

made a covenant at Mount Sinai. It also is beyond reasonable doubt that the Lord of Mount Sinai was invoked as the God protecting this covenant. The tribes promised to obey His laws and commandments. But in this case there is no sufficient ground for denying that the holy chest, which contained the sacred laws of this God, might not have been called the Ark of the Covenant of Jahve.

The fact that centuries afterwards this old name was understood in another way and therefore was beloved by the Soferim, does not prove that the name itself is a title of later invention. If we penetrate into the religious thought of old Israel we do not find any feature in the conception of the nature of the ark that cannot be explained by the historical situation and the religious ideas of that period.

Thus we need not accept the view that the ark was a sanctuary to be used in the holy war, nor that it was an old Josephitic fetish; we have only to interpret the text of Exodus in the light of the history of religion.

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## *ST. PAUL AND THE MYSTERY-RELIGIONS.*

### II.

#### JEWISH AFFINITIES WITH THE MYSTERY-RELIGIONS.

It is a custom almost universal among writers on the religion of the New Testament to speak of the "Mysticism" or "Faith-Mysticism" of St. Paul. Now "Mysticism" is one of the most elastic terms in the religious vocabulary. Hence, when it is used to designate an important element in the complex of Paul's religious experience, its precise significance in this connexion must be as clearly defined as possible. It is not our purpose at the present stage to

attempt such a definition. It is enough to indicate the features in the Apostle's experience which are commonly grouped under this name. Prominent among them are those which he himself describes as "crucified with Christ," "baptized into his death," "risen with Christ," "joined to the Lord," "putting on Christ," being "in Christ," having "Christ living in" him. To a somewhat different side of the same general category belong the "visions" and "revelations" which he occasionally claims to have: the pneumatic endowments of a unique kind which he shares with other Spirit-possessed Christians: and the remarkable ecstatic experience which he recalls in 2 Corinthians xii. 1 ff. Some recent investigators have been disposed to associate these spiritual phenomena with the influence of the Mystery-Religions, and, in future articles, we must, in the light of their researches, make a careful comparison of the terminology of these religions with the religious vocabulary of Paul. On a surface view of the facts, however, it seems relevant, meanwhile, to suggest that in the Pauline phrases quoted above, we have examples of a spiritual experience which comes to light wherever religion exercises an intense and sovereign control over the personality. The soul for which God is all in all craves for and continually attains a relationship to the Divine which can only be expressed in terms of absorbing personal intimacy. For Paul access to God is only and altogether through Christ. Hence, speaking generally, the language he employs is true to his whole Christian standpoint. On the other hand, the peculiar experience described in 2 Corinthians xii. 1 ff., the visions and revelations, and perhaps the unique spiritual endowments, while traceable over a very wide area of religious history both in ancient and modern times, are nevertheless more local in their character, and belong more essentially to a definite environment. If we are to do justice to that

environment in Paul's case, we must attempt to examine those elements in Judaism, his ancestral faith, which may broadly be grouped under the comprehensive term "Mysticism." For there may certainly be a germ of truth in Reitzenstein's statement: "Paul was a mystic before his conversion: this is attested by his allegorical exegesis of Scripture."<sup>1</sup>

We should expect to find phenomena of the kind called "mystic" in experiences which reveal religious feeling at its highest pitch of intensity. These, in the history of Israel, are associated with the *prophetic* function.

The earliest descriptions of the *Nebi'im* (e.g. 1 Sam. x. 5, 10; xix. 20, 24) are extraordinarily significant. Here they appear in bands, swayed by a common religious excitement, accompanied by stirring music. Their frenzy is contagious. Saul is swept away by it, strips himself of his clothing, and falls exhausted to the ground. Even at a later date, according to 2 Kings iii. 15, Elisha calls for music, and while the minstrel plays the prophetic inspiration comes upon him and he declares the word of the Lord. In the Samuel-passages these phenomena are attributed to the *Ruah Elohim*. The *Ruah*-conception, in the most primitive phases of the popular religion, had probably stood for anything "demonic" that had to be accounted for, but in the oldest documents of the Old Testament has already been incorporated with the person of Jahweh.<sup>2</sup> In the case of Elisha, the phrase used is "the hand of Jahweh." This phrase occurs again and again in the book of Ezekiel, where it is apparently connected with trance or ecstatic conditions. It is almost needless to recall the parallels to these primitive ideas both in Semitic and Hellenic religions. The ecstatic influence of Apollo over the

<sup>1</sup> *Hellenistische Mysterien-Religionen*, p. 199.

<sup>2</sup> See Volz, *Der Geist Gottes im A.T.*, p. 62 et al.

Pythia is typical.<sup>1</sup> It is worth while noting that in Egypt certain classes of priests who are regarded as being in immediate contact with the supernatural world are designated *προφήται*.

The development of Hebrew religion has nowhere left more impressive traces than in the sphere of the prophetic activity. A feature characteristic of the great pre-exilic prophets is their lack of emphasis on the conception of the *Ruah Jahweh* in connexion with their own prophetic equipment. Perhaps this is due to the fact, as Volz suggests,<sup>2</sup> that they still felt in it something of the primitive idea, which, as not necessarily ethical, was alien to them. But their usage is no indication that they were less conscious of the Divine Presence. It was the very reverse. They feel themselves to be in direct touch with Jahweh. "The Lord God hath spoken," says Amos (iii. 8), "who can but prophesy?" "Thou shalt be as my mouth," says the Lord to Jeremiah (Jer. xv. 19). And Isaiah's solemn vision represents the same type of experience. At certain crises they were peculiarly sensitive to the Divine compulsion. Isaiah, e.g., tells how the Lord spake to him "with strong pressure of the hand" (viii. 11). Jeremiah in an appeal to God exclaims: "I sat alone because of thy hand" (xv. 17).

While visions are rare in the experience of the greatest prophets, their conception of intimate fellowship with Jahweh is central for their religion. It is often described as "knowing God," or the "knowledge" of Him. This is something more profound than any activity of the intellect. It is essentially experimental. Very significant for its meaning are the words of Hosea: "I will even betroth

<sup>1</sup> See Rohde, *Psyche*,<sup>3</sup> ii. pp. 60, 61. A conspectus of most striking passages from Greek authors in De Jong, *Das antike Mysterienwesen*, pp. 163-165.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 67.

thee unto me in faithfulness, and thou shalt know the Lord " (ii. 20). The "knowledge" is a revelation of God in the inner being. "The word is very nigh unto thee in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it" (Deut. xxx. 14). Here we have, as Klein says,<sup>1</sup> "the quintessence of the prophetic preaching." God gives Himself to men in experience. And the experience is essentially moral. This point of view is peculiarly characteristic of Jeremiah. For him all ethical activity has as its foundation a personal communion with the living God.<sup>2</sup> Perhaps the climax of this aspect of Old Testament religion appears in some of the later Psalms: e.g., Psalm li. 11: "Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me." In Psalm lxxiii. 23-26 the "mystical" element is still more prominent: "Nevertheless I am continually with thee . . . Whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none on earth that I desire beside thee."

It is obvious that there are intimate relations between the prophetic idea of the "knowledge of God" which we have just emphasised, and Paul's conception of *γνώσις*, which must be examined at a later stage. Meanwhile, if, following the development, we inquire into the standpoint of Ezekiel, we are confronted by experiences which remind us forcibly of the earlier popular beliefs. Ezekiel, like his great predecessors, sets high moral truths in the forefront of his message. But his is plainly a nature sensitive to ecstatic conditions, and these occupy a prominent place in his own descriptions of his prophetic work. In his first overpowering vision of the glory of God he narrates how he fell upon his face, and then heard a voice which commanded him to stand up that he might receive the Divine

<sup>1</sup> *Der älteste Christliche Katechismus, etc.*, p. 2. Cf. Kohler, *Grundriss einer systematischen Theologie des Judentums*, pp. 25, 26.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Duhm, *Theologie der Propheten*, p. 243.

commission. "And spirit entered into me when he spake unto me, and set me upon my feet, that I heard him that spake unto me" (ii. 2). In chapter viii. 3 he describes spirit as lifting him up between earth and heaven, and bringing him in the visions of God to Jerusalem. This takes place after "the hand of the Lord God" has fallen upon him. No doubt the experience belongs to a trance-condition. It is futile to explain such descriptions as merely literary artifice. They belong to the very framework of his prophetic activity. The fact that he narrates them so vividly attests the importance which they had for him. Of interest in this connexion is the eating of the book which was given him (ii. 9 ff.). It is quite possible that this was not a mere symbol, but rather an indication that "Ezekiel received the Divine message in an ecstatic condition, associated with intense bodily sensations."<sup>1</sup> It is not without importance for our subject that the later Apocalyptic, with its emphasis on esoteric lore, may be traced back to the influence of Ezekiel. In view of the phenomena with which we have been dealing, Dean Inge's remark requires some modification: "The Jewish mind . . . was alien to Mysticism."<sup>2</sup>

Ezekiel, in contrast to the pre-exilic prophets, makes fairly frequent mention of the Spirit of Jahweh in connexion with his inspired utterances. And in the post-exilic period as a whole, the *Ruah J'* comes gradually to be regarded as the special charism of the prophet. The conception has become highly ethicised, as, e.g., in Deutero-Isaiah. Here we have, as Volz points out,<sup>3</sup> the monotheistic transformation of the *Ruah* which had possessed the earlier *Nebi'im*. One cannot help comparing the

<sup>1</sup> Volz, *op. cit.* p. 15.

<sup>2</sup> *Christian Mysticism*, p. 39.

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.* p. 96.

process with that by which Paul ethicised the ecstatic conception of the *πνεῦμα*, current in early Christianity. The parallel has a vital bearing on the meaning of the Apostle's "mysticism."

When we pass into the Judaistic period we are confronted by a variety of phenomena which may be called "pneumatic." This is the era of apocalyptic literature, and the descriptions given by the seers in the Apocalypses of their visions and of the conditions and circumstances in which these were granted to them afford rich material for study. Now it is true that the writers of the apocalypses associate the revelations embodied in their books with famous names of the past. And the experiences related are constantly embellished and elaborated in a more or less formal fashion. But throughout there is abundance of unconscious evidence that the writers themselves had personal and intimate knowledge of ecstatic conditions. These conditions are again and again ascribed to the influence of the Spirit. A noteworthy instance occurs in IV. Ezra xiv. 38 ff.: "On the following day there cried to me a voice, Ezra, open thy mouth, and drink that which I give thee. Then I opened my mouth, and behold, a full cup was handed to me. It was filled as if with water, but the colour of the water was like fire. This I took and drank, and when I had drunk, understanding streamed from my heart, my breast swelled with wisdom, my soul preserved its memory. Then my mouth was opened, and was not again closed." In his illuminating notes (ed. Kautzsch), Gunkel points out that the flame-coloured liquid represented the Spirit: when the seer had drunk, he was inspired. An interesting feature of the description is the reference to the remembrance of the experience. Persons in ecstasy often lost consciousness, and after the condition had passed away, were unable to recall that which had been given them "in the Spirit."

Here consciousness and memory have suffered no interruption. The whole passage is evidence that the writer was not dealing merely with phenomena external to himself. These mystical experiences are prepared for by ascetic practices. For example, the command comes to Baruch (Apoc. of Baruch, ed. Charles, chap. xx. 5-6) : "Go therefore and sanctify thyself seven days, and eat no bread, nor drink water, nor speak to any one. And afterwards come to that place, and I will reveal myself to thee . . . and I will give thee commandment regarding the method of the times." The same type of instruction is found in IV. Ezra ix. 23 f. Here, again, there is something more than secondhand tradition.

We do not forget that in the Judaistic epoch the opinion prevailed that the Divine Spirit was no longer operative in the nation. And this view could be justified by comparing the existing age with that of the great prophets. But, as Gunkel aptly remarks, "such phenomena are in reality not the possession of any single epoch, but they occur at all times and in all places."<sup>1</sup> Frank recognition of this truism would save much irrelevant discussion on the subject of the "Mysticism" of Paul.

The visions and revelations of the Jewish Apocalypses, which are all to a greater or less degree related to eschatological happenings, are in many instances connected with the ascent of the soul to heaven. Some scholars believe that this conception must have entered Judaism from outside, and are inclined to find its origin in Hellenic-Egyptian culture.<sup>2</sup> This is quite possible. For, as we shall notice immediately, Judaism came into very intimate contact

<sup>1</sup> *Apokryphen u. Pseudepigraphen d. A.T.* (ed. Kautzsch), Bd. II., p. 341.

<sup>2</sup> So, e.g., Volz, *op. cit.*, p. 124. Bousset favours the hypothesis of Persian influence, *Archiv f. Religionswissenschaft*, IV., p. 145 ff.



with the various phases of Hellenistic syncretism. And ever since the time of Plato, the notion of the ascent of the soul into the higher world seems to have formed an important element in the profounder strains of Greek religion.<sup>1</sup> The experience is described more than once in the Ethiopic Enoch : e.g., xxxix. 3 f. (ed. Charles) : " In those days a cloud and a whirlwind carried me off from the earth, and set me down at the end of the heavens. And here I saw another vision, the mansions of the holy and the resting-places of the righteous." In the Slavonic Enoch, the seer is carried up through the various heavens until, in the seventh, he is set " before the face of the Lord " (chap. xxi. 5). There his earthly robe is taken off him and he is clothed with the raiment of the Divine glory (xxii. 8). This, no doubt, refers to the purification of the soul, if it is to look upon the face of God. It is scarcely possible to separate the conception from the Hellenistic idea of the ascent of the soul through the various spheres, a process in which it is gradually purified. It is obvious that in the Enoch-literature there is a large mass of imported material, mystic lore accumulated from manifold sources. But here again we have no doubt to reckon with an ecstatic " mysticism," current in certain circles of Judaism, and lying behind the delineations given in apocalypses of religious heroes of the olden time.<sup>2</sup>

Many modern Jewish scholars are inclined to believe that the chief elements in the famous mystic system of the Cabala have descended in a continuous tradition from the apocalyptic literature of the second and first centuries B.C. Whether, as Josephus holds, these writings were carefully preserved in the circle of the Essenes, who are regarded by some (e.g., Jellinek and Gaster) as the originators of the

<sup>1</sup> See Dieterich, *Eine Mithrasliturgie*,<sup>2</sup> p. 199.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Bousset, *Religion des Judentums*,<sup>2</sup> p. 342.

Cabala, there is little evidence to determine. The description we have quoted from the Slavonic Enoch of the seer's ascent to heaven vividly reminds us of Paul's account of his mystic experience in 2 Corinthians xii. 1 ff. And we know that at many points the Apostle has links of connexion with apocalyptic ideas. But whether these belong to the centre or the circumference of his religious outlook is a question which must be discussed at a later stage in our inquiry.<sup>1</sup>

It is probably an error to draw a sharp line of demarcation between Apocalyptic and Rabbinic thought. These provinces must certainly have overlapped. The religious phenomena of the one are clearly manifest in the other. There is truth, no doubt, in Schlatter's remark that the Palestinian Synagogue had no room for "pneumatics."<sup>2</sup> In Rabbinic piety ecstatic experiences seem to have been held in check. The problems of mystical lore had to be approached with much caution. The advice of the Son of Sirach is significant: "The things which have been commanded thee, ponder; for thou hast no need of secret things" (iii. 22). This shrinking from mystic raptures became more marked in the authoritative Rabbinic schools of the second century A.D. It was said of Simon ben Azzai that he died after he had cast a glance into the mysteries of the "garden."<sup>3</sup> To the famous Rabbi Akiba († 135 A.D.) is referred the warning found in the Mischna against discoursing on the creation of the world (Gen. i.) and the first chapter of Ezekiel, except before carefully selected indi-

<sup>1</sup> Gunkel (*op. cit.*, pp. 342, 349), indicates many parallels, e.g., between IV. Ezra and Paul, which suggest that they belonged to the same circle of Judaism. But he clearly recognises that the contrasts are greater than the resemblances (p. 343).

<sup>2</sup> *Jochanan ben Zakkai*, p. 74, note 2.

<sup>3</sup> Interpreted by some as the realm of theosophical speculations, by others as Paradise. See Bacher, *Die Agada der Tannaiten*, I<sup>2</sup>, p. 408.

viduals.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless the existence in Rabbinic circles of "pneumatic" phenomena, parallel to those with which we have been dealing, is fully authenticated.

It is interesting to note that the "wise" man is regarded as possessing a special Divine endowment. "Who hath known thy counsel unless thou hast given him wisdom and sent thy holy spirit from on high?" (Wisd. of Sol. ix. 17). With this may be compared a passage from the celebrated description of wisdom: "From generation to generation passing into holy souls, she (i.e. Wisdom) maketh them friends of God and prophets" (*ib.* vii. 27). Probably under the same category may be placed the remarkable experience of Eliphaz narrated in Job iv. 12 ff.: "In thoughts from the visions of the night when deep sleep falleth on men, fear came upon me, and trembling, which made all my bones to shake. Then a spirit passed before my face; the hair of my flesh stood up: it stood still, but I could not discern the form thereof: an image was before mine eyes, I heard a still voice." Notable Rabbis like Hillel were looked upon as inspired by the Holy Spirit.<sup>2</sup> Indeed saintliness (*Chasiduth*), which is virtually imitation of God, has as its consummation communion with the Holy Spirit. Schechter, commenting on this conception, quotes from a Midrash: "Holiness means nothing else than prophecy."<sup>3</sup> On the whole, no doubt, the catastrophic aspect of the Spirit has fallen into the background. Characteristic of this situation is the idea of the Spirit as especially manifested in the Holy Scriptures, which has become a widespread belief in Rabbinic theology.<sup>4</sup>

At the same time, there is another group of phenomena

<sup>1</sup> Bacher, *op. cit.*, p. 334.

<sup>2</sup> See Volz., *op. cit.*, pp. 115, 165.

<sup>3</sup> *Some Aspects of Rabbinic Theology*, p. 217.

<sup>4</sup> See Volz, *op. cit.*, pp. 167, 168.

which are closely linked to those ecstatic experiences which we discussed in the field of Apocalyptic literature. As in the case of the apocalyptists, they are associated with esoteric lore, arising out of theosophical and cosmogonic speculations. Judaism had been in touch with Babylonian-Persian ideas, as Blau points out,<sup>1</sup> for at least 500 years before the Christian era. The conception of Gnosis had permeated many phases of its thought. So we need not be surprised to find in it remarkable affinities with the doctrines which we meet both in Hellenistic and in Christian Gnosticism. One name stands out prominently in Rabbinic tradition as identified with mystical speculations, that of Johanan ben Zakkai (fl. c. 70 A.D.). Our knowledge of his Haggadic explanations of Scripture, which was the form given to esoteric doctrines of this kind, is so meagre that much caution has to be used in estimating his standpoint.<sup>2</sup> But we know that the material which supplied a basis for them came from the opening section of Genesis and the opening section of Ezekiel. The one passage was the starting-point for mystic speculations on the Creation (*Ma'aseh Bereschith*), the other for esoteric theories as to the being and abode of God (*Ma'aseh Merkabah*), Merkabah, chariot, being a concise description of Ezekiel's mysterious vision. The latter doctrine must have been elaborately developed. Traces of it, in various phases, are found throughout the Rabbinic tradition. Later, the term "Merkabah-travellers" came to be used of those who ventured on this mystic quest. Some interesting traditions survive as to Rabbis who were absorbed in such theosophical endeavours. An interview is recorded between R. Joshua b. Chananja and Ben Zoma. In answer to a greeting by Joshua, Ben Zoma gave forth a mystic utterance, and Joshua said to the scholars who

<sup>1</sup> Art. *Gnosticism* in *Jewish Encyclopaedia*, V., p. 681.

<sup>2</sup> See Bacher, *op. cit.*, p. 39 f.

accompanied him, "Ben Zoma is gone." Bacher thinks that the saying is to be explained in the light of a tradition that Ben Zoma became mentally affected in consequence of mystical speculations.<sup>1</sup> But Blau's explanation, illustrated by parallel passages, which finds in the words a reference to ecstasy, seems more relevant to the whole context.<sup>2</sup> Ben Zoma is one of a group of Rabbis who, according to a famous tradition, had, during their lifetime, "entered Paradise." Ben Azzai had his vision and died (*ut supr.*). Ben Zoma saw and lost his reason. Acher became a heretic. Akiba alone suffered no harm.<sup>3</sup> Bousset is probably justified in connecting this tradition with visionary experiences of the Rabbis in question, reached in conditions of ecstasy. But such experiences are never conceived in the realistic fashion current, for example, in the contemporary Mystery-religions. We are not confronted in Judaistic thought with the notion of absorption in the Deity. Nor does there ever, apparently, occur the conception of the deification of mortals through mystic communion with God. These facts will be found of high significance when we come to investigate the mystical ideas of Paul.

As we have already seen, the mystic phenomena of the Apocalypses are usually associated with the feverish strain of eschatological expectation which prevailed in the Judaistic period. Of course, in such books as Ethiopic Enoch, Slavonic Enoch, and IV. Ezra, much of the esoteric tradition may well fall under the category of Gnosis. But the clue to the standpoint of the writers is eschatology. On the other hand, the mysticism of Rabbinic Judaism seems to have an intimate connexion with allegorical exegesis of

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 424.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 684.

<sup>3</sup> *Chagiga*, 14b-15b. Cf. Bousset, *Archiv f. Religionswissenschaft*, iv. p. 145 ff., a most comprehensive treatment of the conception of the ascent of the soul.

the Old Testament. Examples have been mentioned in the case of Jochanan ben Zakkai. Significant for the whole trend of thought we are considering is the statement of Akiba : "The whole world is not worth so much as the day on which the Song of Songs was given to Israel."<sup>1</sup> The full import of the saying becomes plain when we remember that for Akiba the book was an allegory of the unique relationship between God and Israel. An interpretation, starting with this presupposition, involved mystical conceptions at every turn. Thus, the *Rabba* on the Song of Songs "compares the 'tent of the congregation,' which was full of the 'splendour' of the Shechinah, to a cave by the sea-shore. The sea rushes in and fills the cave; but the sea suffers no diminution of its waters. . . . Just so the 'tent of the congregation': the Divine Presence filled it, but it filled the world just the same."<sup>2</sup> The Haggada of Simon ben Jochai, renowned as a mystic, are said to be noteworthy for the exuberance of their language as to the relation between God and Israel.<sup>3</sup>

Some light has been shed by recent research on this obscure field. We are able to discern dimly a group of ancient Haggadists, designated *Doresche Reschumoth*, i.e. "interpreters of hints." The name, which is given them in Rabbinic tradition, would at once suggest allegorical exegetes. But this seems to be placed beyond doubt by the investigations of Lauterbach.<sup>4</sup> He shows that their characteristic was the estimating of Old Testament passages as symbols, whose figurative sense was far more important than the literal. While in many respects they reveal marked resemblances to Philo and the Alexandrian type

<sup>1</sup> Bacher, *op. cit.*, pp. 310, 311.

<sup>2</sup> Qu. by Rev. J. Abelson, *Hibbert Journal*, Jan., 1912, p. 435.

<sup>3</sup> Bacher, *op. cit.*, II., p. 79.

<sup>4</sup> *Jewish Quarterly Review*, Jan., 1911, esp. p. 301.

of Judaism, they were apparently Palestinian theologians, independent, so far as the evidence goes, of external influences.<sup>1</sup> Indeed Lauterbach believes that Philo was to some extent influenced by them. It is important to observe that the chief interest of these interpreters was practical. "If thou desirest to know Him by whose word the universe came into being, study the Haggada, for from it shalt thou know the Holy One, praised be He, and cleave to His ways" (*Sifre Elkeb.* p. 49).<sup>2</sup> Klein points out that in the essentials of their piety they stand in the direct succession of the prophets.<sup>3</sup> Their outlook, apparently, was far wider than that of ordinary Rabbinism. And some of their utterances suggest a more or less direct affinity with the Essenes and the Therapeutae.<sup>4</sup> Their mystical tendencies seem to have brought them under suspicion. For their interpretations have left very few traces in Rabbinic literature. They were felt to imperil the sacred Torah. And it is quite possible that a saying of Abtaljon's (*Pirqe Aboth* i. 11) is a direct polemic against them.<sup>5</sup> Klein believes that a chief aim of their practice was to win the heathen for ethical monotheism. If this be so, it is all the more significant to find that Paul appears to follow their method closely in such passages as 1 Corinthians x. 1 f.<sup>6</sup>

The tragic history of R. Chanina b. Teradjon was connected in a later tradition with the fact that he had pronounced the Divine Name as it was written. "This probably implied that he had busied himself with mystic doctrine."<sup>7</sup> The history of the hidden Divine Name (*Schem hammephorasch*) is a complicated subject, on which we must simply touch, as belonging to the essence of Rab-

<sup>1</sup> Lauterbach, *op. cit.*, pp. 305, 328.

<sup>2</sup> See Klein, *op. cit.*, p. 40.

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 44.

<sup>4</sup> Klein, *op. cit.*, p. 41.

<sup>5</sup> Klein, *op. cit.*, p. 43.

<sup>6</sup> See Lauterbach, *loc. cit.*, p. 330, note 33.

<sup>7</sup> Bacher, *op. cit.*, I. p. 597.

binic mysticism. In Ethiopic Enoch (lxix. 14), one of the evil angels asks Michael "to show him the hidden name." Various explanations have been given, but Klein has collected a number of passages from Rabbinic tradition which furnish a strong argument for his position that the mystical name of God is *Ani we-hu*, "I and he," a combination signifying the most intimate relation conceivable between God and His people. The hidden name "conceals the profoundest mystery of religion, the *unio mystica*, the demand for unity with God."<sup>1</sup> It is a point of extraordinary interest that direct parallels occur in Hellenistic literature. Thus, in a prayer to Hermes (in a Papyrus of the British Museum) the words occur: *σὺ γὰρ ἐγὼ καὶ ἐγὼ σὺ*. The same formula is found in a Leiden Papyrus.<sup>2</sup> And in the well-known Gnostic Egyptian *Pistis Sophia*, Jesus is represented as saying: "not only will you reign with me, but all men who shall receive the mystery of the Ineffable will be kings with me in my kingdom, and I am they and they are me."<sup>3</sup> In the magical Papyri mystic Divine names are used as incantations, and many of these are derived from the vocabulary of Judaism. The same usage is, of course, to be found in Jewish magic. But we have no clear data for tracing the connexion which may exist between the mystic doctrine of the hidden Divine Name and those phenomena of Hellenistic religion to which reference has been made. How widely the significance of the "name" has been diffused is apparent from Ephesians i. 21: "Far above all authority and rule and power and lordship, and every name which is named not only in this age but also in the coming one."

Philo, in a remarkable passage,<sup>4</sup> declares as the aim of

<sup>1</sup> Klein, *op. cit.*, p. 48.

<sup>2</sup> See Dieterich, *Eine Mithrasliturgie*, p. 97.

<sup>3</sup> Schmidt, *Koptisch-gnostische Schriften*, I. p. 148.

<sup>4</sup> *De Humanitate*, 119 (ed. Cohn-Wendland).



Moses in all his legislation the establishing of "harmony, fellowship, unity of mind, blending of manners, by means of which houses and cities, nations and countries and the whole human race should advance to the highest well-being." This ideal is to some extent the reflection of actually existing tendencies. We have already alluded to phenomena in Judaism which suggest foreign influence. We must examine this contact more closely. The problem is of importance for our discussion, as we have to contemplate the possibility that Hellenistic (including Oriental) conceptions influenced Paul through this medium.<sup>1</sup>

Perhaps the most impressive example of the assimilation of Judaism and Paganism is to be found in those mixed religious communities, chiefly in Asia Minor, which recent research has been drawing out of their obscurity. Sir W. M. Ramsay has most suggestively contrasted the attitude of the Jews to Greeks and Phrygians respectively. In the first case there was an inherent racial antipathy. In the other the Jews were brought into touch with a people of fundamentally Oriental type.<sup>2</sup> This affinity had remarkable consequences. Antiochus the Great had founded Jewish colonies in Asia Minor about 200 B.C. It seems to have been due to their influence that the worship of the Phrygian deity, the *κύριος Σαβάζιος*, was blended with that of the Old Testament Jahweh, often designated in the LXX as *κύριος Σαβαώθ*.<sup>3</sup> This cult possessed mysteries closely akin to those of Attis.

But the influence of ethnic ideas upon Judaism is discern-

<sup>1</sup> See Wendland, *Hellenistisch-Römische Kultur*, p. 178.

<sup>2</sup> *Historical Commentary on Galatians*, pp. 193-196.

<sup>3</sup> See Cumont, *Religions Orientales*, pp. 97, 98; Eisele, *Neue Jahrb. f. klass. Alt.*, xxiii, p. 631. There is abundant evidence also for votaries of *θεὸς Ψευδος*, the typical title of the God of Israel in Asia Minor, who had not been Jews, and yet were organised in associations apparently only semi-Pagan. See Schürer, *Sitzungsb. d. Berl. Akad.*, 1897, pp. 200-225.

ible over a wide area. Gruppe emphasises the contact of Jewish thought with Oriental mysticism at an early date in Samaria, where Chaldaean astrology seems to have been practised.<sup>1</sup> This is highly probable. But we cannot by any means limit the spheres in which Judaism came into touch with Oriental syncretism. If we had any clear data regarding religious life in the regions immediately east of Palestine in the Hellenistic period, we might be able to trace the origin of that elusive sect, the Essenes, in which, alongside typically Jewish features, appear marked traces of alien beliefs and practices, as, e.g., their daily prayer to the Sun. But their beginnings are wrapt in obscurity. And the same may be said of the Therapeutae, whose existence and characteristics are known to us only from Philo's treatise *περὶ βίου θεωρητικοῦ*.<sup>2</sup> His description reveals many indications of syncretism. But except for the resemblance to be found between them and ethnic associations or guilds, it is impossible to form definite conclusions. Hence it seems hazardous to regard the Essene "colonies" as the main channels through which Persian, Greek, and Egyptian ideas had penetrated Judaism.<sup>3</sup> Essenism may have been an important link of connexion. But there are gaps in the evidence.

Unassailable testimony to the pressure of Babylonian and Persian thought upon Judaism is presented by the apocalyptic literature. In this instance, of course, the Exile supplies the starting-point. The cosmological speculations which abound in such documents as the Ethiopic and Slavonic Enoch are plainly traceable to the astronomical theology of Babylon, which extended its sway in all direc-

<sup>1</sup> *Griechische Mythologie*, II, p. 1608 f.

<sup>2</sup> Conybeare, in his masterly edition (Oxford, 1896), has adduced very convincing arguments in favour of its genuineness: see especially his excursus, pp. 258-358.

<sup>3</sup> So, e.g., Kohler, *Jewish Quarterly Review*, April, 1893, p. 406.

tions. In all likelihood it is here that we must look for the ultimate origin of that worship of the elements or elemental spirits (*στοιχεῖα*) which had crept into Judaism. As in the case of similar Oriental influences, the religion of Persia may have been the direct medium, for in it the elements play an exceedingly important part.<sup>1</sup> But since it is difficult, in this phase of religion, to make sharp distinctions between the spirits of the elements and those of the planets, Babylonian theology seems to lie in the background. Abundance of evidence as to these elemental spirits occurs, e.g., in Ethiopic Enoch, lx. 11-23, Jubilees, ii., Ascension of Isaiah, iv. 18, and the Christian Apocalypse, xiv. 18, xvi. 5. Particularly important for our discussion is Paul's use of *στοιχεῖα* in Galatians iv. 3, 9, and Colossians ii. 8, 20. And the whole subject is illumined by a passage in the second-century *Κήρυγμα Πέτροῦ* (Preuschen, *Antilegomena*, p. 52): *μηδὲ κατὰ Ἰουδαίους σέβεσθε· Καὶ γὰρ ἐκεῖνοι μόνοι οἰόμενοι τὸν θεὸν γινώσκειν οὐκ ἐπίστανται λατρεύοντες ἀγγέλοις καὶ ἀρχαγγέλοις, Μηνὶ καὶ Σελήνῃ.*<sup>2</sup> The manifold possibilities of contact between Judaism and Babylonian doctrine are thrown into relief by such facts as the penetration of Babylonian ideas into Syria, and the presence in Palmyra, where Babylonian astrology was popular, of a large Jewish colony which seems to have compromised with Paganism.<sup>3</sup> The influence of Persian beliefs on the Jews has at times been exaggerated.<sup>4</sup> Yet it would be futile to deny it in such spheres as angelology and demonology, and possibly in such apocalyptic conceptions as that of the end of the world. And there is, at least, some

<sup>1</sup> See Bousset, *Hauptprobleme d. Gnosis*, p. 223 f.

<sup>2</sup> See Reitzenstein, *Poimandres*, p. 73 f., who finds an intimate relation between this Jewish mysticism and Hermetic doctrine.

<sup>3</sup> See Cumont, *op. cit.*, pp. 181 f., 367.

<sup>4</sup> E.g., in our judgment, by Bousset, *Religion des Judentums*<sup>2</sup>, p. 582, *et al.*

affinity between Persian dualism and the corresponding strain in Jewish apocalyptic.<sup>1</sup>

We have already suggested that the Jewish idea of the all-powerful "Name" must have links of connexion with Pagan magical ideas. As a matter of fact, Jacob has brought forward strong arguments for the Egyptian origin of this belief.<sup>2</sup> It is needless to say that our knowledge of Egyptian magic has been largely augmented by the magical Papyri which have recently come to light. They reveal a fundamentally Egyptian ground-work. This might be expected, as, from ancient times, magic formed a most important feature in Egyptian religion.<sup>3</sup> But these texts have incorporated many Jewish elements, more especially forms of the Divine Name, such as *Ἰάω*, *Ἀβραῶν*, *Ἀδωνάι*, and famous Jewish names like Abraham, Jacob, Moses, etc. Typical examples will be found in the *Μονὰς ἡ Ὀγδοὴ Μωϋσέως*, edited by Dieterich.<sup>4</sup> The translation of the Old Testament into Greek has, as Hubert observes, contributed a new magical mythology to Egyptian religion.<sup>5</sup> But the notable fact is the action and reaction between Egyptian and Jewish ideas. For there seem to be here and there distinctly Jewish insertions in the texts, which are, no doubt, modelled on Egyptian tradition. We have here basal elements of that Jewish magical literature which reached its zenith in the Middle Ages.<sup>6</sup> This interchange is highly characteristic of Hellenistic syncretism. It leaves open the possibility of Jewish and even of Christian influence in the case of conceptions which are often treated as wholly independent in their origin, and supposed to have had a

<sup>1</sup> See Bousset, *op. cit.*, p. 585 f.    <sup>2</sup> *Im Namen Gottes*, Berlin, 1903.

<sup>3</sup> See, e.g., Erman, *Ägyptische Religion*, p. 167 ff.

<sup>4</sup> In *Abrazas*, see esp., p. 201 ff.

<sup>5</sup> See his exhaustive article *Magia* in Daremberg et Saglio, *Dictionnaire des Antiquités*, vol. 3, part 2, pp. 1494-1521, and esp. p. 1505.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Reitzenstein, *Poimandres*, pp. 14, 186, 189 note 1.

share in moulding, e.g., the thought of St. Paul. Gnostic communities must as frequently have been the channels for diffusing Christian ideas as for the propagation of Hellenic or Oriental doctrines.

When we speak of the accessibility of Judaism to contemporary religious syncretism the remarkable figure of Philo inevitably stands out before us. For, in the light of our present discussion, it is scarcely legitimate to regard him, with some scholars,<sup>1</sup> as an isolated phenomenon. It is true that Alexandrian Judaism had no transforming effect on the Jews of the Diaspora. But Philo is a crucial example of a Jewish religious thinker, in whom diverse strains of thought and feeling, both inherited and acquired, are curiously amalgamated. The most common estimate of him is that of an extravagant allegoriser of the Old Testament, concerned above all else to make the Divine revelation given through Moses square completely with Greek philosophy. But the atmosphere of his allegorical activity is often ignored. Allegory, he describes as dear to *ὁρατικοῖς ἀνδράσιν*, "men of vision."<sup>2</sup> Reitzenstein gives good reasons for believing that the term *ὁρατικοί*, in Philo, is virtually equivalent to *πνευματικοί* or *γνωστικοί*, those who attain to the real vision of God.<sup>3</sup> And here we come at once into the circle of mysticism. Indeed Philo addresses those who reach the highest kind of knowledge as *μύσται κεκαθαρμένοι τὰ ὄψα*, and he beseeches them to receive it as *ἱερὰ μυστήρια*.<sup>4</sup> That these are not merely artificial terms taken over from the language of the mysteries is evident from his appeal to the soul. "If a yearning come upon thee to have share in Divine blessedness . . . escape

<sup>1</sup> E.g., Bousset, *op. cit.*, p. 501.

<sup>2</sup> *De Plantatione*, 36 (ed. C.W.).

<sup>3</sup> *Die Hellenistischen Mysterien-Religionen*, pp. 144-146.

<sup>4</sup> *De Cherubim*, 48 (ed. C.W.).

from thyself and go out of thyself (ἐκστηθι σεαυτῆς) in a Bacchic frenzy and divinely inspired like those who are possessed and filled with Corybantic delirium."<sup>1</sup> Here is genuine ἔκστασις. And there can be no doubt that Philo speaks from personal experience. "At times, coming to my work empty, I have become suddenly full, ideas being sown upon me in showers from above, so that by divine possession I am in a condition of frenzy (κορυβαντιᾶν) and ignorant of everything, the place, the company, myself, what was spoken, what was written. For I received a flow of interpretation [so Markland], an enjoyment of light, a vision of piercing clearness."<sup>2</sup> Unquestionably Platonic and Stoic influences are discernible in Philo's ecstatic mysticism. But there are elements closely akin to the prophetic ecstasy of the Old Testament. And side by side with these strains may be traced the influence of mystery-religions.

We have restricted this brief discussion of Philo to the single feature of his mystic ecstasy, partly because it suggests a parallelism with certain phenomena in the religion of Paul, and partly because it discloses as its core and kernel a genuine personal experience, which may, of course, be expressed in terms belonging to the religious syncretism of his age, but which cannot be completely explained either from the Platonic-Stoic influence of Posidonius or from the mystery-doctrines of Hellenised Egyptian theology.

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<sup>1</sup> *Quis Rer. Div. Heres*, 69 (ed. C.W.). See Bousset, *op. cit.*, p. 517 note 2, for an interesting list of terms in Philo associated with ecstatic experiences.

<sup>2</sup> *De Migratione Abrahami*, 35 (ed. C.W.). Additional striking references in Bréhier, *Les Idées Philosophiques et Religieuses de Philon*, who gives a luminous account of Philo's conception of ecstasy and prophetic inspiration, pp. 188-200, but lays stress far too exclusively on the Platonic character of his mysticism.