

Tree of Life / Knowledge
SUPPLEMENTS

TO

VETUS TESTAMENTUM

EDITED BY

THE BOARD OF THE QUARTERLY

G. W. ANDERSON	HENRI CAZELLES
P. A. H. DE BOER	E. HAMMERSHAIMB
MILLAR BURROWS	MARTIN NOTH

VOLUME III



LEIDEN
E. J. BRILL
1955

25
410
v. 452
vol. 3

WISDOM IN ISRAEL AND IN THE ANCIENT NEAR EAST

PRESENTED TO

PROFESSOR HAROLD HENRY ROWLEY

M. A., D. D., Theol. D., F. B. A.

BY THE SOCIETY FOR OLD TESTAMENT (1)
STUDY IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE EDIT-
ORIAL BOARD OF VETUS TESTAMENTUM

IN CELEBRATION OF HIS
SIXTY-FIFTH BIRTHDAY, 24 MARCH 1955

EDITED BY

M. NOTH AND D. WINTON THOMAS



LEIDEN

E. J. BRILL

1955

"KNOWLEDGE" AND "LIFE" IN THE CREATION STORY

BY

I. ENGNELL

Uppsala

When the enormous literature on the Creation story and the Paradise myth in Gen. i ff., including all detailed problems, is taken into consideration, every attempt to throw light upon the problem must seem both presumptuous and doomed to failure. This paper is, however, presented with very modest pretensions. It owes its existence, first and foremost, to the fact that the present writer wishes very much to pay homage to Professor ROWLEY, and to thank him for his contribution towards making Swedish scholarship internationally known, as well as, and not least, for his personal kindness and friendship. No one regrets more than the present writer that the references to literature cannot, for reasons of space, be as thorough and comprehensive as they ought to be in a paper of this kind, dedicated as it is to such a well-known specialist in the literature as Professor ROWLEY. The writer can only assure him that he has read more on the subject than would seem; in fact, he is even bold enough to believe that he has read most of what has been written on the problem, during more than twenty-five years' occupation with the relevant texts and their problems.

In addition to the rather remote connexion with the "Wisdom Literature", a strong contributory cause to the choice of the subject has been the fact that it seems to the writer as if a great deal of modern exegesis of Gen. i ff. has been precisely too "modern", has too strong a flavour of an *interpretatio europeica moderna*, indeed an *interpretatio christiana*, the latter, of course, being justified from the point of view of faith and as being in the service of homiletics, but not at home in a strictly scientific treatment. Many exegetes, who no doubt believe themselves to be giving a presentation of the latter type, in reality seem inclined to read too much of a modern, "philosophical", profoundness of thought both into the creation story and the Paradise

myth, a judgment that does certainly not mean that profoundness should be wanting. It may, however, be worth while to seek, and try to capture, the forms of expression which the traditions in question use, their ideological categories, and the view of life, the dialectics ultimately lying behind them.

At the outset of such an undertaking we do perhaps best to deal with the problem expressed in the term *Sitz im Leben* and the question of the so-called "form-literary" type of the texts, properly including the adducing of the relevant comparative material, an aspect of the matter which must, however, here be presupposed rather than carried through. In the second place comes the quite as important examination of the common literary-critical view, and the question whether this view has anything positive to give, or even if it is at all necessary, and if not, from what aspect the matter ought instead to be considered. (The present writer's answer and alternative will, of course, be a *plädoyer* for the traditio-historical view.) Then we may be prepared to seek the ideological contents of the traditions, their categories of thought and representation, trying in that connexion to answer the question in the rubric of the paper from the point of view of the contents.

Concerning the problem of the setting of the traditions in Gen. i ff. and their "form-literary" type, the alternative next to hand is cult text or "narrative" text, and in the latter case whether of the "wisdom" or "doctrine" text type, or of the mythic-historical type. It is inescapable that the comparative material should here play a not unessential rôle, and it is apparent that the Creation story in Gen. i (the "P" of literary criticism) has its nearest parallel in *Enuma eliš*, the Akkadian creation epic, on which it is also no doubt ultimately dependent, though merely indirectly, by intermediation westwards in very ancient times, being taken over by Israel *via* Canaanite literature and, possibly, cult. However, in the same way as the *Sitz im Leben* of the *Enuma eliš* is lively discussed, whether cultic or not), this applies also, and to a greater degree, to Gen. i. Thus, as is well known, a cultic setting of this text has been argued by GRAHAM-MAY²), and carried through above all by HUMBERT³). HOOKE adopts a similar position. "P" in Gen. i "has not the form of a narrative", but "rather the appearance of a strophical arrangement with a repeated refrain",

¹) Cf. e.g. my *Studies in Bible Kingship* (1943), p. 23, 34 ff., etc.

²) *Culture and Conscience* (1936), p. 136.

³) *Revue d'Histoire et de Philosophie Religieuses*, XV (1935), p. 1-27.

its form suggests a liturgical purpose, and "P" in i 1-ii 4a is in reality the creation liturgy at the Israelite Annual Festival. ¹⁾ With this may be contrasted the opinion of, for example, CASSUTO and VON RAD—so different in matters of literary criticism, but alike in what concerns the problem of the setting of the texts: the Creation story in Gen. i emanates according to CASSUTO from "wisdom circles" ²⁾, and is, according to VON RAD, *Priesterlehre* in its most pure form, speculative and anti-mythological with "saubere Ausschmelzung alles Mythologischen", all that is left being that God has "das Prädikat des Schöpfers" ³⁾. The present writer's opinion is well reflected in a paper (in Swedish) by RINGGREN, who answers "no" to the question put in the title, whether the Creation story is a cult text, and, concerning its presupposed "wisdom" character, reaches the conclusion that "any intimate relationship between the Creation story of Genesis and the wisdom literature does not seem to be at hand", a judgment which I also share ⁴⁾. To me the state of things seems to be that it is clearly possible, it is true, to see from, for example, the form-literary type, the seven days' creation, the Chaos-Cosmos motive, etc., that the story in Gen. i has had from the beginning a cultic association— in a form about which we know nothing — but that, in its present form, as included in the "P-work" (to which we shall revert), in the "history" representation" of the "P-circle", it is "de-culticized" and transformed, having now the character of a "historical narrative". The *Priesterlehre* character, read into the text, for example, by VON RAD, I am not able to accept, since in my view the "P-circle" is not, as a matter of fact, a very typical priestly circle, but rather — to use a very anachronistic metaphor — of the type of the Israelite "Academy of Literature, History, and Antiquities", though, of course, with its root and keen interest in the cult ⁵⁾.

Creation
de culti
Ritual

Concerning the Paradise myth in ii 4 ff., its parallels outside the Bible and its indirect sources of inspiration are evidently to be found in such Sumero-Akkadian texts as the Dilmun-text, the Epic of

¹⁾ *In the Beginning* (1947), p. 36.

²⁾ *Annuario di Studi Ebraici*, 1 (1934), p. 22 ff.

³⁾ *Das erste Buch Mose, Kap. 1-12, 9* (1949), p. 36 f.; cf. p. 50 f. This *Entmythologisierung* thesis is very exaggerated and leads, e.g., the author wholly astray in his opinion of the seven days' creation, p. 51.

⁴⁾ "Är den bibliska skapelseberättelsen en kulttext?" *Svensk Exegetisk Årsbok*, XIII (1948), p. 9-21 (p. 14).

⁵⁾ I have to refer my reader to ENGNELL-FRIDRICHSEN, *Svenskt Bibliskt Uppslagsverk*, I-II (1948-1952), especially the article *Moseböckerna*, II, col. 324 ff.

Gilgamesh and, above all, the Adapa myth. Here we may join VON RAD in his opinion that what we have before us is not a "doctrine" but a "narrative" — and that already before it was taken over by the P-traditionists — as well as that the story is presented in "etwas wie eine herkömmliche Stilform", although he says nothing about this *Stilform*, but gives merely a reference to the Gilgamesh epic ¹⁾. In fact VON RAD elsewhere states in contradiction that we have to do with a *unicum* ²⁾. We shall revert to the question in connexion with the problem of the thought and representation categories in this ancient tradition. We may note in passing that ~~for Hooke~~ what he, as well as almost all others, calls the "J" story belongs to the ~~Annual Festival~~, too, where it was ~~recited by the priests~~, though without forming the creation liturgy (which is the "P" story) ³⁾.

With this we have, though in an all too brief and unsatisfactory way, at least touched upon the "form-literary" problem and the question of the *Sitz im Leben* of our text. We can only underline how necessary such a consideration always is, since a treatment of texts of this kind as pure literature, with disregard of their possible ritual and cultic setting, may lead to the most fearful misinterpretations concerning O.T. texts, as well as, for example, Sumero-Akkadian texts ⁴⁾. And now we have to proceed to the literary-critical and the tradition-historical view of our material.

It may be unnecessary to repeat here what seems to be almost an axiomatic *commune bonum* among literary-critical exegetes. They might perhaps be divided into a radical, a more cautious, and an undecided or mixed group. Among scholars who have in a special way occupied themselves with our problem are in the first group, for example, MOWINCKEL ⁵⁾, HUMBERT ⁶⁾, ZIMMERLI ⁷⁾, J. CHAINE ⁸⁾, and VON

¹⁾ *Op. cit.*, p. 60.

²⁾ P. 79 f.

³⁾ *Op. cit.*, p. 36.

⁴⁾ As an instance of the latter may serve A. HEIDEL's judgment on the Gilgamesh epic in his *The Babylonian Genesis* (1942), p. 71 ff.

⁵⁾ First and foremost in his *The Two Sources of the Predeuteronomic Primeval History (JE) in Gen. 1-11* (*Avhandl. utg. av Det Norske Videnskaps-Akademi i Oslo*, II. Hist.-Filos. Klasse, 1937:2). MOWINCKEL's view probably finds few scholars today to support it.

⁶⁾ *Études sur le Récit du Paradis et de la Chute dans la Genèse* (1940).

⁷⁾ *1. Mose 1-11, Die Urgeschichte, I Teil* (1943). ZIMMERLI works in a purely literary-critical manner, dividing the Paradise myth into a "two-trees version" and a "one-tree version", even if he for certain reasons avoids the term "Quellenschrift", and speaks instead of "Zeugen", "Zeugenstimmen" etc.

⁸⁾ *Le livre de la Genèse* (1949). Also CHAINE fully accepts "P" and "J" as

RAD¹). To the middle group of more cautious or sceptical critics might be assigned, among others, HOOKE², HEINISCH³), and LEFÈVRE⁴). To this group we do best to assign ROWLEY⁵), and possibly also the scholar who has lately devoted himself in a thorough and interesting, at the same time also very typical, way to the study of the problem, H. J. STOEBE⁶). The result of his introductory investigation into the literary-critical problem in his paper, which is called *Gut und Böse*, is that the addition in *der Jahwistischen Quelle des Pentateuch* is not covered in the author's subsequent treatment and is, apparently, only an expression for his confining himself to a traditional *a priori* thesis. Not least from STOEBE's examination emerges the fact that a literary-critical, source-analytical "solution" falls short. It does not render any positive contribution to the interpretation of the contents.

Having given credit to BUDE for his attempt at a synthetical interpretation⁷), as also to DE BOER for his work concerning the unity of Gen. ii-iii⁸), we turn to the reliable anti-literary critics, reminding our readers first of CASSUTO's treatment of the problem⁹). This prominent scholar speaks of the story "A" in i 1-ii 4 and "B" in ii 5 ff., which,

independent sources; cf. a statement like this: "Chacun des deux récits se suffit à lui-même. Le second ne suppose pas du tout le premier . . .", p. 41.

¹) *Das erste Buch Mose, Kap. 1-12, 9* (1949). VON RAD, known for his division of "P" into "P¹" and "P²", states that the "Hexateuch", as proved by two hundred years' research work, consists of three sources running parallel, J, E, and P, to be dated ca. 950, 850-750, and 538-450 respectively (p. 16), and that it is, in its present form, the result of the work of editors (p. 19). But it is worth noting that VON RAD opposes a mere literary-critical analysis of the J-story, demanding also what he calls "Stoffkritik" (p. 59 f.). Cf. however, on the other hand, the extreme source analysis in iii 17 ff., which is divided into a "bedouin recension" and a "fellaah recension" (p. 76 ff.).

²) *In the Beginning* (1947). In spite of his formal adherence to the results of literary criticism, the main point in HOOKE lies on another plane which gives his brief commentary its enduring worth.

³) *Probleme der biblischen Urgeschichte* (1947). HEINISCH stresses, however, how much "P" and "J" have in common in their ideological view. But he is also bold enough to maintain that we owe the Paradise story to Moses (p. 57, 61 f., 103).

⁴) In *Recherches de Science Religieuse* (1949), p. 455-480, with which cf. the criticism by COPPENS in *Analecta Lovaniensia Biblica et Orientalia*, II: 21 (1951), p. 91 ff.

⁵) Cf. *The Unity of the Bible* (1953), where ROWLEY calls attention to the fact that the differences between the "P" and "J" stories are often pointed out, while "some important elements which the two have in common are less frequently emphasized" (p. 73 f.). Among these common traces ROWLEY reckons the conception of man, a question to which we shall have to revert.

⁶) *ZAW*, 65 (1953), p. 188-204.

⁷) *Die biblische Paradiesgeschichte*, *Beib. ZAW*, 60 (1932).

⁸) *Genesis II en III, Het verbaal van den hof in Eden* (1941).

⁹) *La Questione della Genesi* (1934), p. 257 ff.

however, together "formino un'unità inscindibile" ¹⁾. This judgment is formed primarily from the point of view of content, and with a right emphasis on the fact that "A" and "B" together furnish us with the answer to the question how evil got into God's created, good world. However, as is well known, CASSUTO's unitary conception of Genesis is at the same time very "bookish", conditioned by his thinking in writing categories. And thus the first chapters of Genesis also form "l'opera organica di uno scrittore (ital. here) originale di altissimo genio", even if based on various traditions current among the people ²⁾.

A prominent position among the anti-literary critics is also held by COPPENS. In the above-mentioned paper called "L'unité littéraire de Genèse II-III", which is a criticism of LEFÈVRE, COPPENS has admittedly come very near the truth when he declares that the best solution of the literary problem of Gen. i ff., or at least a solution "to which he would not object", is to reckon with "l'existence de deux traditions orales antérieures à la rédaction de notre texte", traditions which "l'auteur du récit, par scrupule de fidélité n'a pas entièrement harmonisées" ³⁾.

We have now reached the traditio-historical alternative. Among its earlier adherents STAERK is especially worthy of mention in this connexion. In his view of Gen. i ff. he grants that remodelling and redactory work may be traced, but that does not mean that we are able to discern different sources or recensions, much less to reconstruct a "primary text". Thus it is also wrong to detach two "tree recensions", in which connexion we may quote the following sentence: "Les éléments d'une tradition transmise par la bouche du peuple ne peuvent pas être ressuscités par le scalpel disséquant de la critique littéraire" ⁴⁾. A synthetical view is the only way towards the right understanding of the traditions, a point of view which will be further stressed below.

And now it may be appropriate to sketch briefly the present writer's view of the "literary problem" of Genesis, hinted at before, as far at least as it is relevant in this connexion. According to this view the Creation story and the Paradise myth form part of the first great tradition work of a narrative character, Genesis to Numbers — called

¹⁾ P. 275.

²⁾ P. 276.

³⁾ P. 98, 99 n.

⁴⁾ *Revue d'Histoire et de Philosophie Religieuses*, VIII (1928), p. 67 f.

by me the "P work" or the "Tetrateuch" — handed down to us by a traditionist circle, which may in the same way be called the "P circle". This circle is responsible for a great deal of tradition material of a distinctive character, transmitted within the circle itself from ancient times ¹⁾. With this ("P") material has been brought together a lot of other material, transmitted both in written form and, above all, orally. But in "sources", in the sense of written, parallel, works running through what is usually called the "Pentateuch", the present writer does not believe at all; and he even thinks it impossible to separate "J" and "E" as layers of tradition, owing to the intimate fusion of the tradition material as early as at the stage of transmission by word of mouth. Following a hypothesis of PEDERSEN, I consider Ex. i-xv, the so-called "Exodus legend", the central complex of the "Tetrateuch". Before this, as a kind of introduction, is placed Genesis with its very distinctive tradition material, the central complex of which are the Patriarchal narratives in chs. xii-1, introduced in their turn by the "Primeval history" in chs. i-xi. And here the first larger complex is formed by i 1-vi 4 ²⁾. It is true, of course, that already this complex is very composite, being made up of tradition material issuing from various directions and with various primary *Sitz im Leben*. It is also true that, within this complex, what is called by literary criticism the "P" creation story in Gen. i really consists of the "P circle's" own tradition material. But to distinguish in ii 4 b ff. the "source J" is to the present writer an impossible view. It is evident that tradition material *other than* the "P circle's" own comes in here. But as elsewhere it is futile to call it "J material" or "JE material", and as so often it is so well worked into the narrative of the "P circle" as to form in this case an integral part of the coherent, topically uniform and well disposed "P" story, in which the "P traditionists" with their own creation story in ch. i have, as we say in Swedish, "placed the church in the midst of the village", giving their own fundamental view of the matter. But, as I have already tried to say, the "variant" in Gen. ii — though it ought not even to be called so — is not placed thereafter haphazard. It forms an organic transition to the story of the Fall in ch. iii. And thus we can do no better than take the whole for

¹⁾ And that is why I have used the designation "P", though it is from my special point of view rather "dangerous" since it may be associated too much with the source "P" of literary criticism. It has also been pointed out above that the circle is in reality not very "priestly", at least, less priestly than the "D circle".

²⁾ Thus also DE VAUX, *La Genèse* (1951), p. 29.

what it really is, a single unitary story. And as to the specially relevant problem in this connexion, that of the two trees, the tree of "knowledge" and the tree of "life", it may be stated here that it is in the present writer's view wholly evident that *both trees are from the very beginning organically at home in the narrative.*

A consequence of what has been said hitherto is that the investigation can, and ought to, be made internally and ideologically, though, of course, with due regard to the relevant comparative material ¹⁾. However, it is accordingly not least important to make clear to oneself in what category *Adam*, "the first man", is thought of and depicted, since this may contribute a great deal to our understanding also of the nature of the "knowledge" and "life" that plays so central a rôle in the dialectics of the whole story.

The different categories to be considered here are "Man" as such, as humanity, "Man" as ancestor, *Urvater*, "Man" as Primeval man, *Urmensch*, and "Man" as primeval king, *Urkönig*. The boundary-lines between these categories are, of course, not very clearly marked, but it may be useful to try to keep them apart.

It must be granted, I believe, that the first alternative has been too easily applied, not least since modern scholarship learnt the significance of the collective view in old Israel, and devoted its interest to the "participation thought" and the idea of "corporate personality" ²⁾. There is no doubt that this aspect is inherent in the narrative from the very first and plays a great part, and it is only natural that this very aspect consistently grew more and more important in the interpretation of the story — already in ancient Israel — till it became wholly dominant. Yet there can be no doubt that the *original* thought category was different, and therewith also the deepest intention of the story, and that the mere mankind view does not do justice to the matter. We need hardly dwell upon the ancestor category interpretation. It lies close to the former, but is certainly less appro-

¹⁾ Thus PIDOUX, who has most recently dealt with the problem, is right so far in his statement that "le moins qu'on puisse faire, c'est d'interpréter ces chapitres [i.e. Gen. ii-iii] à la lumière de la Bible elle-même" — even if I would prefer "de l'Ancien Testament" to "la Bible". Cf. *Encore les deux arbres de Genèse 31*, *ZAW*, 66 (1954), p. 37 ff. (p. 38).

²⁾ PEDERSEN, WHEELER ROBINSON, A. R. JOHNSON *et al.* Many of those who hold that the human, that mankind as such, is primary in the notion 'ādām, then draw the — most misleading — line from here *via* Ezechiel to the "Son of Man" in the N.T., with the same stress here too, thus, e.g. PROCKSCH, *Theologie des A.T.'s* (1950), p. 312 f.

priate, especially since it has undoubtedly its roots in, and associations with, a pre-Canaanite period and milieu which obviously plays no great part in this story with its special origin and setting.

Concerning the "primeval Man" category which is the one by far most frequently resorted to, we would properly require a full investigation into this subject here. But for reasons of space, and since the present writer hopes to publish such an investigation elsewhere ¹⁾, we must restrict ourselves to the following remarks. The notion of "primeval Man" in its mythic-cosmic form has played a very modest part among both Eastern and Western Semites ²⁾. This holds true also of ancient Israel. It is in later times that the notion in question begins to play a greater part, especially in gnostic systems like Mandaeism and Manichaeism, as well as in Philo and in Jewish-Rabbinical and Christian apocalyptic speculation ³⁾. But within the O.T. itself an analysis of the texts that are usually referred to as relevant in this connexion shows that we have in reality to do with another thought and representation category, to wit, the sacral king — thus, apart from the Adam tradition in Genesis, Ezech. xxviii, Ps. viii, Job xv 8, etc. ⁴⁾. Paying due regard to such phenomena as "disintegration" and "democratization", and to the problem of the various *Sitz im Leben*, etc., of these texts, I believe we are justified in stating that nowhere are we concerned here with the "primeval Man" category, but with the sacral king category ⁵⁾.

These brief remarks concerning the relevant material within the

¹⁾ In *Svensk Exegetisk Årsbok* for 1955. There the texts mentioned here, Ezech. xxviii, Ps. viii, etc. will be dealt with in detail.

²⁾ So far MOWINCKEL is right in his exposition in *Han som kommer* (1951), (esp. p. 274), so far, but no further!

³⁾ Cf. B. MURMELSTEIN, *Adam, ein Beitrag zur Messiaslehre, Wiener Zeitschr. f. d. Kunde des Morgenlandes*, 35-36 (1928-1929).

⁴⁾ As to Ps. viii, cf. my preliminary remark in *SEA*, XVIII-XIX (1953-1954), p. 185.

⁵⁾ It may be worth noting here that BENTZEN has seen that in Ezech. xxviii and Job xv we have in reality to do precisely with "disintegrated royal texts", cf. his *Messias-Moses Redivivus-Menschensohn* (1948), p. 39. But his assertion that the "primeval Man" category must be prior and superior to the sacral king category ("der übergeordnete sein muss" — ital. here) is nothing but an *a priori* judgment based on an evolutionary idea of prehistoric conditions about which we know nothing. The same *a priori* argumentation recurs concerning the 'Ebed Yahweh figure whose origin from the religio-phenomenological point of view (as *Urbänomen*) "muss breiter, allgemeiner bestimmt werden", i.e., as *Urmensch* (p. 62, ital. here). It is, however, preferable to keep to the representation category used by the sources themselves.

O.T. must suffice as a necessary *memento* when we are facing the problem of the right understanding also of "Adam" in the *Urgeschichte* in Genesis. It was not for nothing that Israel lived on the soil of Canaan for hundreds of years, with the experience of a sacral kingship during these very hundreds of years that has left its traces not least upon the narration categories, whether it concerns the patriarchs, Moses, the judges, and, sometimes even great prophets like Isaiah and Ezechiel or, of course to a still higher degree, the saviour figures that have in different ways arisen from the figure of the sacral king: the Davidic Messiah, 'Ebed Yahweh, and the "Son of Man".

It is certainly no new discovery that Adam in the Creation story is described in royal categories, but it may nevertheless be useful to remind ourselves of the following royal features in this representation, though without any claims to completeness.

First and foremost Adam is "divine", even if there is, as we shall see soon, a very important exception. He is created *b'salmēnū, kidmūtēnū*, "in our image, after our likeness", i 26, an expression the second half of which I confess I am absolutely unable to consider as a limitation of the former, but as an equivalent and strengthening of it¹⁾. The conception is "naively" anthropomorphic²⁾. Adam is a divine being among other such beings³⁾. In ch. ii Adam's share in the "divine" is expressed by his having the breath of God blown into his nostrils, ii 7, which should not be taken as contrary to the former, but as meaning much the same.

As a second feature may be mentioned the "enthroning" of Adam as the ruler of Cosmos, i 28⁴⁾.

As a third feature we have the placing of Adam as "gardener" in the paradise of Eden, ii 15. CHAINE says of this: "Quant à la garde du jardin, on ne voit pas à quel besoin elle répond, puisque l'homme est seul et va dominer sur tous les animaux"⁵⁾. But the pattern of sacral

¹⁾ Vs. KÖHLER, *Theol. Zeitschr.*, 4 (1948), p. 16 ff., et al.

²⁾ Thus I cannot share the view of HEMPEL, HEINISCH, VRIEZEN, G. E. WRIGHT and ROWLEY that the expression refers merely to the spiritual plane. A reference to the spiritual standard of the "P" source which would not allow such a naive anthropomorphism is no proof; it is a vicious circle type of reasoning.

³⁾ Cf. the parallelism with the king of Tyre in Ezech. xxviii. Cf. also Gen. iii 5 and iii 22, as well as later on vi 1 ff., passages which undeniably refer to what is usually called a "polytheistic stage". Yahweh is the high god and creator, enthroned in the *puḥur ilāni*, his *s'bā'ēt*, "hosts".

⁴⁾ Cf. especially Ps. viii 7 ff., and see BENTZEN, *Det sakrale Kongedomme*, p. 76 f.; RINGGREN, *SEA*, XIII, p. 18. The original motive is here "democratized" to a high degree, and more so in Gen. than in Ps. viii.

⁵⁾ *Le livre de la Genèse*, p. 38.

it kingship gives a clear answer to this question. For it is an almost primeval feature in this mythic-ritual pattern that the king is "gardener", to wit, of the "tree of life" in the mythical garden — symbolized cultically in the temple grove — with the "water of life" at the *narāte killanē*, ii 10 ff.; that the world rivers are four in our case makes no essential difference ¹). It is thus to be observed that the expression in ii 15 "to dress it and to keep it" (*'abad, šamar*) has not in view work on the land, of an easy kind, in comparison with the hard work following Yaweh's cursing of the soil ²). It is not improbable that we have here a conscious play upon the double meaning of *'abad* as "serve (in the cult)" and "work" ³). The theme of the gold and the precious stones, recurring in Ezech. xxviii, is also worthy of emphasis. Behind it lies, at least partially, the ~~royal robe~~. In the same connexion belongs probably also Yahweh's giving of the coats, iii 21, a detail which may originally be inspired by Anu's giving of the heavenly robe to Adapa in the Adapa myth.

4 More important is another feature in the royal ideology, namely, Adam's share in the creation of the animals — for this is the deepest meaning of the "giving of names" in ii 19 ff. — and the creation of Eve, "the mother of all living", directly out of Adam, ii 21 ff., iii 20 (though the etymology of the name given in the latter passage is no doubt secondary).

W. P. G. Finally, there is the ~~hieros-gamos~~ motive which from of old belongs to the royal pattern, and with which we meet also here, though in a very characteristic and distinct form. At the same time this motive plays a very prominent, we might even say, the central, rôle in our story, as will be pointed out in the following in connexion with the

¹ Cf. with this theme my *Studies* (1943), Topical Index, s.v. "Tree (plant) of life", my articles in *Svenskt Bibliskt Uppslagsverk*, II (1952), "Livets träd" and "Telning", and my paper on Ps. i, "Planted by the Streams of Water" in *Studia Orientalia Ioanni Pedersen dicata* (1953), p. 85 ff., and for a detailed study WIDENGRÉN, *The King and the Tree of Life in Ancient Near Eastern Religion*, *Uppsala Universitets Årsskrift*, 1951: 4. The motive has also been dealt with by BÖTTL in *Mededeelingen der Koninklijke Akademie van Wetenschappen*, Afd. Lett., N.R. 12: 8 (1949), p. 41 ff. The right connexion in our case has been observed by PIDOUX, *ZAW*, 66 (1954), p. 38 f.

² As held, e.g. by ZIMMERLI, *op.cit.* (1943), p. 223; VON RAD, *op.cit.* (1949), p. 64, *et al.*

³ The above explanation would be further supported if DE BOER's suggestion could be accepted that the fem. suffix in *לעבדה ולשמרה* does not refer to *ן* which is masc., but to *ע* taken as a collective, *op.cit.*, p. 4. However, this conception seems far-fetched and, in fact, impossible. But the case is quite clear in spite of that.

Robus

Foni

Husband of the Mother of All Living

special problem of the "tree of 'knowledge' ". We also have a clear reminiscence of the old royal dragon killing motive, and that too in a unique form, the fight between the "seed of the woman" and the serpent, iii 15, though we have no right to read a so-called "proto-evangelion" into the text here ¹⁾.

And now at last we come to the question of the "tree of the knowledge of good and evil", though it is, of course, impossible to treat this very intricate and still unsolved problem as comprehensively as it deserves. May I be permitted first to declare briefly what kind of "knowledge" we are *not* concerned with? Thus we are not concerned with the "ethical sensorium", or whatever it may be called; nor with "what is useful and harmful", or anything like that, even if one has recourse to the personal experience category, as, e.g., LAGRANGE ²⁾ and lately ZIMMERLI ³⁾. Neither do I believe in the now so popular *antonym* interpretation according to which "good and evil" as a word pair should mean "everything", a knowledge which includes all aspects ⁴⁾. There is no doubt that the expression several times has such an antonymic import, but such is not the case here in the Creation story. Nor is it a general cultural development that is intended. And the "anti-conception" theory of COPPENS is no more acceptable ⁵⁾.

HOOKE's opinion is indeed interesting. With a reference to comparative material like the Adapa myth and the Gilgamesh epic, where the story deals with a magic knowledge of "powerful incantations and rituals" by which the forces of ~~the underworld~~ and since these sources must have had something to say to our narrator in Genesis—else he would not have used them—HOOKE concludes that the eating of the fruit of the "tree of knowledge" reveals the nature of the "tree of life" and its locality, which were from the

¹⁾ Thus rightly, e.g., HOOKE, *op.cit.*, p. 33, who also gives a good exposition of the rôle of the serpent and its background.

²⁾ *Revue Biblique* (1897), p. 344: "La connaissance expérimentale qui fait éprouver par une pénible constatation personnelle quelle différence il y a entre le bien et le mal".

³⁾ *Op.cit.*, p. 201: "dass der Mensch jetzt selber weiss, was er zu tun hat", i.e., man's acting of his own accord, and with the stress laid not so much on the "knowledge" itself but "dass es um Raub geht, das ist entscheidend" (p. 195). In much the same category fall also the interpretations by ROBERTSON, *JMEOS*, 22 (1938), p. 35; EICHRODT, *Theologie des A.T.'s*, II (1935), p. 62 f., and DE BOER, *op.cit.*, p. 5 ff., who, however, is opposed to the *imago dei* thesis.

⁴⁾ Thus, e.g., HUMBERT, VON RAD *et al.*; cf. G. LAMBERT in *Vivre et Penser*, 3 (1945), p. 91 ff., and A. M. HONEYMAN, *JBL*, 71 (1952), p. 11 ff.

⁵⁾ *De Kenning van Goed en Kwaad in het Paradijsverbaal*, Mededeel. van de Koninklijke Vlaamse Academie voor Wetenschappen, Afd. Lett., VI: 4 (1944).

Reason
 Perception
 is
 the
 will
 M.M.

beginning secret, hidden from Man¹⁾. This may sound attractive, and from the ideological point of view HOOKE is not wholly on the wrong track. Yet we must say that he has allowed himself to be misled by the comparative material.

The decision has, however, to be made from internal considerations, having regard to contents, continuity of thought, and the meaning of *da'at 'tob wāra'* in other relevant passages in the O.T. Unfortunately, it is impossible to give here a thorough exposition so far as the latter is concerned. I have to content myself with what I have pointed out earlier in another connexion, that in several cases in the O.T. the expression undoubtedly refers to the sexual sphere, thus e.g. in Deut. i 39; 2. Sam. xix 36, and Jes. vii 15; cf. also the use of *tob* in Gen. vi 2²⁾. In the former respect everything points in the same direction: Man is cut off from the "tree of 'knowledge'", that is what distinguishes him from the rest of the "gods"³⁾. When Adam and Eve cease to observe the prohibition, they secure the divine "knowledge" which they did not have before: their eyes are opened, they "know" (*wajjēd'ū*, iii 7) that they are naked, they are mutually ashamed of their nakedness and cover themselves. That the nakedness and the shame form a central motive is to be seen also from Yahweh's words in iii 11. Of the utmost importance, moreover, is the connexion of the curse upon the woman with the sexual: she shall bring forth sons, though in pain, and, although her husband is to be her ruler, her desire shall be to him, iii 16. Central too is the context in iv 1 ff. Adam "knows" Eve, she conceives and bears a son of whom she says: *qāniti 'it 'at-Jahwā*. However these words be interpreted, as referring to Cain or, which is far more probable or even certain, to Adam, their ultimate meaning is that Adam is now like the gods in that respect, too, that he is now capable of begetting⁴⁾.

What has been said implies, however, an essential modification. It is not a question of sexual life in itself. It is meaningless to put the question if our text intends to say that Adam and Eve had sexual in-

¹⁾ *In the Beginning*, p. 28 ff.

²⁾ Cf. my (Swedish) paper *Kain och Abel. En rituell interpretation in Svenska Jerusalem-föreningens Tidskrift*, 46 (1947), p. 93.

³⁾ In the Sumero-Akkadian parallels Man is instead locked out from the "tree of life", he has no share in "eternal" life—thus Gilgamesh and Adapa; the only exception is Utnapishtim, "the Akkadian Noah".

⁴⁾ Cf. BUDDE in *ZAW*, 31 (1911), p. 147 ff., and my above-mentioned paper on Gen. iv, p. 93 f. A short philological survey is given by RINGGREN in his *Word and Wisdom* (1947), p. 101.

tercourse before their eating from the "tree of knowledge". The whole stress is laid on the ability to procreate. This is the decisive fact: Adam and Eve in Eden have not been allowed earlier to reproduce offspring. It is to be taken for granted that they had access to the "tree of life". By eating thereof they obtained "life", "eternal" life — on the individual level we might perhaps say in a doubtless too modern mode of speech. But that they should *both* have eternal life *and* ability to multiply themselves, that was out of the question, from the point of view of Yahweh himself and the other "gods". On this point iii 22 f. is most instructive: "But God Yahweh said: 'Behold, when the man is now become as one of us, to know good and evil, lest he (further) put forth his hand, and take *also* of the tree of life and eat and live forever' therefore God Yahweh sent him forth from the garden of Eden . . ." ¹⁾. This means that the collective aspect is indeed the dominant one, and there cannot be any doubt that the reason for this is the inclusion of the Paradise myth in the narrative context and the ultimate aim with the primeval history as an introduction to the stories of the Patriarchs and the history of Israel. For this very aim is, from ch. iv onwards, to relate how mankind grows and spreads, at the same time as the "development" inexorably represents a consistently increasing decay, involving such things as the eating of flesh, polygamy (Lemek, the "sons of god"), violence, manslaughter, etc., a "development" that cannot be stopped either by the "flood", or the "confounding of language" and the "scattering" in the story of the tower of Babylon in ch. xi. The result is a world of peoples in dissolution, out of which Yahweh, by the sharpest contrast, chooses Abraham, and in him Israel, to let his blessing come to the chosen people through the fathers, the patriarchs.

The dialectics dictating the Creation story and the Paradise myth is thus the antithesis between life and death, the permanent fight for life against death, the same central problem that dominates also the Sumero-Akkadian parallels, though the Israelite shaping of the motive is all through original and superior; there can be no doubt about that. This dialectics reaches in a natural way its tragic climax in the cursing of the man, iii 17 ff., with its culmination in the "returning unto the ground". As it ought to be, the divine threat is thereby fulfilled which

¹⁾ Naturally OBBINK is right on this point; it is by no means the narrator's intention to say that Adam had never had access to the "tree of life"; cf. his excellent paper in *ZAW*, 46 (1928), p. 105 ff. STAERK, in *RHPBR*, 8 (1928), joins him

was from the beginning bound up with the "tree of 'knowledge' " 1). Thus we may state in passing that Yahweh has not told a lie, while the serpent has told the smartest, most seductive half-truth 2). And for this very reason, consideration for the unity of the narrative, Adam, the "primeval king", is thus cut off from that "knowledge" in which the king in Ezech. xxviii shares fully. This "wisdom", which is the same as vitality, "life", here through procreation, is intended also by the term *maskil* in iii 6. And it is certainly not a mere coincidence that the same word stem recurs in Jes. lii 13 with reference to the 'Ebed Yahweh figure, depicted all through in royal categories, and in a psalm like xlv (in the rubric under the form *maskil*) on the one hand, as well as in "Ebed Yahweh psalms" such as lxxxviii and lxxxix, down to Dan. xii 3 on the other 3). For, however different these texts may be with regard to their types and setting, one thing they have in common: they deal with the victory of life, the conquering of death. Typically enough this is also a central theme in the so-called "wisdom literature", Eccles. iii 19, etc.

It still remains for us, however, to indicate at the same time as we thereby revert to the royal category representation and the problem of the royal pattern, how the narrators in Gen. i ff. have used the ancient royal *maskil* motive. This rite, belonging to the drama of the Annual Festival, was no doubt the one that in the most central manner aimed at the renewal and sustenance of fertility, the most vigorous and earth-bound form of the victory of life over death, of Cosmos over Chaos. But here this is turned wholly into the opposite.

1) For the unitary interpretation shows that those scholars are wrong who maintain that the curse upon the man should not involve death, thus, e.g., ZIMMERLI, *op.cit.*, p. 220 f., and VON RAD, p. 45, 77. With typical modern western demands for logic and accuracy in the modes of expression, the latter raises the objection that the text does not say (in verse 17) "wirst du sterblich werden" but "musst du sterben" (p. 65, cf. p. 77). For the same reason the conception of DE BOER (who joins in his turn VRIEZEN) is impossible. According to him nothing is said in ii 17 or iii 22 of a state of death that succeeds an earlier immortality. The text merely states the penalty of death for the transgression of a command. (*Genesis II en III*, p. 7 f., 15 f.) The core of the narrative is to give an explanation of how the heavy existence of the simple farmer has replaced the life without work in Paradise. The present writer has earlier issued a warning against reading too much profoundness of thought into our texts, but he has a definite feeling that this is too simple a solution, as shown precisely by the syncretical interpretation, the same kind of interpretation for which DE BOER himself rightly pleads (p. 16).

2) Cf. e.g., ZIMMERLI, p. 224.

3) Cf. with this my paper on the 'Ebed Yahweh songs in *BJRL*, 31 (1948), p. 24 ff.

The result of the new "knowledge" is "life", it is true, "life" in the sense of a numerous progeny. But the earth and its vegetation are cursed, the lot of the offspring is hard work, pain, destruction and death. This is verily an *interpretatio israelitica* of Canaanite tradition material almost without equal. And in this respect Gen. iv offers an ideological parallel — there is certainly more than one reason why this tradition is chosen for its present place. Ultimately we are here dealing with another royal Annual Festival ritual of the so-called "Tammuz type", namely *as an inspiring motive*, whereas the theme, here too, is turned into its opposite, into reaction and polemics against the Canaanite ideology round the "king sacrifice motive". And again the result is the same as in Gen. i-iii, a curse upon the earth (iv 12) and an unsteady nomadic life as a hunted wolf for Cain, the son of Adam¹). We must refrain now from entering upon a discussion of other characteristic Israelite features, which does not mean that they do not exist. They certainly do, for example, with regard to the idea of god, the form of the disobedience motive as sin, etc.

Let me instead in conclusion point out anew that I do not by any means claim to have solved all the problems of Gen. i ff. There are, of course, many other aspects of the text which have not even been touched upon, aetiological motives, etc. Neither can the interpretation given above of "knowledge" and "life" be called exhaustive. But I do myself believe, of course, that I have hit upon the most central theme, the deepest motive in the story. I am fully aware of the fact that many objections may be raised, especially if one starts from certain inconsistent details and then enlarges them. Such an objection may refer, for example, to Gen. i 28, where Adam is ordered from the very beginning to "be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth". A banal refutation would be a reference to the somewhat misused quotation *quandoque dormitat bonus Homerus*. As a traditio-historian I prefer to point to the first command of the traditionist: faithfulness to the traditions taken over, liberty in selecting them and in arranging them in their places in the work as a whole. And seldom, if ever, has greater methodical skill in this respect been shown than by the "P circle" in its great narrative work. Thus I think I can do no better

¹) Cf. my above-mentioned paper in *Svenska Jerusalemsföreningens Tidskrift*, 46 (1947), p. 92 ff. May I be allowed to point out that JOHNSON's criticism of this paper in *Exp. Times*, lxii (1950), p. 41, n. 1, shows that he has missed the most essential point, the reactionary re-interpretation of the motive, apparently through difficulty with the language.

than conclude with the following quotations from W. STAERK, to whom I have referred earlier: "Les exégètes qui cherchent à expliquer les traditions bibliques ne devront pas oublier que la seule méthode vraiment féconde est celle qui consiste à interpréter les détails par l'ensemble et à considérer d'abord le sens naturel et l'essence des récits." And: "Les contradictions, comme aussi les doubles traditions qui paraissaient d'abord s'exclure réciproquement, se révéleront alors plus d'une fois comme partie intégrante de l'idée totale. Et c'est ainsi que l'on échappera aux résultats décevants d'une critique qui opère toujours avec le scalpel de l'analyse et qui considère seulement les apparences extérieures et non les réalités" ¹⁾. These words might indeed serve both a traditio-historian and a true "patternist" as a manifesto.

¹⁾ *RHPbR*, 8 (1928), p. 69.