

which shows that an old Canaanite cult underlies the legend of the flood.¹

We have now tried to analyse a complex of tradition from the Tetrateuch, in order to question the certainty and confidence with which literary critics often speak of their solution of the literary problems of the Flood narrative. Thereby we have seen that a mechanical division of the text into two independent sources does not do justice to the present text. Such a division disregards the fact that our present text is a work of art, composed of different traditions, it is true, but in such a way that a unified work has been the result. Our main purpose, however, was not the negative one, to express our doubt and distrust of the method of literary criticism, but a more positive one, viz., to advance an alternative solution. Thus the question now arises: What is the exact bearing of our 'results' on the commonly accepted theory of the compilation of Genesis from two (JE and P) or three (J, E, and P) strands of traditions (sources)?

Evidently our results offer too small a basis for a general answer. A general solution of any value must be built upon similar analyses of the whole Tetrateuch. From the present analysis, however, some things may be stated:

- (1) The author who is responsible for the arrangement of the traditions contained in chs. 6-9 has tried to compose them into a definite chronological scheme.
- (2) If the chronological system has to be connected with P (to use the terminology of literary critics), it is no longer possible to regard this P as an independent source beside the older traditions of strands.

¹ For an attempt to understand Gen. 6-9 in its present version we refer to Cassuto's work mentioned above, though it invites criticism on one point: his treatment of Gen. 7.16 is flagrantly opposed to the principles he applies to the account of the Deluge in general, esp. 6.9-12. He divides chs. 6-9 into twelve sections where each section has its name for the Deity, § 3 and § 9 thus have YHWH (7.1. 5 and 8.20-22), because God here appears in a personal, moral aspect, in the other sections Elohim, because God is there characterized as the preserver and almighty sovereign of life. But 7.16b (where the name of YHWH is mentioned) is thus left in an isolated position, and Cassuto inclines to adopt a conjecture supposed to be found in 'molti commentatori moderni', viz., substituting Noah in 7.16b for YHWH (*op. cit.*, p. 40).

- (3) Nor is he a redactor. A redactor is a man whose main interest is in harmonizing traditions which he has neither created nor supported.
- (4) He must quite certainly have been a great artist.

And now it may be allowed to put two questions which demand an answer:

- (1) Is it possible to go behind this work of art and disentangle one special strand of tradition and to reconstruct it as a literary book?
- (2) Is it possible to localize with some exactness in time and place the author, or the authors, of our present literary text?

If we were able to answer the second question in a convincing manner, if we could gain a picture of the personality (or theology) of the author(s), then we should possibly be able to answer the first question. We think therefore, that the next urgent task is the attempt at determining the character of our author, and this should be done by studying the chronological system, not with regard to its reliability as a historical source of information, but with regard to its literary character and theological (or ideological) foundation. And all the chronological material from the Tetrateuch must be taken into consideration, and not only the data belonging to the accepted P-source. The clue of this system, we think, is the clue to the personality of the author(s). Certainly, this task is attended by some difficulties, the most important of which are the divergences between the Hebrew, the Greek, and the Samaritan versions. These divergences, discouraging as they might be, are evidence of the great importance which was attached to chronology among the groups of Israelite people in Jerusalem, Egypt and Samaria.