PACIFIC COAST THEOLOGICAL DISCUSSION GROUP

What Is Essential in the Christian Religion?

HEBRAISM, JUDAISM, AND CHRISTIANITY

By

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The Christian theologian shares with the historian of religion the task of doing justice to the numerous elements of diversity and unity bequeathed to him by historic religious tradition and experience. Differences in historical background, social milieu, and cultural matrix reflect themselves not merely in the forms of religious faith but in the very values that are championed. We see these differences in the variety of types within one historic religion (e.g. Anglo-Catholicism and Barthianism) or in religious persons like Hosea and Nehemiah or Jesus, Paul, and Tertullian; or contemporaneously in the statements of thirty-four theologians in recent issues of the Christian Century. These differences are important. Yet the theologian and the historian are able to discern connections and to recognize the living unity which persists amidst wide divergence. The character and validity of theological construction and of historical interpretation will depend upon the responsiveness and sensitiveness exhibited toward the living records of history and experience, and upon the appreciation, the absence of intellectual condescension, with which this material is appropriated. For Hebrew-Christian faith this is particularly important. For here appeal is made to the events, and to the life and teachings of a Central Personality, the reports of which are notoriously unsuited to theological rationalization. Christian thought has been restive under the constraints of history. So it has frequently been proposed to cut this Gordian knot once for all. When one thinks of the uses to which historic religious tradition has been put, he is tempted to yield. But this is neither simple nor desirable. Indeed, Christian faith should find itself in a congenial climate today precisely because of its intimate alliance with the crises and continuity of history. International crisis and social disintegration provide the context for every major insight of our Hebrew heritage, and indeed for the emergence of every great personality. Men may succeed in ignoring the great social dilemmas of history, but they lose the chance to understand the true perspectives of Christian faith, as well as the most convincing and congenial apologetic to the secular mind of our day.

One phase of this problem not unrelated to our central theme is the perplexing question of what is old and what is new in religious development. Early Christianity is dominated by the conviction of the emergence of something new. The dominant mood of the New Testament is its enthusiasm. It is inspired by a vivid sense of vitality and energy. Its emphasis upon beginnings is quite as impressive as its emphasis upon the end of things. The earliest gospel opens with the words, "the beginning of the gospel of Jesus the Messiah," and the Fourth Gospel in obvious play upon Genesis reads, "In the beginning was the Word. . . and the Word became flesh and dwelt among us." I John starts in similar fashion, and Revelation, the Book of the end of things, rings with the cry that all things have become new. (We need an antonym for eschatology!) But the historian is suspicious of newness, for he finds it hard to discover its exact location. I have opportunity for but two brief comments: Newness is not necessarily praiseworthy. Originality is a much over-rated virtue. Significant relationship to the past, i.e. situations in which the stream of the past flows into the future, seems to me much more important, and to constitute the proper setting for the emergence of the new. I am not denying, of course, the reality of new elements rising in the course of religion; I am saying they are difficult to describe accurately. The trouble is that the new seldom comes to us as completely new; it is born in the womb of the old, and its ancestry is stamped upon it. Further, one must inquire as to the kind of newness one is seeking. If, for example, we are

thinking of the teachings of Jesus, that is one kind of problem, into which I need not enter, except probably to say that I do not think that the numerous parallels from contemporary literature prove what some scholars think they do. On the other hand, if we are thinking of the personality of Jesus, we have an entirely different kind of problem with which to deal. The history of Synoptic criticism is interesting on this point. The question of uniqueness inevitably raises itself here, but the unique in the sense of the unprecedented is not synonymous with the essential. What is essential may gain in force because it is precedented.

The foregoing discussion is designed to put the defence for our approach to what is essential in Christianity. Our approach is primarily historical (1) because it is for me the simplest way of doing justice to the elements of diversity and unity in Hebraism and Christianity; (2) the baffling and increasingly precarious nature of world society encourages this method; (3) Hebrew-Christianity as a peculiarly historical religion can be more clearly described than ever before because of the enormous fruitfulness of the development of humanistic disciplines and the amazing richness of archaeological discovery; (4) no explanation of what Christianity is appears to me nearly so convincing and compelling as the actual account of what happened in the midst of the world during the last millenium B.C., and the relationship of the Christian movement to that historic development.

Now the perspective which gives us the clearest and most revealing view of the relation between Judaism and Christianity is the period of international disintegration following the decline and collapse of the Assyrian Empire. That this judgment is drawn from a study of the canonical records will not, I hope, suggest biblioatry, but rather that the classical religious literature of Christianity should be read with greater sensitiveness to the total social and cultural context of the individual event and experience, and with recognition of the deep-going and far-reaching continuity that characterizes Hebrew faith. For more than two centuries the power of Assyria, by the ruthlessness of its military aggression and the barbarity of its strategy of conquest, had succeeded in crushing all the nations which belonged to the geographical unity of her world. Hebrew religion has its roots in the most dynamic portion of that geographical unity. Israel was the last buffer state between Assyria and the ultimate objective of all Assyrian campaigns. But she was more than this: located between the Mediterranean Sea, which was to be the vehicle for bearing the truest and ripest fruit of Hebrew religious faith to the world, and the Arabian desert, the perennial source throughout the centuries of new energy and vitality as well as of threat of invasion, she constituted an explosive international corridor between Asia and Africa, and the crossroads for the three continents of the world. In 626 B.C. the barriers fell. Scythian hoardes from the Russian steppe broke through the Taurus and threatened the whole of Western Asia and Africa (cf. Herodotus' doubtless distorted but in essence probably reliable account). Babylonia declared her independence. Egypt saw chances for reviving her empire. The Hebrews and Phoenicians instituted powerful nationalist movements. The Medes entered the arena of international conflict and strategy. Assyria fell in 612 B.C. Africa (Egypt) threatened Asiatic (Babylonian) supremacy. Her ruler paused at Megiddo to quash Israel's neo-nationalism. Carchemish proved one of the world's decisive battles. But contemporaries did not see the meaning of what had happened. Judah again yielded to the machinations of Egypt. As a consequence important elements of the population were deported in 597 B.C., and the collapse of the state came eleven years later. The history of three of the world's great religions was to be profoundly affected by the circumstance.

Jeremiah and Ezekiel stand in the midst of this dynamic period in human history. Jeremiah's career extends from the first dramatic collapse of Assyrian power to the final tragedy of the Hebrew state, from the terrible Scythian invasion, portrayed in some of the most moving and powerful literature in the world, to the Babylonian con-

quest, where Jeremiah made his most dramatic and fateful stand. We know more about Jeremiah than about any other person in the Old Testament or about Jesus of Nazareth. He had the good fortune to have a competent if not a brilliant biographer. But he himself gives us what is infinitely more important, his own confessions, the first of the genre in history. We have his laments, the deeply emotional outpourings of his tortured soul. These intimate self-revelations are the kind of data we need in the study of religion, especially in Christianity where we are interested in recovering for the present the meaning of historical persons (cf. similar self-disclosures in Paul, Augustine, Luther, Kierkegaard). Jeremiah brooded long and deeply over the whole question of society before its God. His thinking is profoundly existential because the existence of society as men had known it was at stake. What makes Jeremiah so significant, it seems to me, is the fact that he embodies within himself the crises and tragedy of his times, those last forty years in Western Asia, the crossroads of the world's continents, makes them his own, suffers the torments of this self-identification with the Sturm und Drang of history, and walks finally (what suggestion this holds for the historical and theological imagination!) an unwilling exile to Egypt. The dimensions of Israel's history are caught up in this man. With sure inevitability he goes back to Hosea, that other tragic sufferer standing in the approaching night of his nation and incarnating like Jeremiah the tragedy of his people; he appropriates the greatness of Hosea and carries it farther.[1] But more than this, he reaches back to the very beginning, to Sinai and the covenant-making experience when Israel made her great decision. Jeremiah's conflicts, his solitariness, his suffering, his inwardness, his deepening martyrdom, all of them in the midst of history's fateful hours, make him the person, of all persons before Jesus, whom the Christian should know. For Jeremiah was a Christian before Christ. If that could be said of Socrates and Plato, all the more could it be said of Jeremiah.

We can only enumerate some of the contributions he has to make to the history of religion. His first poems express his attitude toward nature religion as over against historical religion. He catches the genius and the spirit of both, sees what it is that is different in Hebrew religion, knows the appeal of both religions, the mentality of magical coercion, on the one hand, and the sense of moral conflict and moral choice, on the other. The movement of national reform which had sought to implement the social message of the eighth century prophets into the structure of an infallible constitution he first supported with the fervor of a youthful enthusiast. His disillusionment came as he saw what happened to such compromises. His criticism finally extends in every direction. The Temple as an inviolable institution, the Reform Code as an infallible book, sacrifice and the cult as sufficient instruments of devotion, the nation as an adequate center of allegiance, circumcision, the ark, the Mosaic covement, all of these relativities crash before the trenchant onslaughts of the prophet. "Behold days are coming," is the oracle of the Lord, "when I will make a new covenant with the household of Israel and with the household of Judah,

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1. In discussing Bertram's view that "when they are historically regarded, great spiritual figures become mythical characters," Professor Tillich says, "Two things are implied in the thought: upon the one hand it is implied that the observing spirit when it exercises historical understanding is more than a blank tablet which receives clear or vague impressions of a foreign determinate reality. When spirit understands spirit, it interprets at the same time. The object receives a meaning which is born out of the interaction of that which understands with that which is understood. Thus historical understanding comes to be a function of life through which the past receives meaning from the present and the present from the past."
See also Bultmann's discussion in the introduction to his book on Jesus.

not like the covenant which I made with their fathers on the day that I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt - that covenant of mine they broke, so that I had to reject them - but this is the covenant which I will make with the household of Israel after those days." is the oracle of the Lord: "I will put my law within them, and will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every one his neighbor, and every one his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord;' for all of them shall know me, from the least of them to the greatest of them . . for I will pardon their guilt, and their sin will I remember no more." Jeremiah's reflections on theodicy((e.g. the sour grapes (31:29ff.), the lamb led to the slaughter (11:18ff.), his laments (e.g. 12:1ff; 20:14ff), etc.)) influenced the three greatest achievements of the Hebrew genius: Second Isaiah, Psalms, and Job, and indications are not wanting that the prophet was himself a deep source of inspiration to his spiritual successors. His many poems during the years of war make moving contemporary reading. In Jeremiah, religion becomes universal: the category of the nation becomes utterly inadequate to express the genius of historic Hebrew faith as seen in the covenant relationship or the personal religion of one who appreciated that genius and suffered under the tensions of divine impulsion (cf. chap. 1; also 15:19f.). He counsels surrender to the Babylonians. His own martyrdom parallels the growing Babylonian pressure. Personal religion goes deepest with Jeremiah: it is a religion of a mind and heart in conflict, but there is an inner integrity in him which gives the dominant cry of his poems:

Return, apostate Israel, return
Return, apostate children.
I will heal your apostacy.

In a deep sense, is not this the beginning of the gospel?

Ezekiel stands with Jeremiah at the turning point of international movements, within the continuity of Hebrew religion and at the crisis of the nation's destruction. He is in many ways a foil to Jeremiah, all the more impressive because both are of priestly heritage, both are prophets, both have visions, both are kindled by their sense of responsibility to their contemporaries, both face the same problems. But Ezekiel is overborne by the defeat of history. He does not trust its natural course as the instrument of God's revealing. Just as Jeremiah's sorrow and struggle reflect the essential character of his faith; so Ezekiel's highly pathological condition and the character of his imagery reflect the quality of his supernaturalism. His mythology is elaborate, but it has none of the close connection with history or the theological suggestiveness which we encounter in Hebrew thought at its best. With sweeping blanket denunciation, Ezekiel condemns the whole of Judah's past history as sin. His conviction of Israel's sin is crystallized into a hard and fixed dogma. As he regiments the history of the past into a dogma, so Ezekiel straitjackets the future into an institutional pattern whose chief function it is to keep itself unspotted from the world. A large part of his thought is directed toward his ecclesiastical utopia. The community is supernatural; the Temple is the center of all its life. The priest has taken the place of the prophet, the ecclesiastical hierarchy the place of the political structure. In his view of God, Ezekiel lays great stress on transcendence and holiness. If conduct is three-fourths of life, it is, in Ezekiel, conduct regulated by ordinance and statute. Ezekiel is as much occupied with the problem of theodicy as Jeremiah, but his individualism, expressed in one of the strongest statements before Christianity, is achieved at the expense of the obvious facts of life. Apocalyptic is a natural resort to one of Ezekiel's temperament and with Ezekiel's problems. If the present book is indeed all his, it is not too much to say that he is the most influential person in the whole course of Judaism.

Jeremiah and Ezekiel represent two different responses to the decline and fall

of the state. They illustrate two radically different mentalities. In the main, it is possible to discern two streams of development from the destruction of the Jewish state to the rise of Christianity. The one finds its chief source and inspiration in Ezekiel. Haggai and Zechariah, Ezra and Nehemiah, the Priestly history of the Pentateuch and of Chronicles obviously belong here. The other finds its source in Jeremiah. Second Isaiah and Ruth and Jonah are his natural heirs. This is an over-simplification, perhaps, but not a serious one. Yet it is well to read the religious development in another way by examining the literary deposit of the period. The Church took the place of the nation, and nowhere does the piety of the ecclesiastical community express itself more favorably than in the Book of Psalms, the great devotional literature and hymn book of the Temple, an intimate picture of Judaism in its most characteristic moods. The fear of further disintegration of Hebrew civilization and of the pressures of an organized Persian empire found response in the emphasis upon preservation of the old traditions and the codification of Hebrew law and custom into a final framework. The precariousness of history was met by two major attempts to re-edit and even re-write the whole Hebrew past. The one super-imposed a view of history which contradicted not only the obvious facts but other interpretations of history which were more profound; the other wrote a good, safe history for those who did not wish to be tortured by problems of theodicy, by omitting what was unedifying. The reflectiveness induced by social catastrophe found its best expression in the Book of Job; in other books the prophetic genius of Israel is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought. Finally, there were those who could find little hope and comfort in these methods of religious control. They wanted to preserve the prophetic faith in the activity of God, but could not trust the events of history as the channel of His revelation. The apocalyptic interest runs through the whole period and is by no means to be confined to the Book of Daniel. Official and academic Judaism have never wished to claim apocalyptic, have viewed it as an aberration, which the Christian community pursued and furthered in contrast to normative Judaism. There is an important truth implied in this, but of course it is demonstrably inaccurate to deny the presence of apocalyptical features in orthodox Judaism. Daniel is proof of that. Judaism, then, was a many-sided development, and it is necessary to do justice to all of it if we are to estimate its place theologically and historically. The devotional warmth of Jewish worship, the pride and joy in the Lord's gracious gift of the Law to Israel, the increasing interest in authority as expressed in canonization, the deepening veneration for the past, the regard for ritualistic nicety, the important didactic elements both in education and religion, the fiery passion of the apocalyptic seer, the commonsense wisdom of the sages - all of this is part of Judaism. To be sure, certain emphases outran others from time to time, but we have all learned long ago that the common Christian criticism concerning Jewish legalism widely over-shot its mark.

Yet the influence of Jeremiah did not die with the nation. He had a notable successor, the greatest intellect in the whole range of Hebrew faith. No other was so profound, so penetrating, so universal a thinker as Second Isaiah. But he stands on the shoulders of Jeremiah. I regret that we cannot use the time to demonstrate this, but the intimacy of the relationship is as real and significant and revealing as Jeremiah's relationship to Hosea. Second Isaiah saw into the genius of Hebraism as no one before him or after him. He saw it in its great perspectives, yet he preserved the concreteness of the individual event. His thinking is saturated with the Exodus and the implications of it for religion. He is occupied with the whole of Israel's past history, but he never reduces it to Ezekiel's dogma. The past was infinitely revelatory to him. He seeks as no other figure in the Bible, unless it be Paul, for an adequate philosophy of history. He sees God's purposive and energetic activity in the events of history; he can see God's plan for Israel, he recognizes the forces of judgment and possibility and redemption at work in his own world.

Hebrew theism is nowhere given a fuller or better statement than in Second Isaiah. He exhausts every figure of the Old Testament, and I think of the New also, to give expression to his own radical theism. And it is not mere literary borrowing; each term is used in a rich and pregnant context. Such terms as holiness, monotheism, sovereignty, creativity, transcendence, omnipotence, and omniscience do not adequately describe the nature of his thought. It is the imagery he uses, with the whole history of each term behind it, that helps us to see the dimensions of his mind. God is not only Judge and King and Creator or "the Creator of Israel," Israel's husband; or the source of truth and strength and confidence and vitality; or God of all the nations. He is also Father, Helper, Warrior, Saviour, Teacher and Shepherd.

It is the figure of the Servant of the Lord that interests us most of all in the poems of Second Isaiah, and it is the most perplexing problem of the Book. Twenty or thirty years ago the majority of scholars were agreed that the term was to be interpreted solely as the community of Israel. There were a few protesting voices but not many. But the conviction has grown that this does not satisfy all of the Servant passages. Many names have been suggested as proper identifications of the Servant of the Lord (e.g. Moses, Zerubbabel, Jeconiah, Jeremiah, the prophet himself, or a close acquaintance of the prophet). That some passages are describing an actual person seems very likely, but that the majority certainly refer to Israel there can be no question. The references to the Servant appear throughout the twenty-seven poems; indeed the Servant almost seems to be the central theme of the poems. It is God who has called the Servant into being; the Servant belongs to him. God loves the Servant; He calls him, chooses him, predestines him for a divine task, glorifies Himself in the Servant. It is what God does that makes the Servant; His purposive, invading, powerful act. This action of God in and to the Servant is described in every conceivable fashion. Every instrument of expression is strained to say what must be said. This is why we have so many identifications: not only the community but also Abraham and Jacob and Moses (note especially the affectionate terms, Jeshurun, Yaskil, Meshullam.). But this circumstance gives us a clue, I think, which yet awaits consideration. My view is simply this: Second Isaiah deals with the Servant in exactly the same manner as he deals with his view of God, his view of history, past and present and future, and his view of the world. He strains all his available vocabulary; he employs the language of legend and mythology. That is the truth in Gressmann's theory that we have here a mythological figure which is to recapitulate in the end of history that which was at its beginning. Definitions will not satisfy the vast diversity, the powerful strokes, the vivid colors with which the Servant is drawn. If we could speak of the hypostatization of the community Israel, we might not be very remote from the writer's thought. The Servant is Ideal Israel Individualized.

Is it possible for us to place the dominating convictions of Second Isaiah into some pattern by which we may perceive their coherence? I think it is. All of his poems are concerned with the end of the age. They must be read with something of the attitude with which we read the City of God or Luther's Commentary on Romans. The thought which inspires them and pervades them is the same as that which inspires most of the Old and New Testaments: the imminence of God's activity in a great divine act of judgment, - what God is about to do.

> For a day of requital is in my heart, and the year of my redemption is come.
> Isa. 63:4
>
> For the time is at hand to assemble all nations and tongues together; they shall come and behold my glory. Isa. 66:18

The conversion of all the nations of the world is a major part of the prophet's eschatological program. The familiar theme of Nature's radical transformation

occurs again and again in passages of deep rhapsodic warmth. The glories of the Messianic age are described in most impressive language. A line or two will illustrate their familiarity:

> For thee shall be no longer the sun to give light by day,
> Nor shall the moon with its brightness illumine thee by night;
> But the Lord will be thy light forever, thy God will be thy glory.
> Thy sun shall set no more, thy moon shall not withdraw itself,
> But Yahweh will be Thy Light forever, ended shall be thy days of mourning.
> Isa. 60:19-20

A new heaven and a new earth will be created, a new Jerusalem in which there shall no more be heard the voice of weeping, the sound of crying. Torrey thinks that the term 'Messiah' was in all probability first given general currency by the Second Isaiah, and he is certain that the prophet is the most influential force in the history of Hebrew-Christian eschatology.

The purpose of the foregoing rather hurried and general discussion has been to show the connection of Christianity with its antecedents. What has not been discussed is probably as important, and that is the tremendous vitality, the sheer rhapsody, the vibrating enthusiasm, the proclamation of glad tidings, the sense of liberation and hope and magnificent faith - the thing you feel when you listen to Handel's Messiah sung by a great choir. It is more than mere rhetoric to call this the gospel before the gospel. Indeed, the gospel loses much of its power without the contributions of this great unnamed prophet. That this was the conviction of early Christianity and in all likelihood of Jesus himself seems to me beyond dispute. We cannot be absolutely certain regarding Jesus' identification of himself with the suffering Servant, but nothing is more certain than that Christianity made this identification at a very early stage. An examination of the gospels and Acts is an extremely profitable exercise for the understanding and appreciation of our problem. For even a preliminary scrutiny reveals the central place which the Second Isaiah occupied in the gospels as we have them at present. Indeed, it is very likely that the very term 'gospel' as used by Jesus and his followers was drawn from Second Isaiah, for in the words of Professor Millar Burrows, who has studied the origin of the term, "Jesus saw in the prophecies of the book of Isaiah a description of his own mission, and the designation of his own message as glad tidings was suggested to him by the use of the expression in that book." The first words of our earliest gospel are quoted directly from Second Isaiah: "The voice of one crying in the wilderness, make ye ready the way of the Lord, make his paths straight." The nativity hymns of Luke show obvious influence (1:76, 79);

> Yes and thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Most High:
> For thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to make ready his ways.
>
> To shine upon them that sit in darkness and the shadow of death;
> To guide our feet into the way of peace.

All four gospels narrate in some form the baptismal experience of Jesus, and all give witness to the influence of Second Isaiah: the Bath Qol from the heavens in the Synoptics is surely derived from Isaiah 42:1, and the reference to the descent of the Spirit in all four gospels fortifies this. After John is delivered up into prison, Jesus goes to Galilee, visits Nazareth, and when he enters the synagogue he turns to Isaiah 61:1 ff. for the description of his mission:

> The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
> Because he anointed me to preach good tidings to the poor:
> He hath sent me to proclaim release to the captives,

And recovering of sight to the blind,
To set at liberty them that are bruised,
To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.

Interestingly, when John the Baptist from prison sends an embassy to Jesus to inquire of him concerning his mission, his answer is phrased in language drawn from this same passage in Isaiah. (E. G. Scott calls this incident "one of the most certainly historical, as it is one of the most illuminating incidents in the Gospel narrative.") The Transfiguration story repeats the Bath Qol of the Baptism experience in the words of Second Isaiah. Jesus' interpretation of the Messianic function at Caesarea Philippi seems necessarily to have been derived from Second Isaiah. It is probably too much to see in Mark 10:45, the key-verse of the gospel, a quotation from the prophet, but its language is consistent with the language of the Servant's function. The very early Christology reflected in the first chapters of Acts (3:13, 26; 4:27, 30; 8:32f.) is Servant Christology, and while the number of actual quotations in Paul is surprisingly small, both Torrey and Bacon agree on the tremendous influence of the Servant doctrine, the latter declaring that "Paul's Christ is essentially the Suffering Servant of Isaiah, exalted 'to make intercession for sin.' He is the fulfiller of the mission of Israel, a righteous though suffering Servant, who by his knowledge brings the godless world to justification." (Jesus and Paul, p. 59)

Five principles force themselves upon us:

1. We must distinguish between Hebraism and Judaism. Hebraism represents the classical Hebrew development portrayed most vividly and uniquely in the prophets. Jeremiah and Second Isaiah are the supreme exemplars of this movement. Judaism represents the development pre-figured in Ezekiel, and finds its characteristic expression in the Torah, the Psalms, and rabbinical literature.

2. We must recognize that the lines of liaison between Jeremiah and Second Isaiah and the early Christianity are strong and direct and clear.

3. While the accent of our discussion falls upon the prophetic character of the Christian movement, we recognize that both Hebraism and Judaism are strongly represented in the life and teachings of the historical Jesus, in earliest Christianity (which was a sect within Judaism), and even in Paul. The Hellenism of both Paul and the writer of the Fourth Gospel has been grossly exaggerated.

4. Early Christianity needed and sought the dimension of historical depth for the communication and propagation of the faith, and discovered this dimension in a religion that had conceived of history as the channel of God's revelation.

5. In our attempts to understand essential Christianity and essential Judaism we must recognize and appreciate both the character and the magnitude of these historical forces, both the uniqueness and concreteness of event and the kind of continuity we encounter. Christianity is not what men of any age choose to make it. Violation of these large, creative, dynamic historical movements is a violation of its true nature.

It may perhaps crystallize our discussion to add five further statements as tentative conclusions:

1. The logic of Christianity is toward universality. Professor Friedländer said many years ago that the tragedy of Judaism was its neglect of Second Isaiah.

The genius of Christianity, I should like to add, was its appropriation of Second Isaiah for the categories of its perpetuation.

2. The radicalism of the prophets finds its most exalted statement in Jesus' emphasis upon the centrality of love. These imperatives are perfectly stated in the words of the Jewish lawyer, and they are drawn from the two main streams of Hebrew tradition.

3. The person of Jesus is central for Christianity. He is essential to Christianity. Without him (even with his teachings) Christianity would be essentially different. Personality constitutes the most proper category for divine revelation, and the total impression of the Jesus of the gospels is of one who meets the demands of that category. But it must be added that in many striking and suggestive ways the life history of the Hebrew people parallels the gospel accounts of Jesus. Baptismal experience, teachings, endowment with the spirit of God, passion, death, and resurrection are profoundly revealed in both. (cf. the very similar situation in the thought of the Second Isaiah which helps to explain how convincing and real the identification with Jesus has always been to orthodox Christians.)

4. The Christ of Christian faith must be interpreted in terms of both crisis of event and continuity. Israel would seem to me to be the representation of the eternal Christ functioning within the category of the Hebrew community very much as the Catholic Church attempts to re-incarnate him within the structure of the Church. This may seem to minimize the individual person. I am happy to record my view of the importance of the Church.

5. It is essentially Christian to affirm that God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, and it is essential to Christianity. The representation and the terminology of the Prologue to the Fourth Gospel seems to me in all likelihood Hebraic in origin and character. It is indeed in the direct line of Hebrew religious development (cf. the whole history of the Word of the Lord, esp. in Wisdom and rabbinic literature). That Jesus Christ was the incarnate Logos seems to me the noblest truth of Christianity, but for the meaning of this I should go to Hebraism, even Judaism, but not to Hellas.