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The Significance of [dam] in the Hebrew Religious System

Karl G. Peterson

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THE SIGNIFICANCE OF OT

IN THE HEBREW RELIGIOUS SYSTEM

FOREWORD

The writer wishes to express appreciation for the sympathetic assistance given by Dr. T. H. Mallins, Head of the Department of Semitics in the College of Religion, under whose guidance the work of this thesis was undertaken and completed.

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts
College of Religion

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Butler University
Indianapolis
1939
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CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1. BLOOD OF WORSHIP

I. INTRODUCTION
   A. CLARIFICATION OF TERMS
   B. PURPOSE OF THESIS
   C. DIVISIONS OF THESIS

II. BACKGROUND OF THE IDEA OF BLOOD
   A. MYSTERY OF BLOOD
   B. PRIMITIVE BELIEFS AND CUSTOMS
   C. HEBREW BELIEFS AND CUSTOMS

III. BLOOD KINSHIP
   A. BLOOD COVENANT
   B. CIRCUMCISION
   C. BLOOD RELATIONSHIP WITH GODS
   D. COVENANT AT SINAI
   E. BLOOD REVENGE
   F. SUMMARY

IV. BLOOD AS LIFE
   A. BLOOD ESSENTIAL TO LIFE
   B. THE BLOOD-SOUL IDEA
   C. SHEDDING OF BLOOD
   D. A WORD STUDY

IV BLOOD TABU
   A. PROHIBITION OF BLOOD AS FOOD
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAPTER</th>
<th>INTRODUCTION</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B. BLOOD OF MENSTRUATION</td>
<td></td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. SUMMARY</td>
<td></td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. BLOOD IN SACRIFICE</td>
<td></td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. MEANING OF SACRIFICE</td>
<td></td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. SACRIFICES OF THE HEBREWS</td>
<td></td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. THEORIES OF USE OF BLOOD</td>
<td></td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. SACRIFICIAL SYSTEM IN THE OLD TESTAMENT</td>
<td></td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. QUESTION OF SUBSTITUTION</td>
<td></td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. THE PASSOVER</td>
<td></td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. SUMMARY</td>
<td></td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI BLOOD ATONEMENT</td>
<td></td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. CLEANSING POWER OF BLOOD</td>
<td></td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. HISTORY OF IDEA OF ATONEMENT</td>
<td></td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. THE DAY OF ATONEMENT</td>
<td></td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. SUMMARY</td>
<td></td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONCLUSION</td>
<td></td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. SUMMARY OF THE THESIS</td>
<td></td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. RESULTS OF STUDY</td>
<td></td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The primary meaning of the word 'blood' is 'strength', while the primary meaning of the word 'sacrifice' is 'strength'. It is the word which is always mentioned in connection with blood, while the sacrifice is not always mentioned. It is translated in a number of ways: 'blood', 'sacrifice', 'peace offering', 'sin offering', 'tomb', etc. In the majority of cases, 'blood' refers to shedding of blood in the performance of some act, while 'sacrifice' refers to shedding of blood in a specific act of atonement. The word 'blood' is also used in connection with the act of the sacrifice. This is shown in the following verses:

- "Anan's sons, they make use of the blood." Lev. 1:8
- "And all the blood of the bullocks shall be poured out at the base of the altar of burnt-offering." Lev. 4:7
- "And Moses千万别了 the blood upon the altar round about." Lev. 8:10
The word in the Hebrew in the title of these passages translated of "blood" is □ 7.

A study of the significance of □ 7 in the Hebrew religious system immediately presents the problem of the meaning of the word which is used in the title. There are two words in the Hebrew language which are translated "blood", □ 7 (dam) and □ 7 (netsach). The word □ 7 is listed more than three hundred times in the Hebrew concordance, while the word □ 7 is listed but once as meaning "blood".

The primary meaning of □ 7 is "strength", while the primary meaning of □ 7 is "blood". It is the word which is always used in connection with bloodshed. It is translated in a number of ways. In Psalm 51:14 □ 7, which is the plural form, is translated as "bloodguiltiness", and in Exodus 4:25 □ 7 is translated as "bloody".

In the majority of passages in which it is found, □ 7 refers to shedding of blood in the sense of the pouring out of the life of an animal or a man. This is illustrated in such passages as:

Psalm 22:14 "Precious shall their blood be in his sight." Ps. 72:14; "Their feet make haste to shed blood." Prov. 1:16 "Hands that shed innocent blood." Psalms 6:17 the

□ 7 is the word that is always used in connection with the blood of the sacrifice. This is shown definitely in such passages as:

that in "Aaron's sons, the priests, shall sprinkle its blood." Lev. 1:11 "And all the blood of the bullock shall be pour out at the base of the altar of burnt-offering." Lev. 4:7 "And Moses sprinkled the blood upon the altar round about." Lev. 6:19
The word in the Hebrew language which is in these passages translated "blood" is בַּד (borah).

In many passages, however, in which this word is found, it has reference to blood as the essential element for life. In this respect, it is sometimes synonymous with the Hebrew word נֶפֶשׁ (nephesh), which means "soul", "breath", or "life". (1) In regard to this idea of the blood as the essential element of life, and in regard to the close relationship between the "blood" and the "soul", a study of the Hebrew root בַּד in the words for "man", "likeness", and "ground" in the first two chapters of Genesis reveals some very interesting facts. These facts shall be referred to in the chapter "Blood as Life".

Historical development of those circumstances and rituals. This is a word which appears often in the Hebrew language in connection with the blood of the sacrifices is כָּפֵר (kopher), which is translated "to atone" or "to make atonement". The ideas connected with this word during the various periods of the history of the sacrificial system will be traced in the chapter "Blood in Atonement".

The importance of a study of the significance of blood in the Hebrew religious system for the Biblical scholar is indicated by the close relationship between this subject and the idea of atonement that has become one of the central doctrines of the Christian religion. A new and interesting slant seems to be given to any study of blood today because of the renewal of interest in the idea of racial

relationship that has become one of the principles of present day
nationalism throughout the world. It will not be within the scope
of this thesis, however, to draw comparisons between the idea of
blood-relationship which is found in the Old Testament and the ideas
of "race" advocated by the totalitarian powers of this age.

The purpose of this thesis is to present a critical study of
the Old Testament field in relation to the significance of the blood.
It is an attempt to discover the ideas and the beliefs which were
connected with the blood as it was used in the various religious
practices of the Hebrew people. This necessarily involves a consider-
ation of the ceremonies and rituals in which the blood was used,
and the historical development of those ceremonies and rituals.
This last angle of the subject viz. historical development will be
dealt with only as it assists in the understanding of the use of
the blood in the rituals and ceremonies during the different periods.

The primary reason for this plan of procedure is because of
the lack of material containing definite information in regard to
the significance of the blood in any particular period. The rituals
change as will be noted, but the significance attached to the blood
throughout the different periods does not seem to change, at least
not fundamentally. Some people, and those scholars believe that those
parties in fact, one of the great difficulties involved in the subject,
has been to obtain material dealing with the significance of the bloo
blood in the rituals. Considerable information has been written about what is believed to have been the primitive backgrounds of the ideas associated with blood. Many writers have given conflicting interpretations of the different ceremonies involving blood and the ideas connected with it, but all the scholars consulted seem to plead ignorance in regard to the fundamental principles involved.

It is not, therefore, the purpose of this thesis to develop or advocate any one particular theory. It will present the various views which seem to help in the understanding of the subject, even though at times these may seem quite divergent. Such divergencies of interpretation are in themselves indication that the subject is not one that permits of dogmatic treatment. The purpose of this thesis is rather to present some of the ideas associated with the blood and with the actual uses of it in the religious ceremonies and practices of the Hebrew people, in the light of some of the studies which have been made of the blood rituals of non-Hebraic peoples.

The studies which have been made of Arabic customs have produced numerous interesting facts which have led some scholars to believe that in these customs of the Arabs may be found the primitive roots of many of the Hebrews' ideas of blood. The Arabs, like the Hebrews, are a Semitic people; and these scholars believe that those particular Arab practices preserved many of the ancient original practices of the Hebrews, and are observing them today very much in the
same way as they were originally practiced because they have not been influenced by ideas and customs from other peoples with different religious and social ideas. The Hebrews, on the other hand, in migrating into Canaan were greatly influenced, politically, socially and religiously as a result of their contact with the more highly developed civilization which was in existence there. There is no attempt made in this thesis to argue the extent of cultural influence, but interesting comparisons will be made here and there where the discussion warrants.

Because religion seems inseparable from other phases of life among the Hebrew people, this study will involve the study of blood in the idea of kinship, and also the regulations in regard to blood taboo. The religious background in both of these ideas may not be ignored.

The subject is treated in two general divisions. The first division deals with the idea of blood and is divided into three chapters. The first chapter deals with the general background of the idea of blood. The second chapter presents the idea of blood-kinship. The concept of life being in the blood is treated in the third chapter. The general theme of the second division is the usage of blood. This division is also divided into three chapters. The first chapter contains a study of the tabus placed upon the usage of blood. The second chapter is a description of the various
sacrifices in which blood was used. The usage of blood in regard to atonement is the subject of the third chapter of this division.

All the Biblical passages have been quoted from the American Revised Version of the Bible which was printed in 1901.

Blood has ever been a mysterious substance to primitive man. It is a liquid, and as every kind of liquid is mysterious to him. The rain which comes down from the heavens is necessary for sustaining his own life and the life of plants and animals. But if this same water comes down in abundance, it is very destructive, destroying homes, plants, animals, and man himself. The rivers which seem to rise from the center of the earth and flow continuously are associated with the gods because these phenomena are not fully understood by primitive man.

The most mysterious of these liquids is blood. The red color alone is believed to have aroused awe. It is possible, however, that the use for the color red may have developed from the fact that it is the color of the blood associated with wounds. They knew blood as the liquid that flows in the veins of living creatures. By observation and experience man has learned that the loss of blood means the loss of strength, and may result in death. The color of death indicates to the primitive man the lack of blood. Thus it becomes connected with life itself, and so it is attributed strange and mysterious powers. As a result, certain beliefs, customs, and regulations
The Significance of Blood in the Hebrew Religious System

It is upon these beliefs, and regulations that must depend in formulating the idea of the significance of blood within a racial progressive group during a specified period. Because blood has ever been a mysterious substance to primitive man. It is a liquid, and so many kinds of liquids are mysterious to him. The rain which comes down from the heavens is necessary for sustaining his own life and the life of plants and animals. But if this same water comes down in over-abundance, it is very destructive, destroying homes, plants, animals, and man himself. The rivers which seem to rise from the center of the earth and flow continuously are associated with the gods because these phenomena are not fully understood by primitive man. People pay to their deities for these phenomena.

The most mysterious of these liquids is blood. The red color alone is believed to have aroused awe. It is possible, however, that the awe for the color red may have developed from the fact that it is the color of the blood associated with wounds. They know blood as the liquid that flows in the veins of living creatures. By observation and experience man has learned that the loss of blood means the loss of strength, and may result in death. The pallor of death indicates to the primitive man the lack of blood. Thus it becomes connected with life itself, and to it are attributed strange and mysterious powers. As a result, certain beliefs, customs, and regulations...
grew up in connection with the use of blood. That is upon these beliefs, customs, and regulations that one must depend in formulating his idea of the significance of the blood within a racial or national group during a specified period. The concept of the blood is not static. It develops along with the religious ideas and institutions of the people, which were in turn influenced greatly by the changes in the national life of the group. This is very clearly demonstrated in the development of the conception of blood among the Hebrew people.

To establish a sound foundation for the background of the idea of blood, the primitive beliefs, customs, and regulations connected with blood should be examined. The Hebrew people prior to their sojourn in Egypt were a nomadic people. They were shepherds who traveled from place to place in search of good pasture for their flocks. The family was the fundamental social unit. Their early history, as we have it, is, in main, the record of the growth of family groups. Their beliefs, customs, and regulations are those which grew up within the family relationships. These three elements, it is claimed, were to be found in Palestine untill. There are today certain Arabic tribes who are still living this mode of life. They have been a source of study to some scholars who believe that the Hebrews came from the same ethnological stock as these Arabic tribes. As a result of this study many interesting com-
parisons and deductions have been made. It is, for instance, believed that the Hebrews in the early period, like the Arabs, paid particular honor to stones which were set up at nearly every sanctuary. These were called by the Hebrews - "mazzebah" (מצבה). The "mazzebah" was a crude stone which was used more as an altar to represent the presence of the deity than as an image. Abraham set up altars of stone. (Gen. 22:9; 13:18). Jacob built an altar of stone at Bethel. (Gen 28:18). According to Peters in his Religion of the Hebrews, "The original sanctuary of Israel, west of the Jordan, was according to the book of Joshua, a 'gilgal, that is, a circle of rude stones." (1)

The Arabs use stones in covenant making. The word for making a covenant in the Hebrew language is "karath berith" (카רתם ברית) which means "to cut a covenant". This suggests the Arabic covenant described by Herodotus. According to his account, seven stones were set up, and the hands of the covenanting parties were cut with sharp stones. The blood from their hands was put upon the stones with threads drawn from their garments. The deity was then invoked to witness the covenant between them. (2) No event in the history of the ancients is more against the idea of the "mazzeboth", it is claimed, were to be found in Palestine until the time of Josiah in connection with every shrine. This belief is based upon the denunciations of the prophets. There is, for example, this denunciation in the prophecy of Habakkuk:

1. J. F. Peters. Religion of the Hebrews p. 64
2. Ibid p. 65
I, live. They seem to have been used in two capacities. In one sense they were used as altars, and in the other, they were used in a vague way to represent the presence of the deity. "It is in this former capacity", (that is in the capacity of altar) "that the blood was poured out at or on the stone by Arab and primitive Hebrew alike." (1) Obelisks, apparently this was possible.

This blood, which is poured out at the stone or altar, was generally the blood of tame animals among the Arabs. The blood was dedicated to the deity, and then poured out to the god and then the worshippers ate the flesh. "All killing of animals for food was a sacrifice." (2) It was contrary to the fundamental ideas of religion that animals should be killed without the sacrificial rite. "Whoever killed an animal made a sacrifice to god, and he who partook of it partook of the sacrifice to that god." (3) This sacrificial idea was present even in the killing of wild animals. The blood then was poured out on the ground. Even the pouring out of the blood on the ground was considered an act of worship. The blood, which is vitally associated with life, must be returned to their god. Precautions were, therefore, necessary to insure against making sacrifice to strange gods. For this reason, it was customary

1. J. P. Peters, p. 65
2. Ibid., p. 66
3. Ibid., p. 66
to cover the blood with earth or dust.

Not only were precautions necessary in order to avoid worshiping foreign gods, but it was thought that certain powers in the blood were dangerous to the individual when released. It was not the actual killing that exposed the individual to danger; but it was the literal shedding of blood which constituted the danger. This danger involved the belief that blood actually shed meant mysterious soul-power let loose. For this reason it was common to slay the animals without bloodshed, whenever this was possible.

Special. The perils of blood are a natural result of that idea of the blood-soul which has just been indicated - the almost universal belief that blood is a fluid in which inheres a mysterious potency, no less dangerous when misused than efficacious when properly employed. (1)

It is perhaps for this reason that the drinking of blood was taken in the Old Testament.

The perils of blood are further seen in the elaborate rules which were laid down affecting that of menstruation and childbirth.

"The fear of women's blood in these cases, no doubt because regarded as specially potent, is widespread among the primitive peoples." (2)

It does not seem to be the idea that the blood is dirty in these cases that places the taboo on women at certain intervals, but rather the belief that it is particularly powerful.

These powers which were attributed to blood, making it perilous for man to have contact with it, may cause man in extraordinary

2. *ibid.*, vol II p. 716
circumstances to resort to it as a specially potent means of influence. Thus it was given to old men by young men, if they were related, in order to strengthen the aged. It was often given to members of an avenging expedition to strengthen and encourage them. It was administered to secure unity of purpose and to exclude treachery, and for this reason was forcibly given to one or more people as well as to others at times. It was used at special meetings of reconciliation. The blood of enemies was drunk to obtain their strength. Sometimes it was drunk for religious inspiration. This was done especially in connection with a sacrifice. These powers of blood are imparted not only by drinking and transfusion, but also by its application externally.

Thus far we have examined some of the early animistic ideas connected with blood that have come to us from the studies in the Arabic beliefs, customs, and regulations which have been investigated by scholars today. The question arises, however, as to just what extent these same ideas were held by the early Hebrews. Are the backgrounds of the Hebrews and the Arabs identical, similar, or are they entirely unrelated and independent? This cannot be answered completely, but there are certain facts which must be taken into consideration.

The first fact that comes to our attention is that blood is a mysterious liquid to primitive man universally. It is somehow essen-
tial to life, and to it are ascribed many different powers. It is something to be feared under certain circumstances, and under others it is employed to aid man because of the peculiar powers that are attributed to it. These facts are incorporated in the beliefs, customs, and regulations of the Hebrews too. It may be safely stated, stones that he has put under his head, and set it up therefore, that their backgrounds are identical in regard to those and James (2:12, 18, 19) will say: 'If God will be beliefs which were held universally by all primitive people.

There is some question, however, in regard to the belief that Jehovah will pay thee this stone, which I gave the early Hebrews paid particular honor to stones, in the same way that thou shouldst pay me. I will surely give the tenth as the Arabs did. The early Hebrews, according to the accounts which we have in the Book of Genesis, did set up stones at the various places where they worshiped Jehovah. But these stones marked the places where Jehovah had appeared unto them, or where they had offered sacrifices to Him. Thus Noah after the flood "brought a mazzebah unto the Lord." (Gen. 8:20) Again in regard to the covenant between Jehovah and Abraham one reads:

"And the Lord appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land; and there builded he an altar unto the Lord who appeared unto him." Gen. 12:17

That stones were used as symbols of covenants between God and men is clearly illustrated in the account of the pledge made by Jacob at Bethel. Jacob had fled from his home, after having received the patriarchal blessing which rightfully belonged to his brother Esau. To save Jacob from his brother's anger, his mother had sent him to
her brother's household. On the way Jacob spent the night, at the place which he named Bethel. Sleeping with his head upon a stone, he dreamed that he saw the angels ascending and descending a ladder that reached from earth to heaven. Thus we read in the book of Genesis:

"And Jacob rose up early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put under his head, and set it up for a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it. - And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father's house in peace, and Jehovah will be my God, then this stone, which I have set up for a pillar, shall be God's house: and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee." Gen. 28:16, 20-22.

It is possible that already it was permissible to substitute oil for blood. It is believed that the earliest form of covenant making was to pour blood over the stone. The pouring of oil over the stone by Jacob may have been done as a substitute for pouring blood over the stone.

Jacob's setting up this stone at Bethel (the house of God) is regarded as the classical example of veneration given to stones by the Hebrews. Such incidents are referred to in order to show the close relationship between the religious beliefs of the Arabs and those of the early Hebrews. They are also spoken of in order to illustrate that the religious ideas of the Hebrews during the nomadic period of their history were basically those of the primitive peoples of Palestine.
9.

It would seem that these "sacred" stones were often identified with the god himself or with his habitat. The earliest altars appear to have received the blood of the victims directly from the hand of the offerer, and the fact that the blood was offered at the altars may be said to indicate the association of the stone or altar with the deity. It is further to be noted in this connection that altars sometimes received proper names. Jacob called one "El-God-of-Israel" (Gen. 33:20), and Moses named another "Yahweh-my-banner" (Ex. 17:15), and Gideon called his "Yahweh-Shalom" (Judges 6:24). The importance of this association of the deity with the stone or altar will be observed in the development of the sacrificial cult.

It is clear at any rate that the altar or mound of stones was regarded as the seat of the god from the earliest time associated with the worship of the deity, and the sacrifice of the Baal cult was ultimately an important place in the shedding of sacrificial blood. The blood in such cases as this was invariably poured out at the base of the altar or upon the altar itself. The question then immediately arises: Why was the blood thus poured out upon the ground or upon the altar?

Is this practice to be associated with the fertility worship which was prevalent among the peoples of Palestine of that time? According to Baal worship, the god or gods dwelt in the earth and controlled the growth of vegetation. Is the fact that great care was usually taken in regard to the pouring out the blood upon the ground an indication that it was an adaptation of Baal worship?

Such may have been true at a later period, but it is dubious as to whether Baalism had any influence upon the Hebrew people at this early period. The answer to these questions, to be sure, can never be definitely stated.

Recognizing the prevalence of animism among primitive peoples, according to which it might be argued that the deity was present in the altar, it seems that perhaps the simplest explanation is that the blood was poured out at the base of the stones or upon the ground as a natural means of disposing of a substance that was held sacred and powerful. A statement from H. W. Robinson's Religious Ideas of the Old Testament seems to help at this point.

"The moral instinct of the nation was guided by its religious leaders to 'take the precious from the vile'; the necessary forms of worship were borrowed, whilst the immoral features of the Baal cult were ultimately rejected." (1)

(1) H. W. Robinson, Religious Ideas of the Old Testament, p. 46
CHAPTER II "though the Lord of heaven and the Lord of the earth, that thou wilt take a wife for thy BLOOD KINSHIP sisters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell," Gen. 24:3.

That unit has always been the family. A whole tribe is thought of as descendants from a common parent, and thus the whole tribe is conceived of as one family. This family relationship is basically a blood-relationship. It is the conception that a common blood flows in the veins of all the members of the family that binds them together in a bond of kinship. This identity of kinship with blood-relationship is self-evident to many people today. One recognizes that the life of the father and the life of the mother are combined in the child born from their physical union. The "same" blood flows in all the members of the family except those united with the family by marriage or by adoption. This identity of kinship with blood-relationship was particularly significant among the ancient Semites. It became the foundation stone upon which were built many social customs and restrictions. A basic indication of the importance of the blood-relationship is the significance of this blood-relationship among the Hebrew people is shown first of all in the prohibitions which were laid upon them in regard to marriages between them and those outside of the Hebrew family. Abraham, for instance, sent his servant to get a wife for his son, Isaac, from his own kinsfolk. Thus he made his trusted servant swear to him:
"And I will make thee swear by Jehovah, the God of heaven and the God of the earth, that thou wilt not take a wife for my son of the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell." Gen. 24:3

This blood-relation is a custom that seems to have been followed by all of the Patriarchs as Isaac, the son of Abraham, made a similar charge in regard to his son:

"And Isaac called Jacob, and blessed him, and charged him, and said unto him, Thou shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan." Gen. 28:1

Furthermore, upon the nation as a whole specific restrictions were laid in regard to marriages outside of the Hebrew tribes. In Deuteronomy one reads:

"Neither shalt thou make marriages with them; thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son." Deut. 7:3

The purpose of this command was undoubtedly twofold: first, to preserve the purity of the Hebrew family blood; and second, to decrease the possibility of adherence to foreign gods by the Hebrew people.

A second indication of the significance of the blood-relationship among the Hebrews is the long tables of genealogies recording the family relationships of the people. The writers are very particular in recording the families of Noah and his children. Mitten writes: "In ancient Israel the pillars of the religious life were the tribe and the family. The social life of
Thespnomad tribes was built up entirely upon the basis
of natural blood-relationships. (1)

There are those who argue, however, that this blood-relationship
which seems to be self-evident is by no means so certain as is
frequently assumed. It is their conviction that habitual proximity
and contact were the fundamental ties in the primitive tribal organ-
ization. Thus it is stated:

"The whole range of birth ideas amongst primitive peo-

dle often differs widely from our own. - - - These
ideas, in their many varieties, at least remind us
that the idea of blood-relationship has far less
physiological support in the primitive mind than in our
own." (2)

"Crowley argues that habitual proximity and contact
is the strongest and most ordinary tie and is ear-
lier than the tie of blood." (2)

In regard to this argument the author of the article from which the
above is quoted states:

"On the whole it seems in accordance with primitive
habits of thought to regard the idea of blood-re-
lationship as a specialization of the general the-
ory and practice of early kinship." (2)

It is generally agreed, therefore, that the blood was the bond of
union between the members of the tribe. On this fundamental idea
of the blood bond of kinship, provision was made among the primitive
Semitic tribes for those not born into the tribe to be admitted into it by
a covenant of blood. By such a covenant, one entirely unrelated to
the tribal family might be received as a full member of the tribe.

1. Adolf Kittel The Religion of the People of Israel p. 71
2. Hastings Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics vol. II p. 717
3. ibid p. 717
Thus a man might enter into a blood covenant with a member of any tribe, exchanging blood with him actually or symbolically, and both of them sprinkling their blood with that of the god by smearing it upon a stone, or that which represented the deity.

This union of blood by the two parties was accomplished by various methods. One way was for the two covenanting parties to cut their arms and each suck the blood thus drawn from the other's wound. This was followed by both letting the blood flow out upon the "sacred" stone. It was not uncommon for the two parties to drink the blood of an animal that was sacred to the group which, therefore, was thought to embody the blood of the group or tribe. To what extent the drinking of blood was done by the Hebrews is not known, but very specific prohibitions are given in regard to the drinking of blood.

According to other accounts, the hands of the two covenanting parties might be dipped into a bowl of the animal's blood. At times the animal itself was sacrificed and its blood sprinkled. The underlying principle was still the same, that is to say, that the relation of the members of a tribe with one another was the same as in later times, it is possible, however, that the rites of the tribe had been carried back to earlier times. It is stated by many African tribes and in other parts of the world, in some cases, as a rite of initiation.

1. H. F. Smith, Religion of Israel, p. 30
"When an Arab has secured a bride for his son by a promise from the young woman's father, he takes a sheep or a goat to the tent and slays the animal there, sprinkling a little of the blood on the fiancéé! She is thereby irrevocably promised to the young man. She and all her kin are bound by the contract." (1)

This mingling or mixing of blood in its primitive form meant essentially the union of one life with another. Thus it was believed by some primitive peoples that by drinking the blood of certain animals they could obtain the qualities of strength or cunning that characterized the life of those animals. It was also believed possible to obtain an enemy's strength by drinking his blood.

"The notion that by eating the flesh, or particularly by drinking the blood, of another living being a man absorbs its nature or life into his own is one which appears among primitive peoples in many forms. Most notable application of the idea is in the rite of blood brotherhood." (2)

For the actual blood of the persons making the covenant there was substituted more commonly among the Hebrews, according to the records that are available, the blood of animals. This is particularly true in later times.

It is possible, however, that the rite of circumcision may have originated on the basis of a blood covenant relationship. Circumcision, it is believed, goes back to ancient times. It is definitely known to have been practiced in Egypt. It is still observed by many African tribes and in other parts of the world, in most cases, as a rite of initiation.

1. H. P. Smith, Religion of Israel, p. 39
The following description of the circumcision rite as it is
practiced among some of the African tribes today illustrates the im-
portant place given to blood in this rite.

"The boys of the tribe are not thought to attain man-
hood until they have undergone this operation, which
is usually performed at puberty, and which admits them
to full membership in the tribe, releasing them from
the control of their mothers. The admission is by a
blood covenant, the blood which flows at the operation
being applied to the men of the tribe, and their blood
at the same time being caused to flow over the initiates." (1)

It is generally accepted that among many peoples the organ of
generation has been an object of religious awe and reverence. It is
believed to have been so even among the ancient Hebrews, as incident-
al references to the national customs seem to prove. In view of this
reverence for the organ of generation, it is hardly possible that
circumcision was considered a mild substitute for castration, as
some think. In opposition to such an idea, one writer states:

"It is more correctly a 'bloody sacrifice' or still
more accurately, a consecration of the life to God
by a painful bloody purifying of the source of life
which is regarded as holy." (2)

Among peoples given to nature-worship, the rite of circumcision
was probably connected with the consecration of the natural powers
of generation and conception. The cutting of the foreskin was a sym-
bolical act of presenting the whole organ and its powers to the deity.
It is believed, however, that in the case of the Hebrews, its meaning
was conceived to have been religious and moral. The case is stated
very clearly in the following quotation:

"Circumcision is in Israel the consecration of a man on being admitted as one of Jehovah's holy people. On the organ upon which depends the perpetuation of life, and to which religious reverence was paid, this bloody purification was performed as a sign that the perpetuation of the whole people is sacred to God. The blood of circumcision is in very truth what the Rabbis call it, 'covenant blood', by the shedding of which communion with the holy God is rendered possible." (1)

The importance of the rite of circumcision is repeatedly insisted upon in the Biblical accounts. It appears first to have been given as the sign of the covenant made between Jehovah and Abraham. According to the account given, it was to be a sign of relationship between Jehovah and all of His people, including non-Hebrews.

"This is my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you and thy seed after thee: every male among you shall be circumcised. And ye shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of a covenant betwixt me and you. And he that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you, every male throughout your generations, he that is born in the house, or bought with money of any foreigner, that is not of thy seed... And the uncircumcised male who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken my covenant." Gen. 17:10-14

It is this covenant that was impressed so forcefully upon Moses on his way into Egypt.

Moses and his wife with their young son had stopped at an inn during their journey; and according to the Bible, 'Jehovah met him and sought to kill him'. Zipporah, the wife of Moses, quickly took

1. Hermann Schultz p. 196
a piece of flint and cut off the foreskin of her son, "And caste it at his feet; and she said, Surely a bridegroom of blood art thou to me." So he let him alone." Ex. 4:24-26. We seem to have been that the gods were. In the account of the covenant between Jehovah and Abraham, no mention is made of the blood in the circumcision rite; but in the account of this experience of Moses, there is specific mention of the blood. Details seem to have been omitted, but it may be said that Moses was saved from the anger of the Lord in this case by the blood of the circumcision of his son. It is believed that in the prehistoric stage, the circumcision blood was applied to the altar or pillar which represented the deity. The later practice of having the rite performed by the priest in the temple would seem to indicate such a possibility, although the religious significance which has always been attached to it would seem to be justification enough for it being performed by the priest in the temple. Thus certain trees or rocks were considered as being the special object of the ceremony. It is also believed that, although in the later stages of Hebrew society circumcision was performed in infancy, there are traces of the earlier custom which connected it with the age of puberty. The rites in the temple when the male child was twelve years of age may have developed from the puberty rite of circumcision. Considering all the facts as they have been presented by the different writers, it would seem that the rite of circumcision became
for the Hebrew a sign of blood covenant relationship among the Hebrew peoples, and between the Hebrews and Jehovah. It became the sacred sign of the consecrated and the uncircumcised were considered uncons-
crated. The lords and chiefs were those of the blood brothers of the tribe. This brings one to the enlarged application of the blood-relation-
ship. The idea that the members of the clan were joined to each other by the blood bond was expanded to include the belief that all the members of the tribe were joined to the god of the tribe by the same bond. The earliest conception seems to have been that the gods were merely kinmen. They shared in the physical experiences of the tribe; they suffered in the defeat of their earthly kinmen; they shared in the tribal feasts and celebrations. Thus the sacrificial feasts were feasts of communion among the members of the tribe and which came throughout the whole-Semitic world, between them and their gods. It seems also that the god or gods designate the heaven as related to the divinity, were thought of as dwelling in certain places more particularly than in others. Thus certain trees or rocks were considered as being the special place of habitation by the god or gods at certain times. The Hebrews, for example, felt that they could come closer to God in the wilderness which is to say that the type of such environments is to be found in Egypt and other places in which the Hebrews had come to dwell. The tribes of the Nile would often migrate to such places in order to commune with the deity and to celebrate their feasts. It may be remembered in this con-
nection, that the message of Moses to the Pharaoh of Egypt was to let
his people go out to make their sacrifices unto their God.

The conception of the god as a supreme lord and protector is believed to have grown out of the rise of lords and chiefs in the tribe. The lords and chiefs were those of the blood brothers of the tribe, who rose to prominence and power among their brothers because of their prowess on the field of battle or their wisdom in directing the affairs of the tribe. Such a lord or chief became the protector of his people in time of trouble, and the judge in all disputes among his people. These same attributes came to be ascribed to the god, who came to be conceived of as a supreme lord over all of the people. Peters argues for this point of view from the etymological standpoint. He writes:

"This conception shows itself in a class of names which occur throughout the whole Semitic world, but particularly among the Himyaritic Arabs which designate the bearer as related to the divinity. Among the Hebrew names of this class belong to which is the earliest period, antedating even the names compounded with AdonÎ, El, etc. Of this formation are such names as Abram, 'father is exalted', or Abiram, 'my father is exalted', Abiram, 'my brother is exalted', Amram, 'uncle is exalted', etc. These names must be put with a multitude of other evidences which go to show that the type of religion founded on kinship, in which the deity and his worshippers are supposed to be united by a bond of blood, was the original Semitic type of religion. There was a blood relationship between the god and his worshippers, and his worshippers were related among themselves by the same bond of blood." (1)

According to this view, that which united the members of the..."
tribe to each other united them to their god. Their god became the
father of the people. Their union with each other was maintained
and heightened from time to time by the communion of the god with
his worshippers in the eating of the flesh of a sacred victim, and
as salt of his mouth was sprinkled thereon. At the offering of its blood to the god. This gives one interpretation
of the sacrificial feast, which is, that it was to establish and to
maintain the bond of kinship with the god. Generally, the flesh was
eaten by the people and the blood was given to the god as his share.

There were exceptions to this custom where the people drank part of
one side, and had sprinkled by the altar, on the other side the blood and poured out part as an offering to the god. Thus part-
taking of the same blood and eating of the same food, the people, it
was thought, became one with their god in the most literal sense.

According to the Biblical accounts the relationship between
Jehovah and his people was one of covenant relationship. The first
covenant recorded in the Old Testament was probably that which is
said to have been established between God and Abraham. That covenant, as has already been noted, was the covenant sealed by the rite
of circumcision. Possibly it was the old blood covenant which unit-
ed the people to each other and to their God. Circumcision blood,
According to the account referred to above, Jehovah said it is true, is not emphasized in the Biblical accounts, but it is
possible that being well recognized at the time, no explanation was
necessary or this time, the relationship seems to have been with individuals necessary by the writers of the Biblical records. It was,
law, generally accepted and understood.

Very specific, on the other hand, is the blood covenant that was established at Mt. Sinai. The record is as follows:

And Moses took half of the blood, and put it in basins; and half of the blood he sprinkled on the altar. And he took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people; and they said, All that Jehovah hath spoken will we do, and be obedient. And Moses took the blood and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which Jehovah hath made with you concerning all these words. 1 Ex. 24:6-8

The picture presented in this passage is that of the people on the one side, and God, represented by the altar, on the other side. Victims have been slain, and their blood has been drained off into bowls. Half of this blood is then given to God by sprinkling it upon the altar. The terms of the covenant, that is being made, are read to the people. On their consenting to observe the terms of the covenant, this new relationship is sealed by sprinkling the remainder upon the heads of the people. Here is a definite account of the ritual establishing the blood-relationship between Jehovah and His people, which became one of the fundamental factors in the Hebrew religio-political system.

According to the account referred to above, Jehovah by means of this ritual entered upon a new relationship with His people. Previous to this time, His relationship seems to have been with individuals by means of the rite of circumcision. Now, a blood covenant is established between Jehovah and His people as a group. The meaning
of the ritual seems to be clear. The blood is the life, the vital essence. "For the life of the flesh is in the blood." Lev. 17:11

Through the applying of this vital essence to the two parties they became joined to each other in a blood-relationship. But the question arises: Did this ritual establish for the first time a blood-relationship between Jehovah and the Hebrews, or did it mark an advancement in their conception of Jehovah, or was it merely a seal upon an existing relationship of a covenant relationship already in existence?

Cesterley and Robinson in their book Hebrew Religion, present the case in favor of this ritual establishing for the first time a blood-relationship between Jehovah and His people. They write:

"The meaning of this ritual is not far to seek. The blood is the life (lev. 17:11, 14), the vital essence. Two parties, at present independent of one another, are to be united in a single whole, and to secure the desired union, a third party is introduced. Its life is taken from it and made available for the other two. Both are under it, both are included in it, the same vital essence now covers and embraces the two. They are thus no longer independent entities, they are one, finding their unity with each other in their unity with that third party whose blood now covers them both." (1)

In the idea of the covenant relationship between God and the Hebrews the blood covenant the religion of the Hebrews was marked by a unique feature whose importance, it is impossible to exaggerate. They state it as follows:

"The principle of one tribe, one tribal god, may have been fairly well accepted among ancient Semitic communities. But elsewhere the god is a natural member

1. W. D. Cesterley and T. H. Robinson Hebrew Religion p. 139
of the tribe to whom he belongs, and is inconceivable apart from it. — As long as his people exists his position is secure, but he is as dependent upon the human members of his clan as they are upon him; in the nature of the case each is indispensable to the other." (1)

According to this belief, Jehovah had existed as a God independent of the Hebrews, and could so exist again. "He might even extend His interests and influence to others. But by this ritual, a special relationship between Himself and the Hebrews was established. Quoting again from Cesterley and Robinson:

"The connexion between God and people was not 'natural'.
It had a definite beginning at a definite point in time.
And if at any time either party violated the terms originally laid down, it was within the right of the other to declare the agreement and the partnership at an end." (2)

It has already been pointed out that the earliest Semitic conception of God was that the god was connected with the tribe by a natural relationship. It seems very probable that this was the earliest conception of the Hebrews also. It might therefore be concluded, that this covenant which was sealed at Sinai, was an advance on the idea of the covenant relationship between God and the people, and in the concept of God. This point of view does not eliminate the possibility of an earlier concept, and also gives full consideration to the historical importance which was attached to this ritual as establishing a definite blood-relationship between God and the Hebrews.

1. Cesterley and Robinson p. 140
2. ibid p. 140
The Hebrews, indeed, who had risen above the conception that the relation between Jehovah and Israel was that of natural kinship, thought of the natural religion as constituted by a formal covenant-sacrifice at Mt. Sinai where the blood of the victim was applied to the altar on the one hand, and to the people on the other, (Ex.24:4) or even by a still earlier rite in which the parties were Jehovah and Abraham. (Gen. 15:6) This blood, or their special kinship renewed by partaking... This covenant becomes the foundation of one of the most characteristic features of the religion of the Hebrews, namely, the belief in a peculiar relation of Jehovah to the Hebrews, and the Hebrews to Jehovah: It is an intensification of the belief common among those Semitic peoples whose religions have been studied, that is, the belief in a special relationship of each people to their tribal god. This, it seems, was a relation of blood-kinship continually confirmed and reestablished by the sacrifice of blood. Blood thus becomes not only the sign or seal of the peculiar relationship which was established between God and the people, but also, it might even be considered, as the substance which makes the connection or union between the two parties. It is the belief of some writers that the blood was metaphorically consumed by the people in this ritual by the sprinkling of half of the blood on the people. This would be in accordance with the ancient practice of both parties drinking the blood to establish a blood-relationship.

This point of view is clearly presented in the following quotation:

"But in certain peculiar cases among the Hebrews the blood was, metaphorically at least, consumed by the

1. W. Robertson Smith p. 300
people. This is the meaning of the ritual of the covenant sacrifice, described in Exodus 24, where half the blood was sprinkled on the altar and half on the people. In the case of the passover the blood was communicated to the people by being smeared upon the door-posts. In both cases the idea is the same, that of a very special covenant with God, in which God and His worshipers are made of one blood, or their blood kinship renewed by partaking of the same blood." (1)

Regardless of whether it is applied to the people by the sprinkling or it is a metaphorical consuming of the blood by the people, the significance is the same. It is the sealing or connecting of the people with God by the life that is in the blood, thus establishing a blood-relationship.

That the idea of blood-relationship was one of the fundamental relationships of life, and that it included the relationship between the people and God are further shown in the institution of blood revenge. Upon the basis of blood-relationship were built definite rights and obligations between the individual and his clanmen, in regard to the shedding of blood. Accordingly, shedding of blood involved blood-guilt, and in case of murder, it became the duty of the nearest relative to avenge the life of the slain. This was a rather universal practice, particularly among the nomads. Shed blood demanded bloodshed. This is one of the established facts according to H. P. Smith in his Identification of Israel in which he states:

"We are on more certain ground when we say that the most fundamental social institution of the nomadic

1. J. P. Peters p 67

2. J. P. Peters p 74
of blood is blood revenge. — The institution is religious because the god is a member of the clan, and the duty of blood revenge devolves upon him as well as upon human kin. Where there is no human avenger, the god will assume the obligation." (1)

This practice of blood revenge was also prevalent among the Hebrews. They too adhered to the principle that the shedding of blood demanded bloodshed, as is seen when David commanded that the blood is shed, the sword falls upon the ground; does not messenger bringing the news of Saul's death be slain because he claimed that he had killed the king. David pronounced the sentence of death in these words: "Thy blood be upon thy head; for thy mouth hath testified against thee". I Sam. 1:16: This is only one example of many which might be quoted from the Biblical records. Blood revenge was an established institution and a religious custom. "The avenger of blood shall himself put the murderer to death: when he meeteth him, he shall put him to death". Nu. 35:19. Later legislation did much to modify it, as in the Decalogue and the judgments of Moses. At first blood was required for revenge, but time brought modifications and substitutions. Thus there came about the tendency to take vengeance out of the hands of the individual and to put it in charge of the whole community. Effort, too, was made to differentiate between the cases of wilful and accidental bloodshed. Originally there was no distinction. This was done by adopting such plans as the recognition of the well known "cities of refuge" among the Hebrews. It must be noted, however, that it is the actual shedding

1. H. P. Smith, The Religion of Israel, p. 74
of blood that demanded some form of revenge, not the modern idea of abstract justice. (1) This idea is also suggested in the following quotation:

"The blood that calls for vengeance is the blood that falls on the ground (Gen. 4:10). Hence blood to which vengeance is refused is said to be trodden under foot, and forgotten blood is covered by the earth (Job 16:18). And so we often find the idea that a death in which no blood is shed, or none falls upon the ground, does not call for vengeance." (2)

That such an idea of blood revenge was prevalent among the Hebrew people can be shown from the following passages of scripture:

"but if any man hate his neighbor, and lie in wait for him, and rise up against him, and smite him mortally so that he dieth, and he flee into one of these cities; then the elders of his city shall send and fetch him thence, and deliver him into the hand of the avenger of blood, that he may die. Thine eye shall not pity him, but thou shalt put away the innocent blood from Israel, that it may go well with thee." (Deut. 19:12)

A second passage which clearly illustrates the practice of blood revenge among the Hebrews is found in the plea of the woman of Tekoa before David.

"And, behold, the whole family is risen against thy handmaid, and they say, Deliver him that smote his brother, that we may kill him for the life of his brother whom he slew, and so destroy the heir also; thus will they quench my coal which is left, and will leave to my husband neither name nor reminder upon the face of the earth. -- Then said she, I pray thee, let the king remember Jehovah thy God, that the avenger of blood destroy not any more, lest they destroy my son." (II Sam. 14:7,11)

A verse from the song of Moses would indicate that the Hebrews believed

1. cp. Hastings Encyclopaedia vol II p. 718
2. W. Robertson Smith p. 62
that Jehovah would avenge the blood of His people. The verse from that song is as follows:

Rejoice, O ye nations, with His people; it shall up,
For He will avenge the blood of His servants,
And will render vengeance to His adversaries,
And will make expiation for His land, for His people."

It is not possible in the light of what we see Deut. 32:43, 44.

The belief that Jehovah shared in the responsibility of blood revenge seems to have developed early in the history of the Hebrews. In the Genesis account where He questions Cain regarding the death of his brother Abel, Jehovah is recorded to have said: "That hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground." Gen. 4:10. An early conception among other Semites was that where there was no human avenger, the god assumed the responsibility of blood vengeance because he was united to all by the blood-relationship. Is it possible that such was the conception involved in this account recorded in the first book of the Bible? Jehovah is often spoken of in the Biblical records as the "avenger of His people" as already quoted in the song of Moses which appears above. He is also thought of as demanding that the shedding of blood be avenged, as is indicated in the following passage:

"Surely I have seen yesterday the blood of Naboth, and the blood of his sons, saith Jehovah; and I will require thee in this portion, saith Jehovah." II K. 9:26

The shedding of blood causes the individual or the people to be guilty before Jehovah. He demands that expiation be made for bloodguiltiness.
So David cried out when he heard that Abner had been slain by Joab:

And afterward, when David heard it, he said, I and my kingdom are guiltless before Jehovah for ever of the blood of Abner the son of Ner. Let it fall upon the head of Joab, and upon all his father's house." 11 Sam. 3:26,27.

Is it not possible in the light of what has been stated in regard to the blood-relationship which was established between Jehovah and the Hebrews that He was considered as being the blood avenger at least in certain cases of bloodshed? It is certainly clear that He is looked upon as the avenger of His people. It is also definite that He is conscious of the shedding of blood among His people.

One further fact is also noted, and that is, that He punishes His people when they are negligent in the carrying out of the principle of blood revenge. This, it seems, is the embryo of what later developed into the concept of Jehovahistic justice.

There is one more factor which must be considered in regard to blood revenge. This is the fact that strange powers and perils were a special part of man's life in primitive times that danger to be connected with blood. It was necessary to avenge bloodshed because it was believed in primitive times that dangerous power was set free in the vicinity where blood fell to the ground. To escape the evil consequences that might result, it was demanded that such blood be avenged. Fear of the powers believed set free is an important reason why the individual that had shed blood had to be punished by the community. If the individual was not punished, the strange powers released by the blood falling upon the ground, might
bring calamity upon the people. It was often, therefore, a matter of protecting the community rather than executing penalty from a moral point of view.

"The idea originally connected with the execution of a tribesman is not exactly penal in our sense of the word; the object is not to punish the offender, but to rid the community of an impious member - ordinarily a man who has shed the sacred tribal blood. Murder and incest, or offences of a like kind against the sacred laws of blood, are in primitive society the only crimes of which the community as such takes cognizance." (1)

The Hebrews in a similar way conceived of the blood as polluting the ground, and involving guilt before Jehovah. The idea of the blood polluting the land may have originated from the earlier conception of the blood releasing strange powers which might work evil upon the people. So we read in the book of Numbers:

"So ye shall not pollute the land wherein ye are, for blood it polluteth the land; and no expiation can be made for the land for the blood that is shed therein, but the blood of him that shed it." Num. 35:33

A special ritual was established later to remove the guilt of the person whose blood was shed. A special person was consecrated to act as a substitute. This principle was also adhered to in the case of a man who might not know the murderer was not known:

"And all the elders of that city, who are nearest unto the slain man, shall wash their hands over the heifer whose neck was broken in the valley (which is neither plowed nor sown). And they shall answer and say, Our hands have not shed this blood, neither have our eyes seen it. Forgive, O Jehovah, thy people Israel, whom thou hast redeemed, and suffer not innocent blood to remain in the midst of thy people Israel. And the

1. W. Robertson Smith pp 398, 399
blood shall be forgiven them." Deut. 21:6-8

To recapitulate, the fundamental social unit in the Orient has always been the family. Among the Semitic peoples the family bond was strong, and the institution of marriage was seldom dissolved. A covenant, as we have seen, was conceived of as a blood-relationship. Provision was made in the Bible that life is in the most cases for individuals not born within the blood relationship to blood. It is a generally accepted fact today that life is in the blood to be received into the clan or tribe by a blood covenant. It is possible that the first blood covenant among the Hebrews was the rite of circumcision. It was noted also that the blood-relationship was enlarged to include the idea that the god or gods were joined to the worshipers by a blood-relationship. Such a covenant is definitely current of blood that matters can pass freely from the recorded as having been established between Jehovah and the Hebrews through the nation of the vessels to which the blood is at Mount Sinai.

Blood revenge, which was one of the most prevalent institutions of Semitic society, was founded upon the idea of blood-relationship. It is absolutely essential to the life of every man worshiper to be connected to his society, was founded upon the idea of blood-relationship. According to the principle of blood revenge, all shedding of blood demanded bloodshed. If a man murdered another, it was required that the blood of the murderer or one related to him be shed by a blood avenger of the murdered man. This principle was also adhered to among the Hebrews. According to the Biblical records, it was believed that the god or gods of this people would punish the people if they did not avenge the shedding of blood. Jehovah was also thought of as the "avenger of His people".
CHAPTER III
BLOOD AS LIFE

The key to many important institutions will be discussed in this chapter. That key is found in the idea that life is in the blood. It is a generally accepted fact today that life is in the blood; that it is essential to the continued life of every part of the body to be in a close relationship with its blood stream. It is stated:

"It is absolutely essential to the life of every part of the body that it should be in such relation with a current of blood that matters can pass freely from the blood to it, and from it to the blood, by transudation through the walls of the vessels in which the blood is contained."

"Thus, the blood is literally the vehicle of life throughout the organism, and this function is discharged by means of its constant circulation from the left lower cavity of the heart through the arteries, and back through the veins to its right upper cavity."

"Of this circulation the ancient world was ignorant, and consequently of the precise ministry of blood to life." (1)

It would make a long but interesting story to discuss how blood was life in the ancient mind, and this principle is the basis of many ideas which came to understand the reasons why blood is essential to life, but it must remain the scope of this thesis to discuss the conception of blood as life among the Hebrew people. To do this, however, it is necessary to realize that blood was believed to be significant in relation to life by most primitive people. Quoting again from the above source:

1. Hastings, vol II p. 714
But primitive man did not need to wait for Harvey in order to be taught the significance of blood in relation to life. However, ignorant he might be of the precise relation, common observation showed the dependence of life upon the blood within the body of man or animal. Loss of blood meant loss of strength, and a man's life seemed to drain away with the blood from a mortal wound. Thus Homer can speak either of the soul (ψυχή) or the blood (ἀίμα) as passing away through the inflicted wound; the identity is affirmed explicitly e.g., amongst the Hebrews in the phrase 'the blood is the life'—(1)

The expression "the blood is the life", means something quite different as it is understood today from what it meant long ago to the Hebrews, for example. That difference is of fundamental importance in the consideration of this subject. Thus if it is asserted by one authority:

2. ibid, vol. II p. 715

This is the underlying principle which explains many ideas, beliefs and numerous customs that illustrate the perils and powers of blood for the ancient mind; and this principle is the basis of many important institutions. Accordingly, as has been pointed out in the preceding chapter, the purity of the blood and the sanctity of the life of the members of the tribe are thought to be fundamental, and very stringent regulations are usually adopted to guard them.

Thus, the sacred unity of life between individuals in ancient
times was often attached to participation in the flesh of a sacrificial victim, and the solemn mystery of its death was justified by the consideration that only in this way could the "sacred cement", the blood, be procured which was thought to create or keep a living bond of union between the worshipers and their god. This "cement" was nothing else than the actual life of the "sacred" animal, that was often thought to be kindred to the tribe, which was conceived as residing in its flesh, but especially in its blood. The blood covenant between man and man, as it has already been referred to, is essentially the union of one life with another. The inter-commingling of the blood of the two parties is equivalent to the inter-commingling of the lives, of the personalities and of the natures thus brought together.

exist. "To shed blood" is synonymous with "to kill", for shedding blood implies the pouring out of life. It is significant to note in regard to this implication that guilt for a person's death is expressed in the Hebrew language by דם (dam) which is the plural form of דם (dam) which means "blood". This is a term which is often repeated in the Biblical records. Reuben pleads with his brothers not to "shed the blood" of their brother Joseph. (Gen. 37:22) In the Old Testament there are similar expressions employed to describe a murderer, as for example, "bloody hands" and a "man of blood".

The conception of blood as life involves the idea of what may be called a "blood-soul".

1. Hermann Scholz, p. 247
This soul, as the sentient personal life of man, is conceived of as embodied in the blood like the spirit not in the breath, no matter whether it is more accurately expressed as 'the soul is in the blood' or more boldly once, as 'the blood which is the soul'. (1)

Hence the special significance of the 'heart' (15) in the religious terminology of the Old Testament. The 'heart' is considered the center of the soul's activity - the center not merely of the world of feelings and wishes, but likewise of the plans and counsels of the understanding, and of the conscience. It is not the head or the brain but the 'heart', which the Hebrew considers the seat of thought, of counsel, and of conscience. This conception also connects up with the idea of existence after death. There seems to have existed almost everywhere, among practically all races, some sort of a conception of the continuance of existence after death, and of something in man different from his physical body, by, or in connection with which this continuance of existence is achieved. This is the life-spirit which animates the body, and yet is independent of it. This life-spirit in harmony with the 'blood-soul' idea is thought to be associated with the blood, as the principle of life, because in proportion as a man loses his blood his life departs, until finally he becomes lifeless. So also it is the bloodlessness of the corpse which is the marked feature of death that helped to produce this belief. It is undoubtedly because of the idea that life is in the blood that the liver and heart, which are still vigorous and active, still of latent life.

1. Hermann Schultz p. 247
the manifest seats of the blood, were thought of as the seats of life not only in the present life, but also in the future life, or existence, by some primitive peoples. Thus it is the heart that is weighed in the balances at the future judgment in the ancient Egyptian eschatology. The identity of the blood with the soul is accepted by H. W. Robinson as is indicated in the following quotation:

"We can easily parallel from other peoples non-Semitic as well as Semitic, the idea of the breath or the blood as identical with the soul, and the attribution of psychical characteristics to the heart, liver, eye, bones." (1)

Just what the precise relation may be of this "blood-soul" with the other ideas of soul, such as that mentioned in the above quotation, where it is identified with breath, seems to be left quite indeterminate by many scholars.

A natural result of this idea of the "blood-soul" are the perils of blood. The two ideas are almost correlative. There was an almost universal belief that blood is a fluid in which inheres mysterious potency, no less dangerous when misused, than efficacious when properly employed. Blood is not merely a "giver of life" but it seems endowed with a personality of its own. Abel's blood cried out from the ground. As has already been noted in this thesis, the law of blood revenge was based not on mere vindictiveness, but on the fear and hate of all creatures not to be pierced or to be shed, that blood unsatisfied might prove an appalling peril to the living.

"For the ancient mind, blood even when shed, was still perilous and potent, full of latent life,

and capable of working on persons or things in contact with it." (1)

The danger is in the literal shedding of blood, because it is in this way that the mysterious soul power is let loose. For this reason the actual shedding of blood in killing is to be avoided if possible. The unwillingness to shed blood is seen in the methods used to kill animals. Stoning and suffocating are used among some primitive people. When the blood is shed, however, various means are employed to avoid the peril. No hard and fast line is drawn between the blood-soul of the animal and that of man. Therefore, if an animal was killed in the field, its blood must be covered with earth or dust.

The Hebrews were forbidden to eat the flesh of animals that had been slain by wild beasts.

"And every soul that eateth that which dieth of itself, or that which is torn of beasts, whether he be home-born or a sojourner, he shall wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water, and be unclean until the even." Lev. 17:15

This may have been due to the blood having been spilled on the ground in the killing of the animal by the wild beast, or it may have been for hygienic reasons. J. F. Peters interprets the practice of covering the blood as it was observed among the Arabs in the follow-

way:

"All killing was so far a sacrifice that the blood of gazelles and wild creatures must be poured out, and furthermore, must be covered up that it might not be regarded as a sacrifice to some other god or to the demons of the field." (2)

1. Hastings  
2. J. F. Peters  
3. J. F. Peters  
4. J. F. Peters
The practice of eating meat which had been offered to Jehovah is thus illustrated: "A creature whose blood was not poured out might not be eaten, among either Hebrews or Arabs, for to eat it was to ally oneself with some strange god, who received the unoffered blood. On the same principle the Hebrews forbade the eating of any animal killed by wild beasts; the blood had become a sacrifice to a demon, and to partake of the flesh was to become united with that demon." (1)

In this last quotation, the above writer applies the same reason to the Hebrew prohibition of eating animals killed by wild beasts, that is, that the blood not having been offered to Jehovah had become a sacrifice to a demon. There does not seem to be any definite reference in the Bible to indicate that blood shed in this way was thought to be a sacrifice to a demon. It may have been an early belief, that is not recorded.

Another means used to avoid any peril that may be connected with the shedding of blood is putting the blood on a sacred stone or altar. It was evidently in accordance with this idea that Saul set up the stone as a place for slaying the animals after the defeat of the Philistines. Thus it is recorded:

"And the people were very faint; and the people flew upon the spoil, and took sheep, and oxen, and calves, and slew them on the ground; and the people did eat with the blood. Then they told Saul, saying, Behold, the people sin against Jehovah, in that they eat with the blood. And he said, Ye have dealt treacherously; roll a great stone unto me this day. And Saul said, Disperse yourselves among the people, and say unto them, Bring me hither every man his ox, and every man his sheep, and slay them here, and eat; and sin not against Jehovah in eating with the blood." I Sam. 14:32-34
The principle is again set forth in the law where it is stated:

"What man soever there be of the house of Israel that killeth an ox or lamb, or goat, in the camp, or killeth an ox or lamb not seemeth it without the camp and hath not brought it unto the door of the tent of meeting to offer it there as an oblation unto Jehovah before the tabernacle of Jehovah; blood shall be imputed unto that man: he shall shed blood; and that man shall be cut off from his people." Lev. 17:2-4

In many cases the blood that was shed required expiation. The blood stain could only be cleansed away by the use of other blood.

This is illustrated among the Hebrews in the provision made for the expiation of an unknown murderer's crime, which has already been referred to. This idea of expiation is a subject in itself which will be discussed in a later section.

The idea that the life is in the blood is expressed again in the belief that the departed souls thirsted for blood in order to maintain life after death. It is said:

"This eagerness of the dead to revive their strength by drinking that blood which is life, is the best explanation of the frequent practice of pouring blood into the grave or tomb by means of a tube or funnel, or the various forms of blood-offering to the dead, which may take the form of more or less serious mutilations on the part of the mourners." (1)

The Hebrews are specifically commanded to refrain from such practices, indicating that a similar belief was probably held among them at one time. It is commanded in Leviticus:

"Ye shall not make any cuttings in your flesh for the dead, nor print any marks upon you: I am Jehovah." Lev. 19:28

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The difficulty that may be felt in connecting an immaterial spirit with the blood does not exist in the primitive mind. They do not seem to be conscious of any such antithesis. There are indeed instances which would seem to indicate that they think spirits sometimes yield blood. At any rate, blood is one of the fundamental ideas. The blood, because it is supposed to be or contain the visible part of the spirit, is often the means of approaching the spirit world. It is especially potent in the life that all scholars seem agreed that beyond this no explanation of the physical universe and the supernatural world. There is in fact something spiritual about the blood; certain unseen qualities which seem to give it a personality of its own, and give it powers that make it respected.

From the very earliest records among the Hebrews, the blood was conceived of as the life of men and beasts. Coming from Jehovah, it must be restored. It was not to be consumed like the flesh. It must either be buried under the ground; else it cried out to Jehovah, and brought His vengeance upon the shedder of the blood; or it must be poured out at the altar, else the individual is guilty of bloodshed and is cut off from the people. To this extent, among the Hebrews, it seemed to possess an independent existence; but this conception of the independent existence did not seem to be developed further.

The blood as the vital principle of life was identified with nephesh (nephesh) which is the soul or self of man. The nephesh is sometimes said to be the blood, sometimes to be in the blood, and vice versa.
"Hebrew", or 'person' may be used of the whole man, but more specifically it is used like 'blood' of the living or vital element in contrast to the physical and tangible parts of man." (1)

The blood, because it is believed to be or contain the life, is held as sacred. It became the central element of the atoning sacrifices. The blood is thought to make atonement because it contains the life. But all scholars seem agreed that beyond this no explanation can be given of the principle that the blood contains the life, or how this life in the blood makes atonement. The sacredness of blood, however, is always emphasized in all the blood ceremonies.

"In Leviticus 17:10,11 the sacredness of the blood is emphasized because it is the property of God alone, His holy of holies in nature, within which the secret of life lies under lock and key. It is there said, 'I have given it to you to cover your souls!'" (2)

Though there is silence in the records which are available, the repeated references to the belief that life is in the blood indicates that it was believed by the Hebrews to be an ordinance of God. It is stated very specifically in such passages as Gen. 4:10; 9:4; Lev. 17:14; Deut. 12:23; Ezek. 33:25; Job 16:18; and Zech. 9:11, that the life is in the blood. It is to be further noticed that only the blood is given directly to God, because it is believed to contain the life. All other offerings, with the exception of the wave-offering, are burnt. Thus it is stated by one writer:

"By ancient tradition blood is sacred, either because it is the blood of an animal dedicated to the divinity, and

1. J. F. Peters p. 448
2. Hermann Schultz p. 355
so partakes of his sanctity, or else because this mysterious fluid, containing the life of the animal, has in it intrinsically something supernatural. From most ancient times the blood has been the portion of the sacrifices which was too sacred to be appropriated by man and which must be carefully presented to the divinity." (1)

A clear statement in regard to the blood as life is given in the words of A. B. Davidson in his Theology of the Old Testament:

"There is no symbolism, but reality. The blood is not a symbol of the life, it is the life, or contains it. The offering of the blood to God is the actual offering of the life. The slaying of the victim and the offering of the blood are not two separate acts. They are one act, which consists in offering the life or victim to God. The death is not to be regarded as a means of getting the blood; the death and the offering are the giving to God the life of the victim." (2)

In concluding this chapter on the blood as life, the writer desires to present a study of the Hebrew text of the first two chapters of Genesis. An examination of the text with reference to the Hebrew root אָדָם (adam) is, in his opinion, most interesting. In verse 26 of the first chapter of Genesis it is stated: "Let us make man in our own image, after our likeness." The word in the Hebrew text which is here translated "man" is אָדָם (adam). The English equivalent of the Hebrew is readily recognized as the name given to the first man created by God. The point of interest at this particular time, however, is that the root of אָדָם is אָד. According to Hebrew grammar, there are some nouns which are formed by means of the prefixes אָד, אָד, and אָד. The אָד is said to be merely euphonic and has no significance. It is therefore possible that the fundamental idea in the Hebrew word for

1. H. P. Smith, pp 221, 222
2. A. B. Davidson, p. 353
man has something to do with "blood", for that is the meaning of the root רד as has already been pointed out. Still more significant is the word translated "after our likeness" in this same passage of scripture. The word in the Hebrew language which is translated "likeness" is דמות (damoth). It means an inner or spiritual likeness. It is to be noted that the root is again רד. דמות is a feminine form of the noun. Is it possible that the likeness between man and Jehovah in the mind of the Hebrew writer was a "blood-likeness"?

Proceeding to the account of the creation of man as it is recorded in the second chapter of Genesis another word is to be noted. The seventh verse of this second chapter reads as follows: "And Jehovah God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." The word, which is here translated "ground", is in the Hebrew language עפר (adamah) the root of which, it will be noted, is רד. This would seem to indicate that, according to the Hebrew language, the very material substance out of which man was said to have been formed was thought to have had some relation to "blood". To complete this study, it is necessary to distinguish between two other words which are used in the seventh verse of the second chapter of Genesis - "breath of life" רוח הנשמה, and "living soul" נפש. Both רוח and נפש mean "breath", but נפש is used in most cases when the reference is to the exhaling or inhaling
of air, while נַפְשִׁי is the word used invariably to designate the soul or what was believed to be the spiritual part of man.

To bring together the ideas expressed in this study of the Hebrew view as it has been noted that blood was believed to contain words used in the account of the creation of man, one is confronted with the idea of an actual soul. For this reason the blood was held with a rather singular situation. The creation of man might be interpreted as belonging to a rather singular situation. The creation of man might be interpreted as belonging to a rather singular situation. The creation of man might be interpreted as belonging to the Hebrew mind. It has been noted also that it was interpreted to read somewhat in this way: "God created man (a being that contained) in His likeness (a spiritual, inner likeness it was said). These powers were considered paralyzing, that is, the that is somehow related to the blood or like the blood). He formed the dust of the ground (which was a material basically like dust), and created man there in the image of God in His likeness (the blood related to the blood). Then God breathed life into the man, and under other conditions it might result in detriment. In this above combination, and in this way that combination became a living thing, was unlike anything else from the point of social and religious soul. The "nephesh" soul and the "dam" blood were welded together.

It seems to suggest something like this: Man (who was first of all blood) because in the creation of man all blood was made of blood (spiritual) and blood (physical), and God made this combination a living soul by breathing into it.

According to this study, it would seem, that man is fundamentally a combination of blood and soul. If such an interpretation is correct, the significance of the phrase "life is in the blood" is certainly a phrase to which the Hebrew attached far greater importance and meaning than most scholars ascribe to it today.
It is clear from the 24th chapter of Exodus, that the Hebrews had the belief that the Blood was taboo against the eating of certain kinds of flesh. For this reason a verse is given in the law of Israel: "It has already been noted that blood was believed to contain or be the life of men and animal. For this reason the blood was held as sacred and as belonging to Jehovah. In the case of the house of Israel, it was shed. These powers were considered perilous, that is, the blood was thought capable of working harm upon persons or things in contact with it. Under certain conditions it might effect purification, but under other conditions it might result in detriment. Safeguards were built up, therefore, in the form of social and religious tabus. One of the first was the prohibition of blood as food. It is believed that early in the history of the Semites blood was drunk in the celebration of social and religious festivals. It may be noted, that nearly all festivals among primitive peoples are of a religious character. Blood was drunk in the early covenant rites. However, the drinking of blood or the eating of flesh containing the blood became taboo among the Hebrews. In the Genesis account of Noah receiving God's blessing, the following injunction is placed upon him: "Every moving thing that liveth shall be food for you; as the green herb have I given you all. But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat." Gen. 9;3, 4.

It is clear from the wording that the primary object of these verses is to warn the Hebrew people against the eating of blood. The reason for this prohibition given in the law is that the life is in the blood, according to the record of Leviticus 17:10,11:

"And whatsoever man there be of the house of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn among them, that eateth any manner of blood, I will set my face against that soul that eateth blood, and will cut him off among his people. For the life of the flesh is in the blood; and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that maketh atonement by reason of the life." Lev. 17:10,11.

According to these two quotations, the Hebrews were prohibited from eating flesh with the blood in it and from eating or drinking blood because it contained the life and was given to them by God to be used on the altar to make atonement for their souls. The principal reason as is stated in both cases is that life is in the blood. It is stated as follows by one writer:

"The primary object of the verses is to warn against eating blood. The reason given is that the blood is brought to the altar, and this in turn is accounted for by the value of the blood as containing life." (1)

The same reason is given in Hastings' Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics for the tabu on eating blood.

"Another group of examples shows us the use of blood as a substitute for life, and the wide spread avoidance of blood as food is by some peoples explicitly traced to the identity of the soul and the blood." (2)

It seems to follow that, since the blood was refused to the people for food, it was considered the special property of God, and therefore belonging to the blood of animals.

2. Hastings vol. 11 p. 715
fore too sacred to be used by the people. Certain requirements are therefore placed upon them in regard to its use and disposal. One such requirement is that nearly all victims must be slain in the name of God, and the blood poured out upon the ground. It seems that all slaughter of domestic animals for food was originally sacrificial among the Arabs as well as among the Hebrews; this carried with it the disuse of blood as an article of food among the Hebrews. This idea evidently persisted even after slaughter ceased to involve a formal sacrifice, as they continued to think it necessary to slay the victims in the name of their God and to pour the blood on the ground.

It is the belief of J. F. Peters in his book The Religion of the Hebrews that all killing was a sacrifice, that the blood was poured out and the body was divided as an offering to God so that all wild animals must not only be poured out, but covered up lest they become a sacrifice to some other god or a demon of the field. He has already been quoted in regard to this interpretation which he evidently infers from Leviticus 17:15 and Exodus 22:31 where the prohibitions are placed upon eating animals that have been torn or slain by wild beasts in the field. (1)

Whether it is correct to interpret this prohibition on the basis that the blood had become a sacrifice unto strange gods is difficult to determine. It is, however, certain that a strict tabu was placed upon animals thus slain. That this tabu is basically connected with blood may be inferred from the requirements made in regard to the eating of the blood of animals.

1. J. F. Peters p. 66
Accordingly, the Hebrews might eat only of that flesh the blood of which had been given to Jehovah. The animals were supposed to be brought to the door of the tent of meeting to be offered as an oblation. The blood was sprinkled upon the altar. Thus it was given to God who was represented by the altar. The individual who failed to follow these instructions was guilty of eating blood. Likewise, those who failed to follow the instructions in regard to the killing of animals were cut off from among the people of Jehovah. Thus it is recorded: "in possession of any relation with Jezebel or false gods. One reads: "That man ceaver there be of the house of Israel, that killeth an ox, or goat, in the camp or that killeth it without the camp, and hath not brought it to the door of the tent of meeting to offer it as an oblation unto Jehovah before the tabernacle of Jehovah; blood shall be imputed unto that man; He hath shed blood; and that man shall be cut off from among his people," Lev. 17:3,4

Indications of this custom are seen yet today in the regulations that are followed in the slaying of animals for what is called "kosher" meat among the orthodox Jews. A fixed ritual is followed and great care is taken in draining the blood from the slain animal.

The fact that it was necessary to bring the animal unto the door of the tent of meeting and to pour the blood out at the altar or to sprinkle it upon the altar signifies that it was given to Jehovah, because the blood was considered the special portion of Jehovah. It was sacred unto Him.

"According to early ideas the blood is sacred and consequently belongs to the divinity. So late as the
has not time of Ezekiel the prohibition of its enjoyment by men was supposed to be because it was the food of God and was brought to Him on the altar (Ezek. 44:7)" (1)

The interpretation given for the pouring out of the blood at the altar according to the above quotation is that the blood is reserved as a special food for Jehovah. Another explanation given to the custom is that the blood contained the life and since it came from God, it must be returned to God. Turning again to the explanation given by Peters in his volume The Religion of the Hebrew, one finds that emphasis is placed on prevention of any relation with demons or false gods. One reads:

"The Israelite might eat only that of which the blood had been given to Jehovah. To the Hebrew, therefore, this law was not primarily a law of physical cleanliness, but a law intended to prevent any relation on his part with demons and evil spirits." (2)

To the opinions already referred to must be added another very important idea. It is the idea that the blood is too perils and mysterious to be food for man. So one authority concludes his argument in place where that is also found in the laws of the spirits.

regard to the belief that mysterious potency is inherent in the blood: "It is with the former aspect that we are concerned, and its most obvious example is that tabu on blood as food with which the Old Testament makes us familiar; (Lev. 14:32-39) where we see that the blood, which is too perilous and mysterious to be man's food must be offered on the sacred stone to Jehovah before man can eat the flesh with impunity."

(3) It is therefore very definite in the laws of the Hebrews that the eating of blood is tabu, and the eating of flesh the blood of which was covered for the possible cleanliness which it pos-

1. H. P. Smith pp 232, 233
2. J. F. Peters p. 205
3. Hastings vol. II p. 715
has not been poured out upon the ground and offered to Jehovah is tabu. The prohibition of blood as a food is stated in Deuteronomy 12:16, 23-25 and 15:23. Here it will be noted that it is not offered in sacrifice, but when animals are slain for ordinary food, it is to be poured out upon the ground. The same prohibition is found also in Genesis 9:4, Leviticus 3:17; 7:26, 27 and 17:1-19:26.

The blood when poured out upon the ground was to be covered by dust. This is specifically commanded in the book of Leviticus.

"And whatsoever man there be of the children of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn among them, who taketh, withal in hunting any beast or bird that may be eaten; he shall pour out the blood thereof, and cover it with dust." Lev. 17:15

However, differences of opinion arise in regard to the reason for this practice. In one case it is regarded as a protection against evil spirits drinking the blood and thus obtaining power over the killer of the animal.

"Blood of a creature slain in the hunt must be covered with earth that it might not be drunk by a demon spirit, which could thus as his blood-god obtain power over the killer of the beast." (1)

Another interpretation given to this requirement is the belief that it was covered with earth in order to restrain the power or powers that were believed to be released whenever blood was shed. However, this much seems clear: and that is, that the blood which was covered did not cry to Jehovah for vengeance, and that covering the blood stored forever may be considered as a primitive, legalistic, non-ethical, means to save the individual from the possible uncleanness which might result in the law, for if the guilty person could not be found, some

1. J. P. Peters p. 157
sult from contact with the blood. To cover it was to be obedient to God's commandment. Whether this custom was believed to restrain the powers believed latent in blood, or it was thought to guard the blood from being eaten by demons is not definitely known.

It may be that the fear of his blood becoming a sacrifice to a strange god or of it being eaten by a demon can be found in the plea of David, who pleaded to Saul that his blood might not fall to the earth away from the presence of Jehovah. He made this plea when he was an exile from Palestine because of the enmity of Saul. Palestine, he believed to be the land of Jehovah, hence these words: in special:

"Now therefore, let not my blood fall to the earth away from the presence of Jehovah: for the king of Israel is come out to seek a flea as when one doth hunt a partridge in the mountains." 1 Sam. 26:20

There is, of course, the other possibility, that David was merely expressing the longing to die in his homeland, as may be the case with many who are forced to live in a foreign land, for food, and the primitive:

No doubt is possible in regard to polluting the land. Blood shed in murder is described as polluting the land, and in such cases only the blood of the murderer can make expiation: childbirth. The fear of women:

"So shall ye not pollute the land wherein ye are, for, no blood it polluteth the land; and no expiation can be doubt made for the land for the blood that is shed therein shall be on the blood of him who shed it." Num. 35:33

is believed to be wide spread among primitive peoples. In the case among men, The conviction that the spilling of human blood must be avenged and atoned for may be considered as a primitive, legalistic, non-ethical.

The regulations found in the writings of the Hebrews are very element in the law, for if the guilty person can not be found, some
method of atonement must be provided for last divine wrath rest upon the land. This opinion is attested to in the attitude prescribed toward the delivering of the guilty into the hand of the avenger of blood.

"Thine eye shall not pitty him, but thou shalt put away the innocent blood from Israel, that it may go well with thee." Deut. 19:15

and every child of Israel, being unclean, until he washeth his body in water. It was also taboo, according to the Hebrew law, for individuals to gash or puncture themselves in honor of the dead. It was quite common among some early peoples to gash and puncture themselves and let their blood flow out upon the dead. This is believed to have been practiced among the Hebrews until a late period, although it is specifically prohibited in such passages as the following:

"Ye shall not make any cuttings in your flesh for the dead, nor print any marks upon you: I am Jehovah." Lev. 19:28

Similar references are found in Leviticus 21:5 and Deuteronomy 14:1. The prohibitions were most serious when the ban is not the disposition of the blood of animals slain for food, and the precautions that were to be taken in the shedding of blood have been noted. A final illustration of blood taboo is to be found in the elaborate rules affecting the blood of menstruation and childbirth. The fear of women's blood in the cases of childbirth and menstruation, no doubt because it was regarded as specially mysterious and powerful, is believed to be widespread among primitive peoples. Tabu on women during these periods is quite general.

The regulations found in the writings of the Hebrews are very
explicit in regard to the uncleanness of women during their menstruation period and after childbirth, or in any other case of an issue of blood.

"And if a woman have an issue, and the issue in her flesh be blood, she shall be in her impurity seven days: and whosoever toucheth her shall be unclean until the even. And everything that she lieth upon in her impurity shall be unclean, everything also that she sitteth upon shall be unclean. And whosoever toucheth her bed shall wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water, and be unclean until the even. And whosoever toucheth anything that she sitteth upon shall wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water, and be unclean until the even. And if it be on the bed, or on anything whereon she sitteth, when he toucheth it, he shall be unclean until the even. And if any man lie with her, and her impurity be upon him, he shall be unclean seven days; and every bed whereon he lieth shall be unclean." Lev. 15:19-24

Thus the Hebrew regulations established in regard to the uncleanness of women with an issue of blood and those who came in contact with her or even with anything that she had had contact with are very clear. The requirements are just as definite when the issue is not in the time of her impurity.

"And if a woman have an issue of her blood many days not in the time of her impurity, or if she have an issue beyond the time of her impurity: all the days of the issue of her uncleanness, she shall be as in the days of her impurity: she is unclean. Every bed whereon she lieth all the days of her issue, shall be unto her as the bed of her impurity: and every thing whereon she sitteth shall be unclean, as the uncleanness of her impurity." Lev. 15:25,26

Whether it be an issue of blood or whether it be the time of impurity, which is undoubtedly the menstruation period, the woman is considered unclean, at least, ceremonially.
A further statement in regard to the uncleanness of women during such times as have been referred to above is found in the following verse: "... and she shall continue in the blood of her purifying three and thirty days; she shall touch no hallowed thing, nor come into the sanctuary, until the days of her purifying be fulfilled. But if she bear a maid child, then shall she be unclean two weeks, as in her impurity; and she shall continue in the blood of her purifying three score and six days." Lev. 12:2,4,5.

It is the significance given to blood in both cases which places the tabu upon women at the time of their menstruation and at the time of childbirth. It can hardly have been because of childbirth itself that women came to be regarded as "unclean", for actually she had received special grace from God.

In conclusion, it may be stated that a strict tabu was advocated by the Hebrews in regard to the eating or drinking of blood. The blood was believed by them to contain the life. It came from God, and must be returned to Him. This tabu placed upon the eating or drinking of blood resulted in certain regulations on the killing of animals for
food and on the eating of their flesh. The Hebrew was not permitted to eat meat unless the blood of the flesh had been poured out to Jehovah. It was preferable that the blood be poured out at the altar. If the blood was poured out on the ground, as was sometimes done in ordinary killing for food, it was necessary to cover it with dust. The flesh was not to be eaten unless the blood had been poured out. The flesh of animals slain or torn by other animals or that had died was not to be eaten, and the touching of the carcases of anything dead made the individual unclean. The tabernacle upon blood was extended to include women during the time of menstruation, issues of blood, and childbirth.

Sacrifice: What is the meaning of sacrifice? According to Wintem's Simplified Dictionary, it is defined as follows:

"The act of presenting to God, or to a deity, some offering as a slaughtered animal or incense, in worship or exaltation." (1)

An examination of the forms which are used in the ancient language is found in the following quotation:

"The most general terms for sacrifice, which extends far beyond the domain of sacrifice proper as we have defined it, is Qorban (קרוב), offering. But within the scope of sacrifice proper there is, first of all, an important distinction. There is the sacrifice of a living creature, (דית) a slaughter. This was any way of course he had to denote the killing of any animal. But since originally such a thing scarcely ever happened without being a sacrifice, it came to be the term for killing in connection with sacrifices." (2)

Sacrifices are offerings made to a god. They may be generally classified as bloody or bloodless. The sacrifices that were observed by the

CHAPTER V

BLOOD IN SACRIFICE

The sacrificial ritual, if the term may be used to include all
the various sacrifices of the Old Testament, is perhaps one of the
most characteristic features of the Hebrew religious system, particu-
larly of Judaism. In order to understand better the significance of
blood in this ritual, it will be necessary to have some knowledge of
the various sacrifices which were observed by the Hebrews, and the
purposes which they were believed to serve in the religious system of
the Hebrews.

First, what is the meaning of sacrifice? According to Wiston's
Simplified Dictionary it is defined as follows:

"The act of presenting to God, or to a deity, some
offering as a slaughtered animal or incense, in offer-
worship or expiration." (1) Lev. 10:18, 19

An examination of the terms which are used in the Hebrew language is
found in the following quotation:

"The most general name for sacrifice, which extends far
beyond the domain of sacrifice proper as we have defined
it, is Qôban (יָבָן) -- offering. But within the do-
main of sacrifice proper there is, first of all an im-
portant distinction. There is the sacrifice of a liv-
ing creature, (ָבָן) -- slaughter. This word may of
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Sacrifices are offerings made to a god. They may be generally clas-
sified as bloody or bloodless. The sacrifices that were observed by the

1. The Wiston Simplified Dictionary ed. by W. D. Lewis, H.S. Seidel
and T. K. Brown. p. 860
2. Hermann Schultz vol. I p. 3747
Hebrews included; the burnt-offerings, which were voluntary offerings made on the altar of burnt-offering in the morning and evening, on sabbath days, and on special occasions for consecration purposes and for purification. As the name signifies, the animal or the choice parts, which always included the fat, were burned upon the altar.

Another voluntary offering was the meal-offering, and it too was burned upon the altar. The heave-offering was the thigh of a peace-offering or thank-offering which was heaved up and down before the altar and became the portion of the priests. The wave-offering was the breast of a peace-offering or thank-offering which was waved from side to side before the altar and then became the portion of the priests.

And the wave-breast and the heave-thigh shall ye eat in a clean place, thou and thy sons, and thy daughters with thee; for they are given as thy portion, and thy sons' portion out of the sacrifices of the peace-offerings of the children of Israel.” Lev. 10:14,15

Peace-offerings were thank-offerings, or voluntary sacrifices offered by the pious in token of gratitude. They are frequently mentioned in connection with burnt-offerings as in Exodus 20:24; 24:5; Leviticus 3:1,6; and 9:4,16. They consisted of spotless young cattle of either sex.

Blood ceremonies are especially instructive because they show the wisdom of blood in making a vital

“And unto the children of Israel thou shalt speak, saying, Take ye a he-goat for a sin-offering; and a calf and a lamb, both a year old, without blemish, for a burnt-offering; and an ox and a ram for peace-offerings, to sacrifice before Jehovah; and a meal offering mingled with oil: for today Jehovah appeareth unto you.” Lev. 9;3,4.
In this passage the command is given for another sacrifice not as yet referred to—the sin-offering. The requirements laid down for the sin-offering are recorded in Leviticus 4. This is the offering of an animal without blemish, or a dove or a pigeon, to be killed before Jehovah to obtain forgiveness of sins that are committed unwittingly. The trespass-offering, which is similar to the sin-offering, is an offering to obtain forgiveness for specific sins, usually involving one's fellowmen. Animals from the flock, doves, pigeons, or flour are offered according to that possessed by the sinner. The specific requirements for the trespass-offering are recorded in Leviticus 5. These are the principal sacrifices which made up the sacrificial system, dealing with actual or formal ritual of the Hebrew religious system. Only those which involved the shedding or use of blood will be dealt with in the study of this thesis.

The next step, therefore, is a consideration of the various theories of the use of blood in these sacrifices. A proper orientation may be obtained in this quotation referring to the various blood ceremonies:

"Blood ceremonies are especially instructive because they show the potency of blood in making a vital connection with the 'supernatural' world, quite apart from any of the theories of sacrifice developed at a later stage of religious thought. Primitive peoples begin anything new, a new work, or building, a new relation, such as marriage by the shedding of blood." (1)

1. Hastings vol II p. 718
"The important place of blood in man's connection with the spiritual world is paralleled by its position in the sacrificial system of organized religion. The disposition of blood in the most primitive forms of sacrifice shows clearly its central significance, and no theory of sacrifice can be regarded as satisfactory which places blood at the circumference rather than at the center.

Moore in a survey of the Old Testament system summarizes: 'From the first to the last the utmost importance attaches to the disposition of the victim's blood. Indeed it may be said that this is the one universal and indispensable constituent of sacrifice. This use of sacrificial blood is older than the offering of part of the victim by fire, and is the necessary antecedent of the feast, its religious consecration.' (1)

It is clear from these quotations that a study of the use of blood in the sacrifices is a study dealing with the central feature of the sacrificial system. This might seem to be a simple matter, but there is no one theory that is generally accepted as explaining satisfactorily the use of blood in the sacrifices. What are these theories?

The first theory is that the sacrifice is a gift made to the deity, just as one would give a gift to a man who is liked or respected. It is believed that there is value in the offering itself. The gifts are given as indications of homage. The virtue of the procedure lies in the worshiper depriving himself of something prized. This is believed to have been the first idea connected with sacrifice. Cain and Abel brought the products of their labors as offerings unto Jehovah. There does not seem to be any indication that the two brothers

were seeking to appease God for any wrong which they might have done. There does not appear to be any indication that their offering was to become a means of communion. The account seems to indicate that they brought of the fruits of their labors as gifts that might be pleasing and acceptable to God, hoping perhaps to win the favor of Jehovah.

"Whatever the historical evolution of the idea of sacrifice, or whatever its primary idea, it seems certain that this idea of a gift or offering to God is the prevailing idea in the Hebrew religion from the earliest. The sacrifices of Cain and Abel are called מַגֵּן and מַגֵּי (1) present.’’

Though in most of the sacrifices the whole animal was brought into the sanctuary as a gift, the blood was that portion of the victim which was always God’s portion. It was the special gift for the deity, and the emphasis placed upon the blood is indicated by the exacting care used in handling the blood.

"The emphasis laid upon the blood, which is often interpreted as favoring the theory of substitution, is due to quite another consideration. By ancient tradition blood is sacred, either because it is the blood of an animal dedicated to the divinity, and as partakes of his sanctity, or else because this mysterious fluid, containing the life of the animal, has in it intrinsically something supernatural. From the most ancient times the blood has been the portion of the sacrifice which was too sacred to be appropriated by man and which must be carefully presented to the divinity. The gift was grateful to him and made the offering acceptable." (2)

It is said, that the essential feature of the burnt-offering is the complete surrender of the victim to God to indicate that all man and his possessions belong to God. The burnt-offering is believed to

1. A.B. Davidson p. 215
2. H.P. Smith pp. 221, 222
be a later development in the sacrificial ritual, but the place of blood even in this offering is not neglected, and it is considered a gift. 

The whole-burnt-offering of the community in connection with the public worship of God formed the regular foundation on which any special act of sacrifice could be afterwards performed. The burnt-offerings in individual cases formed, on the other hand, the concluding act of worship, after the special atonement is completed. The blood is sprinkled on the altar in order to devote the life to God, in the sense however, not of a definite atonement, but of a gift, a token of reverence." (1)

That the burnt-offering was believed to indicate the complete surrender or dedication of life to the deity is shown in the use of it to redeem the first-born of the male children - Exodus 13:13-15. According to the Priestly Code, it included all children male and female. Perhaps the forerunner or prototype of this ceremony is found in the record of Abraham offering Isaac as a burnt-sacrifice. According to the Biblical account, he stayed from offering his son, and a ram is given as a substitute.

"And the angel of Jehovah called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham, and he said, Here am I. And he said, Lay not thy hand upon the lad, neither do thou anything to him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from me. And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold, behind him a ram caught in the thicket by his horns; and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt-offering in the stead of his son." Gen. 22:11-13

The redeeming of the life of a man or animal by means of the burnt-
offering is not a substitution in the sense of the animal bearing the punishment of the man. The offering is a substitute in the sense that it symbolizes complete dedication of life to God through the giving of the animal.

The life of a man must be unconditionally redeemed by the offering of an animal (Gen. 22:15; Ex. 15:17-19; Lev. 20:1ff.). In place here, then, an animal is in a certain sense, the substitute of a man; but not as if it were punished for him, or for his guilt, but simply because, instead of the greater offering which He might claim, God is willing to accept the smaller, instead of the higher life that exists on earth, the lower, that of an animal.

There is no reason even in the burnt-offering why we should regard the sprinkling of blood as expiatory. It merely expresses the dedication to God of the life of the animal sacrificed.  

The earliest conception of sacrifice seems to have been that it was a gift to the deity. The central feature of this gift was the pouring out of the sprinkling of the blood upon the stone or altar which represented the deity.

This is in accord with primitive Semitic usage in which the blood was poured upon the stone which was regarded as the dwelling of the god, or else allowed to run into a pit at its base, evidently as nourishment grateful to the divinity.

This shows that blood is the chief gift, or the most valuable part of the gift to Yahweh.  

The second theory involves the idea that the essential feature of the sacrifice was the partaking of a communion meal. There are those who believe that sacrifice was not regarded as an expression of homage and dependence - a sort of acted prayer on the assumption of a communion or fellowship. That view is a commonly held view in

1. Hermann Schmitz p. 567
2. R. P. Smith American Journal of Theology July 1906 vol X p. 418
that action rather than words is what is to be expected of primitive life; nor was it so much in the nature of a gift to please the deity as in being a contribution to the development of civilization. The latter is a fateful act of sacrifice, the former is the act of giving to the deity, for instance of his anger and the cessation of calamities, success in the struggle with enemies, or merely the joy of fellowship with him; but in the material of sacrifice. The offering has been in place of such ethical ideas, the essential idea of sacrifice is and which is the giver of all things, he wants his to be observed in the sacrificial meal. The offering of the sacrifice, particularly the blood, was to establish or renew the blood-relationship. It was a type of communion of the deity and man in a common sacramental food. This is called by some writers the physical idea of sacrifice in contrast to the former ideas which are called ethical.

"Quite a different view has been advocated by Professors Robertson Smith and Wulffhansen. In the view of these scholars the essential idea of sacrifice is to be observed in the sacrificial meal - the communion of the deity and man in a common sacramental food. The god and the tribe were one; or, if the god was estranged, it was only temporary estrangement. The idea that a common partaking of food united in a bond of friendship or covenant those who so partook, was a usual one. The idea was transferred to the sphere of Divine and human relations. -- The participants on the human side, by eating food in common, confirmed their union with one another; and by giving the god part of the sacrifice - e.g. - smearing the blood on stones which he inhabited, and which more lately developed into an altar, they allowed him also to participate, and so cemented his union with them." (1)

This seems to be the common view among a number of writers - that the eating of the food became the food for the god and through the eating of this food there came about between the god and the individual a communion or fellowship. That such is a commonly held view is

1. A.E. Davidson p. 315
indicated by the following quotations:

"In the Canaanite sacrifices we find a development corresponding to the development in civilization. The most essential feature of the offering is still the blood, which above all is given to the deity, for in the blood is the life; but flesh, oil, wine and vegetable offerings, the latter commonly prepared in cakes and the like, as for the use of men also constitute the material of sacrifice. The offering has become food for the god, by which he is to be placated, and which as the giver of all things, he exacts his portion." (1)

It is stated as follows by another writer:

"We may now take it as made out that throughout the Semitic field, the fundamental idea of sacrifice is not that of a sacred tribute, but of communion between the god and his worshippers by joint participation in the living flesh and blood of a sacred victim.

When men ceased to eat raw or living flesh, the blood, to the exclusion of the solid parts of the body, comes to be regarded as the vehicle of life and the true vicar which sacramental, and the nature of the sacrifice as a sacramental act is still further disguised when the sacramental blood is no longer drunk by the worshippers, but only sprinkled on their person, or finally finds no outward application at all, but is wholly poured out at the altar so that it becomes the proper share of the deity while the flesh is left to be eaten by man." (2)

The final quotation in this group is taken from J. M. F. Smith’s article which appeared in the *Biblical World*:

"The early Semites conceived of the deity as one of the same community of blood-relations. Sacrifice thus becomes an act of communion. Eating at a common table, they have shared in the same life giving food.

They have become one in a most literal sense; interests of being."

1. J. F. Peters p. 115
2. W. Robertson Smith p. 327
God are identical with those of his people. Consequently the sure preventive of misfortune and divine chastisement is the maintenance of this identity of interests through frequent sacrificial communion. The element in the sacrifice peculiarly efficacious in cementing the union is the blood. The later codifications of the Hebrew law still retain and recognise at its full value this superior efficacy of blood (Lev. 17:11) although the original significance of its use may have been far behind in the atypical past. To the primitive mind blood is the very embodiment of life. When shared in by the worshipper and deity alike, it brought about community of life, as no other sacrificial food." (1)

This last writer is of the opinion that as the idea of God advanced and He became conceived of as being holy and majestic, the feeling of relationship between the God and His family yielded to one of awe and reverence. With this change there came also a transition from sacrifice as the expression of thanksgiving and a-basement to the conception of sacrifice. Instead of the sacrifice becoming a communion meal, it came to be considered as an acceptable gift, which theory has been placed first in this thesis. Quoting from the same source again:

"The old sacrificial meal of which the worshipper and his god partook gave way to the more or less splendid and acceptable gift presented to the God by the worshipper. The gift served as an expression of gratitude and love, as a salve to the feelings of the deity outraged by the worshipper's sins, or as a bid for further favors. This conception of sacrifice as a gift is that reflected in most of the Old Testament teachings and images pertaining to the subject." (2)

There are other scholars, who rejecting the idea of the sacrifice as either a gift or a communion meal, hold that the essential idea or feature of the sacrifice in the primitive period was the bursting forth

1. J. N. P. Smith Biblical World Jan 1906 vol. 51 p. 23
2. ibid p. 23
of the blood. The deities were felt to be barbarous and unfeeling according to this view. When they were offended, therefore, they like human beings of the time, could only be appeased by the bloody offering. (1) is involved any element of communion. The whole ceremony years. The ideas connected with sacrifice as summarized in Hastings' Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics are: communion, conciliation and honorific. The idea involved in communion is "the inherent tendency, the yearning of the feeble human soul to reach out towards and make itself part of the divine nature". (2) The idea involved in conciliation is the desire to avert, neutralize, or expel evil. The idea involved in honorific is the freewill-offering in grateful recognition of the goodness and beneficence of the deity. All three have been dealt with here under the headings of sacrifice as a gift, and sacrifice as means of communion: the animal is a sacrifice.

The most primitive example of bloody sacrifice recorded in the Old Testament according to H. Wheeler Robinson, in his volume The Religious Ideas of the Old Testament, is that recorded in 1 Samuel 14: 32-35 which has already been referred to. This is an account of Saul's hungry soldiers slaughtering and eating the captured animals without offering the blood to Jehovah, and to slaughter and eat animals thus does not seem to have been the Jehovahistic custom. Saul, therefore, orders that a great stone be set up to serve as an altar and that all the animals be slain there and the blood poured out there.

1. cp. George A. Barton: The Religion of Israel p. 11
2. Hastings' vol V p. 6
to Jehovah. The soldiers are then free to eat of the flesh of the animals after this procedure whereby the animals were drained of their blood. In this account there is no indication that this bloody sacrifice involved any element of communion. The whole ceremony appears to be one carried in obedience to a well-known custom or command. It seems to be a matter of giving God that which He expected, or that which was due Him. The actions of Saul would seem to indicate that it was a serious offence that the blood of the slain animals had not already been poured out upon a stone or altar to Jehovah. Saul's actions can hardly have been due to the fear of breaking the commandment in regard to the eating or drinking of blood, as that would not have required the altar to represent God's presence. Rather it appears that the blood is the sacred substance belonging to Jehovah, and that every killing of an animal is a sacrifice. Therefore, the blood must be given back to Jehovah as the Hebrew altar.

This pouring of the blood over the sacred symbol, or so that it gathers in a pit at the base of the altar is called the "godward side" of the sacrificial ritual. (1) It is believed that the blood entering the pit was conveyed to the deity. Such pits, as for example the one under the altar of burnt-offering at Jerusalem, were common under altars in Palestine. There does not seem to be any indication, the Hebrews will have a form or sort rice in which however, in the Old Testament that the Hebrews conceived of Jehovah blood. And even in the case of fire-sacrifice the as dwelling in the pit. The usage of the pit seems rather to be a

1. W. Robertson Smith p. 321
simple means of disposing of a sacred liquid which could not be used for anything but religious purposes. According to later ideas, Jehovah dwelt in the "Holy of Holies", and was only indirectly associated with the altar of sacrifice. Therefore, the pouring out of the blood at the base of the altar at that time could hardly have symbolized the pouring out of the blood to the deity in the pit. Nevertheless, the pouring out of the blood at the altar is the "godward side" of the sacrificial ritual, for the blood is always that which is given directly to Jehovah, and the pouring out of it is always necessary before the individual can approach God, through the sacrificial ritual.

It is said that the slaughter of the victim loses its importance as the critical point in the ritual, where the fire sacrifices prevail as was the case in later ritual. But this idea is not necessarily primitive, for even in the period of fire-sacrifice the Hebrew altar is called מִדָּבָר, that is, "the place of slaughter", and in ancient times the victim was slain on or beside the altar, as appears from the account of the sacrifice of Isaac, and later from the slaughter of the animals by Saul's men just referred to. In writing concerning this one writer states:

"The later passage proves that in the time of Saul the Hebrews still knew a form of sacrifice in which the offering was completed in the oblation of the blood. And even in the case of fire-sacrifice the blood was not cast upon the flames, but dashed
against the sides of the altar or poured out at
its foot." (1)

Two views of the origin of sacrifice are presented by A. B.
Davidson in his book The Theology of the Old Testament. The first
view is that sacrifice was ordained and suggested to men "directly
by God". According to this idea, sacrifice is a part of a primit-
"ive revelation. He presents two objections to this view. First,
"the Old Testament", he claims, "gives no countenance to it." (2)
Referring to the account of the offerings of Cain and Abel, he states
that their offerings seem to be regarded as spontaneous and instinc-
tive expressions of gratitude and dependence. He claims that the
Priest's Code regards sacrifice among the Hebrews as due directly to
God's commands to Moses. This code is entirely silent in regard to
the sacrifices of Noah, Abraham, and other patriarchs. Second,
Davidson states that "the universal prevalence of sacrifice among
the heathen nations seems to imply that sacrifice is in some way a
natural expression of man's sense of his relationship to God." (3)
It is his view that the hypothesis of a primitive revelation, the
remains of which lingered among all the peoples of the world and
which expressed itself through sacrifice, is precarious.

The second view of the origin of sacrifice is that there is a
primitive idea underlying sacrifice. On the basis of this idea,
Davidson rejects the following:

"It has been supposed that man's sense of evil, of his
own inadequate service to God, and of God's holiness,
made him feel that reparation was due to God, and that he deserved death. Hence, to express this feeling, he brought living creatures to God as his own substitutes, inflicting on them the penalty of death deserved by himself. Sacrifice was thus from the first peculiar and propitiatory." (1)

He rejects the above conception because he thinks it is an assumption of ethical reflection too far advanced for primitive man. He concludes that, whatever the primary idea may be or may have been, "the idea of a gift or offering to God is the prevailing one in the Hebrew religion". (2)

The sacrificial system in the Old Testament appears to be left without explanation except in a general way. There does not seem to be any indication, however, that the individual sacrifices were considered as communion meals. The idea of a gift is certainly prominent. In order to understand better the uses of blood in the sacrificial system, it will be necessary to examine each type individually.

The first is the thank-offering, or peace-offering as it is also called. The commandment in regard to this offering is as follows:

And if his oblation be a sacrifice of peace-offerings; if he offer of the herd, whether male or female, he shall offer it without blemish before Jehovah. And he shall lay his hand upon the head of his oblation, and kill it at the door of the tent of meeting; and Aaron's sons the priests shall sprinkle the blood upon the altar round about. And he shall offer of the sacrifice of peace-offering and offering made by fire unto Jehovah; the fat that covereth the inwards, and all the fat that is upon the inwards, and the two kidneys, and the fat that is upon them, which is by the loins, and the caul upon the liver, with the kidneys shall he take away.

1. A. E. Davidson, p. 512
2. Ibid, p. 512
And Aaron's sons shall burn it on the altar upon the burnt-offering which is upon the wood that is on the fire; it is an offering made by fire, and a sweet savor unto Jehovah." Lev. 3:1-5

In these sacrifices the offerer presents the animal of the herd or of the flock to God. The laying on of the hands seems to indicate, not any transfer of sin or guilt, but a sign of dedication. The animal is slain beside the altar which is at the door of the tent of meeting. The priests then take the blood and sprinkle it upon the altar round about. In this ritual it is believed that the priest presented the life of the victim to God. Then as a token of homage, God is given the best parts of the victim, that is, the fat and the other organs which are specified to be burned upon the altar.

In the thank-offering, some claim, there is absolutely no thought of any kind of atonement. It is evident, it is said, that one cannot give an animal to God without killing it and dedicating its life to the Lord of life by the shedding of its blood. The blood being the life or the bearer of life, is holy; dedicated to God, and, therefore, withheld from every profane use. This has already been emphasized. When blood is, in the sacrifice, brought again into the presence of God, and poured out on His altar, the victim's life is thereby given back to Him. This completes the act of consecration. It is said, therefore, that the victim is killed in the thank-offering simply because it can be dedicated to God in no other way. It may be that the thank-offering or peace-offering is a type of the earliest sacrifice.
The blood of the burnt-offerings, which were also considered as voluntary offerings, was sprinkled on and about the altar in the same way as it was in the peace offering. The Bible record is as follows:

"If his oblation be a burnt-offering of the herd, he shall offer it a male without blemish; he shall offer it at the door of the tent of meeting, that he may be accepted before Jehovah. And he shall lay his hand upon the head of the burnt-offering; and it shall be accepted for him to make atonement for him. And he shall kill the bullock before Jehovah; and Aaron's sons, the priests, shall present the blood, and sprinkle the blood round about upon the altar that is at the door of the tent of meeting. And he shall flay the burnt-offering, and cut it into its pieces. And the sons of Aaron the priests shall put fire upon the altar, and lay wood in order upon the fire; and Aaron's sons, the priests, shall lay the pieces, the head, and the fat, in order upon the wood that is on the fire which is upon the altar; but its inwards and its legs shall be washed with water; and the priests shall burn the whole on the altar, for a burnt-offering, an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto Jehovah." Lev. 1:3-9

The peace-offerings or thank-offerings and the burnt-offerings were voluntary offerings which were used on almost all important occasions, events and solemnities, whether private or public. The sprinkling of the blood about and upon the altar was still an important part of the ritual. It is said in the case of burnt-offering to make atonement for the offerer. It is somehow thought to bring the worshiper into special relationship with Jehovah. The blood had to be sprinkled upon the altar before the burning of the animal to make the sweet smelling savour unto Jehovah. The blood is the offering of the life according to Jehovah's commandment. The burning of the flesh is probably
done with the idea of winning the favor of Jehovah.

The sin-offering and the trespass-offering are the last of the blood-offerings to be considered. These were both considered compulsory offerings in contrast to the peace or thank-offerings and the burnt-offerings which were voluntary. One encounters considerable difficulty in dealing with these two sacrifices. Wherewith do they differ from the other sacrifices? Wherewith do they differ from each other? To answer these questions and to make clear cut distinctions is almost impossible. One Bible dictionary describes the sin-offering as follows:

"An offering, consisting of a young bullock for the means of a priest or congregation, and a male kid or lamb for a ruler, and a female kid or lamb for a private person, in all cases without blemish, made as a confession of, and in atonement for, sin. The ceremonial of the sin-offering, which is closely connected with the trespass-offering (which see), but at the same time is clearly distinguished from it, is described in Lev. 4 and 6." (1)

The same dictionary speaks of the trespass-offering in the following quotation:

"An individual sacrifice, or offering, made for some error, specific sin or offence. Restitution was first to be made, and then this offering presented to God for an atonement." (2)

Ebersheim in his book _The Temple_, which deals with the ministry and services of the temple at the time of Christ, makes this distinction between the sin-offering and the trespass-offering. He states: "It", (that is the sin offering) "made atonement for the person of the offend-
er, whereas the trespass-offering only atoned for one special offence." (1)

Quoting further from the same writer: "Hence sin-offerings were brought on festive occasions for the whole people, but never trespass-offerings.

It was, in fact, the trespass-offering may be regarded as representing ransom for a special wrong, while the sin-offering symbolized general redemption. Both sacrifices applied only to sins 'through ignorance', in opposition to those done 'presumptuously' (or 'with a high hand'). (2)

They were also indications of the fundamental conditions of the important fact that must be taken into consideration in regard to these sacrifices. Two sacrifices were provided for those who were in covenant relationship with Jehovah. They were thought of as the means of remaining within that relationship, of obtaining God's forgiveness, and of retaining His good will when the people or the individual had sinned "unwittingly". It was a provision that seems to have been made out of recognition of the fact that although the people were in covenant relationship with Jehovah, they were not sinless; it was recognized that they might fall into error and sin.

Forgiveness. The following quotations point out very clearly the idea that in covenant relationship with Jehovah. They were thought of as the means of remaining within that relationship, of obtaining God's forgiveness, and of retaining His good will when the people or the individual had sinned "unwittingly". It was a provision that seems to have been made out of recognition of the fact that although the people were in covenant relationship with Jehovah, they were not sinless; it was recognized that they might fall into errors and be compassed with infirmities. It was, therefore, for those sins of infirmity and of error, as they were called, that provision was made in the sacrificial system. "It is an institution provided of God for sins that the sacrifices are for sins of the sacrificial system for those sins that were committed with a "high hand"." (3)

There was no provision made in the biblical records for sins that the sacrifices are for sins of the sacrificial system for those sins that were committed with a "high hand".

It is to be noted, therefore, in regard to the two sacrifices:

1. Ebersheim, The Temple p. 128
2. Ibid p. 128
3. A. E. Davidson p. 310
the sin-offering and the trespass-offering, that a distinction is
drawn in the Old Testament between sins of ignorance, infirmity or
error, and sins that were done with a high hand or intentionally.
It was believed that the sins of ignorance could be atoned for by
these sacrifices, but the sins done with a high hand were capital
and threw those committing them outside the covenant relationship.
They were an infraction of the fundamental conditions of the cooven-
ant union, and no sacrifice was acceptable as a means of obtaining
forgiveness.

The following quotations point out very clearly the idea that
the sacrifices were provided for those people in covenant relation
with Jehovah and were thought of as the means of maintaining that
relationship when it was threatened by sins of infirmity and error.

"The sacrifices were thus offered to a God already in
relations of grace with His people. They were not
offered in order to attain His grace, but to retain
it - or to prevent the communion existing between
Him and His people being disturbed or broken by the
still inevitable imperfections of His people." (1)

"At all events the Old Testament sacrificial system
belonged to the worship of the people of God, con-
ceived as truly His people and in fellowship with
Him. And it was a means of maintaining this fel-
lowship, of equating and removing the disturbances
which human frailties occasioned to this communion." (2)

The Biblical records emphasize that the sacrifices are for sins or
trespasses that have been committed "unwittingly". It is stated
in that way throughout the fourth and fifth chapters of Leviticus.

1. A. B. Davidson p. 316
2. ibid p. 317
It should be noted at this point that the terms guilt-offering and trespass-offering are synonymous in the Old Testament. The Hebrew word which is sometimes translated guilt-offering and sometimes trespass-offering is מָזָּע (mazah). The Hebrew verb מָזָע (mazah) is translated: "to be guilty" and "to trespass". No one was to be given to the offender. If one were to make a distinction between the sin-offering and the trespass-offering from the above facts, it would be that the trespass-offering has to do with those offences which involve guilt. Guilt involves the violation of law which makes one liable to punishment. The trespass-offering, then, would seem to be the offering made in cases of specific acts which broke God's commandments, and made the individual liable to punishment of some kind. The sin-offering, on the other hand, would seem to be the offering made for the condition of the individual which resulted from errors or failure in the carrying out of the divine will. The Hebrew word for sin-offering לֶחֶם (chatat) which comes from the verb לֹא חָטָאת (chatat) meaning, "to err", "to fail", "to miss the mark". The sin-offering seems to have to do with an inner state of being or condition, and the trespass-offering with overt acts of transgression.

The sin-offering is said by some writers to have been required whenever unwittingly or through inadvertence, something had occurred, which, without doing definite injury to God or to one's neighbor, violates the requirements of moral or physical holiness. It was atone-
ment for uncleanness. Its peculiarity was the search after purifica-
tion. (1)

One distinctive mark of the trespass-offering was that compensa-
tion had to be made before the offering was received. The law speci-
fied that one-fifth more than the damage done had to be given to the
offended. This is stated very clearly:

And Jehovah spake unto Moses, saying, If any one commit
a trespass, and sin unwittingly, in the holy things of
Jehovah; then he shall bring his trespass-offering unto
Jehovah, a ram without blemish out of the flock, accord-
ing to thy estimation in silver by shekels, after the
shekel of the sanctuary, for a trespass-offering; and
he shall make restitution for that which he hath done
amiss in the holy thing, and shall add the fifth part
thereof, and give it unto the priest; and the priest
shall make atonement for him with the ram of the tre-
 passes-offering, and he shall be forgiven." Lev. 5:14-16

The above quotation gives the requirements placed upon the individual
"sinning unwittingly, in the holy things of Jehovah", and the same re-
quirement of giving one-fifth more than the damage done to the offend-
ed as compensation is made in cases of trespass against one's fellow-
men.

And Jehovah spake unto Moses, saying, If any one shall sin unwin-

In concluding this comparison of the sin-offering and the tres-

The fundamental difference between the two sacrifices
appears also in this - that sin-offerings, having a
retrospective effect on the worshippers, were brought
at the various festivals, and also for purifi-
cation in such defilements of the body as symbolically pointed
to the sinfulness of our nature (sexual defilement,
those connected with leprosy, and with death). On the

1. cp. Hermann Schultz p. 562
other hand, the animal brought for a trespass-offering was to be always a male (generally a ram, which was never used as a sin-offering); nor was it lawful, as in the sin-offering, to make substitution for something else in the case of poverty. These two particulars indicate that the trespass-offering contemplated chiefly a wrong, for which decided satisfaction was to be made by offering a male animal, and for which a definite unvarying ransom was to be given."

The common characteristic of these two sacrifices was the use of the blood and the significance that was given to it. In the sin-offering in particular, the shedding of the blood is the solemn and essential characteristic. It is said that the sprinkling of the blood before the veil would seem to indicate "that the covenant-relationship itself had been endangered and was to be re-established". It was the shedding of the blood that assured the offerer of God's forgiveness in both of these sacrifices, and in the sin-offering it was the sprinkling of the blood that cleansed.

The directions for the use of the blood in the sin-offering are very specific in the Biblical record:

"And Jehovah spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, If any one shall sin unwittingly, in any of the things which Jehovah hath commanded not to be done, and shall do any one of them: if the anointed priest shall sin so as to bring guilt on the people, then let him offer for his sin, which he hath sinned, a young bullock without blemish unto Jehovah for a sin-offering. And he shall bring the bullock unto the door of the tent of meeting before Jehovah; and he shall lay his hand upon the head of the bullock and kill the bullock before Jehovah. And the anointed priest shall take of the blood of the bullock, and bring it to the tent of meeting; and the priest shall dip his

1. Ebersheim p. 128
2. Ibid p. 172
finger in the blood, and sprinkle of the blood seven
times before Jehovah, before the veil of the sanctuary.
And the priest shall put of the blood upon the horns
of the altar of sweet incense before Jehovah, which is
in the tent of meeting; and all the blood of the bul-
lock shall he pour out at the base of the altar of
burnt-offering, which is at the door of the tent of
meeting." Lev. 4:1-6

It is believed by some that the victim is dedicated to God by
the offerer laying his hand upon its head when it is slain. The
most solemn act of the sin-offering is the application of the blood
as an atonement. In the two most solemn cases: which are when the
priest sins and brings "guilt" upon the congregation (note the re-
sponsibility of the priest) and when the whole congregation errs,
the blood is brought directly before God to the veil which was before
the "Holy of Holies". There it is sprinkled seven times. It is then
sprinkled upon the horns of the altar of sweet incense which is be-
lieved to represent the altar of prayer or intercession. The rest
of the blood is poured out at the base of the altar of burnt-offering.
In the more ordinary cases, however, the blood is put with the priest's
finger only on the brazen altar of burnt-offering and on its horns.
"But in every instance it is this sprinkling with blood that constitutes
the really sacramental part of the ceremony." (1)

A great difficulty arises, however, when an attempt is made to
ascertain the religious ideas at the basis of the expiatory sacrifices:
the sin-offering and the trespass-offering. It is stated in the fol-
lowing way by one writer:

sin of "It is here that the sacramental and the symbolical touch each other. It is here that the widest scope is given to mysticism, and in such a realm it is always a matter of extraordinary difficulty to find a doctrinal expression for the import of such ceremonies that will at the same time be just to every feeling. At any rate, we need never imagine that we are here in possession of really religious ideas of atonement." (1)

It is said by some that it was in virtue of the mercy of God that He was willing to accept a ransom for those sins which are not absolutely unpardonable, that is those sins which are mere mistakes made by an individual who desires to be loyal to his God. The life of the animal is required because it was believed to be the highest and holiest thing in possession of man. It becomes a ransom although even its efficacy depends solely upon the good pleasure and the mercy of God.

There is a textual difficulty in regard to the whole ritual in the fact that provision is made in the regulations for the sin-offering of the king, for if these regulations were given to Moses, there was no king among the Hebrews at that time. Whether this section is a later addition, or the entire ritual is of later origin using the Mosaic period as a background is a question of higher criticism. It is possible that the entire ritual is a codification of the sacrifices used by the people at the time of Moses, written by a later author who added the specifications such as those for a king.

The greatest difficulty, however, is the question of substitution. Did the death of the animal represent the death of the sinner? Was the

1. Hermann Schultz p. 357, 358
sin of the offerer believed to be transferred to the victim? The writers are unable to agree on any one definite answer to these questions. The opinion of one writer is expressed in the following:

In the case of the sin-offering, however, we have to do with a number of more delicate questions connected with the death and the blood of the victim, and their atoning efficacy.

The whole procedure would be most simply and fully explained, could it be traced back to the idea of an actual or real substitution; that is, to the idea that the victim, in stepping into the place of the guilty person, must let the punishment due to him be inflicted on itself. Then with the laying on of the man's hands, the guilt would be as it were, transferred to the head of the victim, to its soul.

And the whole theory that the blood as the source of life, that is as the soul, 'covers' or 'staves for' the soul, points most naturally to the theory of an interchange of roles, in other words to a real substitution. (1)

There are nevertheless a number of arguments which have been presented against the theory of a real substitution. In the first place, it is argued that even the heathen theory of an atoning sacrifice admits of only a symbolical substitution. In the second place, if a human sacrifice is replaced by an animal one, that is merely a vicarious act, not a vicarious punishment. In the third place, the laying on of the hand does not bring about a transfer of sin to the victim. It is claimed to be merely a general act of dedication, and not an act of substitution. It is presented in the following way:

Outside the cultus the laying on of hands often signifies the impartation of good gifts, but never the trans-

1. Hermann Schultz, p. 369, 390
mission of evil. — In the case of blasphemy the witnesses lay their hands upon his head either for identifying the offender or of vouching for the truthfulness of their testimony and not for transmitting any guilt.

These sacrifices are distinctly gifts to the deity; and the laying on of hands seems to have been the sacrificer's method of presenting his gift, the way in which he designated it as coming from him. (1)

In the fourth place, there is a distinct Biblical reference to the belief that the animal became holy. Its flesh did not become unclean in the later period of Jewish history, but became "most holy" (Lev. 6:24) and was eaten by the priests. In the fifth place, it does not seem in the law that the death of the victim constitutes the atonement. It would appear rather to be merely the means by which the life, that is, the blood of the victim, is appropriated to God. The emphasis is not on the killing of the victim, but on the sprinkling of the blood. It is stated by one writer:

"Whatever is devoted to God must die, that which is under the hand as well as the first-born, the thank-offering, as well as the burnt-offering. And only after the killing is over is the blood brought as an atonement before God; and that not as a life that has become unclean and guilty, but as something for the presence of God." (2)

A. B. Davidson presents three considerations with which he claims make the poena vicaria explanation questionable. The first is that in the Old Testament, sacrifice is of the nature of a gift to God. The second, he claims, is that the kind of offences for which sacrifices made atonement were sins of inadvertency, which did not seem to awaken the wrath of God, though they did disturb His fellowship with the sinner. His third consideration is that these sacrifices

in the main were offered for a people in His covenant fellowship.

Nevertheless, he concludes with this statement:

"In earlier times, perhaps the former side of the idea was more prominent - the idea of a gift to placate God; in later times the other side, that the death of the creature was of the nature of penalty, by the extraction of which the righteousness of Jehovah was satisfied." (1)

The above quotation suggests that some idea of substitution is thought to have developed at a later period of Hebrew history.

The idea of substitution seems to be expressed, for instance, in Isaiah 53: 4–10 where the penalties are said to be borne by the servant, and because they are borne by the servant, the people are relieved from the penalty of their sins and are forgiven. Although the situations are not identical, the idea of a substitution is suggested. This was possibly a later idea which developed out of a deepening ethical experience. Such changes of interpretation are considered natural developments in the interpreting of primitive rites anew to the need of each age.

There are others also who argue for the idea of substitution in the sacrifices of the Hebrews. Thus it is stated:

"The Israelites slew the sacrifice at the side of the altar with his hand placed upon its head, thus identifying himself with the sacrifice. The whole act speaks of substitution." (2)

Certainly, they say, the idea of substitution is seen in the offering made for the first-born. According to the Hebrew law, God claimed the first-born of every animal and of men, but a non-human offering was

1. A. B. Davidson p. 305 in David, 1926. vol 51 p. 31
accepted in place of the first-born child. (Ex. 13:2,15) Two things appear from the context. The first is that the first-born on general principles belongs to Jehovah and should be sacrificed to Him. The second is that Jehovah accepts something else as a satisfactory substitute for the surrender of this life. Thus Abraham substituted the ram for his son Isaac.

It is also claimed that substitution is seen in the primitive custom of blood revenge. According to the law of blood revenge, satisfaction was gained by the slaughter of any member of the murderer's family; it was not necessary to identify and punish the murderer himself.

It seems that a very good summary of the matter of substitution is given in the following quotation:

"The facts of the preprophetic period thus seem to show that the main idea regarding atonement was that of a compensation made to Jehovah for the purpose of mitigating the punishment or in the case of the infliction of the death penalty, in order to save the life forfeited by guilt to Jehovah. There is no clear case of penal substitution in this period; that is, of an offender saved from death by the infliction of the penalty upon a guiltless, human substitute. The general idea of substitution, viz., that Jehovah will sometimes forego His right to demand the surrender of a life to Him in death and will accept compensation in lieu of it is unmistakably present."(1)

It seems clear that in the preprophetic period there was no definite idea of substitution. The offering of the blood and the use of the sacrificial ritual were interpreted during that period to be accepted by God as a means of taking away that which separated the individual

1. J. M. F. Smith Biblical World 1908 vol. 21 p. 31
from fellowship with Him, and of placating God so that He did not inflict the punishment upon the sinner that His sin ordinarily would have required. One theological explanation is given in the following quotation:

"Then God is really angry with His people or with one individual, He demands satisfaction." (1)

In many cases this means the full expression of His anger - the guilty are destroyed. It is as is stated below:

"Only when God in His goodness and mercy allows Himself to be appeased by intercession or by sincere repentance on the part of man, can such a doom be averted.

But when it is not the case of divine anger, that is, when a man has erred through weakness without any contempt of covenant statutes, it is quite a different matter. Then it is not a question of averting God's anger, or of its working itself out. But for breaking the statutes the sinner has to make such satisfaction as has been provided for in the covenant itself, and been graciously accepted by the covenant God. This satisfaction is the sin-offering which is a ransom, a redemption." (2)

This explanation helps one to understand the attitude of the prophets toward the sacrifices of the Hebrews, when they cry out against the offerings and the blood.

"What unto me is the multitude of your sacrifices? saith Jehovah: I have had enough of the burnt-offerings of rams and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks or of lambs or of he-goats." Is. 1:11

The Psalmist too decries the sacrificial system.

"Will I eat the flesh of bulls, Or drink the blood of goats?" Ps. 50:12

1. Hermann Schultz p. 303
2. ibid pp. 293, 294
The question which is aroused by these quotations declaring that the sacrifices are not acceptable to God is as to whether the prophets were declaring this fact because their messages marked an advancement in the ethical conceptions, or they claimed that the sacrifices of the people were not acceptable to God because they had broken their covenant relation with Jehovah and were going after strange gods. Perhaps both are involved, but this further statement from the book of Isaiah must not be overlooked, for it gives us something of an explanation:

"He that killeth an ox is as he that slayeth a man; he that sacrificeth a lamb, as he that breaketh a dog's neck; he that offereth an oblation as he that offereth swine's blood; he that burneth frankincense, as he that blesseth an idol. Yea they have chosen their own ways, and their soul delighteth in their abominations." Is. 66:3

If it is accepted that the sacrificial system was only for those who were in covenant relation with Jehovah, and the sacrifices were for continuing that relationship and the provision whereby the inadvertent sins might be atoned for, then the prophet's message is a rejection of the sacrifice system and on the line of the sacrifices of those who have willfully broken their covenant relation with Jehovah. It seems to have been generally acknowledged that the only means of forgiveness in such cases was sincere repentance before Jehovah, of today. It is believed that this ancient sacrifice rite there is another rite which is not included directly under the sacrificial system, but should, perhaps, be dealt with in this chapter because of its close association with the sacrificial ritual. This
rite is the feast of the Passover. The Passover celebration is considered to be extremely primitive. It is one of the ancient rites of the Hebrews which is still observed, at least in a symbolic way by the Jews today. It is believed by some, that at one time, the paschal lamb was eaten entirely, head, entrails, and all, perhaps even all. Speaking of the Passover requirements, one writer states: "They can only mean that originally the victim was eaten raw, and the bones pounded and also consumed, and this, indeed, is precisely what one would expect to have been the case, because according to early Semitic belief, the life resided in the blood and in the bones, and the object of the sacrificial meal, at which the victim was eaten, was to absorb the divine life conceived to be present in the sacred victim, and thus to become united with the victim." (1)

This ancient observance, it is believed, was taken over and given fresh meaning as the sign which was placed there greater significance and a new interpretation with the emphasis placed to protect the murderer from the angel of death. It is taken both as upon the significance of the blood, at the time of the Exodus from a sign of salvation and a symbolical act of consecration. Beyond Egypt. Thus it is recorded:

"And they shall take of the blood, and put it on the two side posts and on the lintel, upon the houses, or that wherein they shall eat it. And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood I will pass over you." Ex. 12:7,13

According to the above view, the blood ritual on the door post is compared to the Menorah of today. It is believed to have been smeared it may be, that there is an old theory that can be traced back to the there originally to keep the evil spirits away, which were especially one fully explaining the sacrificial of the Hebrews. Some believe that active at night. Thus, it is believed by some, that the chief sacred the central idea was that of a gift to Jehovah, whereas claim that the customs must have been already in existence in simple form at the time of Moses.

1. W. C. E. Gasterly and Theodore H. Robinson p. 97
the "Another point of view, however, is presented in the following quotation:

Further "But even the oldest of our present documents know it only as a feast in commemoration of the last evening to pass before the deliverance. The sacred act of the covenant - consecration, as it is described in the oldest narrative, the sprinkling of the people with 'the blood of the covenant', the acceptance of 'the words of the covenant' could never, in the nature of things, be repeated. But in memory of God's mighty act of deliverance, of the blood with which, on that occasion, the holy community was marked and protected from the wrath of the angel of death, in memory of the hasty exodus and the afflictions of those days, in the present this supper was to be observed as a symbolical act of worship." (1)

No explanation is attempted in the Bible or by writers of the time as to how this offering, the burnt-offering, the meal-offering, the sin-offering, the trespass-offering, the offering for atonement, the offering for purification, and the offering for the sin of the sanctuary came into being. It is merely referred to as the sign which was placed there voluntary gift to the deity, but the last under necessity in order to protect the Hebrews from the angel of death. It is taken both as a sign of redemption and as a symbolical act of commemoration. Beyond the fact that somehow the efficacy of the blood was commuted to the whole household by it being placed upon the door posts, or that it had some ancient significance which has not been preserved, there do not seem to be any explanations.

To summarize the usage of blood in the Hebrew sacrificial system, it may be stated, there is no one theory that can be accepted as the one fully explaining the sacrifices of the Hebrews. Some believe that the central idea was that of a gift to Jehovah. Others claim that the sacrifice was a primitive conception goes back to the blood relation idea, and that

1. Hermann Schultz p. 196
The sacrifices were communion meals in which both the people and
their god partook of the same victim. The gift idea is developed
further by others to include the opinion that the gift was given
to placate the god, or as a sign of homage. Again, others interpret
the offering of blood as food for the god. Whatever intepre-
tation may be given, the blood is considered as the central feature
of the animal sacrifices. The blood is always designated as the
special part that is given to the deity. It contains the life. It
is the part of the offering that is most efficacious. The Hebrew
sacrifices in which the blood is specially emphasized are: the
peace-offering, the thank-offering, the burnt-offering, the sin-of-
fering, and the trespass-offering. The first three of these offerings
are voluntary gifts to the deity, but the last two are compulsory ob-
servances. A serious difficulty is noted in regard to the relig-
ious ideas at the base of the sin-offering and the trespass-of-
fering. This difficulty is brought into prominence in the question
concerning substitution. Are the sacrificial animals substitutes
bearing the sin and the punishment that is due the offerer? Most of
the scholars are opposed to the idea that the victim becomes a poema
vicaria, but it is evident that there is something in the sacrifice
of the animal which was believed to cause God to forego the punish-
ment that the sinner deserved, to conciliate Him, and to maintain
the covenant relationship between Him and His people. It was noted
in regard to this that the sacrifices were only effective in cases of inadvertent sins committed by those within the covenant relation.

In the previous sections on the use of the blood in the sacrifices of the Hebrews, emphasis was placed upon the idea of blood being given to Jehovah as the gift, and as the means which kept the people in covenant relationship with Jehovah. The purpose of the present chapter will be to illustrate the cleansing power of blood, and its use in making atonement.

There is evidence that the Hebrews attached greater significance to the blood, than is attached to it even when it is conceived of merely as the offering of a sacred gift. It was believed to have special power of consecration, and cleansing. The blood for instance was applied to that which was defiled in order that it might become clean according. This is seen very clearly in the consecration of the priests:

"And Moses took the anointing oil, and the blood which was upon the altar, and sprinkled it upon Aaron, upon his garments, and upon his sons, and upon his sons' garments; and he sprinkled Aaron, his garments, and his sons, and his sons' garments with it." Lev. 8:10.

"And Moses took the blood thereof, and put it upon the tip of Aaron's right ear, and upon the thumb of his right hand, and upon the great toe of his right foot, and he sprinkled Aaron's sons; and Moses put the blood upon the tip of their right ears, and upon the great toe of their right feet, and Moses sprinkled the blood upon the altar round about." Lev. 8:20.

This also was cleansed and sanctified by a similar process. The
CHAPTER VI

BLOOD ATONEMENT

And he took the blood, and put it

In the previous chapter on the use of the blood in the sacrifices of the Hebrews the emphasis was placed upon the idea of blood being given to Jehovah at the altar as a gift, and as the means which kept the people in covenant relation with Jehovah. The purpose of the present chapter will be to discuss the cleansing power of blood, and its use in making atonement.

There is evidence that the Hebrews attached greater significance to the blood, than is attached to it when it is conceived of merely as the offering of a sacred gift. It was believed to have special powers of consecration, and cleansing. The blood for instance was applied to that which was defiled in order that it might become consecrated. This is seen very clearly in the consecration of the priests.

"And Moses took the anointing oil, and the blood which was upon the altar, and sprinkled it upon Aaron, upon his garments, and upon his sons, and upon his sons' garments with him, and sanctified Aaron, his garments, and his sons, and his sons' garments with him." Lev. 8:30

"And Moses took the blood thereof, and put it upon the tip of Aaron's right ear, and upon the thumb of his right hand, and upon the great toe of his right foot. And he brought Aaron's sons; and Moses put the blood upon the tip of their right ear, and upon the thumb of their right hand, and upon the great toe of their right foot; and Moses sprinkled the blood upon the altar round about." Lev. 6:23, 24.

The altar also was cleansed and sanctified by a similar process. The
blood was put upon the horns of the altar round about with Moses' finger and the remainder was poured out at the base of the altar.

"And he slew it; and Moses took the blood, and put it upon the horns of the altar round about with his finger, and purified the altar, and sanctified it, to make atonement for it." Lev. 8:15

It is interesting to note, that in the vision Ezekiel had of the second temple at Jerusalem, a similar ceremony is to be used to consecrate the altar at the dedication. Blood is still in that late period considered a consecrating medium. (Ezek. 45:18-25)

"When Ezekiel ordains that the blood be applied to the altar and to the door posts of the new temple, we might suppose him thinking only of the assurance thus given that the sacrifice had been duly performed." (1)

But careful consideration, it is said, reveals a different point of view.

"The emphasis on the distinction between sacred and profane gave new importance to those substances which traditionally had power to remove persons or things from one sphere to the other. Blood was one of these substances. -- of its efficacy there can be no question." (2)

The belief in the cleansing power of the blood is to be seen in the ritual for the cleansing of a leper, and his house. In the cleansing of a leper, according to the Biblical record, the priest takes two birds; he kills one bird, and sprinkles the blood from the bird seven times upon the one that has been healed of the leprosy, and after dipping the other bird in the blood of the one slain, lets it go.

Thus it is stated: "Applying the blood to these special parts of the

1. N. P. Smith American Journal of Theology July 1906 vol X p. 419
2. ibid p. 419
"As for the living bird, he shall take it and the cedar wood and the scarlet and the hyssop, and shall dip them and the living bird in the blood of the bird that was killed over the running water: and he shall sprinkle upon him that is to be cleansed from the leprosy seven times, and shall pronounce him clean, and shall let go the living bird into the open field." Lev. 14:5-7

Blood: Just what the function was of the living bird in this ceremony, is not clear. It may have served a purpose similar to the "scape-goat" on the day of atonement. At any rate, it should be noted, that it was only after the leper had been sprinkled with the blood that he was pronounced clean.

The above ceremony was performed outside of the camp, so the priest went out to the leper. After eight days, the leper was permitted to bring offerings and come to the tent of meeting. There the priest offered the trespass-offering for him, and he took of the blood of the victim and put it on the tip of the right ear, the thumb of the right hand, and the great toe of the right foot of the leper.

"And the priest shall take of the blood of the trespass-offering, and the priest shall put it upon the tip of the right ear of him that is to be cleansed, and upon the thumb of his right hand, and upon the great toe of his right foot." Lev. 14:14

In regard to the application of blood to a person or object, it is stated:

"This conception of the cleansing or sanctifying power of blood applies in all cases in which the blood is actually applied to the person or object which is to be made clean or holy." (1)

The significance of applying the blood to those special parts of the

1. J. M. P. Smith Biblical World 1908 vol 31 p. 211
body is not explained in the Bible, but it will be noted that the ceremony in this respect is identical with that of consecrating a priest.

The consecration of a priest and the cleansing of a leper are evidently considered special cases. The application of the living blood to the worshipper is not retained in what might be termed the ordinary cases. Some hold that it is used in these special cases because, in them, it is believed proper to express in the strongest way either the establishment of a special bond between God and His servant (Deut. 33:9) or the restitution of one who has been cut off from religious fellowship with Jehovah and the community of His worshipers.

It is thought by some, that in the ordinary cases the offerer was believed to be cleansed by laying his hands upon the head of the animal that was sacrificed. This hints at the idea of substitution which has been discussed in the preceding chapter of this thesis.

Two ideas are suggested. First, the blood was used primarily to cleanse the worshipper. According to this idea, the guilt of the individual was believed to be transferred to the victim and by means of the pouring out of its blood on the altar, the offerer was cleansed; or the blood was thought to be a gift which covered the sin, and reconciled the sinner to God, and thus became a means of maintaining the covenant relation between the offerer and God. Second, the idea suggested is that the altar had been defiled, perhaps by this neglect on the part of the people to sacrifice, and needed the application of the blood as a powerful cleanser; blood with its cleansing power to keep it fit for service. In either
case, it seems clear that the blood was not only conceived of as the special gift to Jehovah, but served as a sanctifying medium of extraordinary potency, and was believed to effect removal of pollution.

Some think that this belief was connected with the blood of the sin-offering. They would say:

"The reason why the blood was not in ordinary cases sprinkled upon the supposed guilty person was apparently twofold: the blood was too powerful—it would make the individual unfit for ordinary duties of life. The writers of these regulations were more interested in keeping the sanctuary clean than in purifying the persons who brought the sacrifice." (1)

Others are inclined to think that all sacrifices were believed to effect reconciliation between the individual and God whether they were bloody or bloodless.

"All sacrifices, whether bloodless or bloody, effect reconciliation (Ezek. 45:15-17) they are the means of obtaining divine forgiveness. The term 'to effect atonement' expresses the basic idea, and the sin-cleansing power of the blood becomes very marked (Lev. 4:5,7,16-18). It is nowhere explained why blood should atone for sin; it was a divine ordinance, and that sufficed. When in Lev. 17:11, the expiatory efficacy of blood is ascribed to the 'life' that is in it; this is no explanation, but only the expression of the accepted fact." (2)

The whole treatment of the subject seems to indicate that the authors were not so interested in any theological theory in regard to the cleansing or consecrating power of blood, or why the sacrifices took away guilt. They seem to be satisfied with the belief that the blood was a powerful cleanser.

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1. Henry Preserved Smith p.222
2. W. C. E. Cesterley and Theodore H. Robinson p. 298
In fact the law expressly recognizes that the flesh and blood of the sin-offering is a sanctifying medium of extraordinary potency; whosoever touches the flesh becomes holy, the garment on which the blood falls must be washed in a holy place, and even the vessels in which the flesh is eaten must be broken, or secured to remove the infection to its sanctity." (1)

Before entering into the subject of atonement proper, one must not overlook another important rite of purification. This rite is the purification of women after childbirth. The requirements of this rite seem to indicate that it was not so much an ethical or hygienic uncleanliness, as it is understood today, that was involved in this purification ceremony, as it was a matter of ritual uncleanliness; for the woman who has given birth to a child, instead of being a sinner, is one who has received special grace from God. Yet, according to the tradition of the Hebrews, she was regarded as unclean. It is conjectured by some that this may have come from a primitive idea of fertility worship. According to this idea, the explanation would be that she had been under the patronage of a divinity of fruitfulness whose worship was incompatible with the worship of Jehovah. The mother, therefore, to make the offering in order to purge away 'contagion.' This ritual was essentially one of purification, but it will remain a question as to what was to be cleansed away. Was it because of a primitive idea that she had been under the patronage of a fertility god? Was it because of the tabu on blood previously referred to in this thesis? Was it because there was some unrecorded uncleanliness in regard to childbirth? There does not seem to be anything in the accounts referring to this rite in the Bib-
rical record to help determine this question, except that "She shall be cleansed from the fountain of her blood" (Lev. 12:7), which would seem to indicate the idea of blood taboo, but one can not be sure.

The requirements of the rite are stated as follows:

"And when the days of her purifying are fulfilled, for a son, or for a daughter, she shall bring a lamb a year old for a burnt-offering, and a young pigeon, or a turtle-dove, for a sin offering, unto the door of the tent of meeting, unto the priest: and he shall offer it before Jehovah, and make atonement for her; and she shall be cleansed from the fountain of her blood. This is the law for her that beareth whether a male or a female." (Lev. 12:6,7)

These two purification rites may seem less strange when it is understood that the dread of becoming ritually unclean developed into one of the marked features of the Hebrew religious mind. In view of the cleansing powers that came to be attached to blood along with this dread of becoming ritually unclean, it was quite natural that blood was thought of as wiping off defilement and was employed as a consecrating medium.

The idea of purification and the idea of atonement are closely allied in the Hebrew religious system. Both are connected with the sacrificial system, particularly with the offering of the victim’s blood upon the altar. It is believed by some that the idea of atonement is involved in all of the bloody sacrifices. The problem will be to determine to what extent, if any, the sacrifices were considered as making atonement, and what was understood by such a statement as: "It is the blood that maketh atonement by reason of the life".
Such a statement is often repeated in the Old Testament, as for example, Leviticus 17:11; 4:20; 8:34; 10:17; 14:21; 16:6,10 and Exodus 29:33,37; 30:10,15. In order to do so it will be necessary to investigate the interpretation of the term used for atonement in the Old Testament.

The history of the idea of atonement in the Old Testament falls naturally into three stages. The first is the age prior to Amos. It is the period of the covenant code. In this period the primitive Mosaic religion is believed to have been modified, gradually and enriched through contact with Canaanite civilization. The second is the period from Amos to Ezra. In this period the Deuteronomic law is said to have been found, and prophecy is thought to have attained its full fruition. The third is the period of the post-exilic days, in which the Priestly Code is claimed to have been written and the Hebrew philosophers are considered to have wrought out the universal truths expressed in the Wisdom literature.

The Hebrew word חֵד (kopher) which is translated "atonement" seems to have progressed in meaning throughout these various periods. According to H. P. Smith, the primitive meaning was "to wipe out". Then it came to mean "to compensate" for an injury or damage by making a payment of some kind. "The thought resident in the word is that of 'compensation' rather than 'substitution'". (1) Next it came to connote the idea of appeasing the anger of an offended person, and finally it came to mean "to purify" from ritual defilement by the required offerings. (2)

1. H. P. Smith, American Journal of Theology, July 1906 vol. X p. 422
2. op. ibid.
This writer seems to slight a very early idea of עֹבר that is generally recognized today as the root meaning of the word — that is, "to cover". According to this translation of the word, Jehovah was believed to "cover over" the sins of the people. The blood would then become the element used in "covering" the sins of the Hebrews. It covered up their offences so that they could no longer be seen.

It is believed that during the first period no specific sacrifice was demanded. It appears that during this period the thought expressed by the word was primarily that of appeasement brought about through gifts by way of compensation for past injuries and offences. Accordingly, during this period the blood was a gift to God for appeasement which covered the offence.

The prophets' teaching concerning atonement was different from all others. They minimized the place of sacrifices in atonement. Their message was that no gifts could atone to the Lord of the whole earth for willful violations of His moral and spiritual law. Their idea was that nothing but changing from evil ways would appease God. The sacrifices were to be used for atoning for persons and things from Blood had little importance in the teaching of the prophets.

The adoption of the Priestly Code in the days of Ezra and Nehemiah is believed to have marked an epoch in the history of the Hebrew religion. It seems to have signified the triumph of the legalistic and priestly aspect of the Hebrew religious thought. This code furnished a rule or ritual for the performance of almost every religious function. As a result, rigid, exact and minute provisions were made...
for atonement. Blood again came to play an important role in the obtaining of forgiveness and restoration to favor. In the study of the atonement ritual an initial fact of its great significance is to be noted. Sin, or that which demands atonement, is no longer primarily the product of the will. It may be and frequently is existent entirely apart from any act of volition. "Unwitting sins" thus come to play an important part in the law and so require atonement. Atonement is called for; therefore, in cases of uncleanness, where it serves for general purificatory purposes, making the person or thing acceptable in the divine presence; and in cases of "unwitting sins" which were unintentional or accidental transgressions. (1)


The purpose of the stoning act in the Priestly Code is believed to have been to facilitate communion with God, and to remove obstacles to such communion of whatever sort they may have been. The efficacy of the transaction was in the performance of the atoning act. This act emphasized the use of blood.


In the final analysis, it seems that the principle of atonement is left somewhat indefinite in the Old Testament. The ritual for atonement which grew up with the development of the sacrificial system

was evidently built upon long cherished custom the significance of which was not preserved for later generations.

The phrase on page 102 reads: "Finally, as to the principle of atonement by the sacrifice or the blood of sacrifice, this, I fear, must remain obscure. The law appears nowhere to give any rationale or explanation of the ordinance that blood and the atonement covers the sin or defilement. The passage in Leviticus 17:11 comes nearest an explanation,albeit without supplying it. The law here is not occupied immediately with the question of atonement; for it is a law against eating blood." (1)

Perhaps it may be said, that though the sacrifices were of the nature of gifts, the blood in the case of atonement was believed to be used, by virtue of its connection with the life, according to an express appointment of God. The Bible states that the blood in virtue of the life atoned for the souls or lives of men. It is impossible that the compilers of the ritual law satisfied themselves with just enunciating this fact, refraining from stating any principle or assuming that the principle was known. The ritual law is undoubtedly the culmination of a multitude of ritual conceptions and ritual practices. The compilers evidently satisfied themselves with legalizing the practices without condescension on the principles. There is, however, one idea which does seem to be clear. It is, or seems to be, connected directly or indirectly with the idea of atonement throughout all of the periods. That idea is: that somehow the blood had cleansing or purifying powers.

This idea of the purifying powers of blood, reached its climax in the ritual of the great day of cleansing - the Day of Atonement, which
is a festival observed by the Jews even today. The ritual for the an-
with them in the midst of their uncleannesses. Here an-
ual atonement was an elaborate one. After special rites of purifica-
tion the priest was sent to the Holy of Holiness to the altar and
ation on the part of the high priest which included the sacrifice of a
burnt-offering and a sin-offering, the bathing of his body with water,
his garments and that of the people, and putting it upon the horns of the
and the anointing of himself with the special priestly garb, he was con-
sidered ready to proceed with the ritual. In the rites of purification
for the high priest, he killed a victim for a sin-offering for himself,
and after he had taken a censer full of coals off the altar, and with
and the altar, he took the living goat that had been chosen by
his hands full of sweet incense beaten small, and entered within the
both hands upon a altar and confessed over it all the in-
veil of the "Holy of Holiness" (as it was later called), where he put
offering for the congregation. He was then taken without the camp and
the incense upon the coals "that the clouds of the incense may cover
the mercy-seat that is upon the testimony" (Lev. 16:13), he took the
"suit goat shall be the blood of the blood of his sin offering and sprinkled it with his finger upon the
children of Israel and all their transgressions upon the
mercy-seat, and before the mercy-seat seven times. Having completed
the tent, he shall lead his way the tent veil and set before Jehovah at the door of the tent of meeting to make atone-
ment for the people, and cast lots upon them. By this process one of
the goats was chosen to be sacrificed as a sin-offering for the people.
Killing this goat, the high priest took its blood and went within the
veil where he sprinkled the blood upon and before the mercy-seat seven
times. They shall make atonement for the holy place, because
of the uncleannesses of the children of Israel, and be-
cause of their transgressions, even all their sins; and
so shall he do for the tent of meeting, that dwelleth with them in the midst of their uncleannesses." Lev. 16:16

The priest then went out from the "Holy of Holies" to the altar and made atonement for it by taking of the blood of the two sin-offerings: his own and that of the people, and putting it upon the horns of the altar and round about seven times. Thus he cleansed and hallowed it "from the uncleannesses of the children of Israel." Lev. 16:19. After he had completed making atonement for the holy place, the tent of meeting, and the altar, he took the living goat, that had been chosen by lot, placed both hands upon its head and confessed over it all the iniquities of the congregation. It was then taken without the camp and turned loose.

"And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions, even all their sins; and he shall put them upon the head of the goat, and shall send him away by the hand of a man that is in readiness into the wilderness: and the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities unto a solitary land:" Lev. 16:21,22.

According to this ceremony, the blood was used not only to cleanse the Hebrews, but also to cleanse the sanctuary and some of its furnishings. Evidently, it was thought necessary at least once a year to cleanse these furnishings from the contamination of the people, in order that they might continue to be used in the service of Jehovah. Then followed the sacrifices whereby the people themselves were cleansed that they too, might continue in their relationship with Jehovah.
To recapitulate, it seems clear, according to the evidence that is available, that the Hebrews attached greater significance to the blood than is attached to it when it is conceived of merely as the offering of a sacred gift. They ascribed definite cleansing and purifying powers to the blood, as is shown by its use in the rituals for the consecrating of the priests and the cleansing of lepers, and also in the cleansing of women after childbirth.

Tracing the ideas connected with the word קファー (kopher) which is translated in the Old Testament to mean "atonement" or "from", it was noted that the history of the idea may be divided into three stages. From the primitive meaning "to cover" there came to be associated with the word the idea of compensation or appeasement. The blood of the atonement was accordingly believed to be a gift to appease God, and to make compensation for past offences, so that they were covered from the sight of God. This was followed by the prophetic period during which the idea of all sacrifices seems to have been denounced, and the emphasis was placed upon moral and spiritual righteousness. The next stage is that which has been designated as the period of the Priestly Code which is believed to have been developed during the days of Ezra and Nehemiah. According to this code, the emphasis is placed upon the blood of the sacrifices. The principle of how the blood makes atonement seems to be left somewhat indefinite in the Old Testament. The ritual was evidently built upon long cherished customs, but the significance if there was any, has not been preserved for later genera-
tions. The ritual is perhaps the culmination of a multitude of ritual connections and practices. The one idea, however, which appears to be present in all periods in all the rituals of atonement is that of cleansing and purification. This idea reached its climax in the annual atonement, which is observed among the Jews even today as the Day of Atonement.

At any rate, it is claimed that they only need to construct new shrines in Palestine until the time of Christ. It has been shown that these should represent the god so that the god could be seen. And since the blood was poured out upon them as before.

The sacrificial idea was also very prominent among the early Semites. It seems that every killing of an animal was thought to be a sacrifice, and whenever blood was poured out or spilled upon the ground, it was supposed to be offering to a god. There was also the fear of taking an offering to a wrong god whenever blood was poured.

The blood was believed to be in a sense animate in itself and to possess within itself certain powers which might be transferred to the individual or group which released the power by shedding the blood of men or animal. These powers were thought to be especially
CONCLUSION

Looking back into the distant past, one of the great facts which comes to the attention of the individual examining the beliefs of primitive man is the awe in which he held blood. It is a mysterious liquid even to primitive peoples today. Among these many animistic ideas are associated with it. It was poured out upon stones by the early Arabs. This paying of honor to "sacred" stones or "mazeboth" was also observed by the early Hebrews. There is, for instance, the record of the stone set up by Jacob at Bethel. Such stone or stones are believed to be the prototypes of the altars which were erected later. At any rate, it is claimed that they were found in connection with shrines in Palestine until the time of Josiah. It was believed that these stones represented the god or that the god animated them, and thus the blood was poured out upon them as to the god.

The sacrificial idea was also very prominent among the early Semites. It seems that every killing of an animal was thought to be a sacrifice, and whenever blood was poured out or spilled upon the ground, it was considered an offering to a god. There was also the fear of making an offering to a strange god whenever blood was shed.

The blood was believed to be in a sense animated with life, and to possess within itself certain powers which might become perilous to the individual or group which released the powers by shedding the blood. These powers were thought to be especially because the foundation stones upon which they built various social cus-
potent in the blood of menstruation and childbirth. Contact with blood as well as the shedding of it caused awe and fear among the early Semites, under certain conditions; while under other circumstances the blood was resorted to in order to obtain its specially potent means of influence. Accordingly, blood often was drunk or obtained by transfusions in order to gain its powers.

There are undoubtedly, close parallels to many of these animistic ideas to be found among the early records of the Hebrews; but if such ideas were held by the Hebrews at an early period, they are believed to have been leavened by their religious conceptions. The Hebrews poured the blood of the sacrifices out on the altar or stone, but there is little indication that it was more than a symbol of God's presence. It is definite that from a very early date they were prohibited from eating or drinking the blood. If the Hebrews at an early period had animistic conceptions and beliefs, they had evidently been elevated by the time that the present records were written.

An institution that is very definitely of ancient origin is the family. The family has been the fundamental unit of social life, especially in the Orient. The family relationship is basically a blood-relationship; this relationship is based upon the conception that a common blood flows in the veins of all the members of the family. This identity of kinship with blood-relationship is self-evident to many peoples today. To the ancient Semites this idea of blood-relationship became the foundation stone upon which they built various social cus-
toms and restrictions. One of these outstanding customs is seen in the different forms of the ritual for the establishment of blood-relationship between individuals not of the same family or tribe. The fundamental idea of these forms of the ritual was the union or mingling of the blood of the two individuals which was thus believed to unite them in a bond of kinship to each other and their respective families or tribes. This same idea of blood-relationship is thought to have been held as existing between the deity and the tribe. Accordingly, sacrifices are thought to have been ceremonies whereby the tribe and the god were united in a blood-relationship, or the means whereby this relationship was renewed or strengthened.

There are a number of indications that the idea of blood-relationship was significant among the Hebrew people. It may be deduced, in the first place, by the emphasis which was placed in their historical records upon family genealogies. It is also seen, in the second place, in the prohibitions which were placed upon inter-marriage with those outside of the Hebrew family. This may be illustrated from the narrative of Abraham, who sent his servant to get a wife for his son from among his own kinsfolk.

It is held that the idea of blood-relationship among the Hebrews is shown very specifically in the rite of circumcision. This became one of the distinguishing marks of the Hebrew people in covenant relationship. All the Hebrews were supposed/circumcised according to the covenant which was supposed to have been made between Jehovah and
Abraham. A division was made between them and other people by the terms: "circumcised" and "uncircumcised". Circumcision is, therefore, believed to have been the seal of the first recorded covenant between Jehovah and the Hebrews. The covenant which was made at Sinai between Jehovah and the newly liberated Hebrew slaves under the leadership of Moses was also, it is thought, a blood covenant. In this covenant the blood of the sacrifice was sprinkled upon the altar which was meant to represent God's presence, and then it was sprinkled upon the people who agreed to the terms of the covenant as they had been read by Moses. This idea of a particular relationship existing between the Hebrews and their God is said to have become one of the characteristic features of their religion. They always considered themselves as God's chosen people, a feeling which persists among many Jews even today. Upon the idea of blood-relationshíp existing among all the members of a particular social group and between members and their god, one of the fundamental social institutions of the early Semites seems to have been built. That is the practice of blood-revenge. Blood revenge may be said to be the foundation of primitive justice among those people who believed in the tribe being bound by a blood-relationship. Naturally the responsibility of blood revenge extended beyond the social group to include the deity. Thus, if there was no brother to avenge the blood of one who had been slain, then the deity was supposed to avenge the blood of such an individual.
The practice of blood revenge was also prevalent among the Hebrews. They, too, adhered to the theory that the shedding of blood required bloodshed. Time seems to have brought ethical ideas which wrought modifications and substitutions of the original requirements. There is evidence in later legislation that effort was made to take vengeance out of the hands of the individual, and further to differentiate between wilful and accidental bloodshed, and thus to develop some idea of abstract justice as it is known today.

The Hebrews also seemed to have thought that Jehovah shared in the responsibility of blood revenge. It is recorded that the blood of Abel cried out to Jehovah from the ground. Furthermore, Jehovah is spoken of in Biblical records as "the avenger of His people". The shedding of blood appears to have involved guilt before Jehovah. It is spoken of as polluting the land, and therefore, required some kind of expiation. This idea of the blood polluting the land may be related, it is held, to the general Semitic idea that strange powers and perils were connected with the blood.

It was probably the conception of blood as containing or being life that led not only to the belief that it possessed strange and sometimes perilous powers, but also to the use of blood in so many of the rites and ceremonies among the Semites, especially the Hebrews. This same conception of blood as containing life is a belief that is emphasized in the Biblical records. There a common expression for killing is "to shed blood", and guilt for a person's death is expressed
in the Hebrew by לוד which is the plural of ל meaning "blood".

The conception of the blood as life involves the idea of what may be called a "blood-soul". Upon this basis the development of the special significance given to the heart and those organs of the body which were recognized as blood centers, is understood. The heart for instance in the religious terminology of the Old Testament is considered the center of the soul's activity - the center of feeling, thinking, willing, and of conscience.

The idea of the "blood-soul" also connects up with the conception of life after death. In ancient Egyptian eschatology, for example, it is the heart that is weighed in the balance in the judgment of a person after death. There does not seem to be a great deal of definite eschatology recorded in the Old Testament, but there was a belief among the early Semites that the departed souls thirsted for blood in order to maintain "life". Whether such belief was very prevalent among the Hebrews is not known, but they are specifically commanded to refrain from cutting themselves for the dead. The right condition of the heart in relation with Jehovah was emphasized among the Hebrews as is indicated in Deuteronomy 15:29. Whether such an emphasis was carried over as a condition for the future life is not definite, but might be implied as the free drinking tradition which accompanied the blood offerings. It is probably as a result of the belief in the perils of blood, that the ideas of the "blood-soul" developed. Accordingly, blood was looked upon as a mysterious fluid in which resided powerful forces or
spirits. It was thought to be endowed with a personality of its own. The people were therefore reluctant to shed the blood of animals or man, and when it was shed, various means were employed to avoid the peril that were believed to arise from that fact. It is easy to conceive of the development, from the idea of the blood being endowed with a personality of its own and possessing special powers, of the conception of the soul being in the blood—a "blood-soul".

According to the earliest records, the blood was conceived of as the life of man and beasts among the Hebrews. It was accepted as coming from Jehovah, and therefore, it must be restored to Him. It was not to be drunk, nor was flesh containing the blood to be eaten; it must either be poured out at the altar, or else poured upon the ground and covered with dust. It was identified among them also with the soul of man. It was always held sacred because it was believed to contain the life. However, the ultimate principle upon which they based their belief that the blood contains the life does not seem to be known.

It was directly or indirectly the result of the conception that life was in the blood, that certain tabus were placed upon the blood. The most prominent of these tabus among the Hebrews prohibited them from drinking blood and eating flesh containing the blood, already mentioned in the above paragraph. It was undoubtedly because of this tabu that they were commanded not to eat the flesh of animals torn by wild beasts and those that died in the field. Actually,
This tabu, it can be seen, has hygienic value.

symbol Another tabu among the Hebrews which is undoubtedly based upon their conception of the significance of the blood is the tabu placed upon women during their menstrual periods and after childbirth. Women in such cases were considered unclean, and remained so according to later legalistic ideas until certain rites of purification had been observed. In the interpretation of the offerer by the law the best it is in the sacrificial system, as it was developed among the Hebrews, that the greatest significance was attached to the blood. From a simple offering of an animal to Jehovah by the individual, there developed among the Hebrews by the close of the Old Testament period an elaborate sacrificial ritual and an officiating priesthood. The sacrifices were generally divided into bloody and bloodless. The principal blood sacrifices were: the burnt-offering, the sin-offering, the trespass-offering, and the peace or thank-offering. The blood of the offering was poured out upon the altar and around the altar probably originally as a gift to Jehovah. This gift may have been thought to be the means of honoring Jehovah, of paying homage to Him, or of appeasing Him for past wrongs. The idea of cleansing or purifying seems to have been prominent, however, in the later sacrificial ritual. According to the ritual regulations given for this purpose, the blood was applied to the sanctuary and to some of its furnishings as a means of cleansing them, to the leper as a means of cleansing him, to the priest as a means of cleansing and consecrating him for the
service in the sanctuary, and also to all the Hebrews as a means of symbolic cleansing. In all of the bloody sacrifices, the blood was sprinkled upon and about the altar. It was only in the extraordinary cases such as the consecrating of the priest and the cleansing of a leper that blood was applied to the individual.

One of the difficult problems which arises in regard to the sacrifices is the interpretation of the offerer laying his hand upon the head of the victim as it was killed. The question may well be asked as to whether this was an act of substitution, or merely an act of consecration whereby the individual identifies this animal as his offering. If it was an act of substitution, then the question may be presented as to whether or not the shedding of the blood of the victim is a vicarious punishment for the sins of the offerer. It is felt by a number of scholars that such a question cannot be answered satisfactorily. The basis for their contention are: the fact that there are other rites in which the hand is placed upon an individual without the implication of any transfer of qualities, and that the flesh of the sacrificial animal instead of being considered unclean is to the contrary held as holy. It seems, however, that no explanation can be given as to how the blood which is believed to contain the life accomplished this cleansing of the individual and the altar, and the restoration of the individual to covenant relationship.

Cleansing seems to be the central idea of atonement in the sacrifices. The Hebrew word הָעַט (kopher) which is translated "to atone"
in the Old Testament originally meant "to cover". Later the idea of compensation seems to have become connected with it. The offering accordingly became the means of compensating Jehovah for past sins committed, so that they were covered before Him. In the days of the sacrificial ritual, however, it seems to have involved more of the idea of cleansing. At that period, the uppermost thought of the offerer is believed to have been a question of ritual uncleanness rather than a question of "sin" as it is understood today. In any case, throughout the whole history of the sacrificial rites, which became so characteristic of the Hebrew religion, the blood seems to have been thought to contain the life, and to have been the central element, not only in these religious ceremonies and rites, but also in many non-religious social customs and regulations.

The following findings may be enumerated as resulting from this study of the significance of קח in the Hebrew religious system:

1. It was noted that the authorities which were consulted did not agree in their interpretations of the beliefs, customs, and regulations that were connected with the blood and its usages among the Semites and the Hebrews in particular. Great divergence of opinions was noted in regard to why the blood was used in the various ceremonies, and what it was believed to have accomplished.

2. Although there was slight divergence of opinion on the original meaning of קח (kopher), the majority of the authorities agree that the original meaning was "to cover". Later the idea of appeasement
and compensation seem also to have been attached to the interpretation of the word and the ceremonies of atonement.

3. It was also noted that the ideas connected with blood seemed to develop with the historical development of the people. From the early idea that it was a mysterious liquid somehow connected with life itself, there came to be associated with it the belief that it possessed certain powers which could be either perilous or efficacious when used or contacted by the people. It seems that out of this belief there developed the concept of a "blood-soul", that is, that the blood possessed a personality of its own. In the case of such peoples as the Egyptians, this idea may have been connected with their belief in a future existence. The idea that life is in the blood is prominent throughout the Old Testament record of the Hebrews.

4. The vital significance of blood in the family relationships was noted. The idea of blood-relationship not only between the members of a family group or tribe, but between the group and their gods seems to have been one of the basic beliefs of all the Semites, and may be the origin of Jewish ideas of relationship held by some Jews even today.

5. No answer could be found as to why the blood was significant in the rituals which were studied. The Bible does not give a definite or satisfying answer and none of the scholars consulted attempted to give any answer except that it may be linked in the "abyssal past".

6. The one idea that seems to be connected directly or indirectly
with the sacrificial ritual throughout all the periods was that the blood had certain cleansing or purifying powers. It was used, therefore, not only to cleanse individuals, but also to cleanse those things that were consecrated for sacred use in the service of Jehovah.

7. A study of the Hebrew root О7(dam) as it is used in the account of the creation of man in the first two chapters of Genesis revealed the vital connection blood had in the creation of man with the idea of soul in the mind of the Hebrew writer. In regard to this, it was noted that the writer conceived of blood as being the central and vital element in the creation of man.

8. There does not seem to be any clear case for the idea of atonement in the Old Testament that theologians have developed from the New Testament documents. The Old Testament writers did not seem to be interested in developing a theological system.
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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

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