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The Kingship Motif in the Near Eastern Cultures and in the Psalms

Albert E. Glock

Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, ir_glocka@csl.edu

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THE KINGSHIP MOTIF IN THE NEAR EASTERN
CULTURES AND IN THE PSALMS

A Thesis Presented to the Faculty
of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis,
Department of Exegetical Theology
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Bachelor of Divinity

by

Albert E. Glock

June 1950

Approved by:

Kellen R. Toehs
Advisor

Alfred von Rohr Sauer
Reader

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The precise nature of the problem which this paper seeks to define will require preliminary elucidation. Also the methodology which has been employed deserves some note of clarification. The method will be found to be implicit in the problem.

Recent Old Testament scholarship has sought to delineate the historical, cultural and religious context that provoked the songs in the Hebrew Psalter.¹ This attempt has been complicated by the very nature of the thinking that created the Psalms for it is a mode of thinking quite foreign to our critical spirit.² The stylized language of much of

¹Elmer A. Leslie, The Psalms: Translated and Interpreted in the Light of Hebrew Life and Worship (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, c. 1949). This has been the latest and as far as we know the first serious attempt by an American to cope with the problem in a comprehensive treatise. Mr. Leslie is a devoted student of both Nowinckel and Gunkel. His book is virtually a summary of the life work of these two continental scholars.

²Branislaw Malinowski, Myth in Primitive Psychology (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co. Ltd., 1926), passim and especially, F. H. Gaster, "Divine Kingship in the Ancient Near East: A Review Article," Review of Religion IX (March, 1945), 267-275, where the author points out the fallacy of our superimposing our western categories of thinking onto the primitive mind and its creations. Kerygma und Mythos: Ein Theologisches Gespräch Herausgeber, Hans Werner Bartsch. (Hamburg: Reich & Heldrich, Evangelischer Verlag, 1948), pp. 15-61, is an important application of the mythos problem to the New Testament.

the Psalter has increased the difficulties of dating. Dating, however, has not been too important since the real effort has been to seek out the worship atmosphere in which the Psalms were created and sung.

The problem which is presented, the problem of kingship in the Psalms, is not a theme that rises to the top in the Old Testament with any prominence.³ Yet it will be noticed that throughout the Near East the king played a decidedly important role in community and national life. The Hebrew Psalms, however, are not without distinct traces of a kingship motif. The natural question that results from this dialectic is: What is the relation of the kingship motif in the Psalms to the more prominent traces of the motif in Babylonia, Egypt and Canaan? To establish the problem we must first show that a relation does exist. No attempt will be made to solve the problem raised by the fact of a re-

³Some have called on 2 Samuel 5:3-17 or 1 Samuel 16:1-13 to substantiate the claim that also in Israel the well-being of the nation as a social unit is bound up with the life of the king. Also 2 Samuel 6 and 1 Kings 6 have been cited to show that the king's interest in the national worship of Jahweh exercised a normative influence upon succeeding monarchs. In both cases the argumentation has serious lacks. For one, it is nowhere, not even in the Psalms, dedicated to the king, (Pss. 18. 20. 45. 61. 63. 69), indicated that the king was at all identified with Jahweh. (cf. 2 Kings 5:5-7). In the other Near Eastern cultures both king and high-god were numinous creatures. This contra Sir James Frazer, "Adonis, Attis, Osiris: Studies in the History of Oriental Religion," The Golden Bough, V (London: Macmillan & Co., Ltd., 1914), 15-27.

lationship. Our evidence, however, will permit us certain suggestions in the direction of further defining the nature of the relationship.

Honesty compels the Christian investigator to declare his theological presuppositions before he presumes to investigate a body of material. By the same token of honesty the investigator should be conscious of his presuppositions as he pursues his task. The perspective in this paper will be conditioned by the simple Christian formula: Kurios Christos!⁴ This paper proceeds from the premise that only the revelation of God in Jesus Christ can give the right perspective for understanding the Old Testament. The Message of the Old Testament is not merely an historical fact conditioned by time but it is also an essential part of the entire divine work of salvation. Since, however, this work of salvation has assumed the form of history, the task of investigation is essentially historico-critical in that it seeks to understand a portion of Scripture as the word spoken in and to a definite historical dilemma.⁵

⁴"Jesus Christ is Lord." Important here is that the Lordship of Jesus Christ is meant as an absolutely unique Lordship. The primitive witness is polemical. It takes its stand against the false lords and affirms that Christ is Lord over all other lords. Ephesians 1:21; Colossians 1:16; 2:10. Also cf. the significant book by W. A. Visser 't Hooft, The Kingship of Christ: An Interpretation of Recent European Theology (New York: Harper & Brothers, c. 1948), pp. 65-88.

⁵Otto Proksch, Theologie des Alten Testaments (Gütersloh: C. Bertelsmann Verlag, 1949), pp. 1-18. Walter Eichrodt, "Theology Today," VII (April, 1950), 15-25, is also a statement of a clean Christian methodology.

The task in this paper is not primarily one of interpretation. For if it were, and if the presuppositions were taken seriously, the issue of the Kingship of Christ in the New Testament would necessarily have to be confronted. The paper is limited, however, to simply setting up in juxtaposition significant parallels in the kingship motif in four Near Eastern cultures in an effort to point out a relationship. The precise nature of that relationship remains the vital problem.

Throughout the paper the term "ritual pattern" is employed and at the same time a careful distinction is made between myth and ritual. It may be well to explain these terms briefly in advance. The ritual pattern is based on an analysis of the ritual of the Babylonian Akitu Festival⁶ and can be briefly summarized as follows:

1. The dramatic representation of death and resurrection of the god.
2. The recitation or symbolic representation of the myth of creation.
3. The ritual combat in which the triumph of the god over his enemies was depicted.
4. The sacred marriage.

⁶Myth and Ritual: Essays on the Myth and Ritual of the Hebrews in Relation to the Culture Pattern of the Ancient Near East, edited by S. H. Hooke (London: Oxford University Press, 1933), p. 8.

5. The triumphal procession in which the king played the part of the god followed by a train of lesser gods or visiting deities.

The distinction between myth and ritual revolves around a definition of both terms. Myth, as we shall use it in this paper, is a mode of reasoning, of thinking, which lives in a totally personal world where nothing is ever neuter but either masculine or feminine. Usually a myth is a story, a direct expression of its subject matter; it is not an explanation in satisfaction of a scientific interest, but a narrative resurrection of a primeval reality.⁷ Ritual, on the other hand, is a dramatic re-enactment of the struggles, hopes, joys that surge through the fibre of the myth story. In order to meet the needs of every day (to keep sun and moon doing their duty, to ward off disease, etc.) the primitives developed a set of customary rites directed toward the pursuit of happiness.⁸

⁷H. Frankfort and others, The Intellectual Adventure of Ancient Man: An Essay on Speculative Thought in the Ancient Near East (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, c. 1946), pp. 3-27; 363-388. The old classic, Andrew Lang, Myth, Ritual and Religion (Revised edition. London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1913), 29-49, is blinded by the fancy of progressive evolution which sets up our standards of thinking as the absolute criteria.

⁸S.H. Hooke, The Origins of Early Semitic Ritual (London: Oxford University Press, 1936), pp. 1ff. Paul Radin, Primitive Religion: Its Nature and Origin (New York: The Viking Press, c. 1937), pp. 289-306, is a helpful and important study of the ritual drama among the Zuni of New Mexico.

CHAPTER II

BABYLONIAN AKITU FESTIVAL

The lesser known name of the Babylonian Akitu festival is Zagmuk which means "beginning of the year." ¹The Zagmuk is the great festival of Bel (Marduk) celebrated at the beginning of the year at the spring equinox and lasting for eleven days. ² The term Akitu ³ is derived from a special part of the festival procession of the gods to the "house of the Akitu," to a building outside the city walls. ⁴ At Babylon, and in some other cities, the festival was held in the first days of the month of Nisan, but at Erech and Ur there were two celebrations, the first in Nisan and the second in Tishri,

¹Svend Aage Pallis, The Babylonian Akitu Festival (Copenhagen: n.p., 1926), p. 12.

²Stephen Herbert Langdon, The Mythology of all Races: Semitic, V (Boston: Archaeological Institute of America, Marshal Jones Co., 1931), 156.

³Pallis, op. cit., pp. 18-43, for a complete philological investigation of the term Akitu. He concludes that (1) it is a proper name, that (2) it is a Sumerian loan word and that its definition will never be found through Semitic etymology, and that (3) its best translation is "New Year's Feast."

⁴C. J. Gadd, Myth and Ritual: Essays on the Myth and Ritual of the Hebrews in Relation to the Culture Pattern of the Ancient Near East, edited by S. H. Hooke (London: Oxford University Press, 1933), p. 46. This is also the view of Langdon, op. cit., p. 316 and Henri Frankfort, Kingship and the Gods: A Study of Ancient Near Eastern Religion as the Integration of Society and Nature (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, c. 1946), pp. 329f.

i.e., the first and seventh month, at the beginning of each half of the year.⁵

Before we examine the Akitu festival in more detail it may be helpful to describe the schedule of ritual activities in order to picture the event as a unit:⁶

Nisan 1 - 4. Preparations and purifications. The Ennema Elish was recited by the high priest after the "little meal" at the end of the fourth day.

Nisan 5. The humiliation of the king. The people "descend"⁷ to revive the suffering god. The city is astir during the search for Marduk.⁸

Dr. T. H. Gaster has suggested that the Bit Akitu was a temporary (collapsible) enclosure comparable to the Hebrew Succoth.

⁵Pallis, op. cit., p. 8. The Akitu festival is known to have been celebrated at Assur, Babylon, Ur, Erech, Harran, Dilbah, Nineveh, Arbela. Ibid., pp. 19-24.

⁶Frankfort, op. cit., p. 317f. There are many other excellent summaries of these rites, e. g., Langdon, op. cit., pp. 315-325; C. J. Gadd, Myth and Ritual, pp. 46-59; Morris Jastrow, The Religion of Babylonia and Assyria (Boston: Ginn & Co., c. 1895), pp. 676-682; and S. N. Langdon, The Babylonian Epic of Creation: Restored from the Recently Recovered Tablets of Assur. Transcription, Translation and Commentary (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1923), pp. 21-27.

⁷Just as Ishtar descended to Tamasuz so the people "descended" to the imprisoned Marduk. S. N. Kramer, Sumerian Mythology: A Study of the Spiritual and Literary Achievement in the 3rd Millennium B.C. (Philadelphia: The American Philological Society, 1944), pp. 86-96 for Inanna's descent.

⁸S. H. Hoeko, "The Babylonian New Year Festival," Journal of the Manchester Egyptian and Oriental Society, XIII (1927), 34.

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- Nisan 6. Nebo arrives by barge at Babylon accompanied by many other gods. He is the son of Marduk, scribe of the assembly of the gods. He takes up residence in Esida, his chapel in E-sagila, the Marduk temple.
- Nisan 7. Nebo frees Marduk from the "mountain" of the Netherworld.⁹
- Nisan 8. The first determination of destiny. From the assembled gods Marduk receives a "destiny beyond compare."¹⁰
- Nisan 9. The king leads the triumphal procession to the Bit Akitu. "He represents the participation of the community in the victory which is taking place in nature and renews Marduk's destruction of Chaos."¹¹

⁹C. J. Gadd, Myth and Ritual, pp. 61f., where he suggests that Nebo is an "embryo champion." "Marduk who was confined in the mountain." This expression is the Mesopotamian formula for "death" of a god. Death is being temporarily overcome by the miseries of the land of the dead. Frankfort, op. cit., p. 321.

¹⁰Alexander Heidel, The Babylonian Genesis: The Story of Creation (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, c. 1942), Tablet IV:6.

¹¹Frankfort, op. cit., p. 318.

Nisan 10. Marduk celebrates his victory over Ti'amat with the gods at a feast in the Bit Akitu. There follows the consummation of his marriage with the goddess.¹²

Nisan 11. Second determination of destiny. The gods assemble to determine the destiny of society in the coming year.

Nisan 12. The gods return to their temples throughout the land.

These few but essential features constitute all that we know of the hemerology of the Akitu festival at Babylon. Important for our understanding of the relevance of this ritual to the ritual pattern of Near Eastern cultures is a discussion of (1) the Emma Elish recited by the high priest on the eve of Nisan 4; (2) the humiliation of the king in E-sagila on Nisan 5; (3) the cult drama of Nisan 5-8; (4) the procession of the gods to Bit Akitu; and (5) the determination of destinies.

¹²Cfr. ibid., p. 330, where Frankfort contends that the sacred marriage was performed in E-sagila and not in the Bit Akitu as Pallis suggests. Pallis, op. cit., p. 198. The nature and purpose of the ἱερός γάμος has been the subject of much discussion. It seems clear that mythopoetic logic explains the ἱερός γάμος to us Western rationalists as neither a cultic act nor a symbol but as a very real event in nature. The immediate consequence of this "event in nature" was the restoration of the fertility of fields, of flocks and men, after the sterility of winter or summer. H. and H. A. Frankfort, The Intellectual Adventure of Ancient Man: An Essay on Speculative Thought in the Ancient Near East (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, c. 1946), pp. 10-26 for a valuable insight into "the logic of mythopoetic thought."

(1) The Enuma Elish.

The world was created out of turmoil; the vernal season seems to share something in this turmoil.¹³ Perhaps it was because the Babylonian priests noted this similarity that the Enuma Elish was recited in its entirety in the temple by the high priest on the evening of Nisan 4.¹⁴ A recital of the achievements of Marduk in his combat with the forces of chaos increased the powers of all favorable powers (wills) to subdue the hazards which had led to the imprisonment of the forces that generated fertility in the earth. This is stated precisely in a ritual commentary on the New Year's festival first published by Eimearn in 1926:

Enuma Elish, which is recited and which they sing before Bel (Marduk) in the month of Nisan; it is because he was bound...¹⁵

Mr. C. J. Gadd of the British Museum, in an effort to discern intelligent purpose in this recitation of Enuma Elish suggests that it was to have a magical virtue.

¹³S. H. Hooke, Myth and Ritual, p. 9.

¹⁴A. J. Wensinck, "The Semitic New Year and the Origin of Eschatology," Acta Orientalia I (1923), 169. "... Not only is each New Year a memorial of the creation but it is a repetition of it, and the creation itself is regarded as a kind of New Year. Indeed, the last expression is the right one. New Year belongs to cosmogony, New Year and Creation are the reflection one of the other."

¹⁵Langdon, Babylonian Epic of Creation, p. 41, line 34.

"...the recitation of Enuma Elish suggests that it was to bring about those triumphs and the annual benefits for which they stood."¹⁶ The epic then was part of the means employed to release Marduk from captivity in the Netherworld.

Stephen Langdon, however, posits a different view when he says that "...the Epic of Creation is a solar myth and intimately connected with the spring sun, whose return from the region of darkness was celebrated by a long festival at the beginning of the year."¹⁷ Langdon's totally different position is obviously the result of his isolation of the Enuma Elish as a piece of belles lettres. Though Gadd over-emphasizes the magical powers of all Babylonian mythical literature, there certainly is a sound core of plausibility to his explanation. Langdon's view is decidedly antiquated and can only be associated with the very earliest vernal ritual.

On the other hand, Pallis seems to be nearer the truth: "Enuma Elish is a cult legend, a free theologico-poetical treatment of the cult myth reflecting the cult acts of the

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C. J. Gadd, Myth and Ritual, p. 62; also Sir James Frazer, The Dying God (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1935), p. 111. "It seems probable that the whole myth of creation was annually recited at the great spring festival as a charm to dispel the storms and the floods of winter and to hasten the coming of summer." This is substantially the view of H. Zimmern, "Creation," Encyclopedia Biblica I, edited by T. K. Cheyne and J. S. Black (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1899), col. 941.

17S. H. Langdon, op. cit., p. 20.

Akitu festival."¹⁸ In other words, the myth developed as a plausible explanation of the rites of the cult, a sort of etiological myth.

The ritual pattern reflected in Enuma Elish is that which was common to all the Near East, the central feature of which was the importance of the king for the well-being and prosperity of the community. The ancient ritual is not a little dimmed by the literary polish applied to the Epic as we have it in a 7th century B.C. recension. Yet the combat motif strongly persists in the dramatic duel between Marduk and Ti'amat and company (Tablet IV:64-135).¹⁹ The fact of the creation²⁰ of the world (Tablet IV: 135-146) and man (Tablet VI:1-34), the determination of destinies (Tablet VI:35-46) and the establishment of a world order (Tablet V: 1-22) stand out boldly as important elements in the ritual conception of the essential importance of the king for the well-being of the state and more especially for the average cult participant, the immediate community pattern.

¹⁸Svend Aage Pallas, op. cit., p. 192.

¹⁹All the references made here to Enuma Elish are based on the translation by Heidel, op. cit.

²⁰A. M. Hocart, Kingship (London: Oxford University Press, 1927), pp. 189-203. According to Hocart creation myths are always reminiscent of creation ceremonies. In summary he says, "The complete creation ceremony then is an extensive system of rites which includes the building up of the cosmic mound, the altar-tumulus, the planting of the sacred tree, the repelling of the hostile powers, the installation of the king, the queen,

(2) The Humiliation of the King before Marduk.²¹

Nisan 5. The rites for the day are well under way. The king has not yet appeared but a prayer for his safety has just been offered to Marduk. The king now enters the temple of E-sagila for the first time. He is ushered in by priests who instantly disappear. The king is alone before Marduk. Soon the high priest appears and snatches away from the king his regal paraphernalia: scepter, ring, scimitar, crown. These he places upon a stool before Marduk. The high priest proceeds to strike the king on the cheek and pulling his ears, forces him to kneel before Marduk. In his humiliation the king pleads innocent in what has been called a "negative confession,"

I have not sinned, O Lord of the lands, I have not
 been ungrateful of thy godhead,
 I have not destroyed Babylon, I have not commanded
 her ruin,
 I have not shaken E-sagila, her rites have I not
 forgotten,
 I have not smitten the cheek of the people in my
 charge...nor caused their humiliation.
 I have thought for Babylon, I have not beaten down
 her walls.²²

and his vassals, and the mystical taking possession of the essence of the earth and all it bears for the benefit of the community," pp. 201f.

²¹Ivan Engnell, Studies in Divine Kingship in the Ancient Near East (Upsalla, 1943), p. 33, where he says "In the New Year Festival the role of the god is mimic-dramatically impersonated by the king, who undergoes the symbolic death - the 'humiliating' or 'suffering' of the king - performs in gestures, etc. the god's fight with and triumph over the chaos-powers, is reinstated..."

²²Gadd's translation, Myth and Ritual, p. 53.

Satisfied with the king's display of humility, the high priest replied with a message of comfort and blessing from Marduk:

Do not fear...what Marduk has spoken...
He (will hear) thy prayer. He will increase thy
dominion....
Heighten thy royalty....²³

The high priest thereupon returned to the king his royal insignia.²⁴

What is the meaning of this tortuous scene. It seems quite clear that this act of confession prepared the king to act as leader during the rest of the festival. Also, the ritual pattern illustrated here should not be overlooked. The humiliation of the king brought him into harmony with the conditions in which the great ceremony of renewal began.²⁵ The momentary dethronement of the king "symbolized" (was) a decline in nature's fertility. The king had lost his fight with the forces of evil and momentarily, at least, death reigned. We

²³Frankfort, op. cit., p. 409, n. 13.

²⁴Frazer, op. cit., p. 115. Frazer points out that kings would be killed before they grew feeble to insure a fresh and vigorous kingship. At the reinstatement ceremony, the high priest might not return the royal insignia. In Myth and Ritual, p. 61, Gadd discusses this practise among the Sumerians. However, Frankfort, op. cit., p. 400, n. 12 where he prefers to see in Sir Leonard Wodley's "death pits" of Ur burials of substitute kings together with their "ladies of the court" and their suites.

²⁵Frankfort, op. cit., p. 320.

have here a miniature, a mimetic combat scene in which the fertility forces of nature are roundly defeated.

(3) The Liberation of the Captive Marduk.²⁶

While the miniature combat ritual occupied the priests in E-sagila, the people were all adither about "Marduk who was confined in the mountain."²⁷ While the details are obscure, yet the main outlines of the next stage in the festival stands out clearly. It consisted of a sacred dramatic performance in which the king, the priests, the people and the images of the gods played a part. The drama portrayed the sufferings, death and resurrection of Marduk. A convenient summary of the details of the drama is provided by Pallis:

A Messenger probably sent out by Zarpanitum runs about seeking Marduk who has suddenly disappeared. He sets out in the direction of the "mountain" where he has presumably been informed that Marduk must be sought... In the meantime Nabu arrives from Borsippa to learn what has happened to Marduk. At the same time others run about the streets of Babylon seeking Marduk who has vanished, and praying to Shamash and Sin that he may return to the land of the living. They go to a gate called bab ka-bur-rat, at which guardians are placed. Marduk is found wounded, lying in his blood, he is dead, and a goddess mourns at his side. Thereupon he that has caused Marduk's death seems to have been

²⁶H. Frankfort, Cylinder Seals: A Documentary Essay on the Art and Religion of the Ancient Near East (London: Macmillan and Co., 1939), pp. 105-108 for the liberation of the Sun god from his mountain grave illustrated on cylinder seals from the Sargonid period.

²⁷Cfr. Supra, p. 2, n. 9; also Kramer, op. cit., pp. 83-96 for the Sumerian myth of Inanna's (Semitic Ishtar) Descent to the Netherworld.

killed in a series of symbolical acts...In the meantime the town rises in rebellion at the news of Marduk's death, civil strife breaks out among the people, a lamentation for Marduk is held. A messenger now brings Zarpanitum the news of Marduk's death, and she wails in despair: "O my brother, my brother." Marduk's garments (?) and possessions are then brought to Belit-Uruk, ceremonies are performed, amongst other things Enuma Elish is recited and in order to bring back strength to the departed, and Shamash and Sin are implored to grant his return to the land of the living. The procession to Bit Akitu must for the time being be postponed on account of what has happened. Zarpanitum wipes the blood from his wounds with wool. On the 8th day of Nisan, the last day of the drama *memes kata* (living, miraculous, holy) hand, water is fetched and a long ceremony is performed with it; probably these are the waters that are to recall Marduk from death. Preparations for slaying Marduk's enemies are made...Zu is captured. This is announced to the gods who rejoice that he is slain. Now all return to Marduk who is still lifeless; a wailing woman weeps over him, but the gods bore holes in the door behind which he is confined and set him free after a struggle with his guards. They recall him to life by means of the life-giving water.²⁸

From the above description it is apparent that the entire community actively participated in the search for Marduk. It could not have been otherwise for on the very success of the search depended the success of the community, the fertility of the soil. The development of the festival, however, indicates that soon enough substitutes were employed to re-enact the ritual. Still every member of the community had a personal interest in the performance, even though they may have been mere "observers".

²⁸Pallis, op. cit., p. 252f. For striking parallels in the drama which was performed in the ritual of the Osiris mystery at Abydos as described by one of its principal par-

(4) The Determination of Destinies.

In Emma Elish the possession of the "tablets of destinies" was the object of the struggle between Marduk and the powers of chaos, Ti'amat and Kingu, her son. The possession of the tablets of destiny could create and control the order of the world of gods and men. In the creation epic, we read of Marduk:

He took from him (Kingu) the tablets of destinies,
which was not his rightful possession.
He sealed (it) with a seal and fastened (it) on
his breast.²⁹

After the conquest of Ti'amat, he proceeds to the business of creation.³⁰ Hence the denouement of the New Year ritual consists in the renewed control of the magical powers which ensure prosperity of the community for the coming year. The victory of the god, whose part in the triumphal procession is taken by the king, leads up to the ceremony upon which the luck of the year depends, the fixing of the destinies.

After the liberation of Marduk, described in the summary by Pallis quoted above, the king, priests and statues of the gods were brought into the Chamber of Destinies to fix the fates of the coming year. This gathering of the gods on Nisan 8 corresponds to the first "Determination of Destinies"

participants on the memorial stone of I-kher-nefert, *cf.* Wallis Budge, Osiris and the Egyptian Resurrection II (London: Philip Warren, 1911), 5-12.

²⁹ Heidel, *op. cit.* Tablet IV:121-122.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 130ff.

in Ennuma Elish in which Marduk was elected king of the gods and given sovereign power.³¹ The king acted as moderator at the august meeting. In their order of precedence he summoned each god to leave his chapel and "taking his hand,"³² led the deity to his position in the great Chamber of Destinies (Ubsu-ukinne).

From the parallel passage in Ennuma Elish we secure the true meaning of this scene:

They erected for him a lordly throne, and
He took his place before his fathers for the consulta-
tion.

"Thou art (the most) honored among the great gods,
Thy destiny is beyond compare, thy command is (like)
Anu('s)

O Marduk, thou art (the most) honored among the great
gods,

Thy destiny is beyond compare, thy command is (like)
Anu('s).

From this day onward the command shall not be changed.
To exalt and to abase-this power shall be (in) thy
hand!

Established shall be the word of thy mouth,
Incontestable thy command!

No one among the gods shall encroach upon thy preroga-
tive.³³

with them then the gods conferred on Marduk all their power. The meaning of the "assembly of the gods" to determine the destinies is this: "They were to confer upon Marduk their combined power so that the liberated god, thus strengthened,

³¹Ibid., Tablet IV: 1-34.

³²Infra., p. 19, note 35.

³³Ibid., Tablet IV: 1-10; also Thorkild Jacobsen, The Intellectual Adventure of Ancient Man, p. 178.

was ready to lead the battle against the powers of Chaos and of Death."³⁴

(5) The Victory Procession to the Bit Akitu.

We come, finally, to the procession to the Bit Akitu on Nisan 9 as the Zagmuk festival swiftly approaches its climax. It seems that the late Assyrian kings usually considered grasping the hand(s) of the great god Marduk as concomitant with the procession to the Bit Akitu. "To seize the hand of Bel (Marduk)" has usually been considered by scholars as equivalent to legitimizing one's claim to the throne of Babylonia, as marking the renewal of the pledge between the king and his god.³⁵ At this point the king assumes his full regal splendor as he leads the procession northward through Babylon, left by the Ishtar Gate and continues in boats across the Euphrates to the Bit Akitu.³⁶

From the text of Sennacherib we learn that on the door of the Bit Akitu of Assur (in Assyria Assur is substituted for the Marduk of the south) appeared the army of the gods and the monsters of chaos. It seems obvious that there must have been a relation between the myth of the battle and the ritual rela-

³⁴Frankfort, op. cit., p. 326; also Pellis, op. cit., p. 196.

³⁵Jastrow, op. cit., p. 630. However, Pellis, op. cit., pp. 176ff., who thinks it improbable that it was a ceremony of investiture since the king was usually invested but once by the god.

³⁶For the Sacred Way at Babylon, cf. infra, note 38.

ted to the Bit Akitu.³⁷ and yet there is no clear testimony that the battle against Ti'amat was mine in the Bit Akitu.

The procession of the gods (probably in the form of images) and priests and people to the Bit Akitu was considered very important because it really marked the beginning of the New Year.³⁸ "It seems that the procession itself, and not a mock battle, represented Marduk's victory in the cult." This is how Henri Frankfort resolves the problem of the lack of evidence for a mock combat in the Bit Akitu. He continues, "It is clear that we cannot expect a mock battle if the various phases of Marduk's victory over Ti'amat and her host are represented by a series of symbolical acts apparently executed by the king and the priests, possibly at the Bit Akitu."³⁹

Withal, there is every reason to believe that it was in the Bit Akitu where Marduk's victory over Ti'amat was celebrated. This explains the great banquet held in the Bit Akitu as a celebration of victory. Also the bronze doors of Sennacherib's Bit Akitu mentioned above now appear to be meaningful. The banquet seems to be the main theme of the Bit Akitu party.⁴⁰

³⁷Gadd, Myth and Ritual, p. 57f.

³⁸S. H. Hooke, "The Babylonian New Year Festival," Journal of the Manchester Egyptian and Oriental Society 13 (1927), p. 37, for a more elaborate description of this festival procession.

³⁹Frankfort, op. cit., p. 328.

⁴⁰Pallis, op. cit., p. 173.

From our discussion of the relation of Enuma Elish to the Akitu festival it has become increasingly clear that it was more than Marduk's victory over Ti'amat that was celebrated in the New Year's Festival. Certainly, the Enuma Elish was a "cult legend...reflecting the cult acts of the Akitu festival."⁴¹ But the festival enlivened nature, revived fertility and in a very real way rejuvenated life.

(6) Conclusion.

We are not to think of the ritual activity described above in the Bit Akitu festival as merely "symbolic." Mythopoeic logic, the thought forms of the ancients, construed natural phenomena as alive. The relationship between the "observer" and the phenomenon was an I-Thou relationship.

The New Year's festival was serious business. The active participation of the king as the human delegate representing the cosmic state was most essential. The importance of the king is illustrated by his role in the ritual combat. When floods threatened to bring back the primeval watery chaos each year "it was of the essence that the gods should fight again that primeval battle in which the world was first won. And so the king took on the identity of a god: in the cult rite the king became Enlil or Marduk or Assur, and as the god he fought the

⁴¹Ibid., p. 192, supra. pp. 11f; also Egnell, op. cit., p. 34f.

powers of Chaos."⁴² The fight was real. The victory was real. How so? The primitive's answer was that it always happened that nature revived after the death of Tiamat. Causality was a will, a person.⁴³ It would be meaningless to ask a Babylonian whether the success of the harvest depended on the skill of the farmers or on the correct performance of the New Year's festival. Both were essential to success.

⁴²F. Jacobsen, Intellectual Adventure of Ancient Man, p. 200.

⁴³It has been popular to term this type of mythopoeic thinking "prelogical." The French psychologist, Levy-Bruhl, defined the term in 1922. W. F. Albright, From the Stone Age to Christianity: Monotheism and the Historical Process (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1946), pp. 123-130. scholars who have proved at length that primitive man has a "prelogical" mode of thinking are likely to refer to magic or religious practice, forgetting that they apply the Kantian categories, not to pure reasoning, but to highly emotional acts.

CHAPTER III

THE OSIRIAN FESTIVALS

The New Year's Festival in Mesopotamia signaled the resurgence of fertility. At this happy point in the year's cycle the new king formally received the cloak of power from the gods.¹ So also in Egypt. New Year's Day or some other decisive turn in nature's cycle provided a hospitable occasion for definite accession to power by the new king.

The ritual pattern in the kingship festivals in Egypt is consistent with the general pattern illustrated by the Babylonian Akitu festival except that we must piece together the Egyptian pattern from several ceremonies not clearly linked in any one text.² Nor does a particular New Year's festival contain all the ritual elements.

¹The evidence for this statement is scanty but cf. Sved Aage Pallis, The Babylonian Akitu Festival (Copenhagen, n.p., 1926), pp. 176-179. Also Morris Jastrow, The Religion of Babylonia and Assyria (Boston: Ginn and Co., Publ., 1898), pp. 678-682, who follows Winckler in explaining the expression, "to take Bel (i.e., Marduk) by the hand," as a ceremony of investiture.

²Henri Frankfort, Kingship and the Gods (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, c. 1948), p. 123. It is impossible to systematize Egyptian religious and ritual thinking without doing violence to local custom and over-simplifying.

In the following presentation we shall attempt three things: 1) to outline an Osirian New Year's ceremony from Denderah followed by an effort to link this festival with Egyptian kingship; 2) to present a Second millenium coronation drama which illustrates especially a combat motif; and 3) to describe a rather new text, "The Myth of Horus at Edfu" which clearly repeats the combat theme.

(1) The Khoiak Festival³

The walls of one of the two courts which form part of the temple at Denderah⁴ contain a long inscription of the Ptolemaic Period describing the bas-reliefs which illustrate the mysteries and ceremonies that were performed annually in that city in honor of Osiris.⁵ Similar rituals were performed in

³ Khoiak is the fourth Egyptian month, following Athyr. Plutarch places this feast in the month of Athyr. Plutarch, "Moralia: De Iside et Osiride," The Loeb Classical Library, V, translated by Frank Cole Babbitt (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1936), p. 39. Cf. James G. Frazer, "Adonis, Attis, Osiris: Studies in the History of Oriental Religion," The Golden Bough VI (London: Macmillan and Co., 1914), pp. 24-29., who discusses the influence of the fixed Alexandrian calendar (c. 30 B.C.) upon the shift of the festivals from their proper relationship with the seasons, supposes that Plutarch refers to the same celebrations that fell in Athyr in earlier times. Henri Frankfort, op. cit., p. 391, n. 39, however, suggests that Plutarch is speaking of a festival peculiar to the Greeks in Egypt, upper Delta region, rather than the Egyptians.

⁴ A town of Upper Egypt situated on the western bank of the Nile about 40 miles north of Thebes. Denderah is the Greek Tentyra.

⁵ Wallis Budge, Osiris and the Egyptian Resurrection II (London: Philip Warren, 1911), pp. 21-31, for a summary of the ritual and pp. 31-43, for a description of the bas-reliefs at Denderah illustrating the ritual.

all the chief sanctuaries of Osiris in Egypt commemorating every event which took place in the life, death and resurrection of Osiris.⁶ Briefly, then, according to the Denderah, the ceremony proceeded as follows:

- (1) About the twelfth of the month⁷ a hollow effigy of Osiris was filled with barley and sand,⁸ wrapped in rushes and laid in a stone trough.

⁶The ceremonies varied somewhat in the several cities where it was annually performed. The ritual of Abydos, for example, differed from that of Denderah. Cf. Hermann Kees, "Aegypten," Religionsgeschichtliches Lesebuch, 10 herausgegeben von Alfred Bertholet (Tuebingen: Verlag von J.C.B. Mohr - Paul Siebeck, 1928), 28f. Also Budge, op. cit., pp. 5-12, for the second half of the stele of I-kher-nefert which chiefly describes the principal scenes in the Osiris ritual performed annually at Abydos. Enriched by the nimbus of Osiris, Abydos, originally an obscure city, by the end of the Old Kingdom (c. 2200 B.C.) became the holiest spot in Egypt. James Henry Breasted, Development of Religion and Thought in Ancient Egypt (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, c. 1912), pp. 259-270, and Frankfurt, op. cit., pp. 201-207, especially. - According to the legend Osirian temples could be found in fourteen Egyptian cities, the cities to which Isis had sent fourteen parts of Osiris' corpse which Horus had dismembered. Plutarch, op. cit., V, 18. The Osirian myth is frequently referred to in the Pyramid Texts (2400-2240 B.C.) but nowhere in Egyptian literature has the complete myth been found. Kees, op. cit., pp. 28-30, for the collected Egyptian sources. Our best reconstructions are in Plutarch, op. cit., V, 12-19 and in Diodorus, "Library of History," The Loeb Classical Library, I, translated by C. H. Oldfather (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1933), pp. 14-25. - Note that the Ras Shamra "Story of Aqhat" follows the same pattern.

⁷The month of Kheiak, 12th to the 30th - an 18-day ceremony. Supra, n. 3. Also Frazer, op. cit., II, p. 36, n. 2.

⁸Ibid., p. 86, and pp. 97-107, where Frazer develops the notion that Osiris is a corn god.

- (2) The effigy was sprinkled daily with water and on the 20th, the sand and grain were replaced by dry myrrh.
- (3) Each evening the image was exposed to the setting sun. On the 22nd⁹ at the eighth hour, it was sent on a ceremonial voyage accompanied by 34 images of divinities in 34 toy-boats illuminated by 365 candles.
- (4) Two hours after sunset on the 24th, the effigy was placed in a wooden box and laid in a chamber, the Upper Styx. At the ninth hour of the night, the last year's effigy was removed from its sepulchre and placed upon sycamore twigs.
- (5) On the 29th, the raising of the Dd-column¹⁰ took place, symbolizing the resurrection of the king

⁹This date varied somewhat at different places, as did all the other dates. Margaret Murray, The Osireion at Abydos (London: n.p., 1935), p. 35.

¹⁰Fraser, op. cit., II, 108; also F. H. Gaster, "The Story of Aghat," Studi e Materiali di Storia delle Religioni, XII (1936), 145, II D, Col. 5, ll. 37-39, in translation: "Behold, let a (sacred pillar) (be set up) in face!" - The Dd-column roughly resembled a telegraph post with cross pieces, usually four or five, which support the wires. Sometimes a grotesque face was carved on the pillar and crowned with symbols of Osiris; sometimes hands were added which held the crook and flail of the god. Frankfort, op. cit., figures 40 and 41 for illustrations of the Dd-column.

Osiris.¹¹ The effigy in its coffer was placed in the underground sepulchre, from which last year's effigy had been removed six days earlier.

- (6) On the next day, the first day of the first month of Piret or spring time, a great festival was celebrated throughout the land, the festival called Khoiakh or Heheb-Kau (unity of the kau).¹² At this festival the king officiated in person.

Alan Gardiner is of the opinion that the above outlined Khoiakh festival echoes history, an ancient event during which peace and unity were proclaimed throughout the whole of Egypt on the accession of a new king, a new Horus. This new king was most probably Menes¹³ (I Dynasty, ca. 3800 B.C.) whose

¹¹ Alan H. Gardiner, "The Nature and Development of the Egyptian Hieroglyphic Writing," Journal of Egyptian Archaeology, II (1915), 123: "This day was clearly and incontestably the day of the resurrection of Osiris; but - and this is the point particularly to be emphasized - the resurrection of Osiris on this day was not that of a young and vigorous god of vegetation, but that of a dead king recalled in the tomb to a semblance of his former life." Note, however, that there is scanty evidence of an actual resurrection in the Denderah text and that it is only implied. Strangely enough, according to Pallis, op. cit., p. 202, we have only implied evidence of Marduk's resurrection in the kitu festival.

¹² Alan Gardiner, "Zeitschrift fuer Aegyptische Sprache," XLIII (1907), pp. 137ff, as cited in Frankfort, op. cit., p. 267, n. 3, for an examination of the calendrical difficulties involved here.

¹³ According to H. R. Hall, "Egypt and Babylonia to 1580 B.C.," The Cambridge Ancient History, I (Second edition, New York: The Macmillan Co., 1928), 269f., Menes is to be identified with Narmer or is a composite king, "Age of Narmer!"

capital at Memphis symbolized a united Egypt. Gardiner points to the walls of the temple of Osiris at Medinet Habu where the festival of Khoiakh is named as the theoretical date of the accession of Ramses III (1198-1167 B.C.) though his actual day of accession is elsewhere differently dated. "This can only be," indicates Mr. Gardiner, "because the festival of Khoiakh was considered the right and proper occasion for any pharaoh to ascend the throne."¹⁴

But why should the Festival of Khoiakh be considered auspicious for the coronation of the new king? When we recall how the Egyptians considered society under the Pharaoh¹⁵ as intimately related to the universe controlled by gods and godlings, then we can understand how the death of the king would assume the character of a terrible crisis.¹⁶ Death was

¹⁴Gardiner, op. cit., p. 124. F. E. Peet supports Gardiner in viewing Osiris as an historical character. Cambridge Ancient History, I, 333. - For the Khoiakh Festival as auspicious for coronation, Frazer, op. cit., II, 18f., and 159ff. Succession to the throne involved two stages - accession and coronation. The coronation sealed the transfer of power to the new king. The accession began the next day at sunrise after the death of the king; the coronation had to wait for a decisive new beginning in nature's cycle, usually on any New Year's Day. Wensinck, op. cit., pp. 153f.

¹⁵The word "pharaoh" is a circumlocution. It comes from per-an, "the Great House," and is comparable to our modern: "The white house today announced. . . ." Wilson, The Intellectual Adventure of Ancient Man, p. 75.

¹⁶Ibid., pp. 64f., and 71-86. Also Frankfort, op. cit., p. 101, and G. A. Wainright, The Sky-Religion in Egypt: Its Antiquity and Effects (Cambridge: at the university Press, 1938), p. 86.

the temporary triumph of the powers of evil: Seth had slaughtered Osiris. Now the coronation of the new king takes on an all-important character. It is obvious that so significant an event could not take place just any time, since the inundation of the Nile¹⁷ initiated a period of renewed life and prosperity, no more auspicious point in the Egyptian Calendar than the Festival of Kholakh could have been selected. With the return of earth to life came the return of life to the throne and peace to the land. "Kingship, not being a merely political institution, had to conform to the cosmic events no less than to the vicissitudes of the community."¹⁸

Following Gardiner, we have considered the festivals in the latter half of the fourth month and ending on the first day of the fifth as a drama of kingship mythologized in the legendary history of Osiris and Horus.¹⁹ From this we may proceed to identify all these performances reproduced in dramatic form with the disappearance of vegetation, due to the inundation and renewal of growth following the subsidence of the waters. Actually, it is not the resurrection of Osiris that

¹⁷Herodotus, "History, Book II," The Loeb Classical Library 1, translated by A. D. Godley (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1931), p. 14; and especially Diodorus, op. cit., I, 32-40, for the theories of the ancients concerning this phenomenon.

¹⁸Frankfort, op. cit., p. 102.

¹⁹Gardiner, op. cit., p. 122; and Blackmann, Myth and Ritual, p. 24.

makes the happy difference. Rather, it is the accession and person of Horus, his son and heir, who inevitably plays the role of the living king.²⁰

(2) A Coronation Drama

Our source material for this Coronation Drama is a large roll of papyrus (2.15 by 0.25 meters), the so-called Rameseum Papyrus, which was the actual script of a ritual performed at the accession of Senusert I (2192-2147 B.C.). Though in its present form this specimen dates from about 2000 B.C., it is probably but one specimen of a performance repeated at the accession of each king.²¹

²⁰Gardiner, loc. cit. Wilson, The Intellectual Adventure of Ancient Man, pp. 74f. Because it conforms to the ritual pattern of all Osirian festivals known, we shall take note of the Sed-festival in passing. Because the Sed-festival is rightly a jubilee, celebrated every thirty years, i.e., normally celebrated for the first time thirty years after the king's accession, and not an annual event, we shall not give it elaborate treatment.

The intention of the festival seems to have been to procure for the king a new lease on life, a renovation of his divine energies. The rites consisted in identifying the king with Osiris (contra Frankfort, op. cit., p. 79); just as Osiris had died and risen again from the dead, so the king might be thought to die and to live again with the god whom he impersonated. For the king, the ceremony meant a death and rebirth.

In pictures of the Sed-festival we see the king posing as the dead Osiris. He sits in a shrine like a god, holding in his hands the crook and flail of Osiris. He is wrapped in tight bandages like the mummified Osiris. There is nothing but his name to prove that he is not Osiris himself. This enthronement of the king in the attitude of the dead god seems to have been the principal event of the festival. cf. Frazer, op. cit., II, pp. 151-157, and Frankfort, op. cit., pp. 9-108.

²¹Frankfort, op. cit., pp. 126-139; for an excellent investigation of this ritual. Also Blackmann, Myth and Ritual, pp. 28-32, for a summary.

In this drama the coronation of the king and the burial rites of his predecessor were re-enacted. It seems that the heir-apparent before his coronation but after his accession, made a tour of the more important Egyptian cities in a royal barge. The drama seems to have been staged on the riverbank where the king played the role of Horus, the reigning monarch. The dramatis personae were all gods but were played by living persons: princes, officials, priests. Osiris, the dead king, was represented by an effigy. It is apparent that here we have a deliberate attempt to fuse the historical event, the coronation of one particular king, with the persistent truth that Horus succeeds the dead Osiris.²²

We shall select for more detailed examination two acts from this six act (46 scene) drama which illustrate the ritual combat (Act III, Scenes 9-18) and the enthronement ceremonies (Act V, Scenes 26-32).

A. Act III, Scenes 9-18. As the scene opens we see bulls

²²"In a way, the coronation of the king in the play was no more than mimed, since it was repeated a number of times and required the definitive ceremony at Memphis to become irrevocable. Yet the play was no mere make-believe or even mere representation. It was necessary for the king to pass through its repeated ceremonies at the various cities traditionally entitled to be thus involved in establishing the religious ties which united the new ruler with his country. . . . It is a view alien to our way of thinking that a ceremony should be, not a token act, but an act which changes actuality - which could not be omitted or replaced by another without dire consequences." Frankfort, op. cit., pp. 124f.

and asses trampling out the kernels of grain which are the ingredients for the bread to be eaten later in the ceremony. Consider, now, that Osiris is the grain god. Horus, the king, naturally commands the animals to cease trampling the grain, Osiris, but, of course, the grain must somehow be threshed. Reacting in a violent rage to their disobedience, Horus avenges Osiris by beating the animals that had trampled the grain. The animals represent Seth, the mythological enemy of Osiris, who is now defeated by Horus.²³ In the concluding scenes the Dd-column is erected on a site consecrated by the henket offering. This symbolizes the resurrection in the hereafter of the new king's predecessor. After the Dd-column is let down a ritual battle is fought between the children of Horus and the followers of Seth symbolizing the conciliation and the end of all discord that accompanies the new king's accession.²⁴ The text reads:

It happened that there was fighting.
That means Horus fighting with Seth.
Geb²⁵ speaks to Horus and Seth: "Forget!"

²³The scene of this defeat of Seth is located at Lentopolis by The Book of the Dead: Facsimiles of the Papyri of Hunefer, Anhai, Kerasher and Netchemet with Supplementary Texts from the Papyrus of Nu, translated by Wallis Budge (London: British Museum, 1899), p.42.

²⁴Heromotus, op. cit., II, p. 63.

²⁵Geb (or Keb) is here the arbiter because as earth-god he is concerned with the rule over Egypt. Geb sometimes stands simply for the earth and later almost equated with Ptah as the powers in the earth, the First Cause. Frankfort, op. cit., p. 181.

(Stage direction) Conflict between Horus and Seth. Fighting.

Horus speaks to the Children of Horus:

"It is you who must forget."

(Stage direction) Conflict between Children of Horus and Followers of Seth. Boxing.²⁶

B. Act V, Scenes 26-32, the coronation. Everything seems to be ready for the actual coronation. Presently a sacrifice "from the Two Regions" (i.e., from the land of Egypt as a unit) is offered; "The great Ones of Upper and Lower Egypt" are ordered to approach, and in their presence the "Keeper of the Great Feather" fixes the crown upon the head of the king who is protected throughout the ceremony by the purifying fumes of incense, senetjer, "the divine substance." Immediately afterwards and as a final act of this part of the ritual, half loaves, called "an offering which the king gives," are distributed to "the Great Ones of Upper and Lower Egypt." Note that the very first act of the newly crowned king is to distribute of his bounty. "Out of the abundance which is to mark his reign he makes the gift which even with us has remained the symbolical of all substance - bread."²⁷ The king himself partakes of a hetep meal.

C. Summary. Osiris was identified with the dead king who

²⁶Ibid., p. 129.

²⁷Ibid., p. 130. Also A. M. Hocart, Kingship (London: Oxford University Press, 1927), pp. 83-86, for a conveniently constructed pattern of the coronation ritual.

very probably was an early Heliopolitan ruler who created in the Delta an entire new culture pattern which superceded that of the earlier, food-gathering, Paleolithic Egyptians. He seems to have done much to advance agriculture and the idea of kingship among his subjects.²⁸ At the hands of a certain Upper Egyptian upstart, he met his death only to be resurrected by Anubis, the funerary god, to be king in the world of the gods and the dead. "The role of the risen king of the original pattern," as Blackmann rightly posits, "was filled in Egypt by the living king, Horus, to whom in the person of his proto type, the mythical Horus, had been assigned by Heliopolitan theologians the position of son,²⁹ avenger and successor of Osiris."³⁰ Moreover, on the eve, and later the day, of the festival of Khoiak it is not the resurrection of Osiris but the victory of Horus that is commemorated. Also, we noticed the prominence of the victory of Horus over Seth in the combat ritual of the Coronation Drama. Note too that in the Coronation itself it is Horus who is identified with the liv-

²⁸ Andrew Rugg-Gunn, Osiris and Odin: The Origin of Kingship (London: H. K. Lewis and Co., Ltd., 1940), p. 34; also Supra, Chapter II, n. 14.

²⁹ But cf. Harry R. Hall, "Egypt," Encyclopedia Britannica VIII (14th edition. London: Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc., c. 1937), 59, col. 1.

³⁰ Blackmann, Myth and Ritual, p. 38; Breasted, op. cit., p. 39.

ing king. If it does nothing else, this modification of the original mythopoeic pattern illustrates how powerful was the conviction among the Egyptians that the king was the fountain-head of all productiveness and fertility.³¹

(3) The Myth of Horus at Edfu

The ritual pattern of a combat in which the foemen of the king are destroyed and the victor's coronation ceremony are perhaps best illustrated in the recent translation of the "Myth of Horus at Edfu."³² The myth consists of a Prologue, three acts and an Epilogue. It is a religious drama performed annually at Edfu in commemoration of Horus wars with Seth, his final victory, his coronation as king of united Egypt, the dismemberment of the body of his foe and his 'triumph' or 'justification' before the tribunal of the gods in the 'Broad Hall.'³³

Now the importance of this myth for our study is its almost monotonous reiteration of the hippotomous (dragon) slay-

³¹Blackmann, *ibid.*, p. 39. Here Blackmann suggests that this modification of the original myth pattern was not a product of Egypt but was imported, possibly from Syria. In this connection, Frazer, *op. cit.*, II, 3-10, who suggests an extra-Egyptian home for all of Egypt's human headed gods and goddesses.

³²A. M. Blackmann and R. W. Fairman, "The Myth of Horus at Edfu," *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*, XXVII (1942), 32-38; XXIX (1943), 2-35; XXX (1944), 3-25, for the best translations of this myth. These presentations concern themselves, however, only with the translation with philological notes but contains no treatment of the mythological significance of the text.

³³Gardiner, *op. cit.*, p. 32.

ing motif. It is in the First Act that we read of two Horus-gods, Horus, lord of Mesen and Horus of Behdet,³⁴ slaying the hippotomous with harpoons. In the five scenes of the Act, ten harpoons are used to pierce the hippotomous' forehead, neck, back (or flank), testicles, hind-quarters and feet. During these arduous operations the king stood on shore lauding the magnificent enterprise of Horus while Isis, his mother, urges him on. Act II in two short scenes describes the rejoicing over the victory. The people acclaim Horus crowned and invested with the emblem of kingship. Act II in three scenes stages the celebration of the victory. First, Horus of Behdet stands on the back of the hippotomous and pierces the forehead with a thirty-pronged harpoon. There follows the scene in which nine divinities are on the bank facing Horus. Each has on the altar bearing a dismembered portion of the dead hippotomous. In scene two, Horus of Behdet harpoons a small model of a hippotomous while the king pierces the buttocks of a larger figure of a bound human captive. In the last scene, a butcher cuts up the body of the hippotomous. The Epilogue closes:

³⁴Though Horus of Behdet and Horus, son of Osiris and Isis, are from time to time merged into one another, they appear more often than not as different gods in this document. Wallis Budge, Legends of the Gods: The Egyptian Texts, Edited with Translations (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., Ltd., 1912), pp. xxxviii-xlvi and pp. 57-95.

Horus of Behdet, great god, lord of the sky, is triumphant in the 'Broad Hall,' overthrown are the enemies of his father, Osiris, of his mother Isis, of his father Re, of Thoth. . .

(4) Conclusion

The Osirian festivals in Egypt ultimately evidence a ritual pattern closely akin to what we have found in Mesopotamia. In both Egypt and Mesopotamia the central feature of ritual is the importance of the king for the well-being of the community, the state. The festivals which we have discussed up to this point in our paper suggest a strong point of contact between the king and the fortunes of fertility in the land. The Mesopotamians understood the cosmos, particularly the state, as an integration of wills. The Egyptians, however, took the universe as being of one substance without any definite line of demarcation between any of its aspects.

John Wilson has described Egyptian thinking as monophy-site, i.e., many gods and many men but all eventually one nature.³⁶ between the people and the king there existed only a qualitative difference of the same substance. The king of Egypt was a god. The supreme god, Re, intrusted the land to his son, the king. A lonely figure was this god-king of Egypt, standing by himself between humans and gods. He was the herdsman, the shepherd of his people. His principal task was to dispense ma'at (justice). Ma'at was not to be found in codi-

³⁶Wilson, The Intellectual Adventure of Ancient Man, p. 66.

fied legal statutes. Rather, the king's burden was to dispense me'at in relation to need determined by varying situations.

This total Egyptian monarchy is to be contrasted with the "Primitive Democracy"³⁷ of the Mesopotamians.

³⁷Thorikild Jacobsen, "Primitive Democracy in Ancient Mesopotamia," Journal of Near Eastern Studies, II (1943), 159-172.

CHAPTER IV

UCARITIC MYTHOLOGY

Before 1920 our sources for a study of Canaanite religious practice and mythology were indeed meager.¹ Since 1920 the non-literary archaeological materials have become decisive.² Still, far and away the most important literary sources are now those discovered at Ras esh-Shamra by C. F. A. Schaeffer between 1929 and 1939.³

In our report we have chosen to limit ourselves to the Ras Shamra texts. The reasons are obvious. These texts are easily our earliest, most complete and reliable authority.

¹William Foxwell Albright, Archaeology and the Religion of Israel (2nd edition, Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1946), pp. 37ff and 63-71. An excellent summary of earlier material may be found in Elmer A. Leslie, Old Testament Religion in the Light of Canaanite Background (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, c. 1936).

²Miller Surrows, What Mean These Stones? (New Haven: American Schools of Oriental Research, 1941), *passim*.

³Cf. the excellent survey by Walter Baumgartner, "Ras Shamra und das Alte Testament," Theologische Rundschau, XII (1940), 163-189; XIII (1941), 1-20, 86-102, 157-183, contains a well classified bibliography, partly in XII, 163-166 and partly in XIII, 1-3, with a supplement in XIII, 192f. The Bibliography was brought up to date by n. L. Ginsberg, The Legend of King Keret: A Canaanite Epic of the Bronze Age (New Haven: American Schools of Oriental Research, 1946), pp. 10ff.

We have reserved our final chapter for a discussion of some of the Old Testament materials bearing on this subject. To introduce these materials here would be to anticipate our conclusions.

(1) The Liturgical character of the Ras Shamra Texts.⁴

There is much to be said for a cultic interpretation of virtually all of the extant Ras Shamra religious texts. Most scholars, however, had disclaimed any ritualistic link with the Keret Epic until Dr. Engnell of Upsalla developed the thesis that the Keret cycle of texts is simply another parallel to the Ali'yan Ba'al cycle, ". . . Kerit himself being . . . culturally as well as religio-phenomenologically identical with Ali'yan Ba'lu."⁵

In Culture and Conscience Graham and May describe many

⁴Dr. Theodor Herzog Gaster of Dropsie College, Philadelphia, and Asia Institute, Washington, D. C., one of America's best students of the Ras Shamra texts will treat this subject at length with full documentation in his forth coming work: Theopis: Myth, Ritual and Drama in the Ancient Near East. For the most recent scientific summary interpretation of the Ras Shamra texts cf. T. H. Gaster, "Canaanite Mythology," Forgotten Religions (Including some Living Primitive Religions) edited by Vergilius Ferm (New York: The Philosophical Library, c. 1950), pp. 113-143.

⁵Ivan Engnell, Studies in Divine Kingship in the Ancient Near East (Upsalla: Almqvist och Wiksells Boktryckeri, 1943), p. 168; also T. H. Gaster, "Divine Kingship in the Ancient Near East: A Review Article," Review of Religion IX (March, 1945), 278, where he advances a step beyond Engnell in a severe review of his book.

of the Ras Shamra texts as liturgical.⁶ ". . . longer inscriptions appear to be part of the liturgy concerned with the various phases of the seasonal cycle. It is highly probable that they were all used during the rites of the great New Year festival which occurred at the time of the spring equinox."⁷

T. H. Gaster's view comes out most clearly in his treatment of the Mikal text. Using this short text as a scaffold he maintains that these Ras Shamra texts were built up of a Prologue - mythos - Epilogue because they originated in utterances pronounced in connection with the performance of ritual actions. The officiant⁸ would call upon the deity, then he would perform the prescribed act or sacrifice and finally he would conclude the ceremony with words of prayer. While he was performing the ritual acts, another priest would explain it to the assembled multitude, in mystagogical terms, and out of such explanations there later arose the conventional element of

⁶William C. Graham and H. G. May, Culture and Conscience: An Archaeological Study of the New Religious East in Ancient Palestine (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, c. 1936), p. 12.

⁷Graham, op. cit., p. 124.

⁸D. M. L. Urie, "Officials of the Cult at Ugarit," Palestine Exploration Quarterly, LXXX (1948), 42-47.

Mythos as the central "movement" of all hymns.⁹

If we accept the liturgical character of these texts, as most scholars do, then certainly Julian Obermann's recent theory of the leading motifs in Ugaritic mythology can hardly stand. Obermann claims that the central theme of the mythological folklore current among the Semites in Ugarit focused on the story of "how Ba'al planned to build a splendid house for himself, how he plotted to obtain consent to his plan from his father, the supreme God El, and how in the end he achieved his objective. . ."¹⁰ Actually, the construction of Ba'al's palace is important in the myth only in so far as it aids him to maintain his prestige. It certainly is not the theme of the myth. Rather, it is "the annual 'Expulsion of the Death or Blight' prior to the return of the fertile season," which forms the theme of the poem.¹¹

In the following pages we shall present some of the Ras Shamra material relating to the seasonal festivals, emphasizing

⁹T. H. Gaster, "On a Proto-Hebrew Poem from Ras Shamra," Journal of Biblical Literature, 57 (1938), 81-87. Gaster's refrain is that these myths are all libretti of sacred pantomimes performed at seasonal festivals. T. H. Gaster, "'Ba'al is Risen. . .'" An Ancient Hebrew Passion-play from Ras Shamra-Ugarit," Iraq, VI (1939), 113.

¹⁰Julian Obermann, Ugaritic Mythology: A Study of Its Leading Motifs (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1948), p. 1. Cf. the review by T. H. Gaster, "Ugaritic Mythology," Journal of Near Eastern Studies, VII (1948), 184-193.

¹¹T. H. Gaster, "The Ritual Pattern of a Ras Shamra Epic," Archiv Orientalni, V (1933), p. 118.

ing kingship and combat scenes.

(2) The Gracious Gods (אֱלֹהֵי נְעֻמָּה),¹²

Our only purpose in drawing attention to this "ritual drama" is to point out the history of a much disputed line which Egnell has taken to refer to Shalem, a god assuming the royal dignity of kingship.¹³ The crucial line (1.7) reads:

שָׁלֵם הַמֶּלֶךְ שְׁשָׁרְתָה עַרְבִים וְחַנְנִים

The differing translations are:¹⁴

- (1) Albright: O Salem, thou shalt exercise (7), O Salem, the kingship over the nomads and settled folks.¹⁵
- (2) Barton: O Salem, thou shalt be queen - Salem, queen of those who enter in and pour a libation.¹⁶
- (3) Gaster: Thou shalem, do thou be king, O shalem, over the kingdom of Arabia and Shinarim!¹⁷

¹²Our occasional notations from the Hebrew transcription of the cuneiform texts are extracted from James A. Montgomery and Zellig S. Harris, The Ras Shamra mythological texts (Philadelphia: The American Philosophical Society, 1935).

¹³Egnell, op. cit., p. 131 and the review cited supra, Chapter IV, n. 5.

¹⁴We have arranged the translations in the order of their publication.

¹⁵W. F. Albright, "The North-Canaanite Poems of Aleya Baal and the 'Gracious God,'" Journal of the Palestine Oriental Society, XIV (1934), p. 133.

¹⁶George Barton, "A Liturgy for the Celebration of the Spring Festival at Jerusalem in the Age of Abraham and Melchisedek," Journal of Biblical Literature, 53 (1934), p. 63.

¹⁷T. H. Gaster, "An Ancient Semitic Mystery-play," Studi e Materiali di storia delle Religioni, X (1934), p. 157.

(4) Ginsberg: Peace reigneth. May peace reign over
incomers and outgoers.¹⁸

(5) Engnell: Salem, thou shalt be king! Salem, thou
shalt verily be king over 'arabim and tan-
inim!¹⁹

(6) Gaster: May peace reign, O may peace reign, ye
sacristans and votaries!²⁰

The early translation of this line of the Prologue refer-
red it to Shalem, a god taking over as leader of the festival
and possibly inducing "peace" and prosperity in the earth dur-
ing the season which ushered in the early rains ($\eta\theta\omega$).²¹
The latest and most complete treatment of the text S_B, however,
claims the poem to be a ritual drama, ". . . the order of ser-
vice for the Canaanite festival of firstfruits, in spring. . ."²²

(3) The Story of Aqhat ($\eta\eta\mu\alpha$)

In the tale of Aqhat we are doubtless confronted with a
seasonal myth depicting the rivalry between autumn rains and
summer crops. Scholars find the text extremely obscure in parts
and one reads at times strangely varying translations of ident-

¹⁸H. L. Ginsberg, "Notes on 'The Birth of the Gracious and
Beautiful Gods,'" Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, (1935),
p. 64.

¹⁹Engnell, op. cit., p. 130.

²⁰T. H. Gaster, "A Canaanite Ritual Drama," Journal of
the American Oriental Society, 66 (1946), 51.

²¹T. H. Gaster, "An Ancient Semitic Mystery-play," Studi
e Materiali di Storia delle Religioni, X (1934), 166f.; also
Barton, op. cit., 61-67.

²²T. H. Gaster, "A Canaanite Ritual Drama," p. 49.

ical texts.²³ Be that as it may, our myth clearly describes the "combat"²⁴ between 'Anat and Aqhat, the death of Aqhat and it seems the final resurrection of the lord of the summer crops.²⁵ In our brief summary which will emphasize the combat motif we will follow T. H. Gaster's more recent sequence which will appear shortly in his enlarged study of Near Eastern folklore.²⁶

Virtuous King Danel "who hath no son like his brethren"²⁷ at long last approaches Ba'al who intercedes for him with the happy result that his request for an heir is granted. Aqhat is born. Whereupon Danel repairs to "the House of Chirping," and sacrifices in thanksgiving to the Kosharoth (כֹּהֲרֹת).²⁸

One fine day while Danel sat at the city gate judging "the cause of the widow, and administering justice to the or-

²³Cyrus Gordon "The Poetic Literature of Ugarit," Orientalia, XII (1943), 67, lines 42-46, contra Gaster, "The Story of Aqhat," Studi e Materiali di Storia delle Religioni, XIII (1937), 28, lines 34-47.

²⁴hardly a combat; qhat does not offer Ytpn much resistance.

²⁵T. H. Gaster, "The Story of Aqhat," Studi e Materiali di Storia delle Religioni, XII (1936), 127.

²⁶Supra, n. 4.

²⁷Gaster, ibid., XIII (1937), 140, line 20.

²⁸Gaster, ibid., 143, lines 23-47. Leo H. L. Ginsberg, "Women Singers and Tailors among the Northern Canaanites," Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research, 72 (1938), 13-15, where he maintains that kbrt is Ugaritic means "(female) singers."

phan,²⁹ he espied Kotar, the artisan-god, advancing with a supply of bows.³⁰ Danel immediately closed court, heartily received friend Kotar, feted him, and sent him on his way. Whether accidentally or intentionally,³¹ Kotar left one of his bows in Danel's home. Aqhat grew up to use this bow fashioned by the divine craftsman. One day 'Anat chanced upon Aqhat a-field. It seemed that this bow which Kotar left behind and Aqhat now held was made especially for 'Anat. She made three desperate attempts to recover the bow but failed in each.³²

After receiving divine assent from El, 'Anat proceeded to plot revenge against Aqhat in an effort to recover the divine bow. She hired Ytpn ($\gamma\theta\omega$), a thug, to do the dirty work.³³ She told Ytpn that she would convert him into an eagle and poise him among the eagles which hovered over Aqhat while he was lurching in the open near the city of Qart-'Abil-

²⁹Gaster, *ibid.*, 144, line 8.

³⁰*ibid.*, 144f. Here we have abandoned Gaster's translation for Gordon, *op. cit.*, 64f.

³¹Gordon reads: Into Danel's hand he put the bow upon his knees sets the crossbow. T. H. Gaster, however, maintains that Kotar-wa-Hasis accidentally forgot one of the several bows he was carrying. It is only a suggestion but it seems likely that he may have intentionally forgotten the bow.

³²She offered 1) herself 2) wealth and 3) immortality. But Aqhat fancied his bow.

³³Gordon, *op. cit.*, 66, where he describes Ytpn as a "Handyman of the Lady." 3 Aqhat Obv. ? line 27. Also Engnell, *op. cit.*, p. 139, n.2.

in. When she gave the signal, Ytpn was to knock out³⁴ Aqhat by striking him twice on the head and thrice on the ear.

The text reads:

There hovers a flock of birds
 Among the eagles soars 'Anat
 Over Aqhat she poises him
 He strikes him twice on the head
 Thrice on the ear
 He spills his blood like a slayer
 On his knees, like a slaughterer.
 His soul goes out like wind
 Like a puff, his spirit
 Like smoke out of his nostrils.³⁵

Danel learns of his son's misfortune through an eagle omen interpreted by Paghath (נִי־ד), Aqhat's sister. She weeps mournfully over her brother's death. To her father she recounts the dreadful consequence of Aqhat's death:³⁶

Ba'al burneth up the clouds with dire heat;
 The early rain which the cloud should pour on
 the summer crops,
 The dew which should distil upon the grapes,
 Ba'al now withholdeth for several years,
 and He that rideth on the Clouds for eight!
 No dew is there nor rain,
 Neither inrush of ocean above or below,
 Neither welcome thunder!³⁷

³⁴Ytpn misunderstands (and so does Gordon) and slays Aqhat. Gordon, loc. cit.

³⁵Ibid., 67, V:31-37.

³⁶This contra Gordon, loc. cit., who says that Danel (Dnll) curses the land with years of drought. But this rendering is thoroughly inconsistent with the sequel in which Danel appears before el apparently pleading inter alia for the success of the crops. Also here Engnell, op. cit., p. 140f.

³⁷T. H. Gaster, "The Story of Aqhat," Studi e Materiali di Storia delle Religioni, XIII (1937), 28.

Moved deeply by the plight of the crops, Danel appealed to El for aid. Not only does El promise verdure and crops but also that Aqhat will yet see them harvested.

I will give grace to the ear of corn;
 The ear of corn shall yet grow tall
 In the soil consumed with drought,
 The herb shall grow tall (in the barren waste)!
 The hand of Aqhat the son of Gazzar shall yet
 reap thee,
 He shall set thee amid the store-houses of the
 grain!³⁸

There must be revenge for the death of Aqhat. So it was that Paghat, encouraged by Danel, proceeded to seek out and slay 'Anat, her brother's murderer.³⁹

Perhaps it is a final scene in the story of Aqhat that reveals the true significance of the entire myth. In this scene Danel and Paghat institute a harvest festival requesting that all men bring the firstfruits of their produce as an offering to Aqhat who will in the not-too-distant future be revived.⁴⁰ It was apparently 'Anat's jealousy over Aqhat's lordship over the summer crops that incited her wrath. She claimed this lordship the jurisdiction of one of her own.⁴¹ But

³⁸Ibid., 30.

³⁹Engnell, op. cit., p. 142, where he suggests that Paghat's search led her on a descensus ad infernos. Note the similarity to the Babylonian Ishtar's descent.

⁴⁰T. H. Gaster, "The Story of Aqhat," XIII (1937), 37f.

⁴¹Gaster, op. cit., XII (1936), 126.

Aqhat, the popular hero of the autumnal harvest, survived the cruelties of 'Anat.

(4) King Keret and Princess Hry (כרת וחרר)

Again it is Dr. Engnell's provocative study that compels us to briefly treat the Keret Epic. Heretofore most scholars have pinned their hopes for the Megebite origin of the Phoenicians on this text.⁴² Even T. H. Gaster has said that the epic is historical rather than ritual in character⁴³ though these characteristics are not mutually exclusive. Now Engnell has soberly concluded that most scholars have completely misunderstood the texts. He proposes a cultic interpretation rather than consider it a campaign annal of a particular war. The epic describes, according to Dr. Engnell, a series of ceremonies connected with the autumnal feast of Ingathering (יָבֹשׁ).⁴⁴ The host which is said to go out is not an army but pilgrims "going out to the sacral-cultic festival."⁴⁵ The

⁴²J. W. Jack, The Ras Shamra Tablets: Their Bearing on the Old Testament (Edinburgh: T. & Clark, 1935), pp. 38ff. and Claude F. A. Schaeffer, The Cuneiform Texts of Ras Sharma-Ugarit (London: Oxford University Press, 1939), pp. 73ff. Also Walter Baumgartner, "Ras Shamra und das Alte Testament," Theologische Rundschau, XIII (1941), 12-20.

⁴³T. H. Gaster, "The King Keret Epic," Religions, 18 (1937), 13.

⁴⁴"... we are here dealing with an older Canaanite pattern of the Old Testament sukkot festival." Engnell, op. cit., p. 149.

⁴⁵7x23y5 7y x3 "Yea, out to the field goes thy host." Ibid., p. 157.

march against "Pabil-malik" is not historical but simply another version of the usual combat in harvest festivals.⁴⁶

"Kerit stands at the gate of the 'town' ($\text{D}^{\prime}\text{D}^{\prime}\text{P}$),⁴⁷ that is to say. . . the temple, and the sham fight begins in the typical form of a 'palaver,' a piece of tongue-fencing."⁴⁸

The "marriage" of Keret and Hry reflects the ἐσπὸς γαμὸς .⁴⁹

In this fashion Engnell forms a cultic cast for the Keret Epic. T. H. Gaster maintains that this interpretation depends too much on "a cavalier treatment of philological points."⁵⁰ And yet Gaster discerns a basic truth in Engnell's theory and by accepting it supplements his former position.⁵¹ "If the war against King Pabl was an historical fact, and not a mere description of the ritual combat, it may nevertheless have been recited (perhaps even enacted) at the festival because it ran parallel to that combat. Similarly, if the winning of the maiden Hry was not simply the myth of the sacred marriage, it

⁴⁶Ibid., p. 162f.

⁴⁷Ibid., p. 155.

⁴⁸Ibid., p. 163.

⁴⁹Ibid., p. 165.

⁵⁰T. H. Gaster, "Divine Kingship in the Ancient Near East: A Review Article," Review of Religion IX (March, 1945), 276f.

⁵¹Supra, Chapter IV, n. 43.

may still have suggested that marriage."⁵²

(5) The Epic of Ba'al Puissant (𐎧𐎶𐎵 𐎧𐎶𐎵𐎶𐎵).

The Epic of Ba'al Puissant was developed by Ugaritic poet(s) to describe the confident return of the rains (𐎧𐎶𐎵) in Autumn.⁵³ Mot (𐎩𐎮), the numinous aspect of no-rain, is conquered by the inevitable reappearance of Ba'al in late September, when the wadies begin to fill up and the springs again trickle life. The rains have not yet set in with full vigor but it is obvious that the drought is breaking up. Yam (𐎶𐎵), the numinous aspect of the sea, is in full possession of the earth. But Ba'al manages to wrest the dominion of the earth from Yam to whom El had originally assigned it. The fall equinox (September 21) is usually accompanied by squalls on the sea⁵⁴ and the subduing of the tempest is attributed to Ba'al's conquest over Yam. Now rains shower the earth destroying every vestige of drought and death. Rain, the numinous aspect of Ba'al, is thought to overpower Mot, the genius of the summer drought.

⁵²Gaster, op. cit., 272f.

⁵³Schaeffer, op. cit., pp. 60f., for spring-tide interpretation. Also Engnell, op. cit., p. 109. Graham-May, op. cit., p. 125, follows Gaster. S. H. Hooke, The Origins of Early Semitic Ritual (London: Oxford University Press, 1938), p. 37

⁵⁴George Adam Smith, The Historical Geography of the Holy Land (London: Hodder and Stoughton, Ltd., 1935), pp. 64ff.

Ba'al, vegetative and human fruitfulness and luxuriance, reigns (1) with undisputed sway until May-time when Mot lures Ba'al into the Netherworld whence he cannot return since he has partaken of the meat and drink of the underworld. When Ba'al fails to return to Earth, Earth withers, life decays and Mot is temporarily in control. But Earth cannot live without some source of fructification. Atter, the genius of artificial irrigation, makes his bid for dominion. His feeble attempt to alleviate the sorry plight of Earth is sanctioned by the gods but only as a substitute until Ba'al returns in late autumn.

The above is a seasonal interpretation of the epic based on a new sequence of the text by Dr. T. H. Gaster which we shall now briefly outline.⁵⁵

After all the gods had been assigned their separate dominions in the world, it was discovered that Earth still remained unassigned. To which of the three high gods would El assign coveted earth? There was Mot who reigned in the Netherworld, genius of all things which have no life.⁵⁶ Then there was Yam the genius of all water - seas, oceans, rivers. Now an old Semitic adage goes that Earth is possessed by him who quickens

⁵⁵Gaster, Forgotten Religions, pp. 135f.

⁵⁶T. H. Gaster, "The Ritual Pattern of a Mesopotamian Epic," Archiv Orientalni, V (1933), 118-123, where the mythopoetic contract of Ba'al and Mot is clearly defined.

it. Not slow to seize an advantage each of the gods claims that he has the power to fructify Earth. After duly weighing the contentions of each, El decided that Yam has presented the best case and has legitimately won Earth.

Ba'al not deterred by the decision of El, plots the destruction of Yam. Aided and abetted by 'Anat and 'Atirat, fortified by "two sticks," Expeller and Driver, gifts of Koter, Ba'al advances to do battle with Yam:

...the stick swoops in the hand of Ba'al
 Like an eagle in his fingers.
 It strikes the head of Prince Sea
 Between the eyes of Judge River.
 sea collapses
 Falls to earth
 his face falls
 And his countenance wilts.
 Ba'al conquers
 and vanquishes Sea.
 He destroys Judge River. ⁵⁷

Now Ba'al is in a position to govern the earth but he can not possibly command the respect of subordinate gods if he has no palace. Ba'al devised a scheme. He prevails upon 'Anat to ask 'Atirat, mistress of El, to give him permission to build a palace on Earth. 'Atirat consents, saddles her ass and rides off to the dominion of El.

On being received by El, 'Atirat presents her petition. El is quite agreeable. In fact, he is never known to refuse

⁵⁷ Gordon, *op. cit.*, 51, lines 23-27; T. H. Gaster, "The Battle of the Rain and the Sea. An Ancient Semitic Nature-myth," *Iraq*, IV (1937), 31, lines 23b-26.

a request though his permission must always be asked. Kotar-wa-Hasis (כֹּתָרְוַהַשִּׁי)⁵⁸ is assigned the supervision of the construction. At first, Ba'al objects to a window⁵⁹ in his new home but finally accedes to the advice of Kotar-wa-Hasis.⁶⁰ The artisan god is pleased to remind Ba'al that from the first he had advised it! The temple completed, Ba'al is warned against his enemies. He derides them, however, boasting of his might and of his rule; he defies Mot, saying that Mot shall remain in his chamber while he, Ba'al rules alone over the gods. Whereupon Mot challenges Ba'al to visit the Netherworld and partake of its food. Warned by 'Anat that such an undertaking would be dangerous, he at first hesitates but finally cannot but prove himself by meeting Mot on equal terms. Ba'al descended to eat of the sumptuous repast Mot had spread for him but was stultified when he learned that he could not return to Earth after having eaten the victuals of

⁵⁸T. H. Gaster, "Notes on Ras Shamra Texts," Orientalistische Literaturzeitung, XXXVIII (1935), col. 474.

⁵⁹Ba'al was afraid that Yam would kidnap his three daughters who are named, according to W. F. Albright, "Recent Progress in North-Canaanite Research," Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research, 70 (1938), 19, Piddiriya, T(a)lliya, and Arsiya.

⁶⁰Graham-May, op. cit., p. 136. Schoeffler, op. cit., p. 68, and Albright, "The North-Canaanite Poems of Ilym Baal and the 'Gracious God,'" Journal of the Palestine Oriental Society, XIV (1934), 129.

the underworld.⁶¹

Grief stricken over the loss of her brother, 'Anat roams up and down Earth sailing:

Dead is Aliyu Ba'al
Perished, the Prince of Earth.⁶²

Finally she confronts the high god El with the problem of a successor for Ba'al. 'Atirat of the Sea suggests 'Attar the Terrible (עֹתֶר עֲרִי) who assumes but limited sway since he is not physically comparable to his predecessor Ba'al. 'Anat, meanwhile, pursues her wanderings over Earth. She seeks out Mot and demands Ba'al her brother but is mocked and spurned for her pains by the boastful and triumphant Mot. Suddenly the infuriated 'Anat

. . . seized Mot, son of El;
with the sword she cut him up,
with the sieve she winnowed him.
In the fire she burned him
in the mill she ground him,
in the fields she sowed him,
in order that the birds might eat their
portion,
in order that they might destroy the
seed (?).⁶³

strangely enough, this does not kill Mot for at a later point

⁶¹ Ungnelli, *op. cit.*, p. 118. There are differing accounts of Ba'al's death. In one version he met death at the hands of demoniacal monsters. W. F. Albright, "The Passing of Ba'al," *Acta Orientalis*, XVI (1937), 41-48.

⁶² Gordon, *op. cit.*, 33, lines 9-10.

⁶³ W. F. Albright, *From the Stone Age to Christianity: Monotheism and the Historical Process* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1946), pp. 176f. and Jack, *op. cit.*, p. 28.

he is found seated in Ba'al's throne and lording it over Earth.

One day 'Anat chanced upon Shapash, the sun-goddess. Now if Shapash were willing she could help 'Anat recover the body of Ba'al because she goes to the Netherworld every evening and returns every morning. Shapash is willing and so does recover Ba'al for 'Anat who immediately carries a shoulder of his immortal remains to "the heights of Sapan"⁶⁴ where "she weeps for him and buries him."⁶⁵

With tuned folkloristic ears we hear of Ba'al's burial and we know that this presages his resurrection. Nor are we disappointed. El has a dream in which the heavens rain oil and the wadies run with honey. This means that nature is plentiful again and that Ba'al, the genius of fertility, has been brought back to life.

And lo Aliyn Ba'al is alive
 And lo the Prince, Lord of Earth, exists.
 In a dream (of) Ltpn, God of Mercy,
 In a vision (of) the Creator of Creatures,
 The heaven rain oil
 The wadies run with honey.
 And I knew that Aliyn Ba'al is alive
 that the Prince, Lord of the Earth, exists.⁶⁶

⁶⁴Gordon, *op. cit.*, 35, line 10. Also Gaster, "Notes on Ras Shamra Texts," *Orientalistische Literaturzeitung*, XXXVIII (1935), col. 474.

⁶⁵Gordon, *ibid.*, line 17.

⁶⁶*Ibid.*, 38f., lines 2-9.

El tells 'Anat, who is overjoyed with the news, what to say to Shapash who will again aid in the search for Ba'al. 'Anat meets Shapash and delivers the message dictated by El. Shapash declares that she is willing to help find Ba'al. When the sun-goddess finds Ba'al, he is again scrapping with Mot. Both of them, it seems, have come back to life and are once more engaged in ferocious combat, goring and biting like beasts.

They fight like gar-animals
 Mot is strong, Ba'al is strong;
 They gore like buffaloes
 Mot is strong, Ba'al is strong;
 They bite like serpents
 Mot is strong, Ba'al is strong;
 They kick like seeds
 Mot falls, Ba'al falls.⁶⁷

Shapash warns Mot to desist. If El should discover what he is going, he will deprive Mot of his throne and sovereignty.

The god Mot is afraid;
 'Il's beloved, the hero, is terrified.⁶⁸

And Mot reluctantly concedes the victory to Ba'al.

The climb to the top has been difficult for Ba'al; after having battled much for his position, he now desires peace and in order to assure tranquility, he creates a thunderbolt to signalize his power.

I have a command and I will announce it to thee ('Anat)

⁶⁷ Ibid., 40, lines 18-22.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 41, lines 30-31.

I have an order and I will report it to
 thee.
 the trees have spoken and the stones have whis-
 pered,
 The heavens have murmured to the earth.
 I shall create the thunderbolt in order that
 the heavens may know
 that men may know the command,
 And that the inhabitant of the earth may un-
 derstand.
 I shall make (the thunderbolt) ready
 And I shall preserve (it) it, even I, in my
 mountain
 -I the god of the north-
 In the holy (place), in the mount of my heri-
 tage,
 In the beautiful (place), in the hill of
 power.⁶⁹

(6) Conclusion

Unfortunately our knowledge of Canaanite political his-
 tory remains fragmentary.⁷⁰ We are not, however, unfamiliar
 with the names of many North Palestinian kings. The construc-
 tion and meaning of these names point to a direct connection
 between the king and the local high-god.⁷¹

The Ras Shamra materials presented above afford us in-

⁶⁹ Albright, "Recent Progress in North-Canaanite Research,"
 19f., lines 13-27. Note how the iconography of ba'al consist-
 ently represents him with the right arm uplifted about to hurl
 the thunderbolt. Cf. Obermann, op. cit., opposite p. 21 and
 Schaeffer, op. cit., Plate XXXII, figure 2 and Plate XXXV,
 figure 1.

⁷⁰ F. Albright, "The role of the Canaanites in the His-
 tory of Civilization," Studies in the History of Culture, edit-
 ed by Percy W. Long (Menasha: George Banta Publishing Co.,
 1942), pp. 11-50.

⁷¹ Robertson Smith, Lectures on the Religion of the
 Semites (First series. London: Adam and Charles Black, 1894),
 pp. 66f.

sights into the mythopoeic thought fabric of Canaanite life which in a derived sense illuminates the role of the king. Our perception is limited since it is impossible to establish more than a theoretic connection between the durative aspect of the numinous, the high-god, and the contemporary aspect of the numinous, the reigning king. The basic problem of vegetation that faced all agricultural peoples is delineated in the function of Ba'al who is the genitive force of fructification.

There seem to be good grounds for the suggestion that the agricultural festivals on Canaanite soil represent the breaking up of the pattern of the Babylonian Akitu festival.⁷² In Canaan, with no centralized government to hold the pattern together, it is probable that the festival adapted itself to the conditions of agricultural life, and that its several elements were separated and were attached to the main turning points of the agricultural year.

⁷²Myth and Ritual: Essays on the Myth and Ritual of the Hebrews in Relation to the Culture Pattern of the Ancient Near East, edited by S. M. Hooke (London: Oxford University Press, 1933), p. 70.

CHAPTER V

THE KINGSHIP OF JAHWEH IN THE PSALMS

We are now familiar with the significant role of kingship in the New Year Festivals in Babylonia, Egypt and Canaan. Did kingship play a correspondingly important role in the New Year Festival of the Hebrews? Was Jahweh known to the Hebrews as a king? If so, did the Hebrews celebrate the enthronement of their God as king? What relation can be fixed between the obvious notices of a combat motif and actual rituals in neighboring cultures?

These are legitimate questions. If we cannot answer them we must at least honestly confront them. We are limiting our Hebrew sources to the Psalms simply because recent research has intensified the problem in this particular area. But first, what was the nature of the Hebrew New Year Festival?

The origin of the Hebrew New Year Festival¹ or Feast of

¹The problem of the origin of the Rosh Hashanah of contemporary Judaism is complicated. Rosh Hashanah is not the Old Testament New Year Festival. In fact, the term is used only once in the Old Testament and that in reference to the tenth day of Tishri (Ezekiel 40:1) and not Tishri 1. Nevertheless Tishri 1 seems to have been something of a holiday (Leviticus 23:24; Numbers 29:1 and Nehemiah 3.) From Tannaitic sources, it can be shown that the modern Rosh Hashanah became legal New Year Festival only after the burning of the Second Temple.

Tabernacles² is buried in antiquity. We first hear of it celebrated by the Hebrews of Shechem: "And they went out into the field and gathered their vineyards, and trod the grapes, and held festival (lit., "made לְעֵלֵינוּ ") and went into the house of their God, and did eat and drink. . ."³ A procession-dance seems to have been an essential feature of the festival.⁴ The dominant mood seems to have been one of rejoicing - song and hilarity.⁵ It began on the eve of the fifteenth day of the seventh month (Tishri; and continued for seven days.⁶ This was "at the going out"⁷ or "at the turn"⁸ of the year. Add to this description the infinite detail of sacrifice prescription.⁹ We know next to nothing, however, about the actual

²Hebrew סֻכּוֹת (booths; of boards, branches and leaves Deuteronomy 16:13. This is not to be confused with the tabernacle of the congregation (Exodus 36:14). Succoth was earlier known as the Feast of Ingathering (אֲסֻפְתּוֹת), Exodus 34:22.

³Judges 9:27.

⁴Judges 21:19-23.

⁵Deuteronomy 6:16 and Leviticus 23:40.

⁶So Numbers 29:12. But there are problems. According to 1 Kings 6:38, Solomon's temple was finished in the eighth month. The dedication, however, according to Chapter 8 was held in the seventh month. Is it possible that after the temple was completely finished, the dedication was delayed 11 months? Cf. also 1 Kings 12:32-33.

⁷Exodus 23:16.

⁸Exodus 34:22.

⁹Numbers 29:12-38. Cf. also Leviticus 23:33-44; Deuteronomy 16:13-17.

celebration of the festival in early Biblical times.

This brief description of the Succoth Festival leaves no one breathless. There is not enough evidence on hand from reliable early Hebrew sources to reconstruct a detailed calendar of what happened on each of the seven days. Some scholars feel that they can find evidence from the Psalms and elsewhere in the Old Testament to show that what actually happened on these festal days is pretty much the same thing that happened especially in Babylon during the Akitu festival. We shall examine some of these theories a bit later. Here we can merely recognize the problem these investigations have emphasized: What influence did the creative god-king of the New Year Festivals of the Near East have on Hebrew thinking about Jahweh as king in Israel?

The following paragraphs are divided into two sections. The first addresses itself to the problem of Jahweh as king. The second seeks to penetrate the relation of the combat motif in the Psalms to kingship.

(1) the Kingship of Jahweh

A. In the following passages Jahweh is spoken of as king

(730):¹⁰

5:3 הַקִּשְׁבָּה לְקוֹל שׁוֹעֵי כִלְכֵל וְאַלְהֵהּ
10:16 יְהוָה כִּלְכֵל עוֹצֵם¹¹ וְגַר

¹⁰Also Isaiah 44:6; Zephaniah 3:15, and Micah 2:13.

¹¹Ten LXX MSS read אֲרִיִּים.

	24:3	כִּי יְהוָה כִּלְכֵּל הַכְּבוֹד
		יְהוָה עֲצוֹס וּגְבוּר
		יְהוָה גְּבוּר כִּלְכֵּל הַכְּבוֹד
	29:10	יְהוָה זֶכְרָתוֹ יִשָּׁבַע
		וַיִּשָּׁבַע יְהוָה כִּלְכֵּל לְאֵלֹהִים
	48:3	הַר־צִיּוֹן... קָרִית כִּלְכֵּל הַכְּבוֹד
	74:12	וְאֵלֹהֵי כִלְכֵּל כִּי ¹² סָפוּם
	84:4	יְהוָה צְבֹאוֹת
		כִּלְכֵּל וְאֵלֹהֵי ¹³
	95:3	כִּי אֵל גְּדוֹל יְהוָה
		כִּלְכֵּל גְּדוֹל ¹⁴ עַל כָּל-אֱלֹהִים
	98:6	הַרְדִּיעוּ לִפְנֵי הַכִּלְכֵּל יְהוָה
	149:2	יִשְׁפַח יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּצִיּוֹן
		בְּנֵי-צִיּוֹן יִגְדְּלוּ בַכְּבוֹד

At first sight it might seem indeed strange to find in Israelitic religious literature Yahweh bound by so human a title as כִּלְכֵּל for Yahweh was a God above all gods (עַל כָּל-אֱלֹהֵי הַיָּמִין 95:3). It is common knowledge, however, that the Israelities were at every stage in their history subject to extraneous cultural influences. And the influences were more likely to have

¹²Most commentators read כִּלְכֵּל with LXX ὁ βασιλεὺς θεῶν.

¹³F. Buhl, "Liber psalmsorum," Biblia hebraica, Herausgeber, Rudolf Kittel (Kopenhagen: n.p., 1930), p. 1049, suggests that this part of the verse may be a gloss. The LXX retains these four words, however.

¹⁴Many commentators drop אֱלֹהִים because it disturbs the 3 x 3 meter.

been effective in that they were exercised by people of greater antiquity and higher culture than the Israelites. We have pointed out repeatedly in this paper how in the ancient Near Eastern community the king must be understood as the contemporary aspect of the durative feature of the community which we may call "divine," the "numinous." Specifically then, the king was the personification of the contemporary aspect of the community. Just as President Truman is the contemporary aspect of the durative principle known as Uncle Sam. In practise this works out in roughly the following manner: when, in a ceremony the king "dies," the folk also die in a period of mortification very often taking the form of fasting. Climaxing rebirth, regeneration of the forces of nature, are the invigoration ceremonies led by the *Ēpō's Japō's*. The king was indeed the focal point of all life bearing activity. His people revered him as their sustainer. In some such way the institution of kingship was finally established in the Near East, all the while taking on the necessary embellishments of ritual and myth.¹⁵

In the Semitic cultures which we have considered the king was often spoken of as a god or a reflection of the high-god. Since this is never the case in our Hebrew sources we must turn the question about and ask: Did the Semites ever refer to their high-god as a king? The following evidence seems to in-

¹⁵ H. Hooke, The Origins of Early Semitic Ritual (London: Oxford University Press, 1933), pp. 1-22.

dicating an answer in the direction of an affirmative. In Enuma Elish, for example, it is told of how the god rejoiced in Marduk as they commissioned him to fight Ti'amst on their behalf;

Thou, O Marduk, art our champion;
 To thee we have given kingship over the whole
 universe.
 (Therefore) when thou sittest in the assembly,
 exalted shall be thy word.
 May thy weapons not miss, may they smite thy
 foes.
 O Lord, preserve the life of him who puts his
 trust in thee;
 but as for the god who started (this) trouble,
 pour out his life.¹⁶

Sumerian records also preserve for us a statement of the kingship of the gods:

when the crown of kingship was lowered from
 heaven
 when the scepter and the throne of kingship
 were lowered from heaven. . .¹⁷

In Egyptian religion, we find that the demiurge, Ptah, established the local cults and all their peculiarities down to the very shapes in which the gods were worshipped.¹⁸ The god Horus was the first king who ruled over all men.¹⁹ in

¹⁶ Alexander Heidel, The Babylonian Genesis: The Story of Creation (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, c. 1942), Tablet IV:13-16.

¹⁷ Thorhild Jacobsen, The Sumerian King List (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, c. 1939), p. 58.

¹⁸ Henri Frankfort, Kingship and the Gods: A Study of Ancient Near Eastern Religion as the Integration of Society and Nature (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, c. 1943), p. 30.

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 38.

many texts the Pharaoh is called simply "the god (netjer)," or "the good god" (netjer nefer).²⁰ A long hymn to Osiris opens, "Praise to thee, Osiris! Thou lord of eternity, king of gods!"²¹ Horus also is known as "king of all gods."²²

There are numerous references in the Ras Shamra texts to the gods as king. After the death of Ba'al, 'Anat approaches El with the problem of a substitute king. El asks Lady 'Atirat of the Sea for a suggestion:

Give one of thy sons!
I shall make him king (amlkn).²³

Lady 'Atirat of the sea replied:

Let us make Yaddû Ykhn king (nmlk).²⁴

After the gods reject Yaddû Ykhn, 'Atirat suggests:

Let us surely make 'Attar the Terrible king (nmlk).²⁵

The gods agree upon 'Attar and he accepts:

I am indeed king (lamlk) in the heights of Spôn.²⁶

²⁰Ibid., p. 36.

²¹Adolf Erman, The Literature of the Ancient Egyptians, translated by Eward M. Blackman (London: Methuen and Co., Ltd., 1927), p. 141.

²²Ibid., p. 137.

²³Cyrus Gordon "The Poetic Literature of Ugarit," Orientalia, XII (1943), 36, line 18.

²⁴Ibid., line 20.

²⁵Ibid., line 27.

²⁶Ibid., p. 37, line 34.

when Ba'al is not specifically referred to as king, he is known as "Prince, Lord of the earth" (zbl.b'l.ars).²⁷

We have traced the view of the high-god as king from Babylonian sources to Canaan (Egypt always playing a subordinate role) where the Hebrews seem to have first learned it. The evidence indicates only that the term קִדְשׁ as applied to Jahweh is not necessarily original with the Hebrews whatever the meaning the Hebrews may have supplied.

B. In the following passages the throne (כִּסֵּא) of Jahweh is referred to:²⁸

$\text{יָשַׁבְתָּ לְכִסֵּא שׁוֹפֵט צִדְקָה}$ 9:5
 $\text{כֹּהֵן לְכִשְׁפֹּט כִּסְאֵי}$ 9:8
 $\text{יְהוָה זָה־יִכְרֹז קִדְשׁוֹ}$ 11:4
 $\text{יְהוָה בְּשִׁמְיָאֵ כִּסְאֵי}$
 $\text{יָשַׁב עַל־כִּסֵּא קִדְשׁוֹ}$ 47:9²⁹
 $\text{צִדְקָה וְכִשְׁפֹּט סִכּוֹן כִּסְאֵי}$ 89:15
 $\text{נִכּוֹן כִּסְאֵי כִּסְאֵי כִּסְאֵי אֱלֹהִים}$ 93:2
 $\text{צִדְקָה וְכִשְׁפֹּט סִכּוֹן כִּסְאֵי}$ 97:2
 $\text{יְהוָה בְּשִׁמְיָאֵ הַכִּיֹּר כִּסְאֵי}$ 103:19³⁰

²⁷ Ibid., p. 39, line 9.

²⁸ Outside the Psalter the mention of Jahweh's throne occurs in 1 Kings 22:19; 2 Chronicles 18:18; Isaiah 6:1; 66:1; Jeremiah 14:21; Lamentations 5:19; Ezekiel 1:26; 10:1; 43:7.

²⁹ Some scholars (Gunkel, Oesterley, Buhl) would delete יְהוָה .

³⁰ Many commentators consider יְהוָה a hypermetrical gloss.

lordly throne,"³³ in honor of his new role as champion of the gods. That his new position gave him all power is amply attested by the restoration of a destroyed garment by the simple word of his mouth.³⁴ In addition, "they bestowed upon him the scepter, the throne, and the palû."³⁵ Among Marduk's fifty glorious names in Tablets VI and VII of Enuma Elish there are enunciated many of the qualities of a legitimate ruler who excels in righteous judgments: for example,

"Asaruslim, who is influential in the home of counsel, (who excels in counsel);"³⁶

"shazu. . . from whom the evildoers cannot escape. . ."

the administrator of justice
who in his place discerns right and wrong. . ."³⁷

In Egypt each king at death became Osiris just as each king in life appears "on the throne of Horus."³⁸ We have seen

³³Heidel, *op. cit.*, Tablet IV:1. The Assyrian word is parakku. Translations of this word have differed in their exact connotations. Cf. Langdon, The Babylonian Epic of Creation: from the Recently Recovered Tablets of Assur. (Oxford: at the Clarendon Press, 1923), p. 127, translates as "chamber." Jacobson, Intellectual Adventure of Ancient Man: An Essay on Speculative Thought in the Ancient Near East (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, c. 1946), p. 178 translates as "dais." A conversation with Dr. Heidel revealed that he and Dr. Jacobson had discussed the exact translation of the term and finally agreed on "throne dais." T. B. Gaster, "Ba'al Puissant," Syria XVIII (1937), 230 thinks parakku parallel to the Hebrew תִּפְסֵל.

³⁴Heidel, *op. cit.*, Tablet IV:23:26.

³⁵*Ibid.*, line 29.

³⁶*Ibid.*, Tablet VII: 3.

³⁷*Ibid.*, lines 36, 39, 40.

³⁸Frankfort, Kingship and the God, p. 32.

in an earlier chapter that the central ceremony of the accession was performed when a ruler was enthroned and received the diadems and scepter.³⁹ Regularly enough, ceremonial objects in Egypt were personified. In his Urgeschichte, Sethe has amassed considerable evidence to prove that it was Isis, the sister and wife of Horus, who was personified as a throne.⁴⁰ Thus it is shown by various epithets that the throne in earliest Egypt was an object of veneration.

In Uragitic Mythology both $\bar{\eta} \bar{\eta} >$ and $\lambda \sigma >$ are used to designate the throne, the latter term of course common in Biblical Hebrew. We read of 'Atirat:

יָתִיב בַּכַּהֵן אֵלֶיךָ 41

and again:

יָרֵד לְכַהֵן אֵלֶיךָ בַּעַל 42

Later we find Shapash warning Not not to fight with Ba'al lest Ed find out and deprive Not of his throne and sovereignty:

... הֵן יִסַּע אֵלֶיךָ

תִּבְתֵּךְ לִי הַפֶּךְ כִּסֵּא כְלָכֶךָ 43

³⁹ Supra, pp. 22f.

⁴⁰ Frankfort, Kingship of the Gods, pp. 43f.

⁴¹ James A. Montgomery and Zellig S. Harris, The Ras Shamra Mythological Texts (Philadelphia: The American Philosophical Society, 1936), p. 51, l. 30.

⁴² Loc. cit., l. 36.

⁴³ Ibid., p. 56, lines 27, 28.

with little effort we could expand this catalogue of references to the importance of the throne in Near Eastern mythology.⁴⁴ We hope we have by the parallels arranged above shown that the throne was a significant symbol of sovereignty in the available history of early Near Eastern culture. Nor are the materials from the Psalms at the head of this chapter a lesser element in this picture. There is definitely a relationship developing here which seems to be genetic.

C. In the following passages the phrases יהוה כִּסֵּךְ occurs:⁴⁵

47 כִּסֵּךְ-הָאָרֶץ אֱלֹהִים 47:8

48 כִּסֵּךְ אֱלֹהִים "עַל-גֹּיִם 47:9

93:1 יְהוָה כִּסֵּךְ גֵּאוֹת לְבָטָח

48 אִכְרוּ בְגָדֵי יְהוָה כִּסֵּךְ 96:10

97:1 יְהוָה כִּסֵּךְ וְתִגַּל הָאָרֶץ

49 יְהוָה כִּסֵּךְ יִרְגֵם עֲפִיף 99:1

The interpretation of יהוה כִּסֵּךְ is the heart of the

⁴⁴John Hastings, etton, Canaanite parallels in the Book of Psalms (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1944), p. 18.

⁴⁵Outside of the Psalter this formula occurs in Isaiah 24:23; Ezekiel 20:33; Micah 4:7 (?).

⁴⁶Many MSS read כַּעַל for כַּכּ.

⁴⁷many commentators read יהוה for אֱלֹהִים.

⁴⁸many MSS follow 1 Chronicles 16:31 and add אֱלֹהֵינוּ after כִּסֵּךְ.

⁴⁹יהוה כִּסֵּךְ seems to be hypermetrical.

matter. In a monograph published in 1912, Paul Volz then of Tübingen labeled $\text{7}^{\text{30}} \text{717}$ a terminus technicus, an exclamation implying that the enthronement of Jahweh had just taken place.⁵⁰ Volz was followed by the Norwegian savant, Sigmund Mowinckel, who submitted evidence for the existence in Israel of an enthronement ceremony largely imitative of the ritual pattern of the Babylonian akitu festival discussed in Chapter two of this paper.⁵¹ He identified the enthronement of Jahweh as a feature of the Hebrew Succoth Festival.⁵² Hans Schmidt seconded many of the results Mowinckel had established, especially did he develop the exegesis of Psalm 68 in favor of this enthronement theory.⁵³ In the posthumous publication of his Einleitung, Hermann Gunkel pointed out that Mowinckel had to supply too much that the Psalms did not contain in order to support his thesis.⁵⁴ In his commentary on the Psalms published a year after Gunkel's Einleitung, Hans Schmidt conveniently

⁵⁰Paul Volz, Das Neujahrsfest (Laubhüttenfest) (Tübingen: Verlag von J.C.B. Mohr, Paul Siebeck, 1912), pp. 13ff.

⁵¹Sigmund Mowinckel, "Das Thronbesteigungsfest Jahwehs und der Ursprung der Eschatologie," Psalmenstudien, II (Kristiania: Dybwad, 1922), pp. 16-43.

⁵²Ibid., p. 37.

⁵³Hans Schmidt, Die Thronfahrt Jahves am Fest der Jahreswende im Alten Israel (Tübingen: Verlag von J.C.B. Mohr, Paul Siebeck, 1927), I.

⁵⁴Hermann Gunkel, Einleitung in die Psalmen: Die Gattungen der religiösen Lyrik Israels, zu Ende geführt von Joachim Begrich (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Rupprecht, 1933), pp. 101-116.

disregards his colleague's criticisms of both Nowinckel and himself.⁵⁵

The British scholars of what may be called the "Hooke school" have lately declared themselves in substantial agreement with Nowinckel.⁵⁶ Briefly, then, we shall summarize the frame of reference in which Nowinckel has developed his theory. Generally, one can discern a fairly distinct ritual pattern in New Year festivals in the Near East. The basic pattern is that of the Akitu festival of Babylon. There is a gradual disintegration of the pattern in Syrian and Canaanite cultures. Among the Hebrews there remains, however, sufficient evidence in the enthronement Psalms to reconstruct a ritual pattern akin to the Akitu pattern. More specifically, the יהוה סלך Psalms were sung liturgically at one of the great festivals, probably Succoth. יהוה סלך must have been uttered in reference to something that had just happened, i.e., Jahweh has just now ascended the throne. Accordingly,

⁵⁵ Hans Schmidt, "Die Psalmen," Handbuch zum Alten Testament, XV, Herausgegeben von Otto Eissfeldt (Tübingen: Verlag von J. C. B. Mohr - Paul Siebeck, 1934), pp. 90f.; 125-131.

⁵⁶ Myth and Ritual: Essays on the Myth and Ritual of the Hebrews in Relation to the Culture Pattern of the Ancient Near East, edited by S. H. Hooke (London: Oxford University Press, 1933), pp. 1-3, and the sequel, The Labyrinth: Further Studies in the Relation between Myth and Ritual in the Ancient World, edited by S. H. Hooke (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1938), pp. 1-v.

God has gone up amidst fanfare,
Yahwah amidst the Shophar blast (בְּקוֹל שׁוֹפָר)⁵⁷

points to a ceremonial rite; that it refers to Jahweh's ascent to the throne is presumably evidence from verse 9:

God reigneth (יָשֵׁב)⁵⁸ $\text{עַל כִּסֵּא קֳדְשׁוֹ}$ over the nations;
God sitteth upon His holy throne.

The evidence for such a ceremonial ritual remains exceedingly weak. This theory of "Jahves Thronbesteigung" in Israel is helpful, imaginative, meaningful but it has little justification in Hebrew sources. On the basis of existing evidence, we are convinced that it takes more eisegesis of the evidence than exegesis to buttress this theory.

In seeking Babylonian parallels it is again Enuma Elish, Tablet IV, which has proven so fruitful to our study that yields the requisite parallels. After the gods had bestowed upon Marduk the powers of many domains and beheld with their own eyes the effectiveness of his creative word,

They rejoiced (and) did homage, (saying), "Marduk is King!"⁵⁹

Also among the honorific titles we read:

⁵⁷ Psalm 47:6.

⁵⁸ Some scholars want to read יָשֵׁב for יָשֵׁב and drop the second יָשֵׁב .

⁵⁹ Meidel, *op. cit.*, Tablet IV:28. The Assyrian phrase is Marduk-ma Sarru. On the translation of this phrase cf. G. R. Driver, "Babylonian Elements in the Psalms," The Psalmists, edited by E. B. Simpson (London: Oxford University Press, 1926), p. 113, n.2; also Langdon, The Babylonian Epic of Creation, p. 129, n. 5.

May one proclaim without ceasing: "May he reign forever!"

The actual enthronement ceremony is preserved only from Assyrian records. The king himself officiates as high priest while the priest who leads the procession cries out, "Aššur is king, Aššur is king!" (Aššur šar Aššur šar).⁶⁰

Elsewhere in cuneiform texts we find similar expressions in the personal names of gods e.g., ^dšamaš-šar-ru-um (Šamaš is king); ^dim-šar-ru-um (Adad is king); ^dsin-šar-ma-tim (Sin is king of the land); ^dšamaš-sar-i-li' (Šamaš is king of the gods); é-a-šar-ri-i-li (Ea is king of the gods); é-a-šar-ru-um (Ea is king).⁶¹ That gods other than marduk are called king need not occasion surprise. Each city had its own patron deity and it was this particular deity for whom each city's Akitu festival was held.

In the mythological texts of Ras Shamra which Montgomery and Harris published in 1933, there is only one clear reference to the phrase used in the proclamation of kingship and that occurs in the poem of Ba'al Puissant where 'Attar is proclaimed substitute king by the gods:

⁶⁰ Ivan Engnell, Studies in Divine Kingship in the Ancient Near East (Upsalla: Almqvist och Wiksells Boktryckeri, 1943) p. 17.

⁶¹ Arno Poebel, Die Sumerischen Personennamen zur Zeit der Dynastie von Larsam und der ersten Dynastie von Babylon. (Breslau: n. p., 1910), p. 24.

730 עתה לך ערץ⁶²

In the Egyptian Coronation Drama of the Ramesseum Papyrus (ca 1950 B.C.) scenes 26-32 are concerned with the crowning of the king, his investiture with the royal insignia and the distribution of loaves cut in half to the notables of Upper and Lower Egypt who have come to pay homage. Though we do not have here an expression quite as succinct as the Hebrew ⁷³⁰ עתה לך⁶² we have the solemn speech of Toth, the scribe of the gods, which invests the king with absolute power of kingship:

Take thou thine Eye, to thy face.
Place it well in thy face.
Thine Eye shall not sadden with sadness.
Take thou the fragrance of the gods (censing),
That which cleanses, which has come out of thyself.
(At this point the crown and feather are placed upon the king).
Cleanses thy face with it so that it be fragrant through and through.⁶³

D. Conculsion

It has not at all been difficult to collate expressions from ritual literature of the Near East which corresponds to the ⁷³⁰ עתה לך⁶² of the Psalms. This formula, together with the terms ⁷³⁰ עתה לך⁶² and ⁷³⁰ עתה לך⁶², seem to represent or allude to the annual coronation of the god-king during the annual New Year

⁶² Montgomery and Harris, op. cit., p. 51, line 27.
Attar the Terrible becomes king.

⁶³ Frankfort, the Kingship of the gods, p. 131.

Festival. We have, however, absolutely no evidence from Hebrew sources that Yahweh (presumably dwelling between the cherubim of the Ark or in effigy) was enthroned in a special ceremony during the Succoth Festival to symbolize the resurrection of life in nature. Nor can we answer the problem easily. One thing is certain, however, the Hebrews were borrowers as every dynamic culture unit must be, since these expressions are particularly foreign to the Hebrew concept of Yahweh it seems apparent that the expression may have been borrowed. Gunkel explains away the difficulty by establishing the enthronement of Israel's earthly kings as model for these Psalms and origin of these expressions in the Psalms. This makes sense except that he dates the Psalms fantastically late in order to explain the eschatological flavor of these Psalms as due to spirited poets imbued with the prophetic spirituality of exilic Deutero-Isaiah. It must also be evident that the borrowing answer does not reckon with much that is implicit in our evidence. We shall attempt to indicate the direction of the answer in our final conclusions.

(2) The Combat Motif in the Psalms

up until now the most obvious of kingship in the New Year festivals has been the combat motif (Marduk vs Tia'mat; Horus vs Seth; Ba'al vs Yam and Mot). In the Psalms there seems now faintly, now distinctly, to be echoes of a fight of Yahweh with some sort of monster - nahab, Leviathan, the serpent, the croc-

odile. How are these terms to be interpreted in their culture context and what relation can be fixed between the Hebrew allusions and the actual rituals in near-by cultures?

(A) Psalm 74:12-17 Yet God is my king of old,
Working salvation in the midst of the earth.
Thou didst break the sea in pieces by thy strength;
Thou didst shatter the heads of the dragon
yam⁶⁴ in the waters.
Thou didst crush the heads of leviathan,
Thou gavest him as food to the sharks of
the sea.⁶⁵
Thou didst cleave fountain and brook;
Thou driest up ever-flowing rivers.
Thine is the day,
Thine also the night;⁶⁶
Thou hast established luminary and sun.
Thou has set all the borders of the earth;
Thou hast made summer and winter.

This Psalm is a national lament. The poem begins with an appeal to God for mercy based on past history in which is recorded the special covenant relationship Jahweh established with Israel. This appeal is occasioned by an attack on Jerusalem which ultimately led to the complete destruction of the

⁶⁴Read תנין (תנין).

⁶⁵Read תנין "צפצפה" with Immanuel Low as cited by R. Koehler, Deutsche Literaturzeitung, nF XXII (1925), 1055 as quoted in Gunkel, Die Psalmen Übersetzt und erklärt. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1936), p. 325. Low interprets to mean, "shark, squalis maris;" cf. W. O. E. Oesterley, The Psalms, II (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1939), p. 349 on "jackels."

⁶⁶Many commentators emend to תנין אור on the basis of II Samuel 5:12.

Temple.⁶⁷ The poet groans as he records the painful details of utter destruction. The enemy has been chopping away at the very entrance and staircases of the Temple and their axes appear as a veritable forest (vv. 3, 6). "How long, O God?" Though Yahweh is a God of mercy and wise in judgment, yet the psalmist believes intensely that all this horror is the work of the God of Israel.

Verses 12-17 are the words of a puzzled poet. Certainly Jahweh's almighty strength has been established by His past performance. Meny and mighty have been His cosmic triumphs. The heathen say it was Ba'al who hacked Yam to bits. But no! It was "Thou, Jahweh." Thou (יְהוָה) didst shatter the sea monster Yam. Thou didst crush the seven-headed leviathan.⁶⁸ Now the poet shows how Jahweh provided water for his people,

⁶⁷ The date of this Psalm is a moot question. Moses Bottenweiser, The Psalms Chronologically Treated with a new Translation (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, c. 1938), pp. 609-611, champions the view that the Psalm dates from the first half of the fourth century when Judah was in trouble with Artaxerxes Ochus (389-338 B.C.). Charles Augustus Briggs and Emilie Grace Briggs, "A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Psalms," The International Critical Commentary II (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1906), p. 152, maintain that the Psalm was written with reference to the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar in 586 B.C. Hermann Gunkel, Die Psalmen, p. 322, thinks that the defilement of the temple by Antiochus Epiphanes in 167 B. C. fits best.

⁶⁸ Montgomery and Harris, op. cit., pp. 39ff.; 78ff.

thirsty from the desert.⁶⁹ It was Thou, Jahweh, who created the world and established forever its order. All this is the honorable and trustworthy record of Jahweh. All this is the display of the power of Yahweh of Israel. Though the heathen attribute many of these wondrous works to lifeless deities, nothing can detract from the fact that it was jahweh and no other whose power has heretofore been real for Israel.

The two references to 𐤅 in verse 13 and to 𐤍𐤏𐤃 in verse 14 are unmistakable traces of the Ras Shamra myth of Ba'al Puissant. With Yam we are familiar⁷⁰ but not with 𐤍𐤏𐤃 . There are two explicit references to 𐤍𐤏𐤃 in the Ras Shamra texts both describing him as the "writing serpent" ($\text{bt} \text{ n } ' \text{ql} \text{ n}$) and as being destroyed either by 'Anat or Ba'al:

When thou ('Anat) dost smite Lotan, the
serpent primeval,
thou dost destroy the writhing serpent,
shalyat⁷¹ of the seven heads;

and

Verily, I have destroyed Yam, the beloved
of El.
Truly, I have destroyed the great rivers of
El.
Truly I muzzle Tannin; I muzzle him.
I have destroyed the writhing serpent.

⁶⁹Psalm 78:15f.

⁷⁰supra, Chapter IV, pp. 39ff.

⁷¹Cyrus Gordon, Ugaritic handbook. Revised Grammer, Paradigms, texts in Transliteration, Comprehensive Glossary, III. (Roma: Pontificum Institutum Biblicum, 1947), p. 272, No. 1948.

Shalyat of the seven heads.⁷²

Alexander Heidel⁷³ follows S. R. Driver when he maintains that Leviathan probably refers to the Dragon which was anciently believed to produce eclipses by swallowing the sun or the moon or by surrounding it in its coils. Hermann Gunkel⁷⁴ maintains that Leviathan is a real animal synonymous with the dragon Ti'amat and the monsters associated with her and that the biblical passages in which Leviathan is referred to are echoes of Marduk's victory over Ti'amat and her brood. Both Gunkel and Heidel merely describe a phenomenon. Neither explains it - indeed, if that is possible. We propose no explanation except the suggestion that we are here dealing with a theme that appears to be common property. The story of a dramatic clash between two supreme forces (in nature?), the genius of life and the genius of death, and the final victory of the lord of creativity, the genius of life. We sense a basic theme here. We do, however, take significant exception to W. G. F. Cesterley⁷⁵ and many others who aver that Marduk is to Babylon as Osiris is to Egypt as Ba'al is to Canaan as Jahveh is to

⁷²Patton, op. cit., p. 23, for the cited texts. - In Isaiah 27:1 שׂוֹמֵר is referred to as "the fleeing serpent" and "the tortuous serpent."

⁷³Heidel, op. cit., p. 90.

⁷⁴Hermann Gunkel, Schöpfung und Chaos in Urzeit und Endzeit (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1895), pp. 41ff.

⁷⁵Cesterley, The Psalms I, 50.

Israel. Such an interpretation misses, among other things, the universalistic note expressed in Psalm 74⁷⁶ and the taunt:

For all the gods of the people are idols,
But the Lord made the heavens.⁷⁷

There can be no doubt that Psalm 74:12-17 proclaims Jah-
weh as the author of acts ascribed by the heathen to their god-
lings. Not unless we are willing to extract these verses from
their context, and there seems to be no legitimate warrant for
this kind of textual surgery here, and then claim them as part
of another enthronement psalm are we able to identify any con-
notation of actual ceremonial ritual in them.

Finally, it should be noted that some commentators call
attention to the striking similarity of verses 16 and 17 with
the Genesis account of the creation of lights in the firmament.
It is further pointed out on the basis of this similarity and
parallels from Babylonia and Egypt that Israel also made reci-
tation of the Creation drama in the annual Hebrew enthronement
ceremonies sometime during the festivities of the Succoth week.⁷⁸
Again, this suggestion lacks conviction for want of evidence
that there ever was such an enthronement ceremony in the He-
brew festival. There is nothing wrong with the mild postula-

⁷⁶74:12 ". . . working salvation in the midst of the
earth," and v. 17, "Thou has set all the borders of the earth."

⁷⁷Psalm 96:5.

⁷⁸Oesterley, Myth and Ritual, pp. 127f.

tion of Elmer Leslie that the Israelites associated the idea of creation with the succoth Festival; that they emphasized the creative power of Jahweh and His mastery of the chaotic forces of the deep which was creation itself.⁷⁹ Doubtless, ancient Israel was reminded of the mighty acts of Jahweh in creation by the resurgence of life in nature but as we have pointed out above this does not manufacture evidence for an enthronement ceremony during which the great battle of life and death forces was re-enacted by Jahweh in His temple in Jerusalem.

(B) Psalm 89:9-13 O Lord of hosts,
 who is might one, like unto Thee, O Lord?
 And Thy faithfulness is round about Thee.
 Thou rulest the proud swelling of the sea;
 When the waves thereof arise,⁸⁰ Thou
 stillest them.
 Thou didst crush Rahab, as one that is
 slain;
 Thou didst scatter Thine enemies with the
 arm of Thy strength.
 Thine are the heavens,
 Thine also the earth;
 The world and the fulness thereof.
 Thou hast founded them.
 The north and the south,
 Thou hast created them;
 Tabor and Hermon rejoice in Thy name.

Most commentators divide this Psalm into three songs:

⁷⁹ Elmer A. Leslie, The Psalms Translated and Interpreted in the Light of Hebrew Life and Worship (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1949), p. 57; 73f.

⁸⁰ Most commentators read יִי־שׁוֹ for יִי־וֹ which, however, Schmidt, Die Psalmen, p. 166, would read as an irregular infinite construct of the doubly weak verb יִשׁוּ .

(vv. 1-19; 20-38; 39-51). The first of these three divisions is a hymn of praise glorifying the supremacy of Jahweh among the heavenly hosts. The second commemorates Jahweh's covenant with the house of David. The third is a pathetic plaint over the downfall of the monarchy. We are concerned only with the first theme.⁸¹

We could better judge this portion of the Psalm if we were acquainted with the occasion of its composition. There is good reason to believe that if the Hebrews did praise the creative activity of Yahweh at the Succoth festival then certainly this Psalm would fit the occasion. Strangely enough, the sequence of ritual activity that we have observed in the first three chapters is much the same here. There is the extolling of the champion's mighty strength (vv. 6-8), a statement of how he crushed his enemy (vv. 10-12), and how after peace once more reigned, he created the world, restoring what was once chaos to order (vv. 13-15).

Numerous parallels from Enuma Elish and other Mesopotamian literature immediately come to mind. For example, "Thou, O Marduk, art our champion."⁸² Among the honorific titles of Marduk we note especially two:

⁸¹Interestingly enough, Oesterley, The Psalms, II, 396, describes the theme of the three psalms as the 1) origin, 2) development and 3) disappearance of kingship.

⁸²Heidel, op. cit., Tablet IV:15.

Asaruslimnunna, the mighty one. . . ⁸³
Eagalguenna, the first of all the lords,
 the gods, the one whose strength is mighty. ⁸⁴

By linking this with what follows in the Psalm we do not mean to say that the wondrous acts of Jahweh are directly comparable to the old Babylonian story of the primeval combat between the god Marduk and the monster, Ti'amat, the enemy of the gods. The combat scene that follows depicts how Jahweh gained undisputed leadership of the cosmos:

Thou rulest the proud swelling of the sea:
 When the waves thereof arise,
Thou stillest them.
Thou didst crush Rahab, ⁸⁵ as one that is slain; ⁸⁶
Thou didst scatter thine enemies with the army
 of thy strength.

Note especially the emphatic Thou (אנכי). It occurs in every line. It is a protest against Ba'al's usurpation of all these great deeds of might. Actually sings the poet, it is Jahweh who performs these acts, to him credit is due, and not to Ba'al as the heathen are wont to chant.

The closest Babylonian parallel is somewhat drawn out but the following extract depicts the climax of the combat.

⁸³Ibid., Tablet VII:5.

⁸⁴Ibid., Tablet VII:93.

⁸⁵Hermann Gunkel, Schopfung und Chaos, pp. 36f. identifies Rahab with the sea. Heidel, op. cit., pp. 89f. thinks that Rahab is either a synonymous term for the serpent and the crocodile or it denotes a similar creature.

⁸⁶cf. parallel thought in Isaiah 51:9 and Job 26:12; also Leslie, The Psalms, p. 75.

Marduk addresses Ti'amat:

(Against) the gods, my fathers, thou hast directed
thy wickedness.
Let thy forces be drawn up, let thy weapons be gird-
ed on!
Then come on and let us, me and thee, do battle!
When Ti'amat heard this,
She became like one in frenzy (and) lost her reason.
Ti'amat screamed in fury;
To the (very) roots her legs shook back and forth.
She recites an incantation and repeatedly casts her
spell;
And the gods of battle sharpen their weapons.
Ti'amat and Marduk, the wisest of the gods, took
their stand opposite each other,
They pressed on to the battle, they approached in
combat.
The lord spread out his net and enmeshed her,
The evil wind, following after, he let loose in
her face.
When Ti'amat opened her mouth to devour him,
He drove in the evil wind, so that she could not
close her lips.
As the raging winds filled her belly,
Her belly was distended, and she opened wide her
mouth.
He shot off an arrow, it tore her belly,
it cut through her inward parts, it pierced (her)
heart.
When he had subdued her, he destroyed her life;
He cast down her carcass (and) stood upon it.⁸⁷

To say that the role of marduk was transferred in hebrew thinking to Jahweh misses the point of the parallel. In this poem Jahweh is not thought of as just another victor in the annual battle for survival for Jahweh was a god above all gods. Certainly there was more than an element of the very real in Jahweh's combat. Note that there are perhaps histori-

⁸⁷Heidel, op. cit., Tablet IV:84-104.

cal allusions to Egypt in Rahab and Leviathan. Nor should a little emphasis be placed on the actual resurgence of life in autumn. To associate Jahweh with the return of vigor in the earth is just what we would expect of a devoted Jahwist.

An extremely illuminating essay by George Sarton published a decade and a half ago illustrates just what this "resurgence" and "revivification" of biological life really means to the primitive or mythopoetic mind. The following quotation from Sarton describes a way of thinking, a way of saying, that is foreign to our "critical" or scientific modes of communication:

saint George or al-Kaidr is . . . a giver of life, for he is the most powerful rain-bringer, and any one who has lived in the parched East - where one never needs to go very far to witness the grim realities of the desert, and where the fear of drought is always a ghostly presence - will readily understand what this implies. One can easily imagine the popularity of a saint or hero who is able to procure that great blessing - second only to fertility - heavenly water for a thirsty land. After a generous rain what had seemed a desert, blossoms out with such suddenness and exuberance that I could hardly get used to it; to my critical eyes it looked like a miracle, and no doubt, to the uncritical eyes of the East, it was a miracle. No wonder that St. George is a very great saint and well beloved. His story is connected with the daily struggle against darkness, with the yearly struggle against winter, with the continual one against drought. He it is who causes the resurrection of the spring. Hence he is identified with Adonis and Tammuz, and he has become the symbol of the resurrection of nature and of the resurrection of the dead.⁸⁸

⁸⁸George Sarton, "The Unity and Diversity of the Mediterranean World," *Osiris*, II (1936), 459f.

It was Yahweh who restored life in the Wadies, in the rivers, in the mountain creeks, in the desert, in human activity. The Canaanites said: "Now Ba'al has conquered Mot." The Babylonians said, "Now Marduk has conquered Ti'amat." The Egyptians said, "Now Horus has conquered Seth." The thought was so prominent in the Near East that no living nation could escape being influenced by the mythology. Israel assuredly used the theme and applied it to Yahweh but Yahweh was an altogether different kind of purposive force in the lives of His people than were any of the quasi-champions of the primitive Near Easterners generally.⁸⁹

We had noted earlier in considering the New Year Festivals of Israel's neighbors that a recitation of the creative acts of the great god usually followed close upon the successful completion of his battle with the forces of death. It is held that the Psalms in which reference to vegetation, to the fruits of the earth, and to plentiful showers, which are all the gifts of Yahweh, point to this ceremony.⁹⁰ Psalm 65:10-14 is considered a good example:⁹¹

⁸⁹W. Robertson Smith, Lectures on the Religion of the Semites, First series (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1894), pp. 95-108.

⁹⁰Nowinckel, Psalmenstudien, II, 2844.

⁹¹Also Psalm 74:16, 17; and 104:13ff.

Thou has remembered the earth, and watered her,
 greatly enriching her,⁹²
 with the river of God that is full of water;
 Thou preparest them corn,⁹³ for so preparest
 Thou her.

Watering her ridges abundantly,
 settling down the furrows thereof,
 Thou makest her soft with showers;
 Thou blessest the growth thereof.
 Thou crownest the year with Thy goodness;
 And Thy paths drop fatness.
 The pastures of the wilderness are dashed with
 dust.⁹⁴
 And the hills are girded with joy.
 The meadows are clothed over with corn;
 They shout for joy, yea, they sing.

An important part of the New Year Festival of the Egyptians and Babylonians was a dramatic re-enactment of the creation story. This was supposed to have taken on a mimo-dramatic form. Consequently, it is held, the frequent references to the creative acts of Jahweh in the Psalms sung at the New Year Festival prove that in the consciousness of the hebrew people the ritual of the festival was inseparably connected with the original creative acts of Jahweh at the creation. That sounds reasonable enough. In the absence of traditions in the Old Testament, however, it is making evidence talk your peculiar language to postulate legitimate Jahweh mysteries in

⁹² $\text{הַיָּרֵךְ הַיְמָנִי}$ refers to artificial irrigation.

⁹³ many commentators consider $\text{בְּאֵלֵינוּ יִצְחָק}$ a gloss because it overloads the meter and is untranslatable. The problem is then resolved by dissolving יִצְחָק into יִצְחָק .

⁹⁴ some would equate יִצְחָק with יִצְחָק .

Israel as Gressmann⁹⁵ and Nowinckel⁹⁶ do. Certainly, also in Israel ideas were conceived in mythical form because mythical thinking and primitive or pre-scientific thinking are synonymous expressions. However, much mythical thinking controls the thought patterns of the Old Testament. There is no trace of a specific Jahweh myth and consequently never any specific spectacles in Israel.

These illustrations from Psalms 74 and 89 which record how Jahweh conquered the dragon both have as their immediate context Jahweh as king (74:12 and 89:9) and as Creator of the world (74:16-17 and 89:11). This is exactly the case in the Babylonian epic of creation, which, as we have seen, was recited in full on the fourth day of the Akitu festival in Babylon. Marduk is enthroned, then comes his victorious combat with the dragon, after which he creates the heavens and the earth.

(C) Psalm 44:20 Yet thou hast crushed us⁹⁷ in the region of the Tannim,⁹⁸ and thou hast covered us with the darkness of death.

The Jews consider the approach to God in this Psalm so

⁹⁵Huge Gressmann, "The Mysteries of Adonis and the Feast of Tabernacles," The Expositor, ninth series, III (June, 1925), 416-432.

⁹⁶Nowinckel, op. cit., pp. 67-78.

⁹⁷Budde would emend יִשְׁרָץ to read יִשְׁרָץ־ךָ, "thou hast thrust us into. . ." Cited in Gunkel, Die Psalmen, p. 188.

⁹⁸Read with some MSS תַּנִּימִים for תַּנִּימִים, "jackels."

irreverent that it is not used in the worship of the Synagogue. Israel has been in perilous circumstances and Yahweh has not come to her rescue. History had repeatedly witnessed his marvelous intervention on behalf of Israel but now Yahweh has "cast us off and brought us to shame." (v.10) Our verse (v.20) occurs among an enumeration of the insults that Yahweh had caused Israel. Israel, so claims the Psalmist, has not forgotten Yahweh, "nor dealt falsely in thy covenant, our heart is not turned backward" from God. And yet Yahweh has crushed ($\eta\delta\eta$) Israel in the place of dragons, i.e., as though Yahweh were treating his people as he treated ri'amat and her brood or as he treated Yam, identified with the sea and conceived of as the very personification of wickedness,⁹⁹ and covered them with darkness (lit., $\eta\delta\eta$ shades of death).¹⁰⁰

(D) Psalm 93:2-4 Thy throne is established of old;
 Thou art from everlasting, O Yahweh,¹⁰¹
 The floods have lifted up, O Yahweh.
 The floods have lifted up their voice;
 The floods lift up their roaring.
 Above the voices of many waters,
 The mighty breakers of the sea,
 The Lord on high is mighty.

⁹⁹ Isaiah 51:9. 10.

¹⁰⁰ Note the use of the same word in Psalm 23:4 and Job 38:16, 17; 7:12.

¹⁰¹ Add $\eta\delta\eta$ as demanded by the rhythm. Gesterley, The Psalms, II, 415. Also Briggs, The Book of Psalms, II, 249. Duhm has suggested instead the emendation $\eta\delta\eta$. Cited in Gunkel, Die Psalmen, p. 412.

Gunkel¹⁰² considers the ceremonies incidental to the enthronement of earthly monarchs in Israel and Judah the model for the psalms of enthronement of Yahweh. For that reason Psalm 93, in the spiritualized form in which we have it today is the result of a prophetic reworking.¹⁰³ Mowinckel,¹⁰⁴ however, disputes the eschatological interpretation of this psalm and understands it as a description of what the congregation experienced at the festival of the enthronement of Yahweh. The nature of our problem, however, carries us beyond both of these interpretations.

The combat motif rises out of this psalm as the supreme element of Yahweh's kingship, viz., the victory over his enemies. Yahweh is pictured as girded for battle (v.1). His throne is secure, established, for Yahweh has issued from the contest decisively victorious.¹⁰⁵ That Yahweh was ever thought of as sitting on a throne seems to be a picture as intimately related to the life of the Near Eastern world as to His kingship. Verse 2 anticipates the outcome of the battle described so vigorously in verses 3 and 4 in which Yahweh successfully

¹⁰²H. Gunkel, Einleitung in die Psalmen, pp. 96f.

¹⁰³Gunkel, Die Psalmen, p. 411. Also Adam Welch, The Psalter in Life, Worship and History (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1926), p. 33.

¹⁰⁴Mowinckel, op. cit., cf. index under Psalm 93.

¹⁰⁵ יָדָה. The same word is used in reference to establishing the earth in v. 1 and also 96:10.

competes against Yam, Prince Sea. Yam met Yahweh with a roar and a shout but Yahweh was not to be outdone for "more glorious than the raging of the sea, is Yahweh, glorious on high." (v.4).

(E) Psalm 91:13 On lion¹⁰⁶ and adder shalt thou tread,
Shalt trample on young lion and dragon.

This Psalm is a devotional polemic against magical means employed to encounter the attacks of demons.¹⁰⁷ Anciently the Semites believed that there was a distinct relationship between certain animal and demons who appeared in the wilderness as wild beasts. They thought that the closest connection existed between demons and serpents. In another direction Gunkel suggests that the psalmist has apparently seen illustrations on seal cylinders and on reliefs, common in the Near East, on which the god, Marduk is portrayed as standing with his foot on the conquered monster Ti'amat. Also in Egypt, in reliefs and figurines worn as charms, the deity is frequently pictured as holding a lion, serpents and scorpions by the tail and as treading on crocodiles and lions.¹⁰⁸ Such charms betray the hope that the wearer too may similarly triumph over the viscious enemies of the animal world.

¹⁰⁶LXX and Syriac (London Polyglott, 1654) read $\alpha\pi\iota\delta\alpha$ or $\alpha\pi\iota\delta$.

¹⁰⁷Oesterley, The Psalms, II, 407f., where he cites Talmudic evidence to support this contention.

¹⁰⁸Gunkel, Die Psalmen, p. 405.

It is precisely at this point where the Psalmist is in violent polemic against the formulas, magic acts and enchantments, help of wizards and witches employed by the heathen to ward off the malevolent activity of demons. Rather, it is Yahweh "who is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust" (v.2). Hence, if the reference to $\text{ג}^{\text{י}}\text{י}$ in this Psalm is taken to echo the oft-told tale of Ba'al's victory over Yam then certainly it is a vague allusion and much corrupted. It seems, however, that the $\text{ג}^{\text{י}}\text{י}$ refers to what the Arabs call jinn or ghul.¹⁰⁹

(F) Psalm 77:17 The waters saw Thee, O God;¹¹⁰
The waters saw Thee, they were in pain;
The depths also trembled.

The last five verses of this Psalm (17-21) fairly leap out of the context by their vigor and power. The theme of the final verses is not foreign to the problem which the poet has set up but the language is much less meditative. This could well be the tacking on of appropriate verses for the sake of completeness or length. Verses 17 to 21 also make a good transition from verses 1-15 to Psalm 78.

In verse 18, the psalmist introduces an already familiar element by recalling the glorious deeds of Yahweh in the past. The sons of Jacob and Joseph had been in Egypt, helpless as a

¹⁰⁹ W. Robertson Smith, op. cit., pp. 120-127.

¹¹⁰ Many commentators read $\text{ג}^{\text{י}}\text{י}$ for $\text{ג}^{\text{י}}\text{י}$.

widow. But in their distress they had in Yahweh a champion who had taken up their cause and redeemed them. Now verse 17 recalls how Ba'al destroyed Yam with Expeller and Driver, his two divinely fashioned clubs. Yahweh also conquered Prince Sea is thrown into permanent writhing indicated by the restless heaving of the waves. Here also is reference to חַיְהוֹן , the deeps of the creation story which "kept shaking" (יָרַח). In Enuma Elish we read that on the verge of battle with Marduk Ti'amat's "legs shook back and forth."¹¹¹ From the conquest of the chaos-ocean the psalmist passes on to the phenomena of the sky.

(3) Conclusion

The kingship concept that has been developed in this paper were derived almost exclusively from a study of its manifestation in the New Year Festivals in the various cultures of the Near East. The fundamental pattern of this festival has been established by the Akitu Festival in Babylon. Though the precise pattern has been more difficult to identify in both Egypt and Canaan, there is strong evidence that the general pattern persisted in at least a gradually disintegrating form.

The sources in this area of investigation are growing. The available evidence is by no means completely satisfying. The often uncertain nature of the materials has created not a

¹¹¹Heidel, op. cit., Tablet IV:90.

little difficulty in sorting out and arranging it in as honest a manner as possible. We have tried to face up to the evidence honestly and fully conscious of our presuppositions outline in the first chapter. In this paper we have merely stated a problem, and that summarily. Instead of stretching out into a full length discussion of the enthronement ceremony as postulated by continental scholars we have merely skimmed off the basic arguments for examination. For example: The psalms of Yahweh's enthronement as Psalms 47, 68, 93, 97, 98 and 99. We have not discussed any one of these psalms as a complete poem. Rather, have selected the key terms $\text{יָדָוּ, אֶסֶר, יְהוָה יִרְדָּה}$ and discussed each term separately. Choosing the combat theme was not arbitrary. This motif seems to be particularly important in the minds of the festival participants.

Finally, we wish to draw together a few fundamental propositions that have resulted from the evidence produced in this paper.

- 1) Myth as a form of reasoning that proclaims a truth in an action such as ritual behavior seems to have been the thinking behind the stories that describe the rituals which we have discussed. Here we must completely disabuse our minds of the modern connotation of myth.
- 2) Kingship centered around the problem of maintaining and procreating community life in the ancient Near East. The proper functioning of a healthy king was fundamental to existence.

- 3) The New Year Festival was a joyous occasion. Prince Life conquered Prince Death and thus the creative power of biological life was assured success. There would be crops, rain. There would also be children.
- 4) The victory of the high-god (in the person of the king) over his enemies was not merely an assertion of power; it was also the reduction of chaos to order.
- 5) These features were common to all primitive life in the Near East. This is perhaps the best explanation of the apparent unity of the existing ritual pattern.
- 6) The Hebrews frequently referred to Yahweh as king. There is no compromising of the character of Yahweh when he is made king.
- 7) There seems to be a basic experience underlying the kingship motif which stirred also the Hebrews, in this case an experience of faith that Yahweh could maintain, sustain and procreate life as a trustworthy (re-) Creator.
- 8) The parallels set up in this paper have established a definite affinity in the descriptions of the kingship motif in the several Near Eastern Cultures. The unique feature in the descriptions of the kingship motif among the Hebrews consisted solely in the self-revealing character of Yahweh.

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