

Excerpt of

Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy

Cyprian Vaggassini OSB

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PART 3

LITURGY AND BIBLE

1. The Foundation: The Concept of the Unity of the Two Testaments and of Sacred History

The law of the liturgical interpretation of the Scriptures can be formulated thus: The liturgy reads the Scriptures in the light of the supreme principle of the unity of the mystery of Christ, and therefore of the two testaments and of the whole of sacred history, an organic-progressive unity under the primacy of the New Testament over the Old, and of the eschatological realities over the reality of the present economy.

To understand the import of this law, we must refer again to the first chapter, and especially to that outline in which we traced the various phases of the mystery of Christ, and take account of the profound unity which binds these phases to one another. This intrinsic unity depends on the fact that history, centered in Christ, is wholly in the hands of a single, all-powerful director, God Himself, who grasps its threads firmly yet with complete respect for human freedom, and infallibly directs its course, whether in general or in its smallest details, to a single and precise end: the establishment of the heavenly Jerusalem of the redeemed in Christ together with the faithful angels.

In the historical unfolding of this plan, nothing escapes the supreme purpose of God. The phases which follow one another are all realizations and concretizations of one and the same supreme idea. They are ever more perfect approaches to a single ideal, because He who realizes them does not leave them to follow one another chaotically but in an orderly fashion, keeping and a prophetic passage (Law and prophets). Other notable liturgical passages: the triagion of Isaias; some psalms more especially in use, whether every day or according to a weekly distribution or on particular feasts. Everything leads to the conclusion that the Christians too, who in the beginning continued to frequent the temple and whose apostles willingly made their propaganda in the very meetings of the synagogues (Acts 13:15; 15:11), continued to read passages from the Old Testament and sing psalms even when they became separated from the synagogue in their worship.

St. Justin the Martyr, who is the first to give us an adequate description of the way in which the Eucharist was celebrated, mentions expressly (in the first part of the *synaxis*) the reading of the "Memoirs of the Apostles", and of the "writings of the prophets" (*First Apology* 67 [Jurgens, no. 129]). Tertullian adds mention of the singing of the psalms (*The Soul* 9). Later testimony is abundant.

The reading of the Scriptures and the chanting of the psalms took on a very great development in the liturgy, especially in the divine

office, with the rise of monasticism in the fourth century. Then also the cycle of the scriptural readings of the Mass was fixed, often in agreement with the readings of the office, especially on the feasts and in paschal time. The cycle then established remained much the same until our own time and the liturgical revisions subsequent to Vatican II. But there also prevailed, especially under monastic influence, the system of the so-called *lectio continua*, that is, the concept of reading in the course of one year, especially in the office, the passages of Scripture in the order in which they follow in the collection of the sacred books. This too had its influence as historical antecedent upon the later status of the use of the Bible in the Roman liturgy; and at least the concept itself has clearly influenced the reforms of our own times.

For the use of the Bible in the liturgy from the more descriptive point of view, see the chapter by P. Jouan in *The Liturgy and the Word of God* (a fruit of the Strasbourg Conference, 1958), published by The Liturgical Press, Collegeville, Minnesota.

always in view the total picture and the ultimate goal. Thus there is an intrinsic connection between these phases: each one prepares and announces the one that follows and is like a first imperfect realization of it; a roughcast, while all are fulfilled in a most perfect way in the last, the general goal toward which they tend.

And since all the phases are nothing but an ever more perfect realization of the unique mystery of Christ, each one of the realities in which this mystery is successively concretized, besides being and signifying that which it is in itself, has also a functional meaning in respect to something else beyond itself which is like the future goal to which it tends. The mystery of Christ in the unfolding of salvation history is fulfilled, therefore, by successive roughcasts, as it were, in which the preceding ones prepare for, announce, and prefigure the subsequent ones.

It is through the texts of the Old and New Testaments that we know the realities of the phases in which the mystery of Christ is successively concretized. It follows that to understand in depth the meaning which the realities spoken of in the Scriptures have in the eyes of God (the only meaning that counts), it is necessary to consider them also in relation to the subsequent unfolding of the same sacred history, since only in this does each one find its connatural fulfillment, its full significance.

The whole of the Old Testament, then, and the realities of which it speaks, besides being what they are, prepare for, announce, and prefigure as if in an initial roughcast those realities which will be realized later in the historical life of Jesus and which are realized continually in the real, mystical life, liturgical and extraliturgical, of Christians in the Church, in the present economy between the ascension and the parousia. In their turn, the realities of the present economy prepare for, announce, and prefigure the realities which will be fulfilled in the final eschatological phase.

Practically speaking, this means that the complete significance of the realities of which the Old Testament speaks can be understood only by a person who places them in relation to the realities of which the New Testament speaks and to those which are now being fulfilled in the Church in the ascetical and mystical life, liturgical and extraliturgical, of Christians. It means also that to understand the full import of the realities which are now being fulfilled in the Church in the ascetical and mystical life of the faithful, a person must consider them first by looking backward in the light of the realities of which the New Testament speaks, and further backward to those of which the Old Testament tells; and then by looking ahead to the light of the future eschatological realities. For only thus will he understand how the realities which are fulfilled today in the Church in the supernatural life of the faithful were prepared for, announced, made possible, prefigured in the history of the world before Christ; how in their own way they were

oughly understood, the texts of the Scriptures, especially of the Old Testament, must be examined under four lights and, as it were, sounded to four depths.

First: in the light which these texts, and hence the things of which they speak, had or could have had in the minds of the persons living at the time when the respective texts were written and for whom such compositions were immediately intended. We call this the sense or meaning grasped by the contemporary mind, or better, the "contemporary depth" of a biblical text, viz, the *literal sense*, in technical biblical textbooks.

Second: in the light which these same texts and these same things have to the eyes of those who consider them at a later date in the context of events which happened sometimes generations or centuries after the composition of the texts under consideration. In fact, in God's intentions, these later events were destined precisely to concretize in a more perfect way that very idea concretized or expressed at first in a less perfect way, as in a roughcast, in the previous events and texts. It is clear, therefore, that the functional meaning of the prior texts and of the things expressed in them toward those later events will be evident only to the later witnesses of these events, who have at their disposal, for understanding the ancient things, a light which the people contemporary with the original setting could not make use of.

Thus, within the limits of the Old Testament itself, texts and events of an earlier age can have to the eyes of later sacred authors a significance, not arbitrary but true, which far transcends that which the more ancient contemporaries were able to perceive. Thus again, and with greater reason, the whole ensemble of events and texts of the Old Testament, for the sacred authors of the New—and for all the faithful who live after that decisive event which is the incarnation of the Son of God, His redemptive life and death and glorification—takes on a meaning which is not at all arbitrary because first it corresponds to the deep realities of the events, while immensely transcending anything the contemporaries of those events could possibly suspect. All this is the simple and inevitable consequence of the concept of the unity of the two testaments and of history. For the believer who lives in the economy inaugurated by Christ, texts and facts of the Old Testament are illuminated by a new light, because they are considered in view of the realities which have already taken place in Christ Himself, realities toward which the whole of the Old Testament tended functionally. This depth which is discovered by the light of the person of Christ we may call the "Christic depth" of the Old Testament.

Ephemerides theologice Iouanienis, Vol. 22 (1946), pp. 70-89, and especially 70-71). The reason for this, I think, is that in treating of the question they adhere too much to the terminology of the ancients, who spoke of the "senses" of Scripture. Such a way of speak-

ing, however, gives rise to many difficulties. It is necessary, I think, to pay heed to the things themselves without becoming entangled in the terminology in which the ancients expressed them.

Third: but Christ is never separated from Christians, nor are the Christic realities separated from those realities which take place after Christ in Christians and among Christians. Indeed, Christ is in some way extended and fulfilled in the Christian realities. Thus, in the light of the Christian realities, the texts of the Scriptures reveal a new depth. We call it the "Christian depth."

These Christian realities are either extrinsic to each individual and more directly social, such as the Church, the sacraments, the liturgy, or they may be intrinsic because they take place in the interior of each of the faithful, comprising in some way the vicissitudes of the ascetical and mystical ascent toward perfection. Indeed, the mystery of Christ in Christians includes precisely this. Truly, it must be said that these vicissitudes of the intimate and personal relations of each soul with God are in some way the ultimate seal in which the mystery of Christ is fulfilled in every soul. Although they must never be divorced from those realities which are also extrinsic and of which we have spoken, yet it is true that it is to this ultimate seal, intimate and personal, that all the rest is in some way ordained. It is certainly a mistake, therefore, to think that no account need be taken of these intimate and personal realities of ascetical and mystical life when the concern is with reading and understanding the Old Testament in the light of the Christic and Christian realities.

It is not my intention to justify here the arbitrariness of Origen and his school when, with their system of allegorical interpretation of the Scriptures, they claimed to read in every text of the sacred page even the smallest details of their systematic ascetical and mystical theories, however arbitrary those theories might be. Still, I do not see how anyone can reject the fundamental principle that in the Sacred Scriptures are prefigured and prepared the realities even of the highest ascensions of the perfect life in Christ, ascetical and mystical, and that, in fact, it is precisely these realities which, in the final accounting, will give us the strongest interpretive light for understanding the Bible in the sense intended by God. Nor do we wish to fully justify the manner in which the mystics are accustomed to read the Scriptures. We wish only to invite the reader to reflect whether, in this manner of reading, their fundamental principle is not correct, and whether the scientific reaction in the opposite direction has not been exaggerated. All this, as is easily understood, will be of great importance in the question of the relations between spiritual life and liturgy.

Fourth: a fourth light, finally, is necessary to exhaust, insofar as possible, the meaning of the Scriptures, whether of the Old or of the New Testament, namely, the light of the eschatological realities which have not yet occurred, but on which we are nevertheless informed in some way by the revelation of the New Testament. Indeed, with the arrival of the new economy which begins with Christ, the mystery of Christ, or sacred salvation history, has not

quite justified; God really did announce and promise that Israel would be forgiven spiritually, would be liberated from exile in Babylon, and Jerusalem would again become a center of life on earth that was divinely acceptable. The only trouble was that the Jews later concretized this revelation into a material and national ideology, while God intended a much more sublime, spiritual, and universal fulfillment of it, a fulfillment which was verified in the appearance of Jesus on earth (Epiphany) and is verified in mystery every day in the Church, in the Mass, and in souls.

When the liturgy of the Epiphany reads that prophecy in the Mass, it is the whole complexus that is under consideration. The further light which comes to this text with the advent of the Son of God on earth at Bethlehem and every day in the Church at Mass and in the souls of the faithful does not cause the message given Judaism in exile to evaporate but presupposes it, so that the total theological-liturgical meaning of this text read on the day of Epiphany is this: What God promised and announced to the Jews in exile, namely, that in virtue of the Messiah the people of God would be liberated from their enemies and, resplendent with extraordinary glory, would become the center of the whole world, was indeed verified as if in a first very pale sketch in the end of the Babylonian exile, but in reality had its consummate fulfillment in a manner immensely more sublime than that which the Jews could suspect, with the appearance of the Son of God on earth in Palestine many centuries later and with the sacramental coming of the Son of God every day in the Church, in the Mass, and with His spiritual coming into souls. There is no interruption, therefore, but rather a sublimating continuity between the understanding which the contemporaries had of that oracle and the further insights stressed by the liturgy.

In the same way it must be said that the theological-ascetical interpretation of the psalms in liturgical use, to keep from being arbitrary, must start from the sense of the contemporaries, and the other "senses" must always, in some way, be connected with that original one and be a deepening of it, never foreign to it. Otherwise one would fall into full Hellenistic allegories, with no guarantee that we are still understanding the sacred text in the sense of the author, God. In a word: every interpretation of the Bible, including liturgical interpretation, which would want to abstract from the literal, historical sense, i.e., the meaning originally intended by the inspired author and understood by his contemporaries, would build on emptiness.

4. The Deepening of the "Contemporary or First Perspective" in the Texts of the Old Testament Used by the Liturgy

To understand the use which the liturgy makes of the Bible, we must resolutely affirm that the sense which contemporaries had or could have given to a biblical text at the time of its composition is always surpassed

when such a text is used in the liturgy, surpassed precisely by means of that deepening which is obtained by putting the text into relation with the realities which have already taken place in the historical life of the Redeemer in Palestine; with the realities of the Christ-mystery which are verified in a real mystical way every day in souls and above all by way of the liturgy in the present period from the ascension to the parousia; and finally, with the future realities of eschatology about which we are already in some way informed.

Let us illustrate this rule with a series of examples showing the prolongation which the liturgy gives to the sense of the contemporaries. Let us consider first the liturgical use of Old Testament texts accordingly as the concern is with texts which express:

- a) doctrinal affirmations about God, His nature and attributes; or about other things, especially about the relations between God and man;
- b) moral, juridical, liturgical precepts and admonitions;
- c) prophecies properly so called;
- d) historical persons, things, and events.

Doctrinal affirmations

If the concern is with texts of the Old Testament which speak, whether under didactic form or under the form of prayer or some other form, of God's attributes, the fact that they have come to be inserted into the Christian liturgical picture and recited by the Church and by the believer in this framework interprets these attributes under a light much more profound than that under which they could possibly appear to the Jews. Actually, a philosophical analysis of such attributes is never made in the Scriptures, but the story of their manifestation through God's action in the world is told. Scripture does not analyze speculatively what wisdom or goodness or power or freedom is in God; rather, it shows God acting in the world with wisdom, goodness, power, and freedom.

Now the record of God's interventions in the world is that sacred salvation history which, as we know, is wholly centered in the mystery of Christ. It is clear, therefore, that with the manifestation of Christ and of the Christian realities, the attributes of God affirmed and sung in the Old Testament appear in the New with a depth unsuspected in the sole light of the Old, but obvious to that of the new reality. That is precisely what happens when the texts of the Old Testament affirming the attributes of God are recited in the liturgy in the further light of the realities of Christ, of the Christian economy, and of the future eschatology.

Thus, for example, in Psalm 135 [Vulgate or liturgical numbering], *Confitemini Domino quoniam bonus* (new translation: *Laudate Dominum quoniam bonus*), in which the refrain *quoniam in aeternum misericordia eius* is constantly interjected, the goodness and mercy of God is exalted as it is

"He who listens to me will not have to blush, and those who act by using me will not sin; those who put me in the light will have life eternal. All this is the book of life and the alliance of the Most High, and the knowledge of truth."

Now, this passage frequently serves as one of the liturgical readings, with evident reference to our Lady. In this context the sense with which the encomium on the wisdom of God is colored is this: The wisdom of God, which was manifested in a marvelous way in the creation of the world and in the Mosaic law, manifests itself in a still more marvelous way in the Blessed Virgin Mary. And in fact one who thinks of the close relationship between Mary and Christ, the concretized and incarnate Wisdom of God, one who thinks of the marvels God has wrought in Mary, of the place she has in the life of Christians, cannot help counting Mary among the most marvelous works of the divine Wisdom: *beatam me dicent omnes generationes quia fecit in me magna qui potens est*. There is nothing arbitrary, therefore, in her insertion into the message of scriptural passages which praise the wisdom of God manifested in creation, in providence, and in the Torah!

Those texts also, so frequent in the Old Testament, in which God the Creator is spoken of take on a wholly new light from the context in which they have been inserted when they are read in Catholic liturgy. For the liturgy, as the New Testament has already done (see Col. 1:15-20), reads the work of creation in the light of Christ, of His work of redemption, and of future eschatology, so that the vision of God the Creator which the Jew could have is different from that which the Christian has.

Hence the oration after the ninth prophecy of Holy Saturday used to say: "O God all-powerful and eternal, wonderful in the disposition of all Your works, may those whom You have redeemed understand that the creation of the world, which took place in the beginning, was not more excellent than the immolation which Christ, our Passover, accomplished at the end of the ages."

In the older rite the "first prophecy" was a reading from Genesis, the creation narrative; now in the Pauline Roman Missal the same passage is the first reading during the Paschal Vigil service. The oration which formerly was read after the first prophecy may now be read after the first lesson. The text of that prayer is: "O God, in a wonderful way You created man, and still more wonderfully You have redeemed him . . ."; one may add: "still more marvelously You will glorify him at the parousia."

The Old Testament often speaks of God present among His people, especially in the sanctuary. Very marked is the sign of God's presence in the erection and dedication of Solomon's temple is related. The deepening of the sense of these texts is obvious when they are read in the Catholic liturgy for

the dedication of a church — material edifice of the spiritual Church, where God makes Himself present in the Eucharistic sacrifice and where the influx of sanctifying grace (derived from the Eucharist for every soul and which can go as far as the mystical experience of the presence in oneself of the persons of the Trinity) is immensely greater than in the temple of Solomon. In fact, in the Office of the dedication of a church, the continual allusions to the presence, still more extraordinary, of God among the people of the heavenly Jerusalem (see, for example, the responsory to the former eighth lesson, the chapter at Lauds, the hymns *Caelstis urbs Jerusalem* and *Alto ex Olympi vertice*, and the first reading of the Mass: Apoc. 21:1-5) prolong the sense of the texts of 2 Paralipomenon on the presence of God even to the triumphs of the Apocalypse.

The prophets of the Old Testament often sing the tenderness and the greatness of God's love for His people, comparing it to that of a husband for his wife (Osse 1:2; 2:3-15; 4:10-19; Jer. 12:7-9; 31:3; Is. 54:5-8; 62:4 ff; Ezech. 16; 23; Mal. 1:2). The whole Canticle of Canticles, after the fashion of a parable, is simply celebrating this conjugal love between God and Israel. The texts of the Canticle are sometimes read in the liturgy in the votive Mass for religious profession and on the feasts of various saints. Transported into these Catholic surroundings, those texts are read in the light of all those manifestations of the love of God for the Church and the individual souls within the Church, especially for Mary, in whose case the relations between God and Israel were but a pale foreshadowing. And in the background is always the heavenly Jerusalem where the nuptials of the Lamb with the Church and with individual souls will have their perfect fulfillment (Apoc. 19:7-9; 21:2 ff).

God the protector of the just and pious Israelite is very often sung in the psalms and in the sapiential books. These texts are often read by the liturgy in the light of the still more wonderful protections which God has granted the just of the New Testament (see, for example, the readings of the Commemoration of Martyrs outside of Paschaltide).

In short, the Old Testament texts of a doctrinal type in which some attribute of God or something of the relations between the world and God is affirmed, when read in the liturgy, are, as it were, deepened and prolonged by it in the light of the realities present in Christ and in the Church and of the realities proper to the consummation of Christ's redeeming work in the eschatological future.

Precepts and admonitions

The moral, liturgical, juridical precepts and admonitions directed immediately to the Israelites in the Old Testament are often accepted into the New Testament and held valid in the new economy, and hence are repeated also in the liturgy. But it is clear that these precepts and admonitions as read in

12:1-11, it was clear that the sense of those liturgical precepts is to be seen against the background of the immolation on Golgotha and of its unbloody re-enactment in the Mass.

The liturgical precepts of Exodus (13:1-3, 11-13) and of Leviticus (12:1-8) in the breviary liturgy of February 2, are read with reference to the historical fact of the presentation of Jesus in the temple and to the real mystical fact of His sacramental coming in the Mass.

Very appropriately, therefore, did the former antiphon of the Candlemas procession, still recited in part in the first responsory after the first lesson of the breviary, proclaim: "Adorn your bridal chamber, O Sion" (understand Jerusalem and the Church), "and receive Christ the King. Welcome Mary with love; she is the gate of heaven. For she carries the King of glory, the new light. The Virgin stops, presenting in her arms the Son, begotten before the dawn. Simeon receives Him in his arms and to the nations heralds before Lord of life and death and Savior of the world."

Or the entrance antiphon: "We have received Your mercy, O God, in the midst of Your temple; as Your name, O God, so also Your praise goes even to the ends of the earth. Your right hand is full of justice."

It is proper also that the Catholic worshipper think of the full realization of these realities in the heavenly Jerusalem.

Prophecies properly so called

The continuance of the first or original message of the prophecies properly so called of the Old Testament when used in the liturgy is easy enough to understand; we have given an example of it above. Actually, any prophecy properly so called from the Old Testament in its essence touches upon the messianic work, the Messiah, or His reign in the last times, the eschatological era of history; or at least, among the prophecies properly so called of the Old Testament, it is this aspect that interests the New Testament and the Church.

Now, according to the New Testament, the Messiah of prophecy is Christ Jesus; and with Him begin the last eschatological times of which the prophets spoke. These eschatological times are not yet completed, but are still in progress; they will be completed perfectly in the second coming of Christ, in the parousia, and in the final, definitive establishment of the Kingdom of God.

Thus, theologically speaking, the prophecies of the Old Testament about the Messiah and His Kingdom, besides the message which they could convey to their first or original audience, can and should have, as it were, three further levels of deepened meaning, three further stages of integral realization, in the light of which the fundamental sense perceived by contemporary Is-

rachies is prolonged and deepened: the level of Christ's historical life; the level of the real mystical realization of the mystery of Christ in souls and in the Church by means both liturgical (chiefly the sacrifice and the sacraments) and extraliturgical (as takes place every day in the present phase from the ascension to the parousia); and the level of final eschatology.

In the liturgy the prophecies of the Old Testament about the Messiah and His Kingdom are important principally in the period from Advent to the Epiphany, the season during which the mystery of Christ, in its complete unfolding from the beginning of the world to the Apocalypse, is seen in the perspective of the Lord's epiphanic coming.

Secondarily, these oracles have a certain importance also in the Quadregesima-Pentecost period, the time during which the whole mystery of Christ is once more viewed in perspective, but from the viewpoint of redemption. Some particular feasts, such as those of the Immaculate Conception and of the Sacred Heart, may be added for consideration here.

In the Advent-Epiphany period, precisely because the primary objective is the unfolding of the mystery of Christ as that of the coming of the Lord, the scriptural background, particularly abundant in the breviary, is constituted of Isaian prophecies on the future Messiah, His coming, and His Kingdom. Now, the sense which these prophecies had for Isaiah and his contemporaries undergoes a continual transposition in the liturgy by way of deepening, because they are seen in the light of Christ's historical coming on earth in Palestine, of His continual real mystical coming in souls, in the Church, in the sacrifice of the Mass in the sacraments, in the private life of every Christian soul, and finally in the light of His future second coming at the end of time.

Thus when the Roman liturgy on the Fourth Sunday of Advent recites the entrance antiphon, "Drop down your dew, O heavens, from on high, and let the clouds rain down the just one; let the earth open and bud forth the Savior" (Is. 45:8), this is indeed the cry of the Jews who, in the exile of Babylon, awaited the coming of the Messiah, liberation by the hand of Cyrus (see the former fourth lesson in the Office of Ember Saturday in Advent), and the establishment of the kingdom of God—all things which God was promising by the mouth of His prophet.

But in the vision of the liturgy, Is. 45:8 is also the cry of the whole Old Testament for the coming of Christ, an event realized by the incarnation of the Son of God and His birth of the Virgin Mary in Palestine. Is. 45:8 is also the cry of every Catholic who annually awaits the feast of Christmas, in fact, who each day awaits Christ's sacramental coming in the sacrifice of the Mass and His mystical advent into the soul. And it is, finally, the cry of this same individual as he awaits the second and triumphal coming of the Lord in the parousia and the beatific vision.

erly so called of the Old Testament has some importance should be noted: the Immaculate Conception and the reading of Genesis 3:15ff both in the breviary and as the first reading in the Mass: ". . . I will place enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel." The passage, even as understood by its Yahwist author and his contemporaries, presents a prophetic announcement of the Redeemer to be born of woman and of the evil, the cause of man's first fall. Obvious to all is the resplendent light with which this oracle shines in the liturgy, which reads it in the context of the revelation on Mary as the Mother of God and on her Immaculate Conception. Hence the liturgy can comment, "Through a man sin has entered into this world, and by sin, death—in which all have sinned. Fear not, Mary! You have found grace before God" (responsory after the first lesson, and in part, the Gospel reading of the Mass).

On the feast of the Sacred Heart, the readings of the Roman Breviary placed notable emphasis during the Office of Readings on the prophecies of Jeremias concerning the establishment of a new and eternal pact between God and the people at the time of the Messiah, a pact founded on God's love for the people and the sincere response of the same people to the love of God. These prophecies obviously assumed a new and profound meaning, read as they were by the liturgy, in the light of the revelation of God's love in Christ as it appears in St. Paul and in St. John, and of the Church as God's new people ever pilgrimaging their way to the heavenly Jerusalem. In the Liturgy of the Hours, supplanting the Roman Breviary, the feast is retained, but the reading is from St. Paul.

The meaning of persons, things, historical events, institutions.
Typology

The deeper sense by means of which the New Testament and the liturgy surpass the simple sense which the contemporaries gave to certain texts of the Old Testament, when the concern is with the meaning attached to persons, things, historical events, institutions, has a special name, already used, though not exclusively, in respect to the New Testament, and which today is ever more universally accepted: it is called the *typological sense*. It is necessary to examine this special case more closely.

Typology in the Bible is a certain relation, as of roughcast and complement, which God has placed between two things in which He has intended to concretize successively one and the same aspect of the mystery of Christ, so that the antecedent object has the character of imperfect realization and, as it were, of sketch of that which will be more perfectly fulfilled in the subsequent thing.

The antecedent thing is the type: a first expression, a first roughcast, an

initial prefigurative sketch. The subsequent thing is the antitype: the more perfect and more complete realization of the same objective. Between the type and the antitype, therefore, there is in the eyes of God an intrinsic relation of preparation and prefiguration: in realizing the antecedent thing God already had in view the subsequent thing. Thus it is clear that the full significance or whole *raison d'être* of the type in the historical development of the mystery of Christ cannot be understood except in reference to the antitype.

In typology, then, there is a thing which prepares, prefigures, and roughs out another thing, with a view to a successive and ever more perfect realization of the mystery of Christ. This "thing" may be a person, an inanimate thing, an event, a relationship or an institution. Typology presupposes the unity of the two testaments and of sacred history as it has been explained at the beginning of this chapter. It expresses this unity of sacred history in the mystery of Christ not only by means of an ever greater deepening of the total value of general abstract, doctrinal, moral, or prophetic statements, but by means of an intrinsic, preparative and prefigurative relation of one phenomenon to another.

The existence of typology in principle between the Old and the New Testaments is absolutely certain. The process appears already in the prophets, with whom there is seen the tendency to interpret the past events of Israel's history as a function of future events awaited. Past events are considered as preparing, announcing, and prefiguring future realities which be verified in the days of the Messiah. In fact, the thought of the prophets is that in the messianic era the more memorable events of Israel's ancient story will be renewed in some way, yet not in a mechanical and material repetition, but, as it were, in a more sublime and wonderful transposition.

It is above all else the story of the Exodus, the departure from Egypt and the entrance into the promised land, which is considered in this light (see, for example, Is. 11:11-12:6; 43:16-21; Jer. 23:7ff; 31:31-33). Thus the essential lines of the history of ancient Israel, besides preserving their function of delineating past historical reality, take on a further dimension of first imperfect realization of what God will do in messianic times. Then there will be, in a manner much more marvelous and sublime than that which took place at the first Exodus, a new passage through the sea, a new march of the people through the desert, new living waters gushing from the rock, a new luminous column of clouds, and especially a new and eternal covenant. This tendency is especially strong in later Judaism and finds its full development in the New Testament.

The great new announcement which the New Testament addresses to the Jews is simply this: Whatever had been prepared, announced, prefigured as in a first sketch in the Old Testament has now been fulfilled in the person of Christ and in Christians. The books of the New Testament are full of

sary if an apodictic argument is to be drawn from the Fathers alone, so as to assert that a thing is to be believed and accepted as of the faith. These conditions of moral unanimity will be difficult to verify for those cases which are not already clearly proposed by the Scriptures themselves. With this in mind, it is not at all sufficient to show that some typology has been affirmed by one or even by various Fathers, or that it is affirmed in some text of a historical or present-day liturgy, in order to be able to conclude at once that this typology is to be considered a matter of faith.

On the other hand, to know the thinking of the Fathers about the typological interpretation of some passage of Scripture or of the liturgy will be very useful in every case for understanding the symbolic meaning which they attached to it, although it does not follow that this meaning must be considered a matter of faith. In this regard the works of Cardinal Daniélou, *Sacramentum futurum* and *The Bible and the Liturgy*, will be found very useful.

At any rate, the use of typology in the liturgy is quite abundant; but by observing things attentively, one will note that, as a rule, the Roman liturgy confines itself to the cases already very clear, or relatively clear, in the New Testament. Thus it is easy to find there the cases previously listed. Some few examples will suffice:

On the passage through the Red Sea as a type of baptism, see the liturgy of the Paschal Vigil, the oration after the third reading, and the blessing of the baptismal water; the entrance antiphons of the Masses of Thursday, Friday, and Saturday in the octave of Easter.

On the typology of the Eucharist, see the Mass and the Office of Corpus Christi. On the flood as a type of baptism, see again the blessing of the baptismal water in the liturgy of the Paschal Vigil. On the entrance into the promised land as a type of baptism and entrance into the Church, see the entrance antiphon of Easter Monday. On Elias as a type of John the Baptist, see the feast of June 24, the Gospel passage read in the Vigil Mass (Luke 1:5-17). On the typology Esau-Jacob, Ishmael-Isaac, and Jews-Christians, see the Masses of the Saturday after the Second Sunday of Lent and of the Fourth Sunday of Lent in the pre-Pauline Roman Missal. On the typology earthly Jerusalem-Church-heavenly Jerusalem, see the Mass and the whole Office of the dedication of a church. On the serpent in the desert as a type of Christ on the Cross, see the feast of the Exaltation of the Cross on September 14, *parvum*.

Besides these cases of typology of biblical origin, the liturgy adds a certain number of patristic origin, some of which, however, can easily be considered as a simple development of elements already contained in the New Testament. Concerning our Lady, the liturgy develops a whole typology which is not explicitly scriptural: Eve-Mary, a theme very much developed in the

patristic tradition¹¹ and connected in some way with Gen. 3:15, the promise of a Redeemer to be born of a woman; Judith-Mary; Esther-Mary. See on the feasts of our Lady the many texts taken from the books of Judith and Esther. The typology of the Eucharist is developed especially by means of the elements: sacrifice of Isaac-Eucharist,¹⁰ sacrifice of Melchisedech-Eucharist.¹¹ That of baptism is developed, for example, by means of the theme: earthly paradise-baptism.¹² From the Fifth Sunday of Lent to Good Friday the characterization of Jeremias as a type of Christ is greatly developed in the liturgy.¹³

5. The Texts of the New Testament in the Liturgy: Their Deepening

The use of the texts of the Old Testament and the use of those of the New Testament in the liturgy present two rather different cases because their liturgical interpretation is made under two different perspectives. Actually the sense which the contemporaries for whom they were immediately written could see in the texts of the New Testament is already, under a certain aspect, their exhaustive sense. We who live today and read those texts are not, with respect to the immediate disciples of the Apostles, in such a substantially different situation as were the Apostles themselves with respect to the ancient Jews, as far as the understanding of the Old Testament was concerned.

From the time when the texts of the New Testament were written to the present day, nothing substantially new has happened in the mystery of Christ, sacred history, since, after the Apostles, there has not been nor will there be any new public revelation in the Church. The unfolding of salvation history to the very moment of the parousia does not therefore involve any event which may permit the contemporaries to see the texts of the New Testament in a substantially new light and depth comparable to that new light which the coming of Christ and of the Church brought to the comprehension of the Old Testament.

And yet, under another aspect, it is true enough that the texts of the New Testament read today in the liturgy are illuminated by a light wholly their

¹⁰ See "La nouvelle Eve," parts 1 and 2, in *Études mariales*, *Bulletin de la soc. mariale française*, 1954 and 1955; and also Jean Card. Daniélou, "La typologie de la femme dans l'ancien Testament," in *La vie spirituelle*, 1949, pp. 491-510.

¹¹ See Jean Card. Daniélou, *Sacramentum futurum*, pp. 97ff.

¹² See Jean Card. Daniélou's *The Bible and the Liturgy*, pp. 142ff. The sacrifice of Melchisedech as a type of the Eucharist is basically indicated already by the Scriptures in the Melchisedech-Christ typology.

¹³ See Jean Card. Daniélou's *Sacramentum futurum*, pp. 135ff; as also his articles "Terre et paradis chez les Pères de l'Église," in *Études mariales*, Vol. 22 (1953), pp. 433-472, and "Catechèse parabolique et retour au paradis," in *La maison Dieu*, no. 45 (1956), pp. 99-119. This typology also, "earthly paradise-baptism," has a scriptural basis in the Adam-Christ typology.

¹⁴ This typology is already sufficiently hinted at by the Scriptures where Christ is presented as "the just one" and "the prophet" *par excel-*

festation of Christ; the Resurrection, an ever-renewed participation in His divine life; the Ascension, an ever-renewed participation in His glory at the Father's side; Pentecost, an ever new coming of the Spirit into the heart of the believer.

Thus when there is read in the liturgy on Christmas day, "In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be enrolled. . . . And [Mary] gave birth to her first-born Son and wrapped Him in swaddling clothes and laid Him in a manger," the sense of this reading is not only to recall the historical fact which happened in Palestine, but also to assert that that fact, in its redemptive power, is actualized today in every individual believer who takes part with the proper dispositions in the liturgical action which is going on. Thus Luke's narrative does not speak of a simple historical fact like other historical facts, which have no real contact with me and with what I am doing at this moment. That of which Luke speaks is a living reality which touches me personally. We participate for the first time and radically in the redemptive power of Christ's nativity in baptism; then, throughout our life we assimilate to ourselves that redemptive power more and more in participation in the sacrifice, the sacraments, the liturgical life of the Church and our extraliturgical Christian life.

The like may be said of all the other liturgical feasts which refer to historical events in which our redemption is realized. Every Holy Week is for us a further dying and a further rising in Christ. The narrative of the descent of the Holy Spirit on the Apostles, recounted in the first reading of the Mass on Pentecost, in the liturgical frame in which it is read, at the same time that it records the past historical event, proclaims its mystical sacramental realization in the souls of the faithful in the liturgical action.

The reference of the New Testament texts used by the liturgy and containing some moral admonition is clearly in view of the present liturgical action as well as of the personal situation of the believer who is participating in that liturgical action. For example: on Easter Sunday the second reading of the Mass is (optionally) from St. Paul's Epistle to the Colossians (3:1-4): "If you have risen with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things that are above, not on the things that are of earth. For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, your life, appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory."

The sense of this passage is not a simple repetition of what St. Paul was writing to the Colossians. But, by reason of the fact that this passage is read in the Easter Mass to the faithful who, whether the day before or a longer time before, have received baptism and confirmation and are now about to participate in the Eucharistic sacrifice, St. Paul's admonitions are considered as directed personally to the faithful here present. They refer to their baptism,

either recent or in the more distant past, to their participation in the Eucharist, to the obligations which are derived from it, and to the certain hope which each of them personally has of reaching the goal of all life, which is glory together with Christ and in His likeness. It is not only the history of the Colossians which is here placed in perspective for me, but my personal situation while I participate in the liturgical action at this moment on Easter Sunday.

It is to me personally that another admonition of St. Paul is addressed, and which, like the one just considered, serves optionally as the second reading of the Mass on Easter Sunday: "Throw out the old leaven, that you may be a new dough, as you really are unleavened; for Christ, our Passover, has been sacrificed. Therefore let us celebrate the feast, not with the old leaven, the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth" (1 Cor. 5:7-8).

It is just as clear that all the other passages of the New Testament read in the liturgy and referring to a moral teaching of Jesus or of the Apostles, or which describe the realities of the supernatural life which take place in every Christian, are read as addressed to each of the faithful present at the liturgical action. Thus, for example, the Sermon on the Mount (see in the *Lectioary* the numerous places where pericopes from Matthew 5-7 are read; and in particular, on the feast of All Saints, when the Beatitudes are read)—with the further implication that these precepts and admonitions have been, as it were, the way which has led the saints to their glory). So also when on the Sixth Sunday of Easter (Cycle C) there is read the Gospel passage in which Jesus promises the coming of the Spirit and explains the conditions necessary for receiving Him and the effects of His coming (John 14:23-29): "If a man loves Me, he will keep My word, and My Father will love him, and We shall come to him and make our home with him. . . ."—all this the liturgy interprets as addressed to each of the faithful present.

* * *

From the simple hints given in this chapter on the use of the Bible in the liturgy, it is seen how important it is to take account of the theological laws which apply.

From what we have said, the fact is made perfectly evident that the Church is living out a sacred history, just as revelation emerges primarily in sacred history. The Christocentrism of the liturgy becomes most vivid. Sacred history is the mystery of Christ, in Christ Himself and in His faithful. Christ appears as the pivot of the whole liturgy, of the whole Bible, of all history, of the whole life of the believer.

The perfect unity of the two testaments and of all history is found again precisely in the mystery of Christ, read in the Bible and realized in liturgical action.

re-establishing their use among the people, of singing them in the liturgy, we can understand the capital importance of the question of how to make them also our personal prayer, especially for those of us who are obligated to the breviary and still more for those whose lives are such that besides the breviary obligation they have the additional obligation of choral recitation.

It would be naive to think that in order really to pray the psalms, it is enough to "understand" them, in the sense of having a conceptual comprehension of them of the scientific or learned sort. It is certain, on the contrary, that holiness of life, even if not accompanied by such knowledge, is the one condition necessary and sufficient for achieving this result.

Actually, in one who has holiness of life there occurs infallibly, by the work of grace, an understanding of the psalms, not by a conceptual process of the scientific type, but an understanding gained connaturally and, as it were, by an attuning of two natures confronting each other, or by instinct and sympathy. For holiness means a way of being and of acting similar to the way of being and of acting which pertains to God and to divine things. But the psalms speak of nothing else but God and divine things. Hence, just as a mother's nature "understands" her son instinctively by an intuitive and not a conceptual process, or just as the chaste person reacts instinctively by sympathy or by repugnance before situations and objects which concern chastity, so the holy man vibrates with a connaturality before God and the divine things of which the psalms speak; and thus does he "understand" them.

And this understanding, which does not depend on intellectual acumen or abundance of erudite knowledge, but solely on grace and moral dispositions, is eminently a prayer which is so much the more intense as the holiness is greater, and reaches its apex in the mystical life, as will be better explained in a later chapter.

But this does not mean that the conceptual understanding of the psalms is useless for enabling us to make them more easily a true personal prayer. On the contrary, a conceptual understanding may help this aim considerably in two ways. First of all, it may help it as preparation, inasmuch as the conceptual understanding of the text disposes the discursive intelligence toward the things of which the text speaks; and, through the intellect, it disposes the will and the other powers which obey its command. Secondly, it may help inasmuch as the conceptual understanding of the text may justify the way in which, even if more or less instinctively and without any formal deliberative study, we interpret it and apply it to our personal situation, seeing ourselves personally involved in what it says.

On the other hand, not all methods of proceeding in the study of the psalms are equally adapted to attaining this end. It is not enough to "understand" the psalms in the sense of knowing the original composer's message.

And we must realize also that the purely philological-historical study, while being the indispensable basis for a conceptual and exhaustive liturgical understanding of the psalms, is not by any means sufficient in itself to attain that understanding.

Under this aspect, for example, the otherwise important work of H. Gun- kel¹ on the literary genres of the psalms is still far from satisfying the desires of anyone who wants to understand and live the liturgy. Let it suffice to say that his proposed grouping of the psalms into ten different titles² is made essentially from the literary-philological point of view of expression and not of religious thought or theological content.

On the contrary, to understand the psalms in their real depth, it is necessary to start out first of all from the viewpoint of their thought and seek to understand it against the general background of the mystery of salvation history, the mystery of Christ. In other words, while taking into account everything that exegesis and modern biblical theology have given us and are now giving us with ever greater perfection, we must ground the study of the psalms—as of all the Bible—decisively on the point of view which was essentially that of the Fathers.³

Accordingly, in this study it is indispensable to take into account everything that exegesis and modern biblical theology teach us; it is likewise clear that to imitate the Fathers in the general grounding of the study of the

¹ *Einleitung in die Psalmen*, Göttingen 1933.

² 1) Lamentations of private individuals; 2) hymns; 3) psalms of thanksgiving; 4) royal psalms; 5) lamentations of the people; 6) sapiential psalms; 7) alphabetic psalms; 8) psalms which speak of the lot of Israel; 9) psalms which contain stories; 10) psalms of eschatological content.

Père Tournay, *Les psaumes (Bible de Jérusalem)*, 2nd ed., Paris 1955, pp. 59-61, groups the psalms according to literary genre under four headings: hymns, prayers, didactic psalms, prophetic and eschatological psalms.

In Italy we have the work of G. Castellino, *Libro dei Salmi (La sacra bibbia)*, Marietti 1935. He groups the psalms under the following eleven titles: 1) individual lamentations; 2) psalms of trust; 3) public lamentations; 4) songs of thanksgiving; 5) hymns; 6) royal psalms; 7) psalms of Zion; 8) psalms of Yahweh King; 9) liturgy of Yahwistic fidelity; 10) sapiential psalms; 11) various prayers. In the work of Castellino will be found an excellent foundation for dedicating oneself to that first phase of the study of the psalms which is their consideration under the simple philological, critical, historical light according to the advances of modern science. See also

P. Dryver, *Les psaumes, genres littéraires et thèmes doctrinaux* (trans.), Paris 1958.

³ Foremost is St. Augustine in his *Enarrationes*. Even prior to him in time, and taking much the same point of view, there are Athanasius, Hilary, Ambrose, and many others. See the list of them in G. Castellino's *Libro dei Salmi*, pp. 34-37. See also B. Fischer, *Die Psalmenherkunft der Marienkirche*, Freiburg 1949. P. Salmon, "De l'interprétation des psaumes dans la liturgie, aux origines de l'office divin," in *La maison Dieu*, no. 33 (1953), pp. 21-55; "Le problème des psaumes," in *L'ami du clergé*, Vol. 64 (1954), pp. 161-173; and also of Salmon, Les "Himni psalmorum" des manuscrits latins, Rome 1959. L. Bouyer, "Les psaumes dans la prière chrétienne traditionnelle," in *Bible et vie chrétienne*, Vol. 10 (1955), pp. 22-35. H. de Caudole, *The Christian Use of the Psalms*, London 1955. R. B. H. Scott, *The Psalms as Christian Prayers*, London 1958. T. Worden, *The Psalms Are Christian Prayers*, London 1962. A. Georges, *Prier les psaumes*, Paris 1962. I. Salmi, *preghiera e canto della Chiesa*, Turin, LDC 1964. S. Rinaudo, *I Salmi nel mistero di Cristo e della Chiesa*, Turin, LDC 1965.

study of that theme even through the New Testament, without ignoring, moreover, those realities of the mystery of Christ which theology shows us, under various forms, in the Church, in souls, and even in eschatology itself.⁷

In short, according to what was said in the preceding chapter, what is important for the liturgy is that the study of the Bible and of the psalms in particular be made from the prevailing point of view of the great biblical theological themes of the mystery of Christ and that, in respect to each theme, there be kept in mind the intimate connection which the different phases of sacred history have among themselves in the eyes of God. Thus the text which for the original author spoke directly of one of these phases will be seen by us in intimate connection with the antecedent and subsequent phases.

It goes without saying that when we affirm that the psalms must be viewed against the background of salvation history or the mystery of Christ in its total extension, we are by that very fact recognizing at the same time that all the psalms, as indeed the whole of the Scriptures, speak of Christ, or, as St. Augustine puts it, of the *Christus totus*: of Christ the Head, and of ourselves, His members. All the psalms, therefore, can, and in a certain sense, must be prayed as the prayer of the *Christus totus*. Christ offers them all as His prayer, and we pray them all as ours. It must be kept in mind, of course, that even though there exists between Christ and ourselves that ultimate union which is called the Mystical Body, there is not on that account a physical unity of person. And that being the case, certain of the psalms — those, for example, in which the sinner asks pardon for his sin — are prayed by Christ in one sense and by ourselves in another.

Nevertheless, even while admitting this, every psalm is the prayer of Christ and our prayer also.⁸ In fact, there is no event nor aspect of the sacred salvation history of which the psalms speak which does not refer, as to its focal point extended into the eschatological reality, to Christ and to ourselves, His Christian followers.

2. General Grouping of the Psalms according to the Principal Theme of Each One in Relation to Sacred History and Their Extension to the Christic, Christian, and Eschatological Realities

For these reasons I think it will be useful to attempt to a general grouping of the psalms according to the principal theme of each one in reference to sacred history; and to indicate, for each theme, the type of reasoning, by way of transposition or deepening, by means of which the liturgy makes use of

⁷ P. Guichou, *Les psaumes commentés par la Bible*, 3 vols., Paris 1958.

⁸ See St. Augustine, *Enarr. in Ps.* 85, *prom.* See also CL, art. 83. In this same regard, cf. F. Vandenhoecke, *Les psaumes et le Christ*, Louvain 1955, with bibliography.

it, beyond the sense of the original author, and sees in every psalm the Christic, ecclesial — also ascetical and mystical — and eschatological realities of the mystery of Christ in its whole extension. It is this transposition which *ipso facto* permits the individual who recites those psalms in following the liturgy to recite them as prayers which are personal and which are of immediate interest to himself.

Without giving an absolute interpretation to this attempt, it seems to me that the whole Psalter, from the point of view which interests us here, can be divided into ten categories:

- 1) Creation and general providence;
- 2) Election, separation, formation, and restoration of the people of God;
- 3) The king, head of the people of God;
- 4) Jerusalem, the capital city of the people of God;
- 5) The temple of God; the holy ark; and Sion, the holy mountain;
- 6) The law of the people of God;
- 7) The enemies of the people of God and the struggles of the people of God against them;
- 8) The penitent sinner among the people of God;
- 9) The just and pious man among the people of God;
- 10) Attributes of God and invitations to praise Him as the direct and the principal theme of some psalms.

The necessity of this last category, notwithstanding the fact that ultimately all the psalms have as their general objective the singing of the praises of God and of His attributes, will be clarified later in this presentation.

1. Creation and general providence. In this group the concern is with those psalms whose principal theme is to sing of God as universal Creator, Governor, and Provider of all things and for all men.⁹ They are the following psalms, according to the numbering of the Vulgate: 8; 18:1-7; 28; 32; 89 (which under other aspects could also be put into the category covering the enemies of Israel or in the category of the penitential psalms); 91:1-7 (but the whole psalm, under another aspect, could be put into the category on the just man among the people of God; the different lot of the just man and of the sinner); 94 (under another aspect it could be included in the category on the attributes of God directly sung: the kingship of God); 103; 148.

The liturgy, making use of these psalms, does not stop at the consideration of the marvels of creation and of general providence — which, however, it contemplates no less than the Jews could — but deepens and prolongs this theme, conscious that in the intentions of God, and therefore in the truest way possible, creation and general providence were all directed to the redemption and to the special providence in Christ. "In a wonderful way You have created

⁹ See A. B. Rhodes, *Creation and Salvation in the Psalter*, Chicago 1952.

The psalms in which these themes are especially developed are the following, in the numbering of the Vulgate: 76; 77; 80; 84; 94-5; 99; 104; 105; 106; 110; 113; 118; 113; 9-26; 120; 125; 134; 135; 110-26; 146.

3. The king, head of the people of God. Here the concern is with the theme and the theology of the king as representative of Yahweh in the midst of His people and, as such, special object of God's love and care as well as His instrument for the realization of the kingdom which he always has in view. Special attention is accorded to David and to the Messiah-King, David's descendant.¹³

Christian prolongation or extension of this theme is done in the following way: just as Israel, as people of God, in the intentions of God had all her significance in relation to the future Church, so the king in Israel, inasmuch as he was representative of Yahweh in the midst of His people, special object of His love and of His protection, His instrument for realizing His kingdom, was but a first and imperfect roughcast of that which God later realized effectively in Christ. The royal psalms in which is expressed the theology of the king and of the kingship in Israel must all therefore be seen in their typological prolongation in Christ. So much the more must Christ Himself be seen in those psalms which already, according to the conscious intention of the human author, referred directly to the Messiah, and above all in Psalm 109. These psalms are: 2; 17; 19; 20; 44; 71; 100; 109; 131; and perhaps also 143.

4. Jerusalem, the holy capital city of the people of God. It is the theme of Jerusalem, capital of the people of God, chosen by Him from among all, loved, protected, adorned in glory, spiritual center of unity of the chosen people, destined to become the glorious center of the whole world when the Messiah comes.

The extension or prolongation is done in this way: the earthly Jerusalem is a type of the Church and of the heavenly Jerusalem. Yahweh's concern for the earthly Jerusalem, the promises of glory made to her, all had in view the formation of the holy city, the Church, which in its turn prepares for and prefigures the heavenly Jerusalem of the Apocalypse.

The psalms which refer to this theme are principally: 45; 47; 86; 121; 147; and 124 may also refer to this theme. Under a certain aspect the group of so-called gradual psalms (119-127) may also be referred to it.¹⁴

¹³ Concerning the religious and theological significance of the king in Israel, see, for example, J. de Fraine, *L'aspect religieux de la royauté Israélite*, Rome 1954; and Eugene Mal'v, *The World of David and Solomon*, Englewood Cliffs (New Jersey) 1966.

¹⁴ For this aspect and for the general study of the theme of Jerusalem, see Th. Maertens, *Jerusalem la cité de Dieu*, Abbaye de S. An-dré 1954; J. Galès, "Le Ps. 87 (86): Sion la cité de Dieu mère des peuples," in *Recherches de science religieuse*, 1923, pp. 211ff. A. Gelin, "Jerusalem dans la destinée de Dieu," in *La vie spirituelle*, Vol. 86 (1952), pp. 353-366. O. Roussseau, "Quelques textes patristiques sur la Jérusalem céleste," *ibid.*, pp. 378-388. A. Collunga,

5. The temple of God; the holy ark; and Sion, the holy mountain. The temple theme is very close to the preceding theme of Jerusalem, the holy city. The temple, the ark, is the place and the symbol of God's very special dwelling among His people, of His protective presence over the holy city, of the manifestation of his glory. It is therefore the place of special encounter between God and man, the heart of the nation, the place *par excellence* of prayer, of the most holy aspirations of every pious Israelite, of the abode of the priesthood, and of the worship of the people made in the name of all.

The deepening of these themes against the general background of sacred history is done by keeping in mind the following correspondences. On the one hand: holy ark, temple of Jerusalem, and Hebrew worship. On the other hand: Christ and the worship rendered by Him to God; universal Church; every soul as temple of God insofar as it lives in Christ; churches as material edifices and the Catholic worship rendered there to God; finally, the heavenly temple and the heavenly liturgy in the Jerusalem above.¹⁵

The presence of God in His people, concretized and symbolized in the ark and in the temple of Jerusalem, was only a pale shadow preparative and prefigurative of the presence and the manifestation of His much more extraordinary glory which He realized first of all in Christ and, by means of Him, in the universal Church, His new people and true new Sion, to which the ancient Hebrew people and the ancient Sion were ordained. Hence it was a preparation and prefiguration of God's presence in the individual souls who live in Christ and *in Spirit* and are thus, in an eminent way, God's temple and the place where His glory is manifested.

Moreover, it was a preparation and prefiguration of the presence of God in every single Catholic church building, which also, by virtue of the Eucharistic tabernacle, is, in a way far more true and sublime than the ark and the temple of Jerusalem, the place of God's presence among His people, of the encounter between God and man on this earth, where His glory — *shekinah* — continues to be manifested here below.

Finally, the universal Catholic Church and Catholic churches are only a pale shadow prefigurative and preparative of the temple of the heavenly Jerusalem in which the presence of God and the manifestation of His glory reach the apex and the ultimate end to which all the antecedent presences and manifestations of glory were ordained.

It is apparent that these perspectives, in the pre-Pauline Roman and Benedictine liturgy, are applied in a special way in the Mass and the Office of the dedication of a church. The psalms which refer especially to this theme are:

"Jerusalem, la ciudad del Gran Rey," in *Estudios bíblicos*, Vol. 14 (1955), pp. 255-279. E. Testa, "La 'Gerusalemme celeste': dall'antico Oriente alla bibbia e alla liturgia," in *Bibbia e Oriente*, Vol. 1 (1959), pp. 47-50.

¹⁵ See Jean Card. Daniélou, *Le signe du temple*, Paris 1945. Yves Congar, *Le mystère du temple ou l'économie de la présence de Dieu à la création de la Genèse à l'Apocalypse*, Paris 1958.

solved the question of the use in the liturgy of the imprecations against enemies and of the imprecatory psalms, whether against the enemies of Israel or against the individual enemies of the pious Israelite.

For example, when in Psalm 136, *Super flumina Babylonis*, the final two verses are read:

"Men of the devastatrix Babylon —
blessed is he who will repay to you
the evils you have brought upon us!

Blessed is he who snatches up your little ones
and dashes them against a rock!"¹⁷

the Christian must think of Satan, also insofar as he works against the people by means of the sinful enemies of the Church. But he may not in hate wish any evil, either moral or material, upon the sinners themselves or upon the enemies of the Church. His thought stops at the desire for the destruction and the eradication of the evil — in other words, of the influence of Satan — in the world and of all those seeds of evil which Satan sows on earth. The "Blessed is he who snatches up your little ones and dashes them against a rock" necessarily means, in the mouth of the Christian: Blessed is he that can crush the sprouts of evil which Satan nurtures, by having recourse to the supreme and invincible opponent of all sin: Christ, God.

There is nothing at all arbitrary, therefore, in the traditional patristic interpretation of this verse as referred to Christic realities: "Who are the little ones of Babylon? Evil desires when they are being born . . . when it is little, throw it . . . , throw it against the rock: and the Rock was Christ."¹⁸ And in doing thus, whatever may be the way in which the Israelites and the contemporaries understood this verse, the Christian attains the deep sense which God had in view in it, because the *lex talionis* which He, by way of teaching, gave to the Hebrews, and according to which this verse is conceived, was not, in His intentions, anything but a condensation to the imperfection of that people and a first and distant roughcast of the law of charity which He would

¹⁷ In the translation of Kleist and Lynam, St. Augustine, *Enarr.*, in Pt., 7:61:12. Origen, St. Hilary, St. Ambrose, and St. Jerome had already commented in the same sense. Later there were John Cassian, and St. Benedict in his Rule, prologue 28; see the edition of Anselmo Lentini, Montecassino 1948, pp. 19ff.

¹⁸ Another approach to this problem would be this: the psalmist is simply applying the Deuteronomic sanctions of divine punishment upon those who violate God's law — it is not a matter of personal revenge at all. The divine sanction of punishment upon violations of God's law are even more dreadful in the

New Testament than in the Old, e.g., that of eternal punishment in hell surfaces nowhere in the psalms. Accordingly, just as the psalmist was simply repeating God's sanctions upon sinners according to revelation as he knew it, so the Christian in praying the psalms simply continues to give expression to our faith in God's punishment of sinners. It would pervert the Gospel to eliminate those passages in which Jesus speaks as God of wrath, pronouncing judgments of punishment upon the wicked; see Matthew 23:13-39; 25:1-46 and *parim* throughout the Book of the Apocalypse. Tr.]

later give to the Christians. In virtue of this law, the Christians would have to be irreconcilable enemies only of sin as well as of Satan and the damned because they are now definitely rooted in sin, while they would still and always pray and hope for the conversion of every living sinner.¹⁹

The psalms which refer to the theme of the enemies of the people of God are principally: 43; 46; 69; 65; 67; 73; 78; 79; 82; 88; 97; 107; 117; 122; 133; 144; 128; 136; 143; 149. Psalm 89 may also be counted as one of them.²⁰

8. The penitent sinner among the people of God. This is the theme of the pious Israelite who feels that he is a sinner, confesses his sin, humbles himself, asks pardon of God, appealing to His boundless mercy, and thanks Him for the pardon received and the peace regained.

The transposition is made thus: the sentiments of the pious Israelite aware of his own sins and repentant for them should be with greater reason the sentiments of the Christian sinner, since the offense against God committed by the Christian is so much the more serious as he has been more the object of God's goodness and benefits, as the whole economy in Christ demonstrates. The psalms which refer to this theme are principally: 6; 24; 31; 36; 37; 50; 129; 142.

9. The just and pious Israelite, the God-fearing man, the "poor man of Yahweh," among God's people. This theme is, in comparison to the others, the most abundant in the whole Psalter. Here we have those psalms in which the just and pious Israelite, who is referred to also as God-fearing and as the poor man of Yahweh, addresses God in the various contingencies of life.²¹

The deepening of these themes in the light of the Christian realities is done

¹⁹ Since no instance of the application of the law of talion can be found in Jewish history, e.g., a person actually having his eyes gouged out in a legal process, it is erroneous to understand this principle in terms of revenge. Rather it is a principle cast in metaphorical language which simply demands just restitution for damages done. The precise kind or amount of restitution in a given case was determined either in the Law itself or through a legal process in court. The Catholic Church too regards this application of talion law as just and upright both in civil and in her own ecclesiastical practice.

²⁰ Various of these psalms refer to the wars of Israel against her enemies, e.g., 46; 59; etc. Some psalms which treat of the king of Israel or even of Jerusalem the holy city also refer to a similar theme. Concerning this theme of the wars of Israel and of their religious character, see Fr. Schwally, *Semitische Altertümer: I. Der heilige Krieg in alten Israel*, Leipzig 1901; G. von Rad, "Deuteronomy and the Holy War," in *Studien in Deuteronomy*, London 1953, pp. 45-59.

²¹ For this theme of the pious Israelite, the poor man of Yahweh, etc., see A. Gause, *Les "pauvres" d'Israël*, Strasbourg 1922; G. Castellino, *Le lamentazioni individuali e gli inni in Babilonia e in Israele*, Turin 1940. On the theme of the enemies of the pious Israelite, see Castellino's *Libro dei Salmi*, Marietti 1955, pp. 254-263. See also A. Gellin, *The Poor of Yahweh*, Collegeville, Minn. 1964. R. Sorg, *Hesed and Hasid in the Psalms*, St. Louis 1953. J. Coppens, "Les pauvres des Hébreux," in *Mélanges A. Robert*, Paris 1957, pp. 214-244. G. Pidoux, *La main qui guérit. Poèmes du malade*, Neuchâtel 1960.

In concluding these two chapters on Bible and liturgy, it would not seem to be in any way an exaggeration to assert that to penetrate the world of the liturgy, it is of capital importance to understand its relationship with the Bible, to penetrate the profound spirit which actually determines the mutual relationships between Bible and liturgy.

I shall add, in fact — may it not be displeasing to the exegetes who neglect too much the question of the relations between Bible and liturgy — that it is of capital importance even for arriving at the total comprehension of the Bible, as it should be understood in a Christian and ecclesial context, and for bringing it about that the Bible is truly the nourishment of souls and of the whole life of the Christian. For it is principally in the liturgy that the Church uses and lives the Scriptures.

It is for this reason that liturgical renewal and biblical movement are profoundly connected and must keep step, so to speak, with each other. In practice it is illusory to suppose that one can bring Christians back to the sources of the Bible if they are not brought back to the sources of the liturgy; just as vice versa, it is illusory to think that one can bring back Christians to the sources of the liturgy if they are not brought back to the sources of the Bible. This is what has been happily understood by those promoters of the liturgical movement who are striving to link that movement to the renewed study of the Scriptures.²⁴

But it is just as evident that the study of the Bible does not rise to this function of nourishing the life of the Church if it does not surpass the purely, or too prevalently, philological-historical or even apologetic phase, to raise itself clearly in every question to the level of integral biblical spirituality. And this takes place only by means of the study of the biblical theological themes in their development throughout the Bible against the background of salvation history in its various phases connected among themselves, even to the final eschatology.

Probably it is no exaggeration to say that when the sense of finding the Bible connaturally in the liturgy, and the liturgy in the Bible, once more becomes general among Christians, a great step forward will have been taken toward a more intense Christian life because the key to the unity of Bible, liturgy, and life will have been found. This was the essential aim to which the ancient monastic method of the *lectio divina* tended and does always tend — the *lectio divina* which is at the same time theological study, meditation, and prayer, centered essentially around the Bible as seen in the liturgy and the liturgy as understood by means of the Bible.

²⁴ To be noted in this sense are the reviews: *ment: Lumière et vie* of June 1951. The publications of the *Centre de pastorale liturgique* near Vienna; *Penrose et liturgie*, of the Abbaye de S. André, Bruges (Brugge), in the *Supplément* of Paris also give noble importance to this aspect of the liturgical renewal.

It is true, as I said at the beginning of this chapter, that it is not enough to have a clear discursive intellectual vision of the great biblical themes and of their relations with the liturgical life in order that a Catholic may un-
fainingly live the liturgy with all the intensity desirable. For this something else again is needed — holiness of life. Still, habituating ourselves to finding naturally the relations between Bible and liturgy by means of the understanding of the great biblical theological themes against the background of salvation history considered in its unity, we are suitably disposing our conceptual intellect to cooperate as best it can in its own specific way in the work of our sanctification and of our worship in the liturgical life of the Church.

Keeping in mind what has been said in these two preceding chapters, it will be understood why the Second Vatican Council desires that "in sacred celebrations a more ample, more varied, and more suitable reading from sacred scripture should be restored"; why it inculcates the necessity of the homily as explanation of the Scriptures in their liturgical framework; why it actively encourages special celebrations of the word of God, such as Bible vigils.²⁵

It will be understood, moreover, what the same Council meant when it stated: "In order to achieve the restoration, progress, and adaptation of the sacred liturgy it is essential to promote that sweet and living love for Sacred Scripture to which the venerable tradition of Eastern and Western rites gives testimony."²⁶

Perhaps the expression "sweet and living love" is not a particularly felicitous one, since it might seem to imply that what is being treated of is a sentimental and more or less arbitrary way, even if well-intentioned, of reading the Bible. This is certainly not what the Council meant. On the contrary, it had in mind that total, theological reading of the Bible which is, as we have sought to demonstrate, the only scientifically integral manner of reading the sacred text.

²⁵ CL, art. 35.

²⁶ CL, art. 24.