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Reverend Dr. Henri Cazelles to Give Two Lectures at the University of Dayton

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DAYTON, Ohio, March 30, 1972 --- Reverend Dr. Henri Cazelles, a Sulpician priest who is Professor of Old Testament Studies at the Institut Catholique of Paris, will give two lectures at the University of Dayton on Friday, April 7, under the combined sponsorship of the University’s Department of Theological Studies and the Marian Library. His talks will deal with the general theme, "The Bible: Born of the Near East."

The initial discussion will concern "The Origins of Israel" and will be conducted in the Kennedy Union at 1:30 p.m. as part of Theological Studies' continuing lecture program. His evening talk at 8 p.m. is under the sponsorship of the Marian Library and will deal with "Does Modern Historical Criticism Admit Marian Figures and Symbols in the Old Testament." This program is part of the Library's lecture series.

Father Cazelles approaches the Bible by studying the civilizations and the mentalities of the Near East, the ambient from which it arose. He has composed numerous articles and books, worked on the French translations of the Pentateuch for the original Jerusalem Bible, and at present directs the publication of the supplement to the French dictionary of the Bible.

Father Cazelles, who is President of the French Mariological Society, is currently teaching at the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C., as a visiting scholar.

During his UD talks he will discuss, in part, biblical authors and how, in their languages, thought patterns and even their subject matter, these authors were inescapably affected by the geography and the culture of their surroundings, the ancient Near East.

The Biblical scholar recently pointed out that the great difference between nineteenth and twentieth century exegesis is that during the 19th century we knew almost nothing about the prebiblical cultures of the ancient Near East so that the Old Testament appeared to be plunged in the shadows of a kind of pre-history. The Bible is now seen to be a fairly recent text, preceded by the splendid cultures that Israel had to assimilate before it could produce a literature of its own.

Dr. Cazelles' principal studies are devoted to the Pentateuch, the five books of the Old Testament and, as earlier indicated, to the geographical and cultural ambient within which the Bible was composed. For the original Jerusalem Bible, which has received much acclaim, he translated the books of Leviticus, Chronicles, Numbers and Deuteronomy. He is currently directing a supplement publication to the French dictionary of the Bible.