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An Historical Survey of Old Testament Theology Since 1922

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SINCE shortly after World War I there have been a great many publications and a lively interest in the field of Old Testament studies known as Old Testament theology or Biblical theology of the Old Testament. This surge of interest came after a period of almost complete neglect of this discipline. This paper will attempt to analyze the causes of the resurgence of Old Testament theology, to understand the various methods or approaches of major scholars in the field, and to analyze the results of these methods.

However broadly or narrowly the scope of Old Testament theology is defined, it is always a summary of the results of historical and exegetical scholarship, drawing together the other branches of Old Testament study. Thus the importance of an overview of Old Testament theology lies in the fact that this provides, to a certain extent, a survey of all Old Testament scholarship and an indication of the theological results of modern research. Furthermore, a broad view of this field is of great benefit to the student in understanding and making use of the works of individual scholars, revealing, as such a survey does, the importance of approach and method in determining the character of a writer's work.

The period to be surveyed in this paper extends from 1922 to the present day. This is not simply an arbitrary division, but is chosen because the *Theologie des Alten Testaments* of Eduard Koenig, published in 1922,[1] was the first major publication in the field since Davidson's *Theology of the Old Testament,* published in 1904.[2]

The major emphasis in the paper will be on the method or approach of the scholars treated. Obviously the content of the various books cannot be presented in detailed review, but their outline, content, and quality will be indicated, in summary fashion,

[1] Eduard Koenig, *Theologie des Alten Testaments* (Stuttgart: Chr. Belser, 1922).

[2] A. B. Davidson, *The Theology of the Old Testament* (New York: Scribner's, c. 1904).

as much as is necessary for an understanding of a scholar's viewpoint and an assessment of the results of his method.

The Decline of Interest in Old Testment Theology

The theological discipline known as Biblical theology of the Old Testament originated in the period of Rationalism, toward the end of the 18th century.[3] The classic and often quoted definition of Biblical theology was formulated by J. P. Gabler in an address titled "De justo discrimine theologiae Biblicae et dogmaticae," delivered in 1787. Biblical theology is an objective, historical discipline, he maintained, describing what the Biblical writers thought about divine matters. It is to be distinguished from dogmatic theology, which is didactic in character and sets forth what a theologian philosophically and rationally decides about divine matters in accordance with his time and situation.[4]

Although Gabler's definition and the earliest criticism of the Bible grew to a great extent out of a reaction to what dogmatic theology regarded as an abuse of the Bible, the early critics still consider theology as part of their responsibility. Thus such men as Eichhorn, De Wette, Ewald, and Vatke wrote many works on strictly theological subjects.[5]

Later critics, however, writing toward the end of the 19th century, began to ignore the theology of the Old Testament. Such men as Stade, Smend, and the early Sellin treated the Old Testament as a collection of historical sources to be subjected to objective historical treatment. The result was not a theology but a history of the religion of Israel. The idea of the Old Testament as a preparation for the New was given up. If faith wished to make its own valuation of the evidence, this was permissible, but for

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[3] C. T. Craig, "Biblical Theology and the Rise of Historicism," *Journal of Biblical Literature*, XLII (1943), 281—294. Cf. Hermann Gunkel, "Biblische Theologie und Biblische Religionsgeschichte," in *Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, ed. Gunkel and Leopold Zscharnack; 2d ed. (Tuebingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1931), I, col. 1089.

[4] Friedrich Baumgaertel, "Erwägungen zur Darstellung der Theologie des Alten Testaments," *Theologische Literaturzeitung*, LXXVI (May 1951), col. 258. Cf. G. E. Wright, *God Who Acts: Biblical Theology as Recital* (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1952), p. 33.

[5] James D. Smart, "The Death and Rebirth of Old Testament Theology," *Journal of Religion*, XXIII (1943), 3.

the scholar any consideration of faith or theological values was irrelevant.[6]

This drastic decline of interest in the theology of the Old Testament was due, first of all, to a reaction against the theologizing of the former generation. This reaction was not wholly unjustified, since the objectivity of the earlier critics had been impaired by various philosophical and religious biases. Younger critics justly accused them of reading meanings into the Old Testament. A second factor in the decline was the use of a rigid principle of development to explain historical changes. This was also a reaction against the static conception which many had previously held. Thirdly, this decline was part of a general trend away from theology characteristic of Protestantism in general in the 19th century. A final factor was the discovery of ancient cultures by archaeologists. These tremendous finds attracted philologians and historians to Old Testament study. Men of this bent of mind were often without any particular theological interest.[7]

Several theologies were produced in this period, but they were histories of the religion of Israel masquerading under the title of theology or they were confused and inadequate. The victory was left with the history-of-religion approach.[8] Hermann Gunkel, summing up the attitude at the end of this period, confidently predicted that from then on there would be histories of Israel's religion rather than theologies of the Old Testament.[9] Thus Smart is right in speaking of "The Death . . . of Old Testament Theology," [10] and other writers aptly described the period as "a theological ice age" [11] characterized by a "curious paralysis" of Old Testament theology.[12]

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[6] Herbert F. Hahn, *The Old Testament in Modern Research* (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, c. 1954), pp. 227 f.

[7] Ibid.; Smart, pp. 4—9.

[8] Smart, pp. 9—11.

[9] "Nach diesem allem ist zu erwarten, dasz das Fach in einer schon abzusehenden Zukunft allgemein die Form der 'Geschichte der israelitischen Religion' besitzen wird." (Col. 1090)

[10] Smart, p. 1.

[11] C. R. North, "Old Testament Theology and the History of Hebrew Religion," *Scottish Journal of Theology*, II (1949), 113—126.

[12] Norman W. Porteous, "Old Testament Theology," in *The Old Testament and Modern Study*, ed. H. H. Rowley (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1951), p. 313.

Some, like Harnack, openly called for the elimination of the Old Testament from the Christian canon, and a prominent writer in the field declares that his colleagues were restrained from doing so more by courtesy than by conviction.[13]

The Resurgence of Old Testament Theology in Europe

Germany

Under the impact of a purely scientific Old Testament scholarship and the optimistic, liberal Protestant spirit of the late 19th and early 20th century, theology of the Old Testament was abandoned as a part of Old Testament studies. However, a reaction was not long in coming. The first stimulus toward the resurgence of Old Testament theology came from World War I and the resultant collapse of Germany's spiritual heritage. Germany bore the main brunt of defeat in the war, and the optimism of the progressive, liberal approach in theology was thoroughly discredited.[14] In the words of one observer, "With the collapse of civilization at the end of World War I liberal thought lost the very props on which it was constructed. The great triumvirate of theological liberalism, Schleiermacher, Ritschl, and Troeltsch, fell into profound disrepute among German-speaking theologians, especially among the younger generation." [15]

Closely allied with this dissatisfaction with liberal theology was a feeling that purely objective, critical study of the Old Testament was inadequate. It began to be felt that this sort of study did not result in an interpretation that gave significant meaning to the writings.[16] Pastors were being faced with the question of the normative character of the Old Testament, and they were not being helped by purely scientific studies. Besides these men, theologians in the fields of comparative religion, New Testament, and systematic theology also felt the need of a more satisfactory interpretation of Old Testament data.[17]

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[13] Walter Eichrodt, *Theologie des Alten Testaments* (Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1950), I, 4.

[14] Hahn, p. 171.

[15] W. Heick and J. L. Neve, *A History of Christian Thought* (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, c. 1946), II, 171.

[16] Hahn, p. 228.

[17] Baumgaertel, loc. cit.

Several theological movements lent impetus to the rise of Old Testament theology. Out of the disillusionment in Germany after World War I arose a current of "Neo-Lutheranism." Greatly interested in Luther, this group of scholars devoted themselves to Bible studies and to the theological use of the Bible.[18] Though their interest lay mainly in New Testament studies, they may well have provided some stimulus toward a revival of Old Testament theology.

A more direct connection can be traced between the rise of Old Testament theology and the theological movement known as crisis theology, dialectical theology, neo-orthodoxy, or, after its chief representative, Barthianism. The sense of the tragedy of life produced by World War I, discrediting Kant and Hegel along with liberal theology, had a profound effect on Karl Barth, who up to that time had been an advocate of religious socialism and theological liberalism. "He and his friends, as Thurneysen says . . . learned to be 'ganz neu aufmerksam auf die Bibel.'"[19] In 1918 Barth published his *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans,* which with its emphasis on the sovereignty of God, the sinfulness of man, and the revelation of God in Christ and His cross and resurrection stimulated a whole new movement in theology, with Biblical studies as one of its chief emphases.[20]

This movement was a vital stimulus toward theological study of the Old Testament, whether this came from a follower of Barth like Wilhelm Vischer or as a reaction on the part of those who disagreed with Barth.[21]

Later in this period the rise of National Socialism in Germany, with the attendant anti-Semitism, shocked Old Testament scholars into a defense, and thus a discussion, of the theology of the Old Testament. When attempts were made to revive Germany from the spiritual shock she experienced after World War I, not all of

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[18] Outstanding representatives of this group are Elert, Althaus, Sasse, Heim, G. Kittel, Koeberle, Sommerlath, Kuenneth, and Jeremias. (Heick and Neve, II, 180—184)

[19] Ibid., p. 173.

[20] Kenneth S. Latourette, *A History of Christianity* (New York: Harper & Bros., c. 1953), p. 1383.

[21] Emil G. Kraeling, *The Old Testament Since the Reformation* (London: Lutterworth Press, 1955), pp. 219, 178.

these were along Christian lines. Instead, the most radical of the new religious movements declared the country weakened by Jewish-Christian influence. Christianity was being replaced by a pagan mythology.[22] Anti-Semitism was bound to strike the Old Testament especially hard, and scholars felt themselves obligated both as students of the Old Testament and as Christians to defend their book. For example, in 1934 three scholars noted especially for their work as historians and critics — Alt, Begrich, and von Rad — published *Führung zum Christentum durch das Alte Testament.* Directed against a virulently anti-Semitic book by Th. Fritsch, the work tries to demonstrate the necessity of the Old Testament for Christianity.[23] This church struggle with a reviving paganism was a powerful factor contributing to the resurgence of Old Testament theology, forcing scholars to consider the question of the nature and relevance of the Old Testament.[24]

The revival of Old Testament theology began with a number of important preliminary discussions. The first explicit call for a revival of the discipline came in 1921 from an outstanding critical scholar. Speaking to a gathering of Old Testament scholars, Rudolf Kittel, whose own *Religion of Israel* was a typical product of the historical school, freely acknowledged the shortcomings of the purely critical approach. "We came very near apologizing for the very existence of our Old Testament people and its religion. . . . Thus it was no wonder that an outsider such as Harnack misunderstood us."[25] Kittel then urged the scholars present to recapture the sense of Old Testament study as a discipline in Christian theology.[26]

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[22] Hahn, p. 202.

[23] Kraeling, p. 202.

[24] Porteous, p. 317.

[25] Rudolf Kittel, "Die Zukunft der alttestamentlichen Wissenschaft," *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft,* XXXIX (1921), 84. Kittel refers to the suggestion of Harnack that the Old Testament should be dropped from the canon; Harnack had said: "Das Alte Testament im 2. Jahrhundert zu verwerfen, war ein Fehler; . . . es im 15. Jahrhundert beizubehalten, war ein Schicksal; . . . es aber seit dem 19. Jahrhundert als kanonische Urkunde im Protestantismus noch zu konservieren, ist die Folge einer religiösen und kirchlichen Lähmung." Ludwig Koehler, "Alttestamentliche Theologie, I: Vorfragen und Gesamtdarstellungen," *Theologische Rundschau,* VII (1935), 257. Hereafter cited as "Vorfragen."

[26] Cf. Smart, 129.

The first work in the modern period to bear the title *Theology of the Old Testament* was that of Eduard Koenig, which appeared in 1922.[27] Koenig stood somewhat apart from the main stream of Old Testament study, since he disagreed sharply with the Wellhausen school and had a strong tendency toward conservatism. Nevertheless he acknowledges the necessity of critical and historical study of the Old Testament, even if he must construct his own history of Israel's religion (pp. 6—16). Wishing to combine a historical and theological approach, he prefaces his work with his own history and then provides a systematic treatment of the religious ideas of the Old Testament. Basically his system is one adopted from traditional systematic theology, that is, theology, anthropology, and soteriology.[28] Recognizing the diversity of ideas in the Old Testament, Koenig operates with the selective principle of "the legitimate religion of Israel," maintaining that only one religious tradition in Israel has abiding significance.[29]

Koenig's work, however, was marred by defects which brought upon it rigorous criticism and prevented it from exercising any great influence on the history of Old Testament theology. Criticism was directed especially to his systematic principle. Adopted as it was from another branch of theology, it was felt to be ill adapted to the subject. Eichrodt commented: "One notices an unmistakable sort of hybrid character about the book, since the historical-genetic approach extends beyond the confines of the first, historical part and thus the synthesis is slighted, and on the other hand, because the adoption of a dogmatic division foreign to the subject forces the material against its will into a bed of Procrustes."[30] In addition, Koenig failed to provide any new discussion of the nature of Old Testament theology.[31]

Yet though Koenig's work is generally regarded as possessing

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[27] See n. 1, above.

[28] Cf. the evaluation by Eichrodt, p. 4.

[29] Cf. Smart, p. 129.

[30] Eichrodt, p. 4.

[31] "Le manuel d' Eduard Koenig paru en 1922 ne peut pas être consideré comme le signal de la renaissance de cette branche, mais doit plutôt être envisagé comme le derniere témoignage d'un savant qui etait toujours resté réfractaire aux theories de Wellhausen." Edmond Jacob, *Theologie de l'Ancien Testament* (Paris: Delachaux & Niestle, c. 1955). p. 19. Cf. the judgment of Friedrich Baumgaertel: "Übrigens geht Ed. Koenig 1922 bereits — oder in seinem Falle

little permanent value, it is not wholly without historical significance. For all his conservatism Koenig insisted that the theology of the Old Testament must also be concerned with critical and historical scholarship, and thus he was the first of many modern scholars to recognize this principle. The fact that Koenig placed a history of Israel's religion alongside a treatment of Old Testament theology may be considered to have posed the question which was to occupy every writer to follow him: the question of the relation of the relative and the absolute, the immanent and the transcendent, the history of Israel's religion and Old Testament theology.

After Koenig's unsuccessful and rather premature attempt at treating the theology of the Old Testament, discussion of the task and necessity of Old Testament theology was carried on by Carl Steuernagel. In an article which appeared in 1925 Steuernagel first enumerated the disadvantages of the old *loci* method of Biblical theology, emphasizing the inability of this sort of method to show a development or history. Then, however, he demonstrates that the more recent history-of-religion method also is inadequate without a systematic presentation of Old Testament theology. *Religionsgeschichte,* in the first place, does not provide the student of comparative religion with the materials necessary for comparison; a systematic treatment is demanded for his purpose. Then, too, the historian must omit many details which are significant and necessary for New Testament theology; thus monographic study of Old Testament concepts is necessary. It is also a peculiar failing of *Religionsgeschichte* that it is unable satisfactorily to present beliefs always held by Israel, or material which cannot be fitted into any one period with any sort of certainty, such as Israelite eschatology and wisdom literature. Steuernagel closes by stressing the necessity of Old Testament theology for the New Testament scholar and the dogmatician and remarks, with reference to the freedom of Biblical studies from dogmatic points of view, "Independence dare not become irrelevance."[32] Steuernagel's

besser gesagt 'noch' — diesen Weg. [That is, following a dogmatic outline.] Seine sachfremde, weil dogmatisch bestimmte Systematik erweist ihn als Nachzügler." (Baumgaertel, p. 266)

[32] Carl Steuernagel, "Alttestamentliche Theologie und alttestamentliche Religionsgeschichte," in *Vom Alten Testament: Festschrift Karl Marti,* ed. K. Budde (Giessen: Toepelmann, 1925), pp. 266—273.

remarks are cautious and call for Old Testament theology mostly as an aid to other branches of scientific theological study, without raising the question of the validity of the Old Testament for Christianity.

This question was discussed by Otto Eissfeldt in an article which appeared the following year, 1926. Eissfeldt, a Lutheran, notes at the outset the growing tendency toward a theological use of the Old Testament and that some, notably Proksch, were calling for a "pneumatic exegesis" of the Old Testament. In sharp opposition to this trend Eissfeldt insisted on a sharp separation of knowledge and faith, of history and theology. Knowledge deals with history in an objective fashion; scholars of all faiths or even of no faith can work together at the task of a history of Israel's religion. Old Testament theology, which falls into the realm of faith, is to be scientific and yet confessional in character. Here men of different faiths will not be able to co-operate, and the validity of a scholar's work will be limited to his brethren. Quoting Barth and Thurneysen on this point, he calls knowledge and faith "two parallel lines which meet only in infinity." [33]

Eissfeldt may be said to have clarified the problem involved in producing an Old Testament theology, but his extreme separation of knowledge and faith soon produced a reaction. Walter Eichrodt's article of 1929 closed this period of preliminary discussion of the nature of Old Testament theology with a reply to Eissfeldt and a presentation of the author's own position. Opposing any sort of attempt to take Old Testament theology out of the realm of empirical science, Eichrodt points out that all history is subjective to some extent, at least in selection of material, perspective, and the author's personal affinity for his subject. Thus even if Old Testament theology demands faith or existential commitment, it is still an empirical science.[34] Most other writers have echoed Eichrodt's criticism of Eissfeldt's position, adding that this could

[33] Otto Eissfeldt, "Israelitische-jüdische Religionsgeschichte und alttestamentliche Theologie," *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*, XLIV (1926), I, 1—12.

[34] Walter Eichrodt, "Hat die alttestamentliche Theologie noch selbständige Bedeutung in der alttestamentlichen Wissenschaft?" *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*, XLVII (1929), 83—91.

too easily lead to a situation where each religious community makes of the Old Testament what it chooses.[35]

In the same article, Eichrodt outlines the approach which was to bear fruit in his own theology of the Old Testament. Even though Old Testament theology as a historical discipline cannot make a pronouncement on the validity of the ideas presented, this does not mean that an Old Testament theology can only take the form of a historical presentation. A systematic exposition or "cross-section" is necessary as part of the historian's task, to show the inner relationships which a historical presentation may omit. Even though the theologian finds the full meaning of the Old Testament only in the New, and utilizes the New Testament as a principle of selection, yet this does not render his work unscientific.[36]

Eichrodt's principles were then employed in the production of a massive, three-volume *Theologie des Alten Testaments,* which began to appear in 1933.[37] His introduction resumes discussion of a specifically Christian, New Testament approach to the Old Testament. The Old Testament "looks over" into the New Testament. It has a forward movement, an unfinished character, which comes to rest only in Christ. "It is the break-through and consummation of the royal rule of God in this world which inseparably binds together the externally different worlds of the Old and New Testaments because it rests on the action of the one God who in promise and demand, in Gospel and Law, pursues one and the same great goal, the building of His kingdom." (Page 1)

Eichrodt does not contemplate abandoning the historical method, but wishes to build on it. Old Testament theology cannot be presented without constant consideration of its connection with the religious scene of the ancient Near East. Eichrodt's significant observation at this point, however, is that "the religion of which the Old Testament sources tell us is, despite a history full of change, an independent magnitude of enduring basic tendency and of a type constantly the same (p. 4)." This insight into the unity of Israel's religion throughout the historic period underlies Eichrodt's whole

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[35] Hahn, p. 232; Smart, p. 131; Jacob, p. 19 f.

[36] Eichrodt, loc. cit.

[37] Vols. II and III appeared in 1935 and 1939 respectively. Porteous, p. 324.

presentation and is reflected in his other works.[38] For example, when treating Israel's legal code in the body of his theology, though he does not entirely neglect historical development, he emphasizes the basically unchanging character of the legal principles of the Mosaic covenant.[39]

Though he thus asserts the unity of the Old Testament religion, Eichrodt expressly rejects the form of Christian dogmatics (theology, anthropology, soteriology) and instead proposes operating with a dialectic taken from the Old Testament itself. This is done to avoid operating with "bloodless abstractions" like "ethical monotheism (p. iii)." The central idea of the Old Testament, he asserts, is that God bears a special relation to His people designated by the word *covenant*, and thus the whole first volume, titled "God and His People," is organized around the idea of the covenant. But since this God also showed Himself as God of the world and of the individual, the remainder of the theology is organized under the headings "God and the World" and "God and Man." [40]

Eichrodt's treatment of Old Testament theology is an extremely significant one and has proved to be of enduring value. It is the largest and most exhaustive of the theologies that have been published to date and has gone through four editions. It is especially Eichrodt's idea of grouping Old Testament ideas according to a plan from *within* the Old Testament which has attracted the praise of most of those who have published appraisals of his work. Porteous, Wright, and Baumgaertel laud him for having overcome the old *loci* method and characterize his work as a significant pioneering effort.[41] The advantage of Eichrodt's method may be illustrated by the way in which it permits a natural and effective discussion of the meaning of the cultus, which is something of a crux for other theologians. (Pages 39—81)

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[38] Eichrodt treats Old Testament anthropology as unified in spite of historical complexity and diversity, in *Man in the Old Testament*, trans. K. and R. Gregor Smith (London: SCM Press, c. 1951). Cf. also his review of Fosdick's *Guide to Understanding the Bible*, *Journal of Biblical Literature*, LXV (1946), pp. 205—217.

[39] Hahn, pp. 234 f.

[40] Eichrodt acknowledges his debt to Otto Proksch for this division, which Proksch had employed in his lectures on Old Testament theology. (Ibid., pp. 5 f.)

[41] Porteous, pp. 326 f; Wright, p. 36; Baumgaertel, col. 267.

Yet even those who applaud Eichrodt acknowledge that his work cannot be regarded as final or definitive. In the first place, although he achieves a remarkable unity and coherence through his adoption of the covenant as the central and controlling idea, the unity achieved is to some extent artificial, imposed on the Old Testament rather than growing out of it.[42] This is probably reflected in the fact that he abandons the covenant as an organizing principle in the second and third volumes of the work. Baumgaertel criticizes the work from a different standpoint. He finds the defect in Eichrodt's book in the fact that he does not propose discussing the validity of Old Testament ideas, his own view of the relation of the Old to the New Testament would seem to suggest that a treatment of the question of validity is necessary for a complete theology, and it might be recalled that the political and religious situation had asked for something more than a purely historical presentation. Whether this purely descriptive method is considered a fault or not, it must be counted as a limitation.[43] Despite its flaws, however, G. Ernest Wright with considerable justification dubs the book "perhaps the greatest work on Old Testament theology ever produced."[44]

The year 1933 also saw the appearance of a much briefer treatment of Old Testament theology. Ernst Sellin, its author,[45] issued it as a supplement and companion volume to his history.[46] Sellin admits the inadequacy of a purely historical approach[47] and dif-

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[42] For example, it seems that it requires a *tour de force* to treat the names and essence of God under the rubrics "The Name of the Covenant God" and "The Essence of the Covenant God." It appears that Eichrodt's treatment is not basically different from that of other theologians and that applying these headings posits a unity without demonstrating it. Although Koehler's criticism is too sharp, it is not without justification: ". . . das Schema des Bundes ist willkürlich und von auszen her an die Texte herangetragen, statt dasz eine Prüfung vorgenommen wäre, die ergeben hätte, dasz die Bundeskategorie sich wohl findet, aber nicht grundlegend ist." (Koehler, p. 273. Cf. Porteous, pp. 326 f.)

[43] Baumgaertel, col. 267.

[44] Wright, p. 36.

[45] Ernst Sellin, *Theologie des Alten Testaments* (Leipzig: Quelle & Meyer, 1933).

[46] Ernst Sellin, *Geschichte der israelitischen und jüdischen Religion* (Leipzig: Quelle & Meyer, 1933).

[47] Smart, p. 132. "It seems to me high time for Old Testament science to remember that it is not merely a historical discipline, but also a discipline in Christian theology."

fers from Eichrodt as to the unity of the Old Testament. Sellin holds that only that part of the Old Testament is significant which served as the presupposition and basis for the Gospel of Christ and the proclamation of the apostles. The significant portion of the Old Testament is the religion of the prophets, which is in sharp contrast to the national cultic religion and eventually triumphed completely over it in the New Testament.[48] The Old Testament contains such contrasts and contradictions that it cannot yield a system of theology without selection of one element (p. 3), and thus Sellin proposes treating the national, cultic elements only as background for the prophetic religion.[49] Sellin is thus compelled to admit that the Old Testament is not unambiguous; also Pharisaism, Talmudic Judaism, Sadduceeism, Essenism, and Alexandrian religious philosophy based themselves on the Old Testament, adding something new and also finding their ideas prefigured in the Testament. (Pages 1 ff.)

Sellin's outline is in decided contrast to that of Eichrodt. Basically Sellin adopts the traditional divisions of systematic theology: the doctrine of God and His relation to the world, the doctrine of man and sin, and the doctrine of divine judgment and salvation (p. 3). As might be expected, there is no section on the cultus in Sellin's outline. In the statement that God is holy he finds the basic idea of the Old Testament. "God is holy. Herein we touch on that which is the deepest and inmost essence of the God of the Old Testament. Here we have to do, not with one divine attribute among others, but, closely joined to 'life' and 'spirituality,' with His real being, in its inmost core" (pp. 18 f.). The Gospel of Jesus attached itself directly to this faith in the holiness of God and built on it. (Page 22)

Aside from his avowedly Christian approach, Sellin's work re-

[48] "Erst Jesus, Paulus, Johannes, usw. haben klar den tiefsten Gegensatz, den die AT Religion in sich barg, erkannt, den zwischen Gesetz und Verheiszung bzw. Gnade, zwischen nationaler Kultreligion und prophetischsittlich-universalistischer Religion, und sie haben jene abgestoszen und dieser zum restlosen Durchbruch verholfen." (Ibid., p. 2)

[49] Ibid., p. 2. Smart is apparently mistaken in saying that Sellin resembles Eichrodt in holding that the Old Testament presents a basically unified religion. (Smart, p. 134)

veals a thoroughly critical, historical method.[50] As foretold in his introduction, Sellin treats prophetic and priestly religion as opposites; prophecy is "ein zweiter, ganz anderer Weg" when compared with the whole "kultische Betrieb," which is "irrelevant oder gar schädlich." (Pages 48; cf. p. 75)

Sellin's book is a compact presentation of Old Testament thought which has proved to have enduring value.[51] Criticism of the work has been directed chiefly against his outline. Baumgaertel finds it unsuited to the material *(sachfremd)*, and says it causes Sellin's treatment to be superficial.[52] This is unquestionably true at least in this that, together with his contrast of prophetic and priestly religion, it does not do justice to the significance of the worship life of Israel. Sellin's work, written in 1933, is informed by a reconstruction of the history of Israel's religion along the lines of Wellhausen and his school.[53] In the light of the most recent researches into the nature of Hebrew prophecy, it seems that this contrast, which leads Sellin to discard much of the Old Testament, must be regarded as a defect in the work.[54]

A work resembling Sellin's both in size and in method is that of Ludwig Koehler, which appeared in 1936.[55] In appraising Sellin's *Theologie* in an earlier article, Koehler expressed his admiration for his systematic plan and added that he himself planned to treat the theology of the Old Testament in a similar way. "Wenn schon Theologie, dann auch systematisch" (p. 266).

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[50] Cf. his treatment of "Die Einzigkeit Gottes." (Pages 11—14)

[51] Speaking of Eichrodt, Sellin, and Koehler, Gerhard von Rad says: ". . . es handelt sich bei diesen drei Werken um Darstellungen von Rang, die gar nicht mehr wegzudenken sind, weder aus den Bibliotheken unserer Seminarien noch aus unseren Studierzimmern." Gerhard von Rad, "Grundprobleme einer biblischen Theologie des Alten Testaments," *Theologische Literaturzeitung*, LXVIII (Sept.—Oct., 1943), col. 225. Hereafter cited as "Grundprobleme."

[52] "Bei Sellin scheint mir die alte sachfremde Lokalmethode noch spürbar, schon in den Untertiteln: die 'Lehre' von Gott, die 'Lehre' vom Menschen, die 'Lehre' von Gericht und Heil. Die Darstellung ist so flaechenhaft, dasz das heilsgeschichtliche Moment nicht zur Entfaltung kommt." (Col. 266)

[53] Hahn, pp. 14—15.

[54] Otto Eissfeldt, "The Prophetic Literature," in *The Old Testament and Modern Study*, ed. H. H. Rowley (Oxford: Clarendon Press, c. 1951), pp. 115 to 161.

[55] Ludwig Koehler, *Theologie des Alten Testaments;* 3d ed. (Tuebingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1953). The first edition appeared in 1936. (Cf. Porteous, p. 330)

This typically apodictic remark expresses Koehler's conviction that the Old Testament itself will not yield an outline for a theology.[56] Yet Koehler is aware of the danger of adopting an outline from another type of theology, and he calls for the exercise of caution, lest the outline do violence to the material (p. v). His solution of the problem is to choose the scheme Theology, Anthropology, Soteriology. He is satisfied that all the material can be treated effectively under these heads, except for the cultus, which does not seem to fit in anywhere. Since from his point of view the ritual worship of the Old Testament is not God's work (p. 171) not a proper part of soteriology, he finally appends it to the section on anthropology, as a human attempt at self-redemption. (Pages v, vi)

Like Eichrodt and Sellin, Koehler selects one idea as central to the Old Testament, although he does not organize his material around it. The central idea is that God is Lord. "That God is the Lord who gives commands is the one and fundamental sentence of the theology of the Old Testament" (p. 11). "Religion in the Old Testament is the relation between command and obedience" (p. 17). God forgives as Lord and saves as Lord of the community.[57] A noteworthy feature of Koehler's work is his inclusion of much statistical data on Old Testament words and concepts, reflecting his lexicographical labors.[58] Since Koehler believes that Christ and the New Testament are attached to late Judaism, and not directly to the Old Testament, he does not include any discussion of the relation of the Testaments.[59] Within the framework that he adopts, Koehler's method is that of the historian; he does not treat the question of the validity of Old Testament ideas.[60]

Koehler's work is ranked with those of Eichrodt and Sellin in quality and enduring value. The author is reckoned as the most

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[56] Thus Koehler criticizes Eichrodt very sharply. "Es ist unmöglich, dem Alten Testament selber den Aufrisz und die Ordnung des theologischen Gehaltes des Alten Testaments zu entnehmen." (Page 272)

[57] Cf. Porteous, p. 330.

[58] E. g., the data on the occurrence of אֲדֹנָי, p. 11.

[59] "Vorfragen," p. 69.

[60] *Theologie*, pp. 6—11. Here the author's treatment of "Gottestypen" bears this out.

independent and original thinker of the three. Especially his lexicographical data have been appreciated.[61] The most serious criticism of his work has been directed at his outline, and particularly at his treatment of the sacrificial cult.[62] Since Koehler himself felt this difficulty, the criticism is especially apt.[63] Baumgaertel also attacks the employment of a systematic outline.[64] While there is some truth in saying that this sort of outline produces a distortion, which is evidently true in the case of the cultus, this criticism must not be urged too insistently against Koehler. The objective, historical method which he employs within his outline divisions, giving rather complete treatment to the development of the ideas, should be considered as offsetting many of the dangers of a systematic presentation.[65]

Whatever the differences between the theologies of Eichrodt, Sellin, and Koehler, they are of the same type: they employ a more or less systematic outline and operate with the methods and results of scientific Old Testament study. In 1934 a radically different sort of theology began to appear when Wilhelm Vischer published the first volume of his *Das Christuszeugnis des Alten Testaments.*[66] Vischer's work was written to meet the challenge which confronted the church in a reviving paganism and anti-Semitic rejection of the Old Testament. Barth's influence had caused a trend toward a Christianizing interpretation of the Old Testament, especially on "the outer fringes of German and Swiss Old Testament study."[67] Vischer, a preacher rather than a professional Old Testament scholar, became the leader of this group.[68]

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[61] Von Rad, loc. cit.

[62] Porteous, pp. 329 f.; Baumgaertel, col. 266.

[63] "Nur ein Abschnitt, der über den Kult, wollte sich nirgendshin recht schicken." (Page v)

[64] Cf. his criticism of Sellin, n. 52, above.

[65] For example, in the section titled "Das Wesen Gottes," which in other hands might lead to an importation of foreign thought into the Old Testament, Koehler is very careful not to let his outline distort the ideas presented. (Ibid., pp. 2—4)

[66] Wilhelm Vischer, *Das Christuszeugnis des Alten Testaments* (Zollikon-Zürich: Evangelischer Verlag, 1946). Vol. I, 1934; II, 1942. (Porteous, p. 324)

[67] Cf. Kraeling, p. 219.

[68] Ibid. Cf. Porteous, p. 340.

Since Vischer proposes, as stated in the title of his work, to treat the Old Testament as a witness to Christ, he prefaces it with a discussion of the significance of Christ in binding together the two Testaments.[69] Vischer subscribes to the formula that the Old Testament tells us *what* the Christ is, while the New tells us *who* He is (I, 7). He praises Old Testament criticism for having emphasized the human, historical side of Scripture; this has served to remind us of what Luther had said before — that Scripture is but the swaddling clothes of Christ (pp. 14—22). The doctrine which to Vischer's mind imparts significance to the Old Testament is that of the pre-existent Word. Christ is both the Goal and the Source of history (pp. 22—24). Actually both New Testament and Old Testament believers are in the same situation; both hope only for salvation, and the coming of Christ does not mean that we now see what then was only hoped for (pp. 26—29). The mistake of the historical school lies in looking for an "original" meaning, in other words, looking backward instead of looking forward (p. 35). Thus, though Vischer expressly wishes to be critical and historical, he wishes to view the Old Testament as looking forward, a view shared by Luther and Calvin. (Page 36)

Vischer's work takes a form quite different from most other Old Testament theologies. He follows the Biblical account in the traditional historical order and attaches to it his theological comment, a treatment similar to that in Barth's *Romans*. Volume I covers the Pentateuch; Vol. II treats the Former Prophets. Two more volumes were planned.[70] Vischer spends very little space on the results of historical scholarship, even in such a thing as the dating of the sources employed, and passes at once to his theological interpretation.[71]

Vischer's book has been called "both necessary and correct."[72] It was felt to be necessary because the political situation called for a Christian witness from the Old Testament. As Kraeling remarks, "In this situation a liberal was a man with a wooden sword."[73]

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[69] Vischer, I, 7 ff. Cf. the summaries in Porteous, pp. 219—225.

[70] Porteous, p. 324.

[71] I, passim. Cf. Porteous, p. 335.

[72] The verdict of Abramowski, in 1947. Kraeling, p. 225.

[73] Ibid., p. 219.

It was felt to be correct because both the New Testament and the Reformers agree that the Old Testament gives witness to Christ, and a purely humanistic approach will fail to find him there.[74] Vischer attracted followers and imitators.[75]

Despite these evidences of a favorable reception, however, the consensus of critics and Old Testament scholars was decidedly opposed to the approach adopted by Vischer. In the first place, Vischer was accused of reading the New Testament meaning back into the Old Testament.[76] This can be demonstrated, for example, by his treatment of the Melchizedek story in Genesis, which is interpreted by citations from the Book of Hebrews (I, 161—164). Secondly, Vischer uses types beyond the use of the New Testament and often resorts to allegory. The same Melchizedek pericope provides a good example of this. "When Melchizedek brought out bread and wine, we can see in this a clear pointing to the sacrament of the New Covenant, which Jesus instituted to fulfill and abrogate the Old" (p. 164). In another instance, the sign of Cain is a prophecy of the cross of Christ (and probably had the same form), being both a brand and a sign for protection (pp. 92—95). The allegorizing becomes elaborate when Vischer treats the passing through the Jordan into the Promised Land. This event is a prefiguration of Jesus' baptism by John:

> John is the voice of one crying in the wilderness, which prepares the way for the Messiah to enter into the Promised Land. What happened at the beginning of the history of Israel and then recurred on the return from the Babylonian exile as a prefiguration is now once and for all fulfilled. . . . John stands at the Jordan, more precisely, in the Jordan, where once at Joshua's command the priests stood with the ark of the covenant of the Lord of the whole earth until all the people had passed through the river-bed. The Jordan serves as a visible boundary of the Messianic kingdom. This time no one passes through with dry feet. (Vol. II, pages 40 f.)

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[74] Ibid., p. 225; cf. Smart, pp. 133 f. Smart also praises Vischer for having showed the necessity for a theological interpretation in detailed exegesis.

[75] Porteous, p. 346.

[76] Ibid., p. 338; Kraeling, p. 226.

It is this sort of thing which has prompted critics to compare Vischer to medieval allegorists.[77] Vischer's technique has the double effect of making the Old Testament a highly esoteric book, since if one lacks his ability to find witness to Christ, the Old Testament is a closed book, and of minimizing the significance of the actual historical content of the Old Testament and making of it a "wax nose," [78] to be twisted to fit the theologian's taste.[79] Vischer's treatment does not reckon with the before and after of the history of salvation; the distinction between Old and New Testaments is glossed over. Porteous comments, "Vischer scarcely does justice to the fact that Christ did come." [80] Therefore despite the value of Vischer's book at the time it was written, it has generally been felt to be a return to a position which historical criticism has made untenable, rather than a contribution to a modern approach to Old Testament theology.

A work in many ways similar to that of Vischer is the *Biblische Theologie des Alten Testaments* of a father-and-son team, Wilhelm and Hans Moeller.[81] Wilhelm Moeller, the father, who is responsible for the bulk of the work, stands far outside the main

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[77] Th. C. Vriezen points out that Vischer's technique is "akin to medieval theory and so, not surprisingly, is handled with sympathy by the Roman Catholic press." (Quoted by Porteous, p. 346)

[78] Geiler of Kaysersberg's term for what medieval theologians made of the Bible *(naseus cereus, wächserni Nas)*. (Jacob, p. 13)

[79] Koehler's criticism is severe but justified: "Vischer macht aus dem ganzen Alten Testament eine fortlaufende Weissagung auf Christus hin. Das ist folgerichtig, und es ist bequem. Denn wer im ganzen Alten Testament nichts als immer wieder die Weissagung auf Christus behauptet, der braucht zur einzelnen Stelle gar nichts zu tun, um zu zeigen, dasz auch hier Weissagung vorliege. Die generale Behauptung erspart alle Mühe . . . man lese nur bei Vischer, dem es weder an Kenntnis der Literatur noch an Kunst der feinsinnigen Beziehung fehlt, nach, was dann alles Weissagung ist. Man wird leicht erkennen, dasz auch da, wo Vischer es nicht sagt, sich nach diesem Verfahren Weissagung finden läszt, wenn man nur so beziehungsgewandt ist wie er." ("Vorfragen," p. 261)

[80] Porteous, p. 337.

[81] Wilhelm and Hans Moeller, *Biblische Theologie des Alten Testaments in heilsgeschichtlicher Entwicklung* (Zwickau: Johannes Herrmann, 1938). In the following analysis of Moeller's work, the writer was compelled to make an almost completely independent study, since the work is not mentioned in the surveys of Porteous, Smart, and Kraeling, and receives only passing notice in Hahn. (Hahn, p. 246)

stream of modern Old Testament scholarship and is the author of a defense of the Mosaic authorship of the whole Pentateuch.[82] Moeller agrees with Vischer in wanting a Christocentric interpretation, but chides Vischer for his unconcern with the objective history of the Old Testament (p. 14). Thus Moeller actually lays far more stress on the verbal inspiration of the Old Testament than on its Christocentricity (p. 4 and *passim*). He does not feel that it is necessary to prove again the error of the critical view of the Old Testament, "since this has been taken care of by earlier works of ours and can be considered as behind us."[83] Yet a large portion of the book is devoted to a polemic against the critics.[84]

In the body of the book Moeller follows the history and makes it, as Vischer had done, the point of departure for his theological comment. At the end he supplies an outline with references back to the historical section, for those who wish to construct a systematic treatment. (Pages 521—527)

Though Moeller's plan for a theology is interesting and in some ways anticipates the ideas of G. E. Wright,[85] he cannot be said to have made a substantial contribution to modern Old Testament theology. Moeller's refutation of criticism does not hold up,[86] and the attempt at it leads him into immoderate language[87] and a lamentable anti-Semitism.[88] No attempt is made to understand

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[82] Moeller, *Einheit und Echtheit der fünf Bücher Mosis.*

[83] "Wir brauchen im allgemeinen keine Auseinandersetzungen mit der Kritik zu geben, dürfen das alles vielmehr als durch frühere Arbeiten von unserer Seite erledigt und hinter uns liegend ansehen." (Page 28)

[84] Even to Th. Laetsch, who otherwise is very appreciative of Moeller's book, it seems that perhaps he lays "zu viel Gewicht auf die Widerlegung der Bibelkritiker und sonderlich ihrer Quellenscheidung." Th. Laetsch, review of Moeller's *Biblische Theologie des Alten Testaments,* CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY, IX (June 1938), 473.

[85] Page 56. See n. 4, above.

[86] For example, his use of scattered quotations from scientists with some appreciation for Genesis can hardly be considered a refutation of the evolutionary hypothesis. (Pages 37—40)

[87] ". . . der Quellentheorie, die von Anfang bis zu Ende ein groszer wissenschaftlich-unwissenschaftlicher Unfug ist, der grössten Schaden nach jeder Seite hin gestiftet hat, von uns aber als Phantasie entlarvt ist" (p. 43). Gunkel's theories are a *Wust.* (Page 30)

[88] "Hier möchte ich aber nun auch noch auf die Vermutung hinweisen, dasz die ganze alttestamentliche Kritik *vom Judentum her,* wie ich glaube, *tiefste*

the concerns and results of Old Testament scholarship. Speaking of the investigation of the sources of Genesis 1, Moeller says: "Every critical word and every doubting investigation of it would be blasphemy, unbelief, and betrayal of the thing itself and of holy things."[89] Despite his plan, dogmatic categories crowd into the work (pp. 44—45 and *passim*). And his tendency always to find the New Testament meaning in the Old Testament, at times leading to a preponderance of New Testament citations,[90] obscures the difference between the Testaments,[91] and it is not without justification that Moeller has been called *Hengstenberg redivivus*.[92] The work seems to have had no discernible influence on any other writer in the field of Old Testament theology.[93]

In 1925 Otto Proksch had outlined a program for an Old Testament theology,[94] and throughout his career as a professor he lectured on the subject.[95] From the beginning, his emphasis was on

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Impulse empfangen hat" (p. 514). "Astruc war nicht nur ein höchst unzuverlässiger Charakter, sondern er hatte jüdisches Blut in seinen Adern" (p. 515). "Wo zersetzende Bibelkritik auch gerade auf dem Gebiete des Alten Testaments sich findet, prüfe man also einmal nach, ob nicht bewuszt oder unbewuszt jüdische Einflüsse und Interessen und jüdische Eigenart im Hintergrund oder im Ausgangspunkt standen, und ob also auch diese zerstörende Arbeit an der Bibel nicht allenthalben im Geist und in der Richtung gerade des alles zersetzenden jüdischen Geistes liegt, und ob nicht das der allergröszte Schade wäre, wenn der jüdische Einfluss, nachdem er sonst in unserem Volk zum Glück gebrochen ist, sich auf diesem Gebiet noch unheilvoll auswirken dürfte" (p. 517). It is to be recalled that these words were written in Germany in 1938.

[89] "Jedes kritische Wort und jede zweifelnde Erörterung darüber wäre Blasphemie, Unglaube, und Verrat der eigenen Sache und des Heiligtums." (Page 41)

[90] Thirteen New Testament verses about the Fall are cited; six Old Testament references. (Page 69)

[91] Cf. his treatment of the hope of the patriarchs. (Page 154)

[92] Hengstenberg was a 19th century author of a Christology of the Old Testament and a defender of orthodoxy. (Page 483)

[93] The writer was unable to discover any reference to it in any of the theologies surveyed. Moeller seems to have anticipated this: "Aber weil die Alttestamentler nicht hinhören und auch nicht wissen wollen, was man sagt, erachte ich jedes Wort an diese Wissenschaft gesprochen als in den Wind geredet." (Ibid.)

[94] Otto Proksch, "Ziele und Grenzen der Exegese," *Neue Kirchliche Zeitschrift*, XXXVI (1925), 715—730.

[95] Cf. Gerhard von Rad's preface to Otto Proksch, *Theologie des Alten Testaments* (Guetersloh: C. Bertelsmann Verlag, c. 1950), p. v.

a Christocentric approach. The exegete must believe in order to be equal to his task.[96]

In 1942 he submitted his theology for publication. Because of the war it was not published until after the author's death in 1950. In his introduction Proksch stresses again the necessity of a Christocentric approach. For him "All theology is Christology" (p. 1). Christ stands in the center of the system of co-ordinates of history (p. 4). Yet despite the all-importance of Christ for theology the Old Testament does not decrease in importance. Christ is inseparable from the Old Testament; ". . . er atmet in alttestamentlicher Luft" (p. 7). The Old Testament is both revelation *(apokalypsis)* and manifestation *(phanerosis)*, or history, something capable of being grasped objectively (p. 126). A purely historical approach is incapable of apprehending the Old Testament as revelation. To do this the theologian must have a personal faith as part of his equipment (pp. 15 f.). Yet the theologian is not indifferent to history, since God tied Himself to history in the incarnation. History is "the form in which the content for faith can be apprehended." (Pages 16 f.)

Proksch chooses his outline to fit this approach. Since the revelation came through history, an account of the history of Israel's religion is the first portion of the book.[97] This is followed by a systematic presentation of the Old Testament thought world; a cross section divided like Eichrodt's work but with a different order: God and the world, God and His people, God and man.[98] Within this outline Proksch adopts the method familiar from the works of Eichrodt, Sellin, and Koehler: a historical, scientific mode of presentation.

Criticism of Proksch is to be directed not so much against his proposed method as against his mode of carrying out his proposals or rather his failure to do so. Although Proksch had professed a Christian approach, he did not carry this out in the body

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[96] "Denn Christus ist der Brennpunkt, in dem die Strahlen aus dem Alten Testament zusammenlaufen, von dem die aus dem Neuen ausgehen. . . . Der Exeget selbst musz glauben, damit Christi Gestalt durch ihn lebendig werden kann." (Otto Proksch, "Ziele und Grenzen der Exegese," p. 722)

[97] Ibid., p. 18. Cf. the plan of Eduard Koenig, supra, p. 577, and Ernst Sellin, supra, p. 582, n. 46.

[98] Ibid., p. 19. Supra, p. 581, n. 40.

of the work or mention it in his conclusion.[99] The gap between history and revelation is still felt, and the work remains on the plane of an objective study. As such a study, however, it is well done and valuable. Baumgaertel ranks it with the works of Eichrodt, Sellin, and Koehler as one of "our most useful tools."[100]

Although as yet no full-scale theology of the Old Testament has come from Arthur Weiser, Gerhard von Rad, or Friedrich Baumgaertel, a discussion of their views represents some of the most recent thought in Germany on the task and method of an Old Testament theology. Arthur Weiser objects, first of all, to a mere history of Old Testament religion on the ground that it fails to be objective. "To be objective is to let the object confront us with its own understanding of being."[101] On the other hand, Weiser is equally opposed to systematic treatment of Old Testament thought. The Old Testament knows no doctrine of God, for this is contrary to its dynamic view of reality.[102] The theological task should be left to exegesis. If this is carried on without the imposition of extraneous points of view, one will be left with a sense of the ideas common to the totality of the Old Testament.[103]

Gerhard von Rad advocates an approach to the Old Testament as redemptive history (Heilsgeschichte). Writing in 1943, he agrees with Weiser in opposing systematization of Old Testament thought, but accuses Weiser of "liquidating" Old Testament theology by leaving it to exegesis. A method is meaningful only if it is suited to the subject, and since the Old Testament is a witness of God's continuing acts in history, the history must stand right in the center of the presentation, much more than has been the case in any Old Testament theology to date. Redemptive history is "a series of events set in motion by God's word and constantly

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[99] Cf. Cuthbert A. Simpson, "Professor Proksch's *Theologie des Alten Testaments*," *Anglican Theological Review*, XXXIV (April 1952), pp. 116—122.

[100] Cf. Baumgaertel, cols. 266 f.

[101] Arthur Weiser, "Die theologische Aufgabe der alttestamentlichen Wissenschaft," in *Werden und Wesen des Alten Testaments* (Beiheft zur *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* Nr. 66), ed. P. Volz, F. Stummer, and J. Hempel (Giessen: Toepelmann, 1936), p. 222.

[102] Ibid.; cf. Kraeling, pp. 274 f. Cf. also Arthur Weiser, "Vom Verständnis des Alten Testaments," *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*, LXI (1945—48), 17—30.

[103] Weiser, loc. cit.; cf. Kraeling, pp. 272 f.

transformed and led to its goal by a new word of God."[104] The Hebrew creed was a "heilgeschichtliches Credo," a confession of the acts of God in past history.[105] At the same time Von Rad recognizes that this approach has its problems. The first is that the history of Israel is by no means certain; the second, that this approach could lead to a scheme of immanent development comparable to that of Hegel; the third, that it is difficult to fit "unhistorical" books like Job and Ecclesiastes into this sort of pattern.[106] Von Rad's ideas seem to have had a particularly great influence on the American theologian G. Ernest Wright, who adopts the idea of a "confessional recital of the acts of God."[107]

Friedrich Baumgaertel, writing in 1951, also adopts the idea of a redemptive history, but with a different emphasis. From his point of view the prophecy-fulfillment scheme is outmoded and inadequate, as the work of Vischer has proved. Instead he suggested that the Old Testament be regarded as promissory rather than prophetic in character.[108]

(To be concluded)

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[104] Von Rad, "Grundprobleme," col. 227 f.

[105] Kraeling, pp. 278 f.

[106] Von Rad, cols. 228—230.

[107] The first volume of Von Rad's *Theologie des Alten Testaments* (Munich: Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1957) was not available when this paper was prepared.

[108] Baumgaertel, cols. 258—271; cf. Kraeling, p. 281.