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# TEMPLES AND HIGH PLACES IN BIBLICAL TIMES

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# Temple Without Hands

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IT IS not easy to locate an imaginary temple on an unidentified mountain in a poem full of rich but imprecise imagery, but that is the task which confronts us in the attempt to interpret The Song of the Sea (Exod. 15: 1-18, 21) and especially the crucial and enigmatic v. 17. The thesis presented in this paper is that the only true temple of God — made not by human but by divine hands — is and can only be located on top of the mountain sacred to the god who dwells in that temple. The possibilities as to the mountain and the temple are limited in the biblical tradition by historical and mythological criteria.

There are only two cases in the Bible which qualify for consideration: 1) Mt. Sinai/Horeb where Yahweh, whose oldest surviving designation may well have been *zeh snay* "the One of Sinai" (found as early as the Song of Deborah, Judg. 5:5), had his palace. As we know from the tradition, the "tent of meeting" or "Tabernacle" was modelled upon it (Exod. 25: 8, 40), so the correspondence between earthly Tabernacle and heavenly temple, the one at the base, the other at the top of the mountain, is exact. 2) Mt. Zion/Jerusalem, where Yahweh established his new permanent dwelling in connection with the reign of David and the selection of the ancient city on the border between Judah and Benjamin as his capital. Here, however, the picture has been modified. The earthly temple, made with (human) hands, actually is on top of the mountain (which is too small to have a heavenly crest), while the heavenly temple, in which Yahweh truly dwells, is invisible, though located in the vicinity and bound in the same fashion to Mt. Zion as the earlier home of Yahweh was bound to Mt. Sinai. While the image varies slightly, the correlation between earthly and heavenly dwelling remains intact, as well as the association with the single sacred mountain. So far as I am aware these are the only instances in the Bible with the threefold linkage of earthly sanctuary (*miqdās*), heavenly temple, and sacred mountain. Between the two places of permanent residence, the two sacred mountains and heavenly palaces, there is a period during which Yahweh travelled, as he says through the prophet Nathan, in a tent and a Tabernacle, and had no permanent dwelling place.

It is further my contention that the divine sanctuary (made without hands) is not the one associated with Jerusalem and Mt. Zion, though many able scholars have thought so (including Paul Haupt), but rather with Mt. Sinai/Horeb. I do not believe that a serious case exists or can be made for any other location. The attempt to generalize the site (e.g. the mountainous areas of Canaan) is faulty and misses the basic requirement that the heavenly temple be on top of the mountain peak which joins earth and heaven.

Other efforts to localize it at Gilgal or Shechem or Shiloh fail for lack of any combination of earthly and heavenly sanctuaries, or mountain mystique. Obviously Exod. 15:17 cannot be used as evidence since it is the subject of the inquiry, but in the biblical tradition Mt. Sinai serves as the original locus for the deity, the heavenly palace and earthly counterpart, while Mt. Zion is the only inheritor of the three-fold tradition: the location which displaces Sinai as the center of worship and the focal point of the religio-political entity. It is conceivable that other loci served as transition points, but if so, they were ephemeral in character, and in each case, essential ingredients were lacking. We may postulate that in the case of Shechem and Shiloh, where there were central sanctuaries for the tribal league, not only the visible earthly sanctuary, but also the sacral mountain (e.g., Gerizim at Shechem), had a role, and some such association may be supposed also for later sanctuaries at Bethel and Dan, not to speak of Beer-Sheba. But if sacred mountains played a role in the local cult or mythology, no significant trace has survived. On the contrary, clearly identifiable elements of the sacred mountain theme have left their mark, in particular the references to Şapon, the sacred mountain of Canaanite mythology, associated in the first instance with Baal, but also in a different manner with El. As Cross has shown, there are two major mountains in Canaanite mythology, Casius, Baal's mountain, and Amanus, which is associated with El. Both can be characterized as northern (i.e. Şapon) from the standpoint of Canaanite worshippers. Baal's temple on Mt. Şapon is described in detail — it is also made without human hands, though in polytheism the principal god need not use his own hands. In this case Kothar-wa-Hasis is the architect, contractor, and builder. It may be that Baal can claim the temple not only as his possession but as his work — but I doubt that this is correct.<sup>1</sup>

We return now to the basic arguments for the proposed interpretation of the passage in Exodus 15:17.

1. The date of the poem. If, as I and others have argued, this is a very early premonarchic poem in its entirety, then it can hardly refer to the Jerusalem Temple. This is essentially the same point as the identity of the Temple or sanctuary mentioned. If it were the Jerusalem Temple, then the poem would have to be later in date. But the date has been based on other grounds, entirely independent of this particular factor. I am satisfied at any rate that the great bulk of the poem, including vv. 13-17, is premonarchic and comes from the 12th century. There is much evidence and an excellent array of data and arguments in support of an early, premonarchic date that effectively rules out Jerusalem and David's Tabernacle or Solomon's Temple. If I am right the only viable alternative is Sinai.

1. The reading should be, not "I have built my house" — but rather "you have built a house for me." Compare the passages in 1 Kings 8 where we have alternate readings in MT and LXX: "I built (MT)" — "You built (LXX)." The difference is not only textual but conceptual: "I built" must refer to the earthly temple built with human hands, while "you built" is a reference to God's action in building his heavenly temple.

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2. The unity of the poem can be defended on structural grounds. As I have tried to show in a lengthy detailed study of the poem's symmetrical construction, the patterning in the second part is so skilful in relation to the first, that while some scholars speak of imitation or expansion, it is more satisfactory to adopt the simpler hypothesis, namely unity of authorship. If it be agreed that the first part of the poem (at least vv. 3-12) is very early, then the same argument applies to the poem as a whole.

3. The genre analysis supports the view expressed. Victory odes customarily were composed in the lifetime of those who participated in the battle. Such odes tend to be occasional, concentrating attention on the major central episode, with marginal references to events immediately preceding and following the action from the vantage point of the latest event recorded. The dramatic and epic unities are maintained and the poem itself flashes a light on a single moment in ancient history rather than simply recording a sequence of events.

4. The contents and terminology breathe the desert air. The horizon of the poem does not extend beyond Sinai and the wilderness wanderings. In spite of assertions and assumptions to the contrary, there are no allusions to the conquest, the land of Canaan or anything like that. There is direct reference to Canaan, to be sure, but not as an object of conquest. On the contrary, it is mentioned as one of the four neighbors of the territory through which Israel, which is only described as the people redeemed or purchased by Yahweh, passed. The four peoples or nations (Philistia, Edom, Moab, and Canaan) are depicted as paralysed by the overwhelming might and terror of Yahweh — they are struck dumb like a stone, so that they cannot impede the progress of the people through the wilderness, whether they are thought of as allies and vassals of Egypt, or as acting in defense of their own interests. No distinction among the four is discernible: all are involved in the event and its aftermath as spectators, not participants — no threat is aimed at any of them. If any is implied it is at all of them; but the tradition outside of the poem carefully separates the Canaanites from all of the others. This is especially the case with Edom and Moab, whose territory is to be respected, and conflict with whom is to be avoided at all cost (the way of the Philistines is to be avoided as well, but this is another matter). In other words the conquest of Canaan is not on the agenda of the poem. Certainly the reference to Canaan cannot be construed differently from the treatment of the three other peoples, and no one yet has suggested that the conquest was ever conceived as embracing all of them. The only time when this was imaginable was the age of David when Israelite suzerainty over these regions was achieved but the connection is remote in my opinion, and far too subtle to hint at the Davidic conquests. But that at least is a possibility to go along with the notion that the divine-human heavenly-earthly complex at Mount Zion is included in v. 17.

It will be of value to examine in some detail the critical passages especially in Exod. 15 and Ps. 78 relating to the Temple made by Yahweh, and without human hands.

The passage from the Song of the Sea vv. 13-17 is familiar and has been treated extensively in recent years by a number of scholars. Therefore I need only summarize



the analysis. According to the vantage point of the poet, the events belong to recent history. The narrative is entirely in the past tense though the verbs vary between perfect and imperfect according to the style of early Hebrew or somewhat earlier Canaanite poetry (see the study by D. Robertson). Thus the perfect verbs: *nāhīšū* and *nēhalšū* in v. 13 are balanced by the perfect verbs in v. 17: *pā'alšū* and *kōnēnū yādēkā*. Perfects and imperfects are distributed among the intervening verses in more or less symmetrical fashion: v. 14: perfect//perfect; 15: perfect, imperfect, perfect; 16: imperfect//imperfect; 17: imperfect//imperfect; but there is no indication of any change in tense. The action proceeds from the victory at sea to the journey through the wilderness to the settlement at the "mount of inheritance" whither they are brought and where they are planted. It is my contention that the expression *nēwēh qōdšēkā* "your holy habitation" and the *har nahālātēkā* "the mountain of your possession" describe one and the same place, namely the area or territory around the holy mountain of Yahweh, wherever that may be. The association of *har* and *nāweh* is natural, whether as parallel or complementary terms as shown by the interesting passage in Jeremiah 31:23:

yēbārekēkā yhw	May Yahweh bless you
nēwēh šedeq	O righteous habitation
har haqqōdēs	O holy mountain

No doubt the reference here is to Jerusalem and the (re)built temple (mount) but originally the language points to a wilderness setting, and would be entirely appropriate to Sinai/Horeb and the region of Kadesh-Barnea. A related passage is Ps. 78:52-54, where a similar association occurs: in v. 54 we have *gēbūl qōdšō* in parallel or complementary or combinatory relationship with *har*. The context is clearly that of the wilderness wandering, since the immediately preceding verse speaks of the guidance of his people by Yahweh to a secure refuge (= sanctuary) after the drowning of the enemy in the sea (an obvious reference to the episode at the Reed Sea). Here the word *gēbūl* "territory" is used instead of *nāweh*, but the sense is the same. It may be argued that this verse refers to the settlement in Canaan, and that is a possibility since the poet seems to have blended in this passage the sojourn in the wilderness with the settlement in Canaan. That he is aware of these two entirely different periods in Israel's existence, however, is clear from the earlier part of the poem.

In any event, the use of the term *qōdš* to describe the region brings us back to the "mountain of God" which is where the story begins with the episode of the burning bush. As Professor Mazar, with his customary brilliance, has pointed out, the expression *'admat qōdēs* "holy ground" is not to be restricted to the few square meters on which Moses and the bush stood, but the entire district which presumably bore the name *Qādēs* for a reason. We may not want to inquire too deeply into the exact nature of the "holiness" involved, bearing in mind especially the characteristics of the goddess with the title *Qudšu*. Suffice it to say that this was the original "holy land." The persistence in the tradition concerning the holiness of the site of the sacred mountain of God/Yahweh convinces me that the use of the root *qōdš* in these passages is no accident but a direct reference to the area in Sinai. The transfer of holiness to Canaan at a later

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(or earlier) date or the designation of the land of Canaan as holy to the God of Israel may belong to older traditions regarding the patriarchal settlement and the god El (Shadday); but for Yahweh the association was clearly of a secondary nature.

In v. 16 the repeated verb *'ad-ya'ābōr* is taken as a reference to the crossing of the Reed Sea (Dahood) or the Jordan River (Cross and his students). But *'br* is not used only of crossing bodies of water and the lack of an object makes it difficult to pin down the exact meaning of the word in these passages. Since no water crossing of any kind is actually described in the poem, we may dismiss both views as fanciful and dictated by considerations outside the poem. Within the poem there is a more attractive anchorage in the context of the march through the wilderness past (to the south of) the territories of the neighboring peoples, and a direct link with v. 13.

Thus *'am-zū gā'ālītā* in v. 13 is paralleled by *'am-zū qānītā* in v. 16 — the people whom you redeemed//the people whom you purchased. There can be no doubt that E. F. Campbell is right in restoring the connection between these verbs here in the light of their use in Ruth 4:4-6; this establishes that the meaning of *qnh* in Exodus 15 must be "purchase" in parallel with *g'l* "redeem."

The association of the same terms in Ps. 74:2 confirms the connection here in Exodus 15 — it is the same people, and the likelihood is that the same situation is described from two points of view: that of Yahweh's guidance and leadership (v. 13) and that of the people's marching through the wilderness to their destination (v. 16).

The verb *qnh* is used three times of God as victoriously redeeming or purchasing his people. In Exodus 15:16 it is used as a remote parallel to *g'l* while in Ps. 74:2 the parallelism is proximate. In Is. 11:11 the term used with *qnh* is *'ēdā* instead of *'am* but the sense is the same. In Ps. 78:54 on the other hand the apparent antecedent is *har* = "the mountain which his right hand purchased." This is anomalous, and we may recognize the true antecedent of the pronoun in a passage otherwise closely parallel to Exodus 15, the word *'ammō* in v. 52. The unit or stanza extends from v. 52 through v. 54; the first and last cola form an envelope around the intervening material. The reading would be:

<i>wayyassa' kaṣṣōn 'ammō</i>	and he led forth like a flock his people
<i>zeh qānētā yēminō</i>	whom his right arm had purchased.

This arrangement brings the sense into line with the sentiment expressed in the other passages mentioned but leaves an anomalous collection of words in the preceding colon: *gēbūl qodsō har*. They might be rendered literally: "his holy territory, the mountain." The association of *har* and *qōdes* is one of long standing, however, and the change in word order is simply a stylistic variation: the meaning would be "the territory around his holy mountain." The combination of sacred precinct around the holy mountain fits precisely the description of Mt. Sinai and its environs in the time of the Israelite settlement there (Exodus 19 and other places).

A note on the idea of the hand as the instrument of purchase may be in order.<sup>2</sup> My

2. The word *yad* is used in Is. 11:11 in connection with purchase, but the sense is not clear there either.

opinion is that this kind of purchase is made by force rather than dollars. In the Second World War the word "liberate" came into use to describe the confiscation of material goods by conquering armies. This seems to be the meaning. Yahweh's purchase of his people is never recorded as a transaction but rather as an act, a violent one to be sure, and perpetrated by his right hand, the symbol of divine justice and power. That explanation seems to suit the situation at the time of the Exodus when the Israelites gained their freedom through a series of violent actions taken against Egypt and the Egyptians. The climax of the struggle was the destruction of the Pharaonic force at the Sea of Reeds. The notion that the hand, especially the right one, was involved in a business transaction perhaps sealed by oath, may also have merit, but purchase by violence rather than exchange of goods or funds seems to be more appropriate in the circumstances.

Resuming the discussion of Exodus 15, I have pointed to the link between vv. 13 and 17, especially in the combination of *'el-nēwēh qodšekā* and *tebl'ēmō*, which may be rendered quite naturally: "To your holy habitation you brought them" which balances beautifully with *wētiṭṭd'ēmō bēhar nahālātēkā* — "And you planted them in the mountain of your inheritance (better: possession)."<sup>3</sup> This arrangement not only stresses the congruence of the ideas but also links the "holy habitation" with the "mount of possession." Concerning this latter, it will be noted that it is virtually identical with the Ugaritic expression used in connection with Baal's ancestral "mount of possession" or "inheritance" which is also the site of Baal's heavenly temple. It was precisely on this mountain of the north that Baal's temple was built and where he celebrated his kingship. The parallel with Yahweh and his mountain in the South (Sinai) is notable. It was on this mountain that Yahweh's palace stood, a palace made by Yahweh for himself with its throne room and throne, on which he is seated, king forever (v. 18). The same correlation and celebration are to be noted. This heavenly temple or sanctuary with its throne room or holy of holies where the deity was seated on his cherubim throne constituted the *tabnit* or structure seen by Moses during his sojourn on the same mountain, cf. Exod. 25:8 "And they shall make for me a sanctuary (*miqdās* = Exod. 15:17) and I shall dwell in their midst according to everything which I am showing you: the *tabnit* or model of the Tabernacle (*miškān*) and the model for all of its furnishings (equipment); and so shall you do."

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3. The use of this expression points to a pre-Mosaic form of Yahwism, which involved features we can identify in the Canaanite mythic poems about El and Baal. There are repeated references and allusions in biblical tradition to a primordial struggle between Yahweh and the Sea-monster Rahab//Leviathan. If we see here a parallel to the Baal story of the great battle with Yamm, we note that apparently the victory over Yamm was celebrated by the building of Baal's temple or palace on Mt. Sapon by Kothar-wa-Ḥasis and his helper deities, with Baal's subsequent enthronement in his palace. We can trace similar elements in the biblical account and may suppose that Yahweh's battle with Rahab and her allies preceded his acquiring title to Sinai, following which he erected his heavenly palace there. All this derives from pre-Mosaic Yahwism and survived only as colorful imagery in the austere demythologized version promulgated by the great prophet himself.

While the language of v. 17 may seem much more suitable for the later settlement of the Israelites in Canaan, it is nevertheless appropriate for the first settlement at Sinai. After all, the principal object of the Exodus, after escaping from bondage in Egypt, was to seek God in the wilderness. The actual settlement at Kadesh-Barnea, which must have been somewhere in the vicinity of the great mountain itself, extended over the better part of a generation (typically 40 years), and in the eyes of that first generation may well have appeared to be a permanent settlement: "You brought them in and you planted them." It was only later when a new generation and a new situation had arisen that the march from Sinai began. The new state of affairs is reflected in the Song of Deborah (Judg. 5) and the Testament of Moses (Deut. 33). In these poems the removal of Yahweh from Sinai is asserted, along with his march to Canaan. The setting of the assembly of tribes in Deut. 33 is not clear and it is possible that the author intended a wilderness locale, or at least in the Transjordan plateau, but the tribal list itself suggests the locus is Canaan after the entry into the land. This also is clearly the case with the Song of Deborah. Yahweh's direct participation in the battle with the chariot forces of Canaan implies his equally explicit presence with his people. Sinai is far away and far behind: Yahweh is not only *zeh Sīnay* but emphatically *'ēlōhē yisrā'ēl*, which in my opinion always signifies a geographic-political entity with an identification with the land of Canaan, at least since the 13th century. During this period Yahweh travelled in a tent or a Tabernacle, having abandoned his old abode, but not yet having acquired a new one. Shrines and sanctuaries abound, and the divine presence may be made manifest in any one of them, but in no case is there the developed tripartite imagery which we found in relation to the Sinai episodes in the beginning and the construction of the house of David and Solomon at the end. While the latter (the Temple of Solomon in Jerusalem) effectively displaced the former as the cult center of the nation, the tradition about the earlier domicile never entirely faded from view. On the contrary the traditions about Sinai and its sacred associations were maintained (we may suppose in the first instance by the Levites who had a special responsibility for the Ark and its contents, stemming from the time of Moses in the wilderness) without abridgement, so much so that the main narrative of the Bible centers attention on everything that was done at Sinai by Moses and his associates. So what the Bible presents us with is two phases or stages in the faith of Israel: one focussing on the revelation at Sinai, the tradition of the founding fathers, and the organization of the new order; the other arising out of the military, political, or religious circumstances of the monarchy.

If the passage in Exod. 15 points to the heavenly sanctuary erected by Yahweh himself on top of the sacred mountain in the midst of the holy territory, then we must ask about the corresponding passage in Ps. 78:67-69.

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| 67) | wayyim'as bē'ōhel yōsēp<br>ūbēsēbet 'eprayim lō' bāhār   | Then he rejected the tent of Joseph<br>and the tribe of Ephraim he did not choose. |
| 68) | wayyibhār 'et-sēbet yēhūdā<br>'et har šīyyôn 'āser 'āhēb | But he chose the tribe of Judah<br>Mt. Zion which he loved.                        |



- 69) wayyiben kēmō-rāmim miqdāsō And he built like the heights his sanctuary  
 kē'ereṣ yēsādāh lē'ōlām like the earth which he founded forever.

In vv. 67–68 we have clear cases of envelope construction and chiasm: *lō' bāhār* is balanced by *wayyibhār* while *yim'as* and *'āhēb* are paired. (The alternation of perfects and imperfects is noteworthy as an example of classic [i.e. Canaanite] usage: all are past tense — apart from *waw* consecutive.) The contrast between the tent of Joseph (i.e. the *miškān* at Shiloh) and Mt. Zion points to the shift from Shiloh to Jerusalem after the wars with the Philistines and the ultimate triumph of David (who is mentioned in vv. 70–72). In that context we must attempt to interpret v. 69; the basic content seems clear enough: "And he built his sanctuary" — apparently a reference to Yahweh's construction of his *miqdās*. (If our presupposition is correct, namely that Yahweh built only one sanctuary at one time, then this can only be a reference to the sanctuary in the wilderness at Mt. Sinai, but the context points to Mt. Zion.) If as is generally agreed *rāmim* refers to the heavenly heights, then the comparison between heaven and earth is established by the repetition of *kēmō* and *kē* "like the heavenly heights"// "like the earth"; there seems to be a description of heavenly and earthly temples here.<sup>4</sup> The heavenly sanctuary is eternal, whereas the earthly counterpart is not. The former is made by God, while the latter is made by men.<sup>5</sup> The temple or sanctuary on Mt. Zion is said to be like the one in the heights of heaven — its replica and with the special status accorded the place, even the mountain which God loved.

Nevertheless it is our contention that the heavenly palace of Yahweh is located, as it always has been, on Mt. Sinai in the southern wilderness. Men may worship Yahweh anywhere, especially in the approved earthly shrine (or shrines) and especially where the Ark and the throne are. Yahweh who customarily dwells in his heavenly sanctuary will hear and respond. On special occasions he travels to and with his people — to deliver them from bondage in Egypt and to settle them in the land of their fathers (the latter after a long internal and external struggle — with himself and with Moses).

Even though his name and his glory are attached first to one shrine and then another and then finally only to Jerusalem and the Temple there, his home remains in Sinai/Horeb, and an intrepid worshipper may seek him there, as in fact Elijah did, rejecting the convenience of sanctuaries from Dan to Beersheba, going all the way to the sacred precinct of Horeb (= Sinai) and seeking the presence of God in the same cave or grotto where Moses had met the deity long before. Elijah was granted a certain vision (or anti-vision) but unlike Moses was not invited to see the true *tabnīt*, the sanctuary which served as a model for all the replicas, especially the Tabernacle and the

4. As for the parallel verb *ysd*, MT pointing relates it to *'ereṣ* = he founded it; but the spelling is ambiguous and the *h* could refer to the sanctuary, since *ysd* is used in laying the foundation of the temple. It would offer better parallelism:

And he built his sanctuary // He founded it eternally  
 like heaven // like earth.

5. Biblical terminology is not always precise and *wybn* here may be used in the same sense that Yahweh is spoken of in Ps. 147:2 as the "builder" of Jerusalem.

Temple in Jerusalem, but there is no reason to doubt that it was still there. Heavenly temples are built to last — *lê'ôlām*, in fact.

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#### Discussion

*Prof. Y. Yadin:* I should like to comment on an interesting point. Whatever the original meaning was in those verses which you quoted, it is interesting how these verses were understood in the Second Temple period. I am going to speak more on that in my lecture on the Temple Scroll, on the concept of the temple city and the temple's role. But I should like to say that there the idea is a very simple one: God says to Moses how the Israelites should eventually build the earthly temple, let us say the Solomonic Temple. The whole procedure is described and all the sacrifices dealt with, but then it ends with this verse: "All that till the day of blessing at the end of the days, when I shall build my own temple in the midst of the children of Israel, according to the alliance which I had with Jacob in Bethel." In other words they understood quite clearly that this God-made sanctuary, whether in heaven or on a mountain, cannot be found now. It will be revealed only at the end of the days, whenever that may be. This is what they believed, whatever the original meaning was. I want to conclude by saying that many years ago I gave a lecture to some very pious Rabbis here in Mea She'arim about the plan of Solomon's Temple. I spoke about one theory, and another theory, and a third theory, and I said that if today we were faced with the problem of rebuilding Solomon's Temple it would cause a terrific debate among people how to build it. Then an old Rabbi stood up and said: "Professor Yadin, do not worry, when the time comes, it will come ready-made by God from heaven."

*Prof. M. Haran:* Putting aside for the moment the question of the heavenly temples, how does it accord with the verses themselves. In verse 13 it says: "You led your people to your abode of holiness." In verse 17 it says: "You will bring them and you will plant them on your mountain of holiness." "Them" refers to the people of Israel. The question is, how come the people of Israel are associated with the heavenly temple. If

the reference is to the heavenly temple, how could he speak of the people of Israel in this context?

*Prof. D.N. Freedman:* That is precisely the picture we have at Mt. Sinai and that area, namely, that the people of Israel are gathered at the foot of the mountain. This is where they construct the Tabernacle, but on top of the mountain is the heavenly sanctuary. And with respect to the tenses of the verbs, in this poem there is no difference between perfect and imperfect forms. This is the classic example that David Robertson used to show that the verbal system in Exodus 15 belongs to the same pattern as Ugaritic poetry, in which perfect and imperfect forms are used interchangeably and in parallel structure, but do not affect the time scheme. That has to be determined by other criteria.

*Prof. M. Weinfeld:* I see the specific difficulty here in the verb "plant": "You will plant them in the mountain of your inheritance". This is an image in connection with the settlement of the Israelites in Palestine. For example, Psalm 80 is mostly dedicated to the image of how God plants a vine in the land and especially important is Psalm 44, which says in connection with settlement: "You with your own hand have disinherited the nations but you planted them". There are other instances, but I brought only these two. So I see here the difficulty in *wētīṭṭā'ēmō*, which is a motif especially associated with the settlement of the Israelites in Palestine.

*Prof. D.N. Freedman:* There are even better passages. Jeremiah especially uses exactly the same language and of course this is what we have to expect. But what I am arguing is, that to the first generation out of Egypt, forty years was a long time, and that the horizon of the poem and the objective of the people is defined exactly in Exodus 3, where Moses is told: "When you have brought forth the people out of Egypt, you shall worship God on this mountain."