

only fragments of the Ugaritic epics have been preserved, but from the fragments at hand we must assume that the complete form of a work like Baal and ^CAnat consisted of many thousand lines. Compared to such literature the prophetic books of the Old Testament appear rather short.

Ugaritic has thrown much light upon the grammar and vocabulary of Biblical Hebrew and the prosody of Biblical poetry. This applies even more to the early parts of the Old Testament than to the later ones. A number of hapax legomena in the Bible have been explained through their occurrence in Ugaritic literature and it has been shown that the Hebrew text of the Old Testament preserves a number of expressions which at an early date became obscure. In some cases the Septuagint translators were in the dark regarding the meaning of some words, but never the less the word was preserved in the text. Now with the help of Ugaritic we are able in a number of cases to rediscover the original meaning, sometimes without any change in the text. This care in the handing down of the text is also borne out by the evidence of the Isaiah manuscript of ^CAin Feshkha which shows that the Massoretic text is extraordinarily well preserved and agrees remarkably with that text of 2100 years ago.

Many parts of the Old Testament which were generally considered late in years gone by, contain a sizable quantity of material of Canaanite type. Some such passages actually belong to the earliest parts of the Bible. It is interesting to read in books written only a few years ago about the Maccabean date of certain psalms which now turn out to have a background of the second millennium B.C. or even earlier.

When one compares the Ugaritic literature with the Old Testa-