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## The Old Testament as Word of God

The category "word of God" is only one category under which Sacred Writ can be viewed. Although it has a long and hallowed usage, it is not necessarily the best. The difficulty with the phrase lies in its multiplicity of meanings, ranging from its use in the Bible itself to its meanings in the writings of Barth and Ebeling. Are we going to understand it in a biblical sense? Then one must conjure with the rich variation of meaning in the *d<sup>e</sup>bar Yhwh* within the Old Testament and the *logos* within the New Testament. It is not our purpose to pursue such an investigation in this paper; nor will we simply adopt a modern theological notion of word under which one might try to fit the Old Testament. Rather, we are understanding the phrase in the broad sense as designating the writings commonly indicated as the Old Testament. Hence, this is a written word. I propose to use "word of God" or "the word of God" without intending any difference; and "word" is in lower case throughout. In order to portray the meaning of the Old Testament as the word of God, we will comment on three basic questions: (1) In what sense is this written word to be called the word of God? (2) What are the static aspects (especially the canonical limits and their implications) of this word? (3) How is this the word of God to the Christian?

This paper was delivered in lectures at Princeton Theological Seminary and Wesley Theological Seminary in 1970, and is here offered as testimony to what has always been a concern of Jacob Myers in his Old Testament studies.

It is obvious that there is no pure, naked word of God. We have only what has been transmitted in human language, the result of man's confrontation with the Lord. To speak of God's word is to speak metaphorically in an attempt to describe one aspect of God's communication with Israel: the literature which his encounter with them precipitated. We prefer not to speak of the Old Testament as "indirectly," or as "witnessing to," the word of God, because this only pushes the determination of the phrase another step backward. Rather, we admit that the role of human mediation of the word is quite substantial; we are dealing with the word of God in words of men. But it is the only word of God we have; this word does not exist apart from human response, as enshrined in Holy Writ.

The phrase, "word of God," is applicable in the first instance to the final, written word; it is with the Old Testament in its final form that we are concerned. But at several points in our discussion we will be conscious of the preliterate, oral stage of the Old Testament, and the various phases of its formation. Here too, we are dealing with the word of God. In a sense, the spoken word (oral tradition) might seem to have a greater claim to be the word; it is more direct, it is given immediately to a particular generation. Then, it is preserved, and, as we shall see, often reinterpreted in the light of the growth of the community, and eventually put in writing. The reduction to writing is motivated by the vision of the community which sees in the word more than an immediate application to a given generation. The community's experience proves and approves the relevance of the word for a future generation. This whole process preserves the word—expanded and reinterpreted. Since the word is destined to have such a long and varied life, it cannot be measured merely by its temporal directness, by its pertinence to the first audience. The believing community has always and inevitably wrestled with the tradition or text that has been handed down. The primitive Church did this, in an effort to explain Jesus. The later Church has only this text to refer to as a norm, and it must deal with it in its fullest dimensions.

Thus far, we have stated that the word of God is not to be understood apart from the word of men, and that it has traveled through a long history. These aspects of the word have received proper emphasis only in modern times. Classical Christian theology has traditionally stressed the role of God at the expense of man, as we can see in the writings of the Fathers and medieval theologians, as well as the Reformers. The emphasis on the divine aspect of the word—the word of God—goes back to the early Church, and, indeed, the primitive Church itself understood the Old Testament to be

somewhat *theopneustos* (2 Tim 3: 16). This is not the place to sketch the growth of the doctrine of inspiration, but it would be well to take note of two different theories currently proposed by Catholic theologians—those by P. Benoit and K. Rahner.<sup>1</sup> I think it is correct to say that this is not an area of pressing concern in Protestant circles outside fundamentalism. But I am unwilling to let the question disappear simply because fundamentalists have more or less appropriated it to themselves; it deserves to be treated in a freer manner.

P. Benoit, the noted New Testament scholar, follows the traditional lines of Thomistic theology and psychology. In his view, the inspired writer remains an instrumental cause used freely by God in the production of the written work. The divine influence is centered on the mind and will—the faculties—of the human writer. Benoit has introduced several nuances into this explanation; he recognizes that inspiration and revelation are intimately correlated in fact, although the former bears essentially on the practical judgment (what is to be written). The approach of Benoit is a thoughtful effort to analyze the psychology of the human writer who is influenced by God. But perhaps it has reached the point of no return. The analysis of the pertinent factors is logical, but leaves one with the feeling that the reality remains far too complex.

K. Rahner feels no need to speculate concerning divine and human activity in the composition of the Bible. In fact, he fears that a theory concerning the illumination of the human mind may reify the reality of inspiration. For him, inspiration means that God has willed that the Bible form a constitutive element of the primitive Church; it is nothing else than God's founding of the Church, of which the Bible is an essential part. This is, as it were, "the way it is." A given body of literature came, by a divine and salvific *fiat*, to be a basic factor in the life of the Church. Rahner's judgment upon the Old Testament is not happily conceived; he sees it merely as a prehistory of the Church, deriving its validity and function from the New Testament. It would appear more in harmony with his own theory to recognize the fact that the Old Testament was *the* Bible of the primitive Church, while the New Testament was in the process of formation. But the value of his approach is that it is along historical, rather than speculative, lines. Neither Benoit's nor Rahner's theory opens the door to the old fundamentalistic views of divine inspiration. But neither are they fully adequate. No one has yet developed a theological explanation of inspiration which does justice to the nature of the Bible precisely as word, as literature. If language is seen in its further dimension as word, as structure, as itself an interpretation and not merely a representation of reality, new perspectives on the theological explication of "word of God" will surely emerge.<sup>2</sup>

It might appear that we have walked into the fundamentalism which seems to be the concern of G. Ebeling when he writes:

The confessional statement, 'Scripture is the Word of God,' can be rightly understood if the full breadth of the hermeneutic task is also included in the explanation of this way of speaking. But it is dangerously confusing, if the hermeneutic problem is left out of account. It cannot of course be corrected by asserting some form of intermingling of God's Word and man's word, but only by affirming that God's Word by its nature is not a written, once-upon-a-time word, but one that is orally spoken and happens. It is not the Bible text, but the proclamation, that is God's Word in the strict sense. In so far as the proclamation is dependent on the text, the exposition therefore serves towards the text proving itself a Bible text, i.e. becoming the source of God's Word.<sup>3</sup>

We should agree with Ebeling that the hermeneutical process is not to be separated from the written word of God; interpretation is surely necessary. But we need not adopt a theory of proclamation at the expense of the "written, once-upon-a-time word." The analysis of the roles of God and man in the production of the written word is worthy of consideration, as the history of Christian thought suggests. One cannot avoid the risk of the "intermingling" of the human and the divine, even if this cannot be precisely captured. Otherwise, one seems to abdicate the task of understanding why the Bible is the word of God in a manner that no other literature is.

In summary, I am understanding the phrase "word of God" as the written word of the Old Testament, formed within Israel and transmitted to the Church. It is not some kind of direct revelation, a speaking or writing of God, but it is the product of divine influence upon the men of Israel—this characteristic constitutes it as God's word. We will now turn to view this word in what may be called its static aspect—its canonical and normative status.

## II

The Old Testament has a certain static aspect for the Christian. It is simply a given, accepted as a totality, however varied the contents. It is all the word of God, and with it the Church has lived for centuries, turning to it as a normative source of its own self-understanding. We need not enter here into the problem of exactly where the limits of the canon are to be set, whether or not they include the Apocrypha.<sup>4</sup> Rather, we raise the question whether within the Old Testament one part is more the word of God than another, and whether we are to operate with a kind of canon within the canon.

The point at issue is not merely whether the phrase "word of God" is more truly ascribed to one portion of the Old Testament than to another. (Does the prophet, for example, more than the sage, speak the word?) The importance of the question lies, rather, in the implications that can be drawn from the answer. C. Westermann argues that not every word in the Old Testament is to be understood univocally as the word of God.<sup>5</sup> He discerns three basic elements in the Old Testament: report (*Bericht*), God's address to man, and man's address to God. The report is found in the "history"—that is, in the Torah, the histories of the Deuteronomist and the Chronicler, and in the framework of the prophetic writings. God's address to man is found in the prophetic words and in the commandments and laws. Man's address to God is centred in praise and lament: the Psalms, Lamentations, and the prayers that are scattered throughout the rest of the Old Testament. Only the wisdom writings fail to conform to this schema, as Westermann candidly admits. But they can be accommodated on a different basis. He argues that God's action is not only acts of judgment or salvation in history; it is also the steady action of blessing, as the power of fertility, of growth, of success. Just as the blessing is given to every human being, so wisdom is a gift for all men, without the limitation implied by God's history with Israel. "The word of wisdom is the word that matures in life experience, that grows out of the divine action of blessing."<sup>6</sup> Hence, Westermann concludes that not every word in the Old Testament claims to be the word of God in the same way. Rather, the word of God reaches his people in manifold fashion—within the three directions that have been indicated.

This analysis of the directions of the word is useful, and one can only agree that the word is to be determined from the point of view of its function as well as its content. But this style of classification runs the risk of sorting out something as the word by opposition to something else which is not the word or only very secondarily so. Such a procedure is contrary to the way in which the Israelite community, and the Christian community as well, preserved and received this literature.

For Israel accepted the entire *Tanak* (even though it allowed for the centrality of the Torah) as the word of God. Early in Israel's history, an informal canonization process began to work, when the stories of the Patriarchs and the Exodus took shape and were handed down.<sup>7</sup> As the process accelerated, the whole literature was received by the community as somehow being God's word to them. Even the legal corpora, which modern scholarship has shown to be the customary law and legal policy common to the ancient Near East, were so viewed. The Priestly account of the Tabernacle is presented in terms of, "the Lord said to Moses," and this formula is used countless times in the Pentateuch to introduce laws. Hence, one may ask

how Westermann can characterize (at least certain) legal narratives as "God's address to men" when he, along with most modern scholars, recognizes that this and similar formulae are merely a literary device and not historical. He simply decides to evaluate positively the "historical" framework of the laws as conveying God's word to the community—perhaps because this is the way in which the community came to understand the laws. It is important to observe that it is the final, community understanding (which historical investigation would not support) which is the hermeneutical principle in this classification. I am in sympathy with this thrust, but it seems arbitrary, then, to group the laws with the prophetic word as "God's address to man" and fail to find a place for the wisdom literature.

As regards the prophetic word, Westermann has argued that the proclaimed word of salvation or judgment is God's word directly, whereas the reason (*Begründung*) joined to it is so only indirectly.<sup>8</sup> Now it would appear literary criticism becomes the touchstone to the (almost pure!) word of God, which is separate from the prophetic expansion of it. It is an illusion to pinpoint the word of God in this manner, and Westermann himself admits that the messenger formula gradually becomes the introduction to the prophetic speech, so that *the whole* is designated as the word of God, or it even comes to indicate speeches that make no claim to be prophetic speeches. This fact should warn us against giving primacy to the word of God, which the prophet was supposedly consciously aware of. If one can thus distinguish between early and late "stages" of the word of God, why should one come down on *one* stage as primary?

Again, "man's address to God" is too narrowly viewed when it is limited to Old Testament prayer. There is a response to God present in all the varieties of literary forms found in the Bible. The initiative of God and the reaction of man, on whatever profound or even minimal level, are inherent to the inspired word. Finally, it is only by a tour de force that wisdom literature is retained by Westermann as some kind of word. He has related the wisdom literature with the notion of the divine blessing; it might be called the word which expresses the power of God's blessing at work in the world. All the more reason, then, to refuse a secondary rating to it. We must take seriously the fact that the community preserved it as part of the total communication of God to his people. The sages did not distinguish between—much less evaluate—revelation and reason, history and human experience, as channels of divine communication. The broad realm of human conduct was the area which they observed, and it was not closed off from the divine, it was not "profane," as we tend to classify it. Israel had no difficulty in accepting wisdom itself as divine and speaking in the name of God. As G. von Rad describes it:

Nevertheless one can say that she is the form in which Yahweh's will and his association with man (in other words, salvation) comes to him. She is the essence of what man needs for a good life, and of what God gives him. But most importantly, wisdom does not present herself to man as a thing, or teaching, or guidance or salvation, etc., but as a person, an "I" who calls. Hence wisdom is really the form in which Yahweh makes himself present and in which he wants to be sought after by man. "He who finds me finds life" (Prov 8: 35). Only Yahweh can speak this way.<sup>9</sup>

We have been insisting upon Israel's reception and preservation of the word as a totality, over against any literary analysis which might be erected into a touchstone that would categorize or pinpoint the word of God, delimiting it to a specific area of the Old Testament. The same problem appears in another form as the "canon within the canon." The concept of a selective canon has emerged recently in the New Testament context, and it has been asserted for the Old Testament by G. E. Wright.<sup>10</sup>

Wright's presentation is both theoretical and practical. Theoretically, he sees the Torah as holding the rest of the varied literature around it. But he offers no evidence for this. One could possibly point to the eventual identification of wisdom with Torah (Deut 4: 6–8; Sir 24; Bar 4: 1–4) as a measure of proof, but this remains rather slender support. One should, rather, recognize a lack of a synthesizing, classifying principle behind Israel's collection.

Practically, he argues that the actual meaning of the canon cannot be considered apart from the reigning theology of a given period: "The truth is to be found in the actual usage, and here the current theology of the user provides the interpretative principle whereby the canon within the canon can be discerned."<sup>11</sup> This certainly reflects what is happening, but it should not be erected into a principle. It yields too much to the *Zeitgeist*, the constantly changing historical situation of the reader. One must also obey the complex and varied style of the Old Testament word, which provides a corrective to the narrow view of a particular age. The *total* word is the yardstick against which to measure such principles as Law and Gospel, which tend to become the only axis of biblical interpretation. A refusal to delimit the canon means that one can escape partially from the narrow point of view imposed by one's own historicity—an important hermeneutical gain. The acceptance of the total canon brings with it inevitable tensions, such as the particular and jarring viewpoints expressed in books like Proverbs and Ecclesiastes, which are not flattened out because the canon is closed. But the recognition of a total and fixed canon will correct the tendency of each generation to "re canonize" the sacred books.

## III

It is in the context of the dynamic aspect of the word that we will ask how the Old Testament is the word of God to the Christian. The dynamic aspect of words in general has been sharply stated by Ebeling: "We do not get at the nature of words by asking what they contain, but by asking what they effect, what they set going, what future they disclose."<sup>12</sup> The Old Testament is an answer to this kind of question, for it is the result of asking what the word of God to his servants has set going. The vitality of the word has been brought home to us through the insights into the Old Testament literature provided by form criticism and tradition history. We now recognize the *movement* within this literature. The saving acts of God in the Exodus event become the basis of Israel's experience of salvation. Deutero-Isaiah sees the liberation from exile as a New Exodus. The Deuteronomistic historian presents a thematic view of Israel's past by taking up sources that are disparate in origin: annals, cycles of prophets, epic stories. The Chronicler does not allow this view of the Deuteronomist to become official for his generation, and so he moves the horizon of history to legitimatization, with the help of Moses and David. The prophets expand the cultic and legal traditions of earlier generations. The authors of Job and Qohelet take their stand against the traditional wisdom which is presented in Proverbs. The author of the Wisdom of Solomon returns to the formula of the sages (wisdom brings life), in order to deepen it (justice is immortal; Wis 1: 15), and he proposes a meditation on the Exodus that is a rarity in the wisdom tradition. The bourgeois sage of Jerusalem, Ben Sira, offers the "praise of the Fathers" (Sir 44: 1 ff), a kind of salvation history, in an age when wisdom has been identified with the Law.

Where is the word of God in all this? It is on the march, being deepened and expanded in the successive generations of Israel as the community lived with and reinterpreted the word.<sup>13</sup> This movement continues into the Christian Church. Heb 1: 1 suggests that it is in virtue of his faith in Christ that the Christian accepts the Old Testament as the word of God to him. It remains for him to work out a relationship between the Old and the New: "In many and various ways God spoke of old to the fathers by the prophets; but in these days he has spoken to us by a Son . . ." Ultimately, the Christian cannot view the Old Testament apart from the New, although Christian theologians have contested this statement. The nature of the relationship of the two Testaments is far too complex to treat here, but a few basic considerations are in order.<sup>14</sup>

The dynamic aspect of the word of God points up the reality of the history of biblical traditions. The movement of the word perdured into the primitive Church, which reinterpreted the Old Testament in the light of God's eschatological intervention in Christ. Thus, the Christian understanding of the Old Testament as the word of God is a Christian prejudgment (*Vorverständnis*). In terms of our earlier discussion of the canon, we may claim Christ as our ultimate canonical principle (thus, approximately Luther's *was Christum treibet*). We have already noted the limiting factor inherent in the notion of a canon within the canon. The same caution is to be applied when Christ becomes the ultimate canon, lest one lose the total dimension of the word of God. I emphasize *ultimate* canonical principle, for I would not go so far as to say, with N. Lohfink, "that the Old Testament is the 'Word of God' only to the extent that it leads to, and is taken up by and exists in view of Christ, the authentic and final Word of God."<sup>15</sup> This would seem to flatten out the Old Testament, contrary to Lohfink's intention, in the manner of Wilhelm Vischer. It presupposes more unity and continuity between the Testaments than actually exist. Any norm, and especially an ultimate one, has limited application, and usually in a negative way. Christ as canon serves to negate and correct a given thrust of Old Testament thought (e.g., the notion of Sheol, the complaints of the psalmist or Job). Positively, however, it is the structure of my own existence which allows me to appropriate such a thrust as the word of God. The remarks of James Barr supply a needed nuance; he distinguishes between the intended content of a text and its purpose:

Our use of the texts should relate to the intended content because it was through the intended content that his [God's] purpose moved forward, even if the intended content does not comprehend that purpose. Ultimately, it must be said that this "not yet" is not negative, and for an important (though perhaps controversial) theological reason: positivity in this context is not determined by Jesus Christ solely. The positivity here is that the One God of Israel is proceeding with his purpose. Our Christian faith is that the sending of Jesus Christ is the culmination of this purpose. This does not mean that Jesus Christ becomes the criterion for the meaningfulness of that which is done by God before he is sent.<sup>16</sup>

While the Church has taken over the Old Testament and reinterpreted it, she has never canonized a definitive method for understanding it. The manner in which the relationship is to be worked out has always varied, and it will always vary, according to the needs and the insights of the community of faith. The particular method of exegesis employed by the New Testament writers, or by the Fathers, need not and cannot be adopted in the twentieth century. The relationship between the two Testaments re-

mains complex, and the several lines (e.g., promise-fulfillment) which binds them together must be allowed to stand in the midst of all the discontinuity. It is impossible to forge a conceptual unity of the relationship. The vicissitudes of Israel's history prevent this, but at the same time they present various lines—institutional (e.g., kingship, sacrifice, etc.) and conceptual (messiah, servant of God, etc.)—which can be taken up and pursued. As A. Jepsen notes, the New Testament supplies "the question, the point of view, not the interpretation itself" of the Old Testament text, and thus it has a "heuristic function" in opening up the word of God to its fullness.<sup>17</sup>

There are more points of dissimilarity than of similarity between the two Testaments. But the balance between continuity and discontinuity cannot be judged quantitatively. Rather, the balance is one of tension. Positive and negative points, even if they negate each other logically, do not cancel each other out in the historical development of which the Bible is the written record. They exist together as witness to the variety of God's dealings with men. One lives with this fact only in virtue of the faith in the Lord of Abraham as the Father of Jesus Christ. N. Lohfink has well expressed the balancing of these tensions in the case of Ecclesiastes:

Similarly, in dealing with the book of Qohelet, one cannot avoid bringing out especially the melancholic and pervasive concern with this world, which encompasses his faith. Then the pros and cons of this traditio-historical discussion concerning a faith that is limited by this world will have to be developed. The New Testament message of the resurrection of the Lord and of all who believe in him will appear as the opposite pole to Qohelet. But then the interpretation is to be continued up into our own time; if the modern reader does not finally have to make his own decision of faith in the resurrection, then the proper role of the "Christian" truth of Qohelet has not been served. Thus the faith of Qohelet is not to be pushed aside and forgotten, as one might like to think, as a kind of preliminary position or indeed as an error. Rather, if the exegesis is correctly done, it remains as an enduring dimension of belief in the resurrection. Were it to disappear, the meaning of the resurrection message would probably be no longer rightly understood.<sup>18</sup>

Finally, any approach to the question of the relationship between the two Testaments can profit from the reaction of Dietrich Bonhoeffer:

My thoughts and feelings seem to be getting more and more like the Old Testament, and no wonder, I have been reading it much more than the New for the last few months. It is only when one knows the ineffability of the Name of God that one can utter the name of Jesus Christ. It is only when one loves life and the world so much that without them everything would be gone, that one can believe in the resurrection and a new world . . .

I don't think it is Christian to want to get to the New Testament too soon and too directly.<sup>19</sup>

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> For a treatment of the recent history of the question, see J. Burtchaell, *Catholic Theories of Biblical Inspiration since 1810* (Cambridge: University Press, 1969). The full bibliography provides also references to the several works of Benoit and the single work of Rahner, *Inspiration in the Bible*, 2d rev. ed. (New York: Herder and Herder, 1964).

<sup>2</sup> As a beginning along these lines, see L. Alonso Schökel, *The Inspired Word* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1965); also "Hermeneutics in the Light of Language and Literature," *CBQ* 25 (1963), 371–86. Schökel has also a general treatment of the Old Testament as word of God in *Wort und Botschaft*, ed. J. Schreiner (Würzburg: Echter-Verlag, 1967) pp. 1–13.

<sup>3</sup> *Word and Faith* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1963) pp. 428–29.

<sup>4</sup> On this subject, see the symposium in *CBQ* 28 (1966), 189–207, and the thesis and later article of A. Sundberg in *CBQ* 30 (1968), 143–55.

<sup>5</sup> Cf "Zur Auslegung des Alten Testaments," in O. Loretz and W. Strolz, eds., *Die hermeneutische Frage in der Theologie* (Freiburg: Herder, 1968), pp. 190–95.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 195.

<sup>7</sup> Cf E. Speiser, "The Biblical Idea of History in Its Common Near Eastern Setting," *IEJ* 7 (1957), 201–16.

<sup>8</sup> Cf *Basic Forms of Prophetic Speech* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1967), pp. 85, 179.

<sup>9</sup> Cf *Theologie des Alten Testaments* (München: Kaiser, 1957) pp. 442–43.

<sup>10</sup> Cf *The Old Testament and Theology* (New York: Harper and Row, 1969) pp. 166–85.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 182. The position of Ebeling is close to a canon within a canon. For him, the canon is fluid because it must be tested by interpretation (such as Luther's internal criticism of the canon). See *The Word of God and Tradition* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1968) pp. 113–21, esp. p. 120. But the criterion of criticism remains problematical. One can agree, for example, that there is a difference between Leviticus and Deuteronomy, but the principle of differentiation and the implicit value judgments should be revealed; and even then there is the danger of drawing up a personal canon that may not agree with that of the Spirit. For further details on Ebeling's views, see his *The Problem of Historicity* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1967), pp. 61–80.

<sup>12</sup> *The Nature of Faith* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1961), p. 187.

<sup>13</sup> The counterpart of this movement within Israel is the hermeneutical process within the Christian community—and not only the process but also the actual proclamation of the biblical word, the hopes and visions triggered by the word. Historical consciousness has made us ever more aware of the hermeneutical gap between what a text meant and what it means now. The very formation of the word in the Old Testament suggests that there is a continuum that helps to bridge the gap: the understanding and continuous reinterpretation of the word within the believing community. This context is indispensable, whatever the vagaries of interpretation that may arise within the community. Cf Richard E. Palmer, *Hermeneutics* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1969).

<sup>14</sup> For the pertinent literature and a discussion, see R. E. Murphy, "The Relationship between the Testaments," *CBQ* 26 (1964), 349–59, and also The St. Louis University Bellarmine lecture, "Christian Understanding of the Old Testament," *Theology Digest* 18 (1970), 321–32.

<sup>15</sup> "Das Alte Testament nur in dem Mass 'Wort Gottes' ist, in dem es auf Christus, das eigentliche und letzte 'Wort Gottes,' hinführt, von ihm aufgenommen ist, vor ihm besteht." Cf *Bibelauslegung im Wandel* (Frankfurt: Knecht, 1967), p. 210.

<sup>16</sup> Cf *Old and New in Interpretation* (London: SCM, 1966), p. 153; and on p. 140, he writes: "The proper strategy in the Church, then, is not to take Christ as the given and argue from him to the authority of the meaning of the Old Testament; it is rather, taking the Old Testament as something which we *have* in the Church, to ask in what ways the guidance it affords helps us to understand and discern and obey the Christ more truly."

<sup>17</sup> Cf C. Westerman, ed., *Essays on Old Testament Hermeneutics* (Richmond: John Knox, 1963) p. 264.

<sup>18</sup> Cf *Bibelauslegung . . .* (note 15 above), pp. 211-12.

<sup>19</sup> Cf *Letters and Papers from Prison* (New York: MacMillan paperback edition, 1962) pp. 103-4.