Indeed it could only be possible for that one great act whereby He as Man 'made Himself of no reputation' (Phil. 2: 7, AV) to be redemptive, if in every other realm of creation that reputation were beyond question. Brunner tellingly points out, 'If God does not take Himself seriously, who then can take anything seriously?'

This, then, is the fundamental, regulating concern of missionary activity as it emerges from the Old Testament: 'We have received grace and apostleship . . . for the sake of his name among all the nations' (Rom. 1: 5).

'The Fool Hath Said . . .'

The challenge posed to Christian faith by the writings of modern philosophers who practise linguistic analysis is a very real one. MR A. J. F. DULLEY was moved to write this piece of philosophical apologetic after reading Paul Helm's review of Antony Flew, *God and Philosophy* (The Christian Graduate, December, 1967).

'The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God' (Ps. 14: 1). There was a time when Christian thinkers believed that he could be shaken out of his folly by invincible arguments. Today the traditional proofs of God's existence are no longer thought cogent, even among Christians, and the cry is not merely that there is no God but that there can be no God. That is to say, the apologist's problem has changed from finding evidence of something to correspond with a concept that both he and his opponent claim to understand, to trying to convince that opponent that the word 'God' has any significance at all. For, it is claimed, statements about God are either self-contradictory or else so vague as to say nothing at all.

One prong of this Morton's Fork has been stated vividly by Professor Wis-

dom in his fable of the Invisible Gardener.¹ Two explorers come upon a patch of bush more orderly than the rest. One suggests that there must be a gardener who tends it. The other is sceptical. They search for him but cannot see him, listen for him but cannot hear him, watch for him but he never comes. As each line of inquiry fails, the man who believes that there is a gardener is forced to modify his assertion: he comes, but rarely, and he is invisible, inaudible, and so on. At no point can he be compelled to deny the content of his assertion becomes less and less until in the end it is a mere form of words. The analogy with some defences of religious belief is obvious. We can, if we like, insulate our faith from criticism by progressively qualifying our claims in the face of objections, but in the end we shall find that it has 'softly and silently melted away'.

HYPOTHESIS OR TAUTOLOGY?

If, on the other hand, we are prepared to dig ourselves in and defend our beliefs against all comers, then we expose ourselves to the other attack.² We claim that God knows everything, loves us always, and so on. What sense are we to attach to such claims? We assert them as true without exception, but,