

YHWH— PLURALITY IN UNITY

In the last chapter we noted the appearances of God in the early history of Israel, and we noted the revelation of the Name, YHWH, of the God of Israel. In this chapter we must now continue our study of the Name of Yahweh and also of his Wisdom, Word, and Spirit. With respect to the latter the insightful words of Aubrey Johnson are worth noting:

In Israelite thought, while man was conceived, not in some analytical fashion as "soul" and "body," but synthetically as a psychical whole and a unit of vital power, this power was found to reach far beyond the contour of the body and to make itself felt through indefinable "extensions" of personality. Now the same idea is quite clearly present in the conception of the Godhead.¹

It is present, he claims, in the Spirit, the Word, the Name, and the Angel of Yahweh. We looked at the Angel in the last chapter. Here we shall examine the Name, the Spirit, the Wisdom, and the Word of Yahweh. As we do so, we shall gain insights into the nature of the Godhead of Yahweh and see that He is a marvelous mystery, a plurality in unity, and a unity in plurality.

THE TETRAGRAMMATON

Three words — LORD, Jehovah, and Yahweh — are used in English to render the tetragrammaton, the four Hebrew consonants, YHWH, which is the unique Name of the God of Israel. As this Name was treated with ever more and more reverence, the Jews ceased to pronounce it during the latter part of the Old Testament period. So we are not completely sure today just how it was originally pronounced.

In the synagogue the Name of YHWH, which was too sacred to utter, was replaced by the word "Adonay," which means "my Lord," in the reading of the Hebrew Scriptures. Then, later, (after A.D. 500) to avoid the risk of false readings, Jews vocalized the "YHWH" with the vowels of "Adonay" (and sometimes of "Elohim") and these are the vowels found in the markings of the Masoretic text.

"Jehovah" came into use in the Middle Ages but it is an artificial form, which bears no relation to how YHWH was originally pronounced. The word, "Yahweh," represents the generally accepted modern attempt to recover the original pronunciation of the tetragrammaton. This is based upon the available evidence which includes Hebrew theophoric names, Amorite onomastics, Greek transliterations in the magical papyri of the Graeco-Roman period, and testimony of the church fathers, especially Clement of Alexandria.

Though in the Hebrew Bible the Name of YHWH is used from Genesis through to Malachi, it was not known and used by the tribes of Israel before the time of Moses. Naturally, once known, it was not only used in the present but when referring to the past — for YHWH was one and the same God of Abraham and Moses. Thus YHWH appears in the narratives of Genesis as well as Exodus.

In the Book of Exodus are two key passages, both of which associate the Name of YHWH with the time of Moses. Already we have looked at the first of these, 3:14-15, in chapter 4. The second is in 6:2-3 and occurs when Yahweh is addressing Moses in Egypt.

* I am the Lord. I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, as "God Almighty" [*El Shaddai*], but by my Name "the Lord" [*YHWH*] I did not make myself known to them.

God had been known by other names than YHWH in the patriarchal age. Only from the theophany and visitation at the burning bush on Sinai did the God of the patriarchs declare himself to be YHWH.

The content of Exodus 3:14, as well as recent scholarly research, indicate that YHWH is to be taken as a form of the verb *haya*, "to be." In the light of this it is appropriate to see two meanings arising out of this name. First of all, from Exodus 3:14-15, YHWH as a Name is a positive assurance of God's acting, aiding, and communing presence. The "I AM" will be always with his covenant people. He who is now will be also. In the second place, and based on the declarations of Deuteronomy 4:39, 1 Kings 8:60, and Isaiah 45:21-22, YHWH is the only God who actually exists and there is no other. YHWH is the one and only deity, who is both above and within his creation; all other gods are but creatures or the projections of human imagination.

In Israel the name of a man was regarded as an exact picture of the one who owned it. So the name summed up all that its owner is: the name is, as it were, the definition of the person. In other words, the name was the person himself in the form of an alter ego, which represented him, exhibited him, and was him. In like manner the Name of God stood for God himself—"the Name of the God of Jacob protect you!" (Ps. 20:1) and "the Name of the LORD is a strong tower" (Prov. 18:10). The place where Yahweh chose to put his Name was "his habitation" (Deut. 12:5, 11; 14:23-24; 16:6; 26:2). Further, the Name of Yahweh was in his angel: "Behold, I send an angel before you, to guard you on the way and to bring you to the place which I have prepared. Give heed to him and hearken to his voice, do not rebel against him, for he will not pardon your transgression; for my name is in him" (Ex. 23:20-21). The "Name" is an important "extension" of Yahweh's personality, claims Johnson, who also points to the cultic use of the expression "to call upon the Name," where the Name is Yahweh himself.²

PLURALITY IN UNITY

Probably the most well-known text in Judaism is the *Shema* of Deuteronomy 6:4-5:

Hear, O Israel: Yahweh, our Elohim, Yahweh is One, and thou shalt love Yahweh thy Elohim with all thine heart, and with all thy soul and with all thy might (KJV).

* The Hebrew word for "one" here is *ehadh*, which is derived from a verb form having the meaning of to unify. It is the same word used in the expression, "they become one flesh" in marriage (Gen. 2:24). Obviously the unity of and in marriage is a unity which contains a plurality—that is, a duality.* So likewise, as Christians will come to say, the unity of God is not that of a simple monad, but is a oneness which allows for and contains a plurality. (We need to be aware that the other Hebrew word for one where one means unique, the only one of a class, is *yahidh*. It is used of Isaac "the *only* son" in the testing of Abraham: "Take your . . . only son, Isaac, whom you love" (Gen. 22:2). Both Hebrew words for "one" are found in Zechariah 14:9. "On that day, Yahweh will be *ehadh* and his name *yahidh*.")

The concept of Plurality in Unity is also suggested to Christian readers of the Hebrew Bible by the word *'elohim*, God. In grammatical terms, it may be called a quantitative plural or a plural of intensity (cf., such plural words as *mayim* for water and *shamayim* for heaven). In view of the emphatic monotheism of the Hebrew Bible, it is (to say the very least) a striking linguistic use. It is only in the quoted speeches of pagans that *'elohim* is used as an actual plural word in referring to the God of Israel and/or gods (1 Sam. 4:8, cf. Deut. 5:26; 2 Sam. 7:23; Ps. 58:11).

But we are going ahead too quickly. It is necessary to ponder for a while what the confession in the *Shema* contains. Here the words of Walter Kasper are helpful in clarifying our thinking.

The singleness and uniqueness of God is qualitative. God is not only one (*unus*) but also unique (*unicus*); he is as it were unqualified uniqueness. For by his very nature God is such that there is only one of him. From the nature of God as the reality that determines and includes everything his uniqueness follows with intrinsic necessity. If God is not one, then there is no God. Only one God can be infinite and all inclusive; two Gods would limit one another even if they were somehow interpenetrated. Conversely: as the one God, God is also the only God.

The singleness of God is therefore not just one of the attributes of God; rather his singleness is given directly with his very essence. Therefore, too, the oneness and uniqueness of the biblical God is anything but evidence of narrow-mindedness. On the contrary, for precisely as the one and only God, he is the Lord of all peoples and of all history. He is the First and the Last (Isa. 41:4; 43:10f; 44:6; 48:12; Rev. 1:4, 8, 17).³

The commitment to monotheism in contrast to henotheism obviously links Christianity to Judaism, as we have noted above.

However, the further confession of Unity in Trinity by Christianity raises a question. Has Christianity by its confession of the Trinity proved unfaithful to its confession of the One God? Obviously if the statement of the Trinity were as clear in the Hebrew Bible as is the statement of the Unity of Yahweh then such a question would not be asked. Therefore, the Christian claim has been that within the Old Testament there are significant bases and hints concerning the trinitarian nature of God, but that they are of such a nature as only to be so recognized after the revelation of the New Testament is known.

Kasper suggests that one such base is the conviction and clear statement that the God of Israel is the living God. "I am Yahweh, and there is no other, besides me there is no God" (Isa. 45:5; 46:9). Yahweh swears by himself, " 'As I live,' says the LORD" (Isa. 49:18), since he can swear by no one or nothing greater than himself. Yahweh differs radically from creatures in that he possesses his existence in himself, not from another. Therefore, God in his oneness and uniqueness is simultaneously the fullness of life: "As the hart longs for flowing streams, so longs my soul for thee, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God" (Ps. 42:1-2); and "My soul longs, yea, faints for the courts of the LORD; my heart and flesh sing for joy to the living God" (84:2).

Jeremiah declared that "Yahweh is the true God; he is the living God and the everlasting King" (Jer. 10:10). And he bemoaned the fact that Israel had forsaken Yahweh, "the fountain of living water" (17:13).

According to the Book of Daniel, King Darius wrote a letter to all peoples telling them that under his rule

men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel, for he is the living God, enduring for ever; his kingdom shall never be destroyed, and his dominion shall be to the end. He delivers and rescues, he works signs and wonders in heaven and on earth, he who has saved Daniel from the power of the lions (Dan. 6:26-27).

As the living God, Yahweh is able to give and save life for he is life, real life, himself!

Because Yahweh is superabundant fullness of life and plentitude of Being he is portrayed as taking counsel with himself and engaging in soliloquy. What has been called the "plural of deliberation" is evident in such passages as these:

Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness" (Gen. 1:26).

Then the LORD God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of us, knowing good and evil" (Gen. 3:22).

And the LORD said "... Come, let us go down, and there confuse their language" (Gen. 11:6-7).

It is of interest to note that it is *'elohim* who speaks in Genesis 1:26 but Yahweh in 11:7—where a plural verb is used with the singular Yahweh. Thus both Yahweh and *'elohim* here speak in the plural. (It will be recalled that *'elohim* is the standard and normal Hebrew word for the divine Being, that it is plural in form and that usually it takes the singular verb.)

Though these significant texts containing the "let us" are not developed in a trinitarian way in the documents of the New Testament, by the second century such an interpretation had become the norm in the churches. For example, commenting on Genesis 1:26 Irenaeus wrote:

Now man is a mixed organization of soul and flesh, who was formed after the likeness of God [the Father], and molded by his hands, that is, by the Son and the Holy Spirit, to whom also he said, "Let us make man."⁴

For with him [the Father] were always present the Word

and Wisdom, the Son and the Spirit, by whom and in whom freely and spontaneously, he made all things, to whom also he speaks, saying, "Let us make man after our image and likeness."⁵

Here, for Irenaeus, the plurality of deliberation is certainly the Holy Trinity. In contrast, we know that Jewish writers did their best to hide or negate this plurality in order to emphasize the unity of God.⁶

Another place where there is both the plural of deliberation and the triple recital of "Holy" is the account of the call of Isaiah. First of all, we read of the seraphim declaring the holiness of Yahweh.

Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory (Isa. 6:3).

Then after his cleansing with the burning coal from the altar, Isaiah hears the voice of the Lord saying:

Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? (6:8)

It did not take the church long to interpret the triple recital of "holy" as being addressed by the heavenly host to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit—especially when the triple recital also occurs in Revelation 4:8. The *Trisagion* quickly became a part of the Liturgy of the churches of the East and West and it remains in most Liturgies today. Likewise the singular "I" and the plural "us" were soon read as pointing to the unity and plurality of the Holy Trinity.

Referring to this Christian interpretation of Isaiah 6, Kasper writes: "It has great symbolic importance, for in its own way it shows that in the time of the church fathers the trinitarian confession did not originate in pure theory and abstract speculation but rather had its vital context in the doxology, that is, in the liturgical glorification of God."⁷

Another Roman Catholic theologian, Bertrand de Margerie, S.J., commenting in his book, *The Christian Trinity in History*, upon the plural of deity (in Gen. 1:26; 3:22; 11:7; and Isa. 6:8) asks:

Does this Divine "we" evoke a polytheistic age anterior to the Bible? Or a deliberation of God with his angelic

court? Or does it not rather indicate the interior richness of the divinity? How does it happen that only in these four passages the plural form of the name *Elohim* used here has influenced the verb, which is plural only here? And what is more extraordinary is that these plural forms are introduced by formulas in the singular: "Elohim says" or "Yahweh says" (Gen. 1:26; 3:22; 11:6).⁵

At least we can say that the plural and singular forms of the verb are intriguing, whether or not we see (in the intention of God who inspired the writing of the text) the Holy Trinity veiled here.

What is also intriguing is the threefold structure of the priestly blessing in Numbers 6:22-26.

Yahweh said to Moses, "Say to Aaron and his sons, Thus you shall bless the people of Israel: you shall say to them, *Yahweh bless you and keep you: Yahweh make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious to you: Yahweh lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace.*

In view of the enormous significance of the Name in Israelite religion, Yahweh's emphatic comment on the priestly blessing in verse 27 is significant: "So shall they put my Name upon the people of Israel, and I will bless them." Since Jesus told his apostles to baptize in the Name (Yahweh) "of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit," the early church naturally came to read this threefold blessing as not only pointing to, but also coming from, the Three Persons of the Holy Trinity.

It is perhaps also worth noting that there are passages where Yahweh, his Word/Angel of the Presence, and Spirit are named together as co-causes of effects (cf. Ps. 33:6; Isa. 61:1; 63:9-12; Hag. 2:5-6). Naturally such texts were read through Christian eyes as referring to the Holy Trinity.

Finally, the possible connection between the Trinity and the central theological theme of the Old Testament, expressed in the tripartite formula, "I will be your God; you shall be my people, and I will dwell in the midst of you," also is worthy of notice. This threefold formula is made up of (1) the basic promise of Genesis 17:7-8 and 28:21 where Yahweh establishes his covenant

“to be God to you and to your descendants after you”; (2) the additional promise after the Exodus of being not merely God’s people but also of being known as God’s son — “Israel is my first-born son” (Ex. 4:22); and (3) the further promise by God to dwell in the midst of his covenant people — “I will dwell among the people of Israel and will be their God” (Ex. 29:45). As a Trinitarian believer the Christian holds that the Father establishes the covenant of grace and sends the Son; the Son is incarnate and is both the new Adam and the new Israel, God’s true Son, so that all who come to the Father come in and through the Son; and the Holy Spirit is sent by the Father and the Son to dwell in the people who are the new Israel.

Only Yahweh in whom is plenitude of being could fulfill such a tripartite promise. Only Yahweh who possesses Wisdom, who speaks the living Word, and who acts as Holy Spirit could make and keep such a promise. Thus we move on to look at this plenitude of life of Yahweh, the living God, in the Wisdom, the Word, and the Spirit of God.

THE WISDOM OF GOD

The Hebrew Bible is familiar with wisdom as both a human and a divine attribute, for some men are said to be wise and God is declared always to be wise. However, in Proverbs 1-9, *hokmah* is not merely an attribute of God, it also appears to become in some sense actually distinct from God, without being other than God. In fact it is in 1:20-23 and especially in 8:22-36 that wisdom seems to have become an elaborate personification—a divine agent.

The relation of Wisdom to Yahweh in the creation of the world is set forth in these words.

The LORD created me at the beginning of his work, the first of his acts of old. Ages ago I was set up, at the first, before the beginning of the earth. When there were no depths I was brought forth, when there were no springs abounding with water. Before the mountains had been shaped, before the hills, I was brought forth; before he had made the earth with its fields, or the first of the dust

of the world. When he established the heavens, I was there, when he drew a circle on the face of the deep, when he made firm the skies above, when he established the fountains of the deep, when he assigned to the sea its limit, so that the waters might not transgress his command, when he marked out the foundations of the earth, then I was beside him, like a master workman; and I was daily his delight, rejoicing before him always, rejoicing in his inhabited world and delighting in the sons of men (Prov. 8:22-31).

Here wisdom is what Yahweh, the Creator, reckoned primary and indispensable. Wisdom is both older than the universe and is fundamental to it, for nothing came into existence without it. Thus wisdom is the spring of joy.

Commenting upon this passage, Derek Kidner explains that the context within the Book of Proverbs points not to wisdom as a hypostasis (a heavenly being related to but distinct from God) but as a vivid personification of wisdom. "Not only does the next chapter proceed immediately to a fresh portrait of wisdom, in a new guise (as a great lady [9:1-6] whose rival is certainly no hypostasis)," writes Kidner, "but the present passage makes excellent sense at the level of metaphor: i.e., as a powerful way of saying that if *we* must do nothing without wisdom, God himself has made and done nothing without it. The wisdom by which the world is rightly ruled is none other than the wisdom by which it exists."⁹ However, Kidner does not stop here; he recognizes a wider setting. The New Testament shows by its allusions to this passage (see Col. 1:15-17; 2:3; Rev. 3:14) that the personifying of wisdom, far from overshooting the literal truth, was a preparation for its full statement. That is, the agent of creation was no mere activity or attribute of God but the Son, the eternal Word and Wisdom (see John 1:1-14; 1 Cor. 1:24, 30; Heb. 1:1-14).

In the centuries before the birth of Jesus, the Jews showed great interest in divine wisdom. The evidence of this is to be found, for example, in the amount of material on wisdom in the books of the Apocrypha—e.g., in *The Wisdom of Solomon* and *Ecclesiasticus* (the *Wisdom of Jesus Son of Sirach*). Here we meet again the personification of wisdom.

For she is a breath of the power of God, And a pure emanation of the glory of the Almighty; therefore nothing defiled gains entrance into her. For she is a reflection of light, a spotless mirror of the working of God, and an image of his goodness (Wisd. 7:25-26).

Wisdom will praise herself, and will glory in the midst of her people. In the assembly of the Most High she will open her mouth, and in the presence of his host she will glory: "I came forth from the mouth of the Most High, and covered the earth like a mist. I dwelt in high places, and my throne was in a pillar of cloud. Alone I have made the circuit of the vault of heaven and have walked in the depths of the abyss" (Ecclus. 24:1-5).

In the early church such passages from the deuterocanonical books (found in the Septuagint), along with passages in Proverbs (e.g., 8:22-36) and in the Psalter (e.g., 85:10-13), were read as pointing to Jesus Christ, the Wisdom of God.

Recently, much attention has been focused by the feminist movement upon the fact that the word for wisdom in both Greek (*sophia*) and in Hebrew (*hokmah*) is in the feminine gender. It has been claimed that these words refer to a female deity. However, such a claim confuses grammatical gender with physical sexuality! (See chapter 1.) Nevertheless, much has been made of the supposed feminine nature of Wisdom by some feminist theologians. Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza has popularized the expressions "gracious Sophia-God" for Yahweh of the Old Testament, and the "Sophia-God of Jesus" for "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" of the New Testament. One of her much-repeated statements is: "Divine Sophia is Israel's God in the language and *Gestalt* of the Goddess."¹⁰ Apart from confusing grammatical gender with sexuality, this way of thinking gets close to the Gnosticism (in which male and female supernatural beings are paired).

THE WORD OF GOD

According to the Old Testament, Yahweh is certainly the speaking God! From the first chapter of Genesis through to the last

words of Malachi, we read of what God has said. The word of the Lord is a mighty and efficacious word which creates the cosmos, establishes the covenant with Israel, and comes to the prophet to be heard by the people through him.

By the word of the LORD the heavens were made, and all their host by the breath of his mouth. He gathered the waters of the sea as in a bottle; he put the deeps in storehouses. Let all the earth fear the LORD, let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him! For he spoke, and it came to be; he commanded, and it stood forth (Ps. 33:6-9).

For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and return not thither but water the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goes forth from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I [Yahweh] purpose, and prosper in the thing for which I sent it (Isa. 55:10-11).

There are examples of the personification of the word of God at various points in the Hebrew Bible. For example:

[The LORD] sent forth his word and healed them, and delivered them from destruction (Ps. 107:20).

For ever, O LORD, thy word is firmly fixed in the heavens (119:89).

He sends forth his command to the earth; his word runs swiftly (147:15).

The LORD has sent a word against Jacob, and it will light upon Israel (Isa. 9:8).

However, in the Apocrypha there is a remarkable passage wherein the word of God is more obviously personified.

All things were lying in peace and silence, and night in her swift course was half-spent, when thy all-powerful

word leapt from thy royal throne in heaven into the midst of that doomed land like a relentless warrior, bearing the sharp sword of thy inflexible decree; with his head touching the heavens and his feet on earth, he stood and spread death everywhere (Wisd. 18:15-16).

Christians in the early church reading such passages saw them as pointing to the full personification of the Word of God as a hypostasis, which is presented in the prologue of the Gospel of John. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God [the Father]; all things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made" (1:1-3).

THE SPIRIT OF GOD

The Spirit (lit., the wind and/or the breath) of Yahweh is God present and active upon, around, and within that which Yahweh had made—the world and human beings. In fact, the Spirit was active in the actual creation of the world—"the Spirit of God was moving over the face of the waters" (Gen. 1:2).

The psalmist, addressing Yahweh, said:

When thou sendest forth thy Spirit [breath], they are created; and thou renewest the face of the ground (Ps. 104:30).

There is no place within the created order from where the Spirit of Yahweh and thus Yahweh himself is absent.

Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? Or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend to heaven, thou art there! If I make my bed in Sheol, thou art there! If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there thy hand shall lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me (139:7-10).

The breath of God causes the rhythms of nature:

The grass withers, the flower fades, when the breath of the LORD blows upon it (Isa. 40:7).

Apart from the general presence of the Spirit throughout the created order, there is the specific or intensified presence of the Spirit to add to the natural powers of man. Thus Joseph was enabled by the Spirit to interpret Pharaoh's dream (Gen. 41:38), and Moses and the seventy elders were able to prophesy. "Then the LORD came down in the cloud and spoke to [Moses], and took some of the Spirit that was upon him and put it upon the seventy elders; and when the Spirit rested upon them, they prophesied" (Num. 11:25). Further, Moses later laid his hands upon Joshua and he was filled with the Spirit of wisdom (Deut. 34:9). At a very practical level, the skill of Bezaleel in constructing the tabernacle occurred because the Spirit came upon him (Ex. 31:3; 35:31). And Zerubbabel found that he could only rebuild the temple after the exile by the Spirit of the Lord: "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the LORD of hosts" (Zech. 4:6).

Therefore, it is not surprising that the prophets, who spoke as they were moved by the Spirit of Yahweh (Isa. 59:21; Micah 3:8), declared that the Messiah to come would be the servant of God upon whom the Spirit uniquely rested and in whom the Spirit dwelt (Isa. 11:2; 42:1; 61:1). Likewise in the messianic age there would be an outpouring of the prophetic Spirit upon all the people: "I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions. Even upon the menservants and maidservants in those days, I will pour out my Spirit" (Joel 2:28-29).

There is a further dimension of the presence and work of the Spirit, and this is the corporate and personal area of holiness and communion with God. A typical prayer was:

Teach me to do thy will, for thou art my God! Let thy good spirit lead me on a level path (Ps. 143:10).

And also:

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence, and take not thy holy Spirit from me. Restore to me

the joy of thy salvation, and uphold me with a willing spirit (Ps. 51:10-12).

There could be no true revival without the Spirit: "I will put my Spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you in your own land" (Ezek. 37:14). "A new heart I will give you, and a new spirit I will put within you; and I will take out of your flesh the heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to observe my ordinances" (36:26-27). Isaiah spoke for Yahweh: "I will pour water on the thirsty land, and streams on the dry ground; I will pour my Spirit upon your descendants, and my blessing on your offspring" (Isa. 44:3).

So the Spirit of YHWH is present in the created order, in the giving of outstanding gifts to people, in prophecy, and as an essential part of the future hope of the Messiah and the new age. George A.F. Knight has remarked that "since the Spirit of God is no less than God himself acting in accordance with his essential nature, Spirit actually comes to be pictured in a manner that is virtually parallel to the pictorial concept of the angelic activity"¹¹ which we examined in the last chapter. As in the Old Testament, so in the New Testament, the Holy Spirit is always present and invisible but usually "anonymous" and thus not mentioned.

Between the Testaments and particularly within Hellenistic or Diaspora Judaism, certain developments concerning the Spirit of Yahweh occurred. First of all, and this was new for the Greek language, *pneuma* came to cover the broad range of meaning which *ruach* bears in the Hebrew Bible. This occurred because of the influence of the Septuagint where *pneuma* was used to translate *ruach*. Not surprisingly there developed in this context the teaching that not only were the prophets inspired by the Spirit to speak God's word, but those who wrote the text of the Old Testament were also inspired by the Spirit to write down God's word.

There also developed in Alexandrian Judaism a linking of God's *pneuma* with his *sophia*. This is seen in the Wisdom of Solomon, where this *sophia/pneuma* is portrayed as present throughout the universe and distinctively present and operative in "the wise" and "the righteous" (Wisd. 1:4-8; 7:21-30). While

this development does not seem to have affected the presentation and development of pneumatology in the New Testament, it certainly affected Christology (e.g., Heb. 1:2-3). Later, however, in the fourth century when the deity of the Spirit was under discussion these Wisdom texts from the Septuagint were used by the fathers in support of orthodoxy.

IN CONCLUSION

Reflecting upon the Christian reading of the Old Testament under the illumination of the revelation recorded in the New Testament, B.B. Warfield wrote:

The Old Testament may be likened to a chamber richly furnished but dimly lighted; the introduction of light brings into it nothing which was not in it before; but it brings out into clearer view much of what is in it but was only dimly or even not at all perceived before. The mystery of the Trinity is not revealed in the Old Testament revelation; but the mystery of the Trinity underlies the Old Testament revelation, and here and there almost comes into view. Thus the Old Testament revelation of God is not corrected by the fuller revelation which follows it, but only perfected, extended and enlarged.¹²

There is an old saying that what becomes patent in the New Testament was latent in the Old Testament. Thus we have seen how the early Christians saw in Yahweh the Triune God whom they worshiped and served. Yahweh, the God of the Old Testament, was their God and their God was a Holy Trinity.

This said, we need also to be reminded by Knight that

none of these pictorial concepts [e.g., Word, Spirit] . . . acts as a kind of intermediary, a hypostasis, between the life of God and the life of man. God's assuming a form, whether that of Angel or as his own Holy Spirit, has no meaning apart from God himself. Revelation does not mean that the hidden God is resolved into the revealed God in any form whatever. The *Deus Revelatus* actually remains the *Deus Absconditus* throughout the whole OT

from the earliest forms of expression to the latest and profoundest writings in the exilic and post-exilic periods.¹³

In a different vein, but in some ways looking in the same direction as Warfield and Knight, Kasper points out that behind the various hints and indications of pluripersonal fullness of being in Yahweh there is a basic question, "Who is God's appropriate *vis-a-vis*?"¹⁴ To speak of an I without a Thou (in and for Yahweh) is unthinkable! But is the highest creature, man, a proper *vis-a-vis* for Yahweh? Of course not! Man is a creature loved by Yahweh with an everlasting love. We conclude that the "Thou" is only revealed in the New Testament—the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

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