

THE SPRINGFIELD

Vol. XXXIII

Summer, 1969

No. 2

THE SPRINGFIELD is published quarterly by the faculty of Concordia Theological Seminary, Springfield, Illinois, of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

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Indexed in INDEX TO RELIGIOUS PERIODICAL LITERATURE, *published by the American Theological Library Association, McCormick Seminary Library, Chicago, Illinois.*

Clergy changes of address reported to Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Missouri, will also cover mailing change of *The Springfielder*. Other changes of address should be sent to the Business Manager of *The Springfielder*, Concordia Theological Seminary, Springfield, Illinois 62702.

Address communications to the Editor, Erich H. Heintzen, Concordia Theological Seminary, Springfield, Illinois 62702.

An Evaluation of HEILSGESCHICHTE Theologies with Special Reference to Their Implications for Biblical Hermeneutics

RAYMOND F. SURBURG

HEILSGESCHICHTE, A GERMAN WORD, that has been translated as "holy history" or "salvation history" has gained a certain prominence in twentieth theological literature. In many theological circles the term *Heilsgeschichte* is used with an air of familiarity and self-confidence because it is considered to be self-explanatory and the term is adjudged that every user of it employed the word in the same way. However, an examination of theological literature will reveal that the word *Heilsgeschichte* has different meanings for different interpreters, all of whom fill the word with a variety of contents and meanings. Alan Richardson said about the term *Heilsgeschichte*:

'Salvation-history' is clumsy and does not convey any very distinct idea. In German the word bears the double sense of both 'saving history' and 'history of salvation,' and it is nowadays widely used to refer to those saving acts of God in human history which are recorded in the Scripture of the Old and New Testaments.¹

There are also today scholars who are calling for the discontinuance of its employment altogether. The term *Heilsgeschichte* is a very broad one and has been utilized to cover theologians as diverse as Bengel, Auferlen, Eutinger, Beck, Aulen, Ewald, von Hofmann, Schlatter, Cullmann and Otto Piper.²

Rottenberg in *Redemption and Historical Reality* claims that it is not difficult to understand why the idea of *Heilsgeschichte* is portrayed as essential to a proper understanding of the Bible:

The reason in essence was this: the concept expressed a view of revelation that is *dynamic*. The God of the Bible is portrayed as the "God who acts." The message of the Bible is characterized as witness, as proclamation of the *magnalia Dei* — the mighty and saving deeds of the Lord.³

Today it is a popular view that history is the primary medium of revelation. Current theological thinking is and has concentrated on the concept that God reveals Himself in action, revelation come to men through certain events. This view of revelation has had a tremendous influence in recent theological literature.⁴ Both Old and New Testament scholars are using the concept of *Heils-*

geschichte. Ramm in his hermeneutical guide, *Protestant Biblical Interpretation* has listed *Heilsgeschichte* as one of the most recent schools of interpretation to appear in the history of Biblical hermeneutics.⁵

Protestant and Roman Catholic writers are using the term to cover the Biblical history of both Testaments. Thus Rust has written his *Salvation History* and Salms has edited a volume dealing with Biblical topics and called it: *Studies in Salvation History* and Power has given his survey of the Old Testament the title: *History of Salvation*.⁶

It will be the purpose of this presentation to set forth the historical origins of the concept of *Heilsgeschichte* prior to the twentieth century, furthermore to see how it has been and is being employed in this century and also to note the reasons advanced by those who are opposed to its usefulness as a theological term. Finally, the implications for Biblical interpretation will be evaluated in the light of the Scriptures and of the hermeneutics of the Lutheran Confessions (all clergy of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod are pledged to the position that the Lutheran Confessions are correct doctrinal interpretations of God's Word).

1.

Students of *Heilsgeschichte* claim that the word *Heilsgeschichte* was coined in the middle of the eighteenth century in Pietistic circles in Germany. Toward the middle of the nineteenth century there appeared in opposition to the historical positivism of the *religionsgeschichtliche Schule*, the so-called *heilsgeschichtliche Schule*, which flourished especially in southern Germany. Its main representatives were Tobias Beck (1804-1878) and Johann Christian Konrad von Hofmann (1810-1877).⁷

Some of the basic concepts and ideas promoted by the school of *Heilsgeschichte* are discovered by the proponents of *Heilsgeschichte* already in Ireneus and Augustine.⁸ Ireneus is supposed to have emphasized the integral relationship between the Old Testament and the New Testament as well as the concept of recapitulation. Ireneus' writings are also characterized by an emphasis on God's saving presence and his redemptive activity in history. This second-century church father also postulated a preestablished divine plan which embraced history from Creation to the Second Coming. A number of these emphases were adopted by the school of *Heilsgeschichte* of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Augustine in his *De Vera Religione*, xxv, 46 wrote: "Divine providence not only looks after the individuals as it were privately but also after the whole human race publicly . . . How he deals with the human race God has handed down through history and prophecy." In his work *De Civitate Dei*, Books 15-17 (written about A.D. 425) Augustine analyzed the Old Testament revelation on the basis of five historical periods. He thus embodied the views of historical

revelation, and, in a sense promoted a concept of *Heilsgeschichte*. In the twelfth century Joachim of Fiore taught that Father, Son, and Holy Ghost were manifested in different dispensations that followed each other in successive historical eras.⁹

The roots of the *Heilsgeschichtliche Schule* of southern Germany are traced back to Johann Albrecht Bengel, a German Lutheran, who lived from 1687 to 1752. He was known for his piety and for his submissiveness to God's Word. Bengel is famous especially for two works: *Gnomon Novi Testamenti* (Tübingen, 1742), a brief and excellent commentary on the New Testament, and *Ordo Temporum* (Stuttgart, 1741). In the latter work Bengel claimed that "we must not regard Holy Scripture as a text-book, but as an incomparable narrative of the divine economy with reference to the human race from the beginning to the end of all things—through all the ages of the world as a beautiful, glorious connected system."¹⁰ Bengel held to an organic and historical understanding of Biblical revelation, insisting that its different stages be distinguished. Thus he wrote in *Ordo Temporum* (OT), XL, 13: "The Holy Scriptures form one harmonious work. All its books form one corpus. Each is self-contained, and fulfills for itself its particular object. It is one ground thought, which infinitely, divinely comprehends all in itself—from which all times proceed, which has measured past, present, and the future."¹¹

Bengel taught that what God teaches we must by all means learn and accept, one thing after another. Step by step God advances revealing the secrets of His kingdom to each age which each age in turn must appropriate for itself. Nothing more must the saints of God receive, but also nothing less. The measure of the revelation in every age is the measure of the saints (O. T. VIII, 1).¹²

It was Bengel's contention that in order to grasp the meaning of the historical books of the Old Testament, it was essential that the divine purpose of redemption as set forth in the Old Testament be realized and that this redemption came to gradual realization in the Old Testament. For Bengel the historical events recorded in the Bible followed not only a chronological principle, but also a teleological one. The eschatological events of Daniel and Revelation were depicted as necessary to chronological speculations, setting the beginning of the Millennium as the year 1836. As a result, as Fritsch observed, Bengel was not only the progenitor of the *Heilsgeschichtliche Schule* with its stress on revelation as history, but to him must also be attributed the revival of chiliasm in the eighteenth century.¹³

One of the principal insights of the *Heilsgeschichte* theology of the nineteenth century was that there was a plan in the history of the world from the beginning to the end. It was the function of the Biblical student to search for the underlying principles that controlled this divine history as contained in Holy Scripture. This was not a new idea in the history of Christian thought. Bengel, as already been shown, considered Scripture as an organism. Johannes Cocceius

and the so-called federal theology, divided history on the basis of certain covenant relationships between God and man. He spoke of the "covenant of works" and the "covenant of grace." In some respects his position was a reaction against the scholasticism of the post-Reformation period. It was intended as a corrective against theological scholasticism. According to Rottenberg "Cocceius was interested in developing a Biblical-theological dogmatics that would be more closely related to the life of faith, over against the speculative-philosophical tendencies of his day."¹⁴

John Gerstner claims that Johannes Edwards (1703-1758) in New England also conceived of presenting a "Rational Divinity" along the lines of Bengel in his posthumously published *History of Redemption* and that this may thus be considered the first work of the American school of *Heilsgeschichte*.¹⁵ According to Gerstner this outflowing of *Heilsgeschichte* was not from the dry ground because anticipations of it were to be found in church men like Irenaeus, Joachim of Flora and Luther. It is doubtful that Edwards had any knowledge of the work of Bengel.

In order to counteract a static view of Scripture, the *Heilsgeschichte* theology had emphasized the idea of development in Biblical history. In the Scriptures the reader finds a series of divine acts which are organically connected and which grew in clearness until they are fulfilled in Christ. Jesus is the end of the Old Testament history. He is the climax of the developing process of divine revelation in history.

According to this interpretation prophecy and fulfillment assume a new meaning. The Old Testament from Genesis to Malachi is prophetic and is supposed to be freed from the rigidity of the proof-text method. The New Testament is also in harmony with the prophetic view, and looks beyond the Second Coming to the final union of heaven and earth, referred to in Revelation 21:1-3.

One of the important ideas of the school of *Heilsgeschichte* was the portrayal of history as revelation. Members of this school stress the fact that God had made Himself known in and through the historical process in historical acts. In describing this position Fritsch wrote: "These acts are the result of the divine activity in history, and the divine truth in the historical acts therefore makes them the object of saving faith. The function of history is therefore both revelatory and redemptive."¹⁶ This meant that divine revelation is not to be identified with Scripture's contents as had been held by orthodoxy. Scripture is merely the witness to the datum not the reality itself.

The idea of the Bible as redemptive history (*Heilsgeschichte*) was held to have implications for the authority of Scriptures. Over against seventeenth century orthodoxy, the authority of the Bible was not considered dependent on a verbally inspired book, but rather upon the fact that God speaks and acts on its every page. The Bible was not to be used as a repository of proof texts which can be quoted to establish some doctrine or dogma.¹⁷

According to Weth, the nineteenth century was the "century of history," but it was also the century of the theologians of *Heilsgeschichte*.¹⁸ The latter development took two different directions. With Darby, whose views were popularized by *Scofield's Reference Bible*, *Heilsgeschichte* became Dispensationalism. According to this school of theology, the history of the world is divided into seven dispensations, each of which serves a specific end. The last phase is the one in which believers are to be especially interested because they will be spared the dispensation of the Great Tribulation by being taken from the world by the "Rapture" (I Thess. 4:17). Many of the prophecies of the Old Testament regarding Jesus will then be fulfilled.¹⁹

With Johann Tobias Beck (1804-1878) *Heilsgeschichte* took on a different development. Beck combined Hegel's philosophy with certain trends in German theology. This theology is not found in any one book, but must be gathered from numerous publications. The key to understanding the history of revelation is the Kingdom of God, which is a world of true righteousness that penetrates our physical and spiritual life. The goal of God's activity in history is to make mankind righteous. Beck insisted on the teleological character of God's dealings with his people which required a logical connection between the various stages. Beck required a logical connection between the various stages. Fritsch has summarized Beck's theology as follows:

He believed in a transcendent, divine real kingdom, which forms the starting point and goal of divine, organic economy, as well as the individual Christian life, and fills both with a real ethical content.²⁰

The best known and most influential of the *Heilsgeschichtliche Schule* of the nineteenth century was Johann Christian von Hofmann (1810-1877) of Erlangen. His approach to theology was primarily historical. He originated the idea of *heilsgeschichtliche Theologie*. Following a clue from Hegel, von Hofmann claimed that historical events had roots in the past, had meaning for the present and that they also have a portent for the future. It is also believed by the students of von Hofmann's writings that the philosophy of Schelling, with its close union of history and metaphysics, exercised a direct influence on von Hofmann's interpretation of Biblical History. A good part of his life was devoted to the study of the Bible; he was especially interested in the doctrine of inspiration, prophecy and fulfillment. His three most important works are: *Weissagung und Erfüllung in Alten Testament und Neuen Testament* (2 parts. Nördlingen, 1841-44), *Der Schriftbeweis* (2nd. ed. 2 vols., Nördlingen, 1857) and *Biblische Hermeneutik* (Nordlingen: C. H. Beck, 1880).²¹

In *Weissagung und Erfüllung* von Hofmann elaborated his concept of *Heilsgeschichte* or "Holy History." In it the Erlangen theologian brings prophecy into the closest connection with history.

However, prophecy is not fulfilled in words but in related facts whose significance is later on made clear by words. The entire Bible is prophetic. The Old Testament looks forward to the final glorification of the Church and the believer. In a teleological view of history, the earlier happenings of history cannot have the same function as the later ones. The difference between von Hofmann's organic view and the traditional orthodox view of prophecy has been stated by Christian Preus as follows:

In contrast to traditional views, which represented the words of prophecy as either as oracular (with merely incidental contemporary relevance) or simply as premonition (which at best implies only a factual correspondence between prophecy and fulfillment), Hofmann showed that there must be an *organic* connection between the sphere in which prophecy was made and the circumstances of its fulfillment, and that in this connection God's saving purpose be traced.²²

In the study of prophecy the student, according to von Hofmann, must know (1) the history of Israel; (2) the immediate historical context and (3) the fulfillment intended. Revelation occurs as an unfolding process of history with prophecy following the same development. According to Ramm, von Hofmann was indebted to Schelling (as Tillich in America) for this basic insight that history was the manifestation of the eternal and absolute and not so much a matter of chronicled events.²³ Von Hofmann regarded Jesus Christ not merely as the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy, but as a prophecy yet to be fulfilled. The history of Christ was for the Erlangen professor the starting point for a further history which has yet another prophecy concerning the completion of communion between God and man. The course of prophetic history may be described as follows: prophecy, fulfillment, greater or final fulfillment. The present age portends another age, the millennium. Thus von Hofmann took his place with other Lutheran millennarians of the nineteenth century.

The new birth von Hofmann considered as the starting point of theology. By regeneration the individual becomes conscious of being a member of the Church. No person can truly understand the Bible, theology, or history, apart from a personal faith in Christ. It is in this light of his Christian experience and faith that a Christian understands the redemptive character of Old Testament history. It is the ever-present task of theology to reinterpret the church's substance within the historical circumstances.

Von Hofmann also held that the Holy Spirit not only inspired the Bible, but He still guides the church. The Christian exegete must not formalize, dogmatize, or canonize his interpretations of the Bible but must always be dependent upon the Holy Spirit for more light and insight. Interpretation is thus conceived to be dynamic, as opposed to the static approach of orthodoxy and is constantly moving forward under the Holy Spirit's guidance.

The Erlangen divine rejected the form of Scriptural proof employed by the old dogmaticians and writers of orthodox Lutheranism who accumulated a mass of single passages, ignoring their place in the history of redemption. Heick said of von Hofmann: "He demands that proofs be derived from the whole of Scriptures and that each single portion of the Bible be interpreted in the light of the whole. Above all the recorded facts, the historic events are to furnish the proofs."²¹

Von Hofmann endeavored to combine orthodox Lutheran theology with the insights of Schleiermacher concerning religious experience as the place of departure of the Scriptures. This concept became particularly prominent in the nineteenth century. According to Christian Preus von Hofmann endeavored to find the basis of religious authority in (1) the experience of regeneration; (2) the history and fact of the church; and (3) the Scriptures.²²

2.

The Development of Opposition to *Heilsgeschichte* in the Nineteenth Century.

After von Hofmann the presentation of Biblical data in terms of *Heilsgeschichte* went into eclipse. Among reputable scholars only Franz Delitzsch favored the theology of the Erlangen school and continued to advocate "supernaturalism in Biblical theology."²³ During the latter half of the nineteenth century the school of *Religionsgeschichte* took over which placed the Judaeo-Christian religion on a par with other religions and denied the uniqueness of Biblical revelation. The religious thought of the Bible was portrayed as the product of development and human evolution. The Old Testament was regarded at best the expression of religious ideas. Consequently, the Old Testament was not considered to have a relevant message for modern man.

Nineteenth century theologians of *Heilsgeschichte* attempted to maintain a truly Biblical theology in the face of the attacks of rationalism, which had made reason the supreme judge in matters theological. In trying to meet the challenge of their lives, they also incorporated the newer knowledge into their theological system; for instance, the employment of the concept of organic development was an accommodation to the philosophical spirit of idealism. They also adopted the use of an historical system, which eventually was going to challenge the basic assumption of the *Heilsgeschichtliche Schule*.

The question of history which had been agitating scholars for several centuries, ultimately became the undoing of *Heilsgeschichte*. The latter was unable to provide an answer that would satisfy the historical positivists. They succumbed to the school of historicism which had no room for any element of *Heilsgeschichte*. In Rottenburg's opinion: "The whole concept of historical revelation in the traditional sense of presence and saving activity of God became extremely problematical."²⁴

During the nineteenth century the views adopted and developed by Schleiermacher, Ritschl and Troeltsch were opposed to the distinctive positions taken by the proponents of *Heilsgeschichte*. The stance regarding history that developed since the Enlightenment was that history was in essence dealing with the relative. Historians are dependent upon sources and the interpretation of sources. It was inferred from this situation that history could not yield definite information but at best furnish probability. Miracles, it was pointed out, had to be seen or experienced by the historian, otherwise the attestations of men from the past were not acceptable.

This view of history led those who wished to deal with the Scriptures on a scientific basis eventually to adopt a "theology of immediacy and inwardness." Schleiermacher took his stand with the "Christian pious-self-consciousness" and witness to the Christian *magnalia dei* was interpreted in terms of man's religious feelings and experiences. Schleiermacher was a pantheist in his conception of deity and he described man in his feelings in relationship with the Infinite. Every human being could be in direct contact with the Infinite and thus be subject to revelations from the Infinite.²⁸ This totally made unnecessary the emphasis of orthodox Christianity upon the prophetic and apostolic Scriptures, and the concept that in Scripture there is a record of the great deeds of God was completely redundant. Schleiermacher thus severed the Christian faith from the real of history.

Ritschl attempted to employ the positivistic-historical method on behalf of the Christian faith. Out of his endeavors there came the movement known as "the quest for the historical Jesus." He was of the opinion that historical research, while having certain limitations, was able to furnish some historical basis for the Christian religion. He expressed his opposition to speculative rationalism and vague mysticism. Influenced by neo-Kantian idealism he tried to erect a theology upon the basis of "the purely factual" historical basis of the New Testament. Ritschl portrayed Jesus, who was opposed by his enemies, as completely trusting in God's love and power; by doing this Jesus revealed man's true response to God. Thus the man Jesus became the Archetypal Man and the unique revelation of God. Jesus Christ was misinterpreted by Paul, who depicted Him as the Savior by his vicarious death on the cross for men's sins. This Ritschl rejected and made Jesus of Nazareth a great moral teacher. Upon this conception of Jesus, Ritschl erected his concept of "value-judgments."²⁹ According to Ritschlianism contemporary man who considered himself threatened "by blind, mechanistic, impersonal natures can be delivered from this situation only by the work mediated to him by the Christian Church. Man can attain to religious knowledge only through the awareness of the 'value' or 'worth' imparted to his life by God through Jesus Christ."³⁰

It is not difficult to realize what the implications of such teaching would be for those positions that characterized *Heilsgeschichte's*

understanding of the Scriptures, its view of revelation and its belief in the uniqueness of the Christian faith.

Troeltsch (1865-1923) applied the methods and insights of the philosophy of history to an analysis of the Christian faith.³¹ It was his contention that Christianity had to be examined in the context of its overall spiritual and religious development and that the past events of biblical history could be understood as they were relived by the historian. Rottenberg avers that Troeltsch was a great historian who was much concerned with the problems that historicism had raised. Troeltsch was singularly interested in the social, political and cultural movements of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries so that "historical studies had presented him with a panorama of infinite interrelationships, a *Fluss*—an endless, moving flux of events, an *Ozean des Geschehens*—the ever-rolling waves of becoming in which all is related to all. In this view of historical continuum there was little room for the unique event—a different and special kind of history."³²

The results of Troeltsch's stance were to make the basic teachings of the *Heilsgeschichte* Schule impossible and unrelated to man's conditions. Troeltsch's main contributions to posterity have been summarized by Richmond to have been the following: 1. the denial of the Absoluteness of the Christian religion; 2. the denial of the reliability of the Bible's account of the miraculous and anything that claimed to be related to the transcendent.³³

In both Old and New Testament fields the views of historicism came to prevail. The Old Testament was regarded as the story of the religious and cultural development of the people of Israel. Within the Old Testament scholars assumed a development from polytheism to what some called "ethical monotheism." This was usually interpreted along evolutionary lines.³⁴

In the New Testament field the quest was how to find the "historical Jesus" by means of scientific-historical studies. Troeltsch was convinced that even though many faulty notions held by the Church about Jesus would fall by the wayside, yet Jesus would be retained as the central figure, the source and power of the Christian religion. At least in *western* culture, Jesus and Christianity would be kept as the norm to be followed.

However, with the reaction of the dialectical theology against liberalism there emerged a new emphasis on certain aspects of the nineteenth century understanding of *Heilsgeschichte* and the word *Heilsgeschichte* became a popular one with a number of Old and New Testament scholars. Alan Richardson has correctly noted that the twentieth century new *Heilsgeschichte* has espoused two different theological viewpoints, which in turn have resulted in a confusion in the meaning of the term.³⁵ Barth and his followers used the term to describe the events of sacred history, such as the incarnation, redemption, resurrection, ascension as taking place in a suprahistorical sphere, a realm that would not be accessible to historical methods of

history writing and can only be known by faith. Those who place the historical and miraculous happenings of the life of Christ into the area of "metahistory" are therefore not concerned about the kind of objections the critical historian propounds against the significant and vital events of the life of Christ. This school of thought thus believed that the Christian faith which is mainly concerned with the Christ of faith does not need to concern itself with what critics do with the Jesus of history. This enables them to escape the questions and objections raised by positivistic historicism.

Members of the school of dialectical theology have incorporated certain aspects of the older school of *Heilsgeschichte* without adhering to the theology of *Heilsgeschichte*. As the first decades of the twentieth century progressed, a conviction on the part of certain scholars developed that the scientific approach to the Biblical material was not altogether satisfactory. The purely scientific interpretation of the Old Testament, reconstructed along evolutionary lines was found to hide the religious value of the Old Testament and the latter was seen not to have relevance to modern life.

With the publication of Eichrodt's *Theologie des Alten Testaments* the historicistic hold on the Old Testament was broken. In his preface to this Old Testament theology Eichrodt asserted: "It is high time that the tyranny of historicism in the Old Testament was broken and the proper approach to our task rediscovered."³⁶ The employment of the covenant as the organizing concept of Old Testament theology was something radically new. Thus Eichrodt claimed that the covenant as the constitutive concept of Old Testament theology is a basic component of all Old Testament theology and that the establishment of a covenant with Israel characterized Israel's experience as a *Tatcharakter*—the deed nature—of Yahweh's revelation."³⁷ In the opinion of Rottenberg the covenant concept "opened wide the perspectives for a historical view of revelation and a theology of history. In those circles the covenant idea has indeed become what A. Weiser has called a 'Formel für die Ideologie der Geschichte'—a formula that leads to a believing view of history."³⁸

According to Eichrodt, Israel came to confess her God as the One who had elected Israel and because her Lord is an electing God, He is the God of historical initiative. This means that Yahweh has dealt with Israel mainly through historical acts. It is by means of deeds that Yahweh has revealed Himself. The belief that Yahweh is creator was not a matter of direct revelation but a deduction that the Israelites made from the covenant relationship. With Eichrodt there began a reaction against the positivistic historicism that had held sway in the Old Testament circles. A number of subsequent theologies of the Old Testament became oriented toward a *Theologie der Tatsachen*, explained by Rottenberg as "a theology in which the characteristic nature of divine revelation is founded especially in events that faith confesses to be manifestations of the saving presence of God, events that reveal his providential guidance in the destinies

of men as in nations and cultures."⁹ The word "Heilsgeschichte" began to appear in theological literature as it has now for at least three decades. Twentieth-century exponents of *Heilsgeschichte* are, however, not reproducing the nineteenth century theology of *Heilsgeschichte*.

G. Ernst Wright of Harvard in a number of his writings has proposed the idea that revelation has taken place through God's acts. It is especially in the monograph, *The God Who Acts* that he has set forth the main thesis that God has revealed Himself by mighty acts.¹⁰ In dealing with the interpretation of the Old and New Testaments he claims that the Biblical reader needs to isolate the actions of God in history, whose number would be less than the number of fingers on both hands. According to Wright it is necessary when dealing with Biblical data to distinguish the acts of God from the response by the people of Israel to these acts. The responses are human interpretations and subject to evaluation by the critical Biblical reader. Wright is opposed to the historic Protestant and Lutheran teaching that God has revealed himself primarily through propositional revelation. Biblical theology, he avers, must be a "theology of recital." In rejecting a propositional and systematic dogmatics Wright wrote: "It is a theology of recital or proclamation of the acts of God, together with inferences drawn therefrom. These acts are themselves interpretations of historical events, or projections from known events to past and future, all described within the conceptual frame of one people in a certain historical continuum."¹¹ Wright and Reginald Fuller have written a volume dealing with the history and theology of the Old Testament that has as its organizing principle the idea of God acting in history and God's people responding to them.¹² A perusal of the volume by Wright and Fuller, however, will reveal that many facts once considered by Christians as factual and historical have been removed from the arena of the historical by this approach of "act plus human response."

Many Old Testament scholars, headed by Gerhardt von Rad, do not regard *Heilsgeschichte* so much as chronological history but as "sacred history" or "salvation history." According to von Rad *Heilsgeschichte* is actually interpreted history which expresses Israel's faith in Yahweh and his mighty acts on their behalf.¹³ The Old Testament is a witness to Israel's faith, and though it has an historical background, its special and individual events are not historical in the commonly accepted sense. The Exodus in Biblical history is understood to refer to some act of deliverance by Yahweh, which however must not be understood as the account in Exodus depicts it, namely, as a supernatural intervention of God in history. The miraculous happening as given in the Scripture must be regarded as the interpretation of an event which was purely an ordinary one, which however, was interpreted by Israel's prophets as a mighty act of God. As the centuries passed more and more spiritual accretions were added to the original account, resulting in its depiction as a miraculous event.

Eugene Merrill asks what the reason was for such an interpretation of Old Testament history. He answered:

When critics realized that they could no longer scout the essential historical reliability of the Scriptures, they were faced with the difficult task of explaining the miracles and other supernatural content. The only feasible thing to do was to admit that the framework of Old Testament history was valid, but that the miraculous events were merely prophetic interpretations of what God did in history. Even prophets who recorded the events did not believe that they happened exactly as they recorded them, but they "read into" the events their own theological judgments as to the meaning of the events.¹¹

By this procedure critical scholars have succeeded in stripping the Old Testament of its miraculous content without rejecting its historical character.

In opposition to Karl Barth, who placed the distinctive miraculous events of Christ's life such as the incarnation, resurrection and ascension into the realm of meta-history,¹⁵ Oscar Cullmann on the other hand has insisted that the total history of salvation is to be connected with real events. Cullmann has stated his view of *Heilsgeschichte* in *Christ and Time, Christology of the New Testament and Salvation History*.¹⁶ In *Christ and Time* he announced very early in his academic career: "Regardless of the title of my book, my primary concern is not with the question of time but with the presentation of Biblical redemptive history."¹⁷ Cullmann sees history as a straight line running between the creation and the Parousia, intersected at midpoint by the coming of Christ. Braaten has described Cullmann's *Heilsgeschichte* as follows:

He uses the vivid metaphor of the distinction between "D-day" "V-day" to illustrate that in Jesus' cross and resurrection, the decisive battle of the war has already occurred, but the important mopping-up exercises must still go until "Victory-Day." The tension between the "already" and the "not yet" is preserved. In Cullmann's scheme, eschatology deals literally with the "last things" in the sense of linear, calendar time. Each day, every minute, brings the end of history a little closer. Eschatology is the closing chapter of time, the last act in the drama of sacred history.¹⁸

Christian theology, Cullmann contends, in its essence is Biblical history. Christian theology sets forth God's dealing with man. Included in Cullmann's dealings are not only the believers but those of all men and thus in the final analysis all men are embraced. According to the Swiss theologian "all so-called 'secular' occurrences stand in relation to the redemptive history." Like in the older *Heilsgeschichte* theologies there is also to be found in Cullmann's interpretation of history a universalism.

In the opinion of Ramm, the outstanding American representative of *Heilsgeschichte* is Otto Piper of Princeton Theological Seminary.¹⁹ In his writings he admitted having been influenced by von Hofmann and his "Salvation History" principle. In the introduction to *God in History*, Piper announced that he was adopting the views of the school of *Heilsgeschichte* as represented by Bengel, J. T. Beck, Ch. von Hofmann, Carl Aug. Auberlen "so far as the modern development of exegesis and theology will allow."²⁰ Piper accepted the position of von Hofmann that inspiration and revelation were not to be separated. Piper is not appreciated by liberals because they do not believe in real inspiration nor by conservatives who believe that the use of the critical method must prove fatal to the Christian faith.

For Otto Piper the authority of Scriptures was not to be found in the fact that the Bible was given by inspiration of God the Holy Spirit. The reason that the Bible carries authority is not due to the fact that it is verbally inspired but because "the Bible confronts us with the facts that are more comprehensive and more important than anything else we know."²¹ The Bible is true not because of verbal inspiration but because the believer experiences it to be true. When the believer accepts the teachings of the Bible by faith, then it becomes God's Word to the recipient. Piper has espoused in principle the critical approach to the Bible. In his article "How I Study My Bible" he wrote: "All the attempts to exempt the Bible from the kind of criticism that we apply to other historical documents are just as futile as were the theological protests against the discoveries of paleontology."²² At the same time he endeavored to ward off the attempts of criticism to get rid of the supernatural element of the Bible. However, before the exegete can deal with the Scriptures, he must practice criticism as it relates to the text, canon and Biblical introduction. In his article "Principles of New Testament Interpretation" Piper has set forth what he terms his three major hermeneutical principles: 1. the search for the life-movement of a Biblical book; 2. understanding the book's message; and 3. the adoption of the message as one's own. The reader of Piper's article "Principles of New Testament Interpretation" will see that the Princeton theologian has enunciated many sound principles of Biblical hermeneutics.²³ Piper faults those exegetes who do not discover the world view of the Bible but interpret the New Testament from the so-called modern scientific world view, a procedure that can only eventuate in misinterpretation. Those interpreters who allegorize the Scripture are also guilty of failing to discover the world view and system of values in the Biblical writings. Those exegetes who practice a narrow literalism are also faulted by Piper for dealing in too simple a manner with books that are complex.

Piper has been critical of rationalists and liberals for their refusal to take seriously the supernatural character of the Bible. He, however, does not align himself with post-Reformation orthodoxy nor with modern orthodoxy nor with fundamentalism because he claims that

these also have failed to appreciate the Bible. Piper holds to what he calls the "Protestant Circle." Ramm described this as follows: "Coming out of faith we believe them to be the Word of God, and by properly reading them we in turn discover them to be the Word of God. Only *by* response and *in* response to Scripture do we appreciate it and truly know it as the Word of God."⁵³

While some scholars of our time wish to incorporate the emphasis that God has revealed Himself through acts in history, they do not want to adopt the schematic theologies of men like Cullmann or Piper. On the other hand, there are savants who are completely critical of *Heilsgeschichte* and state that the word ought not be used. For the opponents of *Heilsgeschichte* the problem revolves around the words "Heil" and "Geschichte." What do these two words "Salvation" and "History" mean when combined together?

Karl G. Steck in *Die Idee der Heilsgeschichte* said that the use of the term *Geschichte*, "history" is ill-advised, because history only deals with that which is accessible to historical research.⁵⁴ The unique events of the Christian religion are not available to historians and therefore the term "history" should not be used to describe the great redemptive events of which the New Testament speaks. When speaking of history as redemptive what does the term *Heil* mean under these circumstances? According to the Scripture Christ is salvation or *Heil*. But what is meant then by *Heilsgeschichte* when this term is employed by theologians to describe God's redemptive activity in history? How does the redemption of Christ become part of the lives of people without conscious acceptance of Christ as Savior and Redeemer? How does the redemption of Christ affect people in the broadest sense? These are the problems that have not been adequately answered by present-day *Heilsgeschichte* theologians and proponents.

Rudolf Bultmann has been totally opposed to Cullmann's understanding of *Heilsgeschichte*. The question of history in religion and faith has become a burning issue with the demythologizing school of Bultmann.⁵⁵ Bultmann has tried to free theology from its close association with "saving events in history" and substituted existential experience as the decisive factor of faith. But as Joocz has aptly remarked: "But once historicity is surrendered all aspects of objectivity are lost and faith becomes a matter of subjective mood."⁵⁶ Bultmann has endeavored to escape the charge of subjectivity by distinguishing between *Heilsgeschichte* and *Historie*. The resurrection, which Christians have believed was an event that occurred in calendar history, is said by Bultmann to be a matter of faith, or *Geschichte* but not of *Historie*, which deals with events that actually occurred and can be verified by the historian. As such the resurrection of Christ is not an historical event, because this would mean that a person was endeavoring to secure faith by means of history. "The Christian Easter-faith," Bultmann asserted, "is not interested in the historical question."⁵⁷ However, this raises the question: Did Jesus actually

arise from the dead? If Christ be not raised, Paul stated, your faith is useless and Christians are still in their sins.

In America, Richard Reinhold Niebuhr has attacked the concept of *Heilsgeschichte* as inadequate and erroneous by contending that a false dichotomy has been made between "regular history" and "sacred history," which actually is regarded as a "nonhistorical history."⁵⁸ The weakness of *Heilsgeschichte* theologians, according to Niebuhr, is that their position has led to a distinction between internal history of faith and profane history.

Wolfhart Pannenberg of the University of Mainz has been critical of standard *Heilsgeschichte* theology because in his opinion and those of his followers it has failed to show the connection between revelation and history. Pannenberg claims that *Heilsgeschichte* theology flounders on a dualism, in that revelation is placed into the sphere of faith, while history is assigned to the methods of historical criticism. The Mainz theologian has been critical of the existentialistic Bultmannian school with its kerygmatic theology and also with dialectical theologians: Barth, Brunner, and Gogarten, claiming that "historical concerns were submerged beneath an avalanche of theological rhetoric."

Pannenberg has set forth his view and those of his sympathizers in *Offenbarung als Geschichte (History as Revelation)*.⁵⁹ This title is significant because it indicates Pannenberg's position on the ontology of historical revelation. For him revelation does not merely occur *in* or through history but *as* history. In the Symposium *Revelation as History*, Pannenberg has set forth his stance in seven theses. Here the theses of Pannenberg will be cited in Braaten's paraphrases: Thesis 1: According to the Biblical witnesses, the self-revelation of God has not occurred directly, after the fashion of a theophany, but indirectly through his historical acts. Thesis 2: Revelation happens, not at the beginning, but at the end of history. Thesis 3: Unlike special manifestations of God, historical revelation is *there* for anyone who has eyes to see. It is universal in character. Thesis 4: The universal revelation of the Godhead of God was not yet realized in the history of Israel, but first in the destiny of Jesus of Nazareth insofar as the end of history occurs beforehand in him. Thesis 5: The Christ event does not reveal the God of Israel as an isolated event, but only so far as it is part of God's history with Israel. Thesis 6: The universality of the eschatological self-disclosure of God in the destiny of Jesus was expressed by using non-Jewish ideas of revelation in the instruction in Gentile Christian churches. Thesis 7: The relation of the Word to revelation is in terms of prophecy, instruction, and report.⁶⁰

According to Braaten, Pannenberg's emphasis on the universal historical scope of revelation as something new for modern theology and has the advantage of not recognizing a division between salvation history and world history.⁶¹

3.

What should be the attitude toward the various schools of *Heilsgeschichte* of those Lutherans who accept the Lutheran Confessions as correct interpretations of Holy Scripture?⁶² All forms of *Heilsgeschichte* are basically opposed to the historic Protestant doctrine of the verbal and plenary inspiration of the Bible and to the belief that God has revealed truth in propositional form. The view concerning Scripture as set forth in the Lutheran Confessions is simply that presented by Scripture itself. In the beginning of the Formula of Concord, the confessors stated:

We believe, teach, and confess that the prophetic and apostolic writings of the Old and New Testaments are the only rule and norm according to which all doctrines and teachers alike must be appraised and judged, as it is written in Psalm 119:105, "Thy word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path." And St. Paul says in Gal. 1:8, "Even if an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to that which we preached to you, let him be accursed."

Other writings of ancient and modern teachers, whatever their names, should not be put on a par with the Holy Scripture. Every single one of them should be subordinated to the Scriptures and should be received in no other way and no further than as witnesses to the fashion in which doctrine of the prophets and apostles was preserved in post-apostolic times.⁶³ The same symbol asserts:

In this way the distinction between the Holy Scripture of the Old Testament and all other writings is maintained and Holy Scriptures remains the only judge, rule, and norm according to which as the only touch stone all doctrines must be understood and judged as good or evil, right or wrong.⁶⁴

The doctrines presented in the Lutheran Confessions claim to be based on individual Scripture passages and the teachings deduced from clear *sedes doctrinae*. The proof text method, employed by Christ, the Apostles and other New Testament authors, is also utilized by Melanchthon, Luther and those who authored the Lutheran Confessional writings. Von Hofmann, E. G. Wright, von Rad, Piper and others who are classified as exponents of some form of *Heilsgeschichte* are all opposed to the use of individual Scripture passages in the formulation of doctrine. They also reject the concept of revelation by direct disclosure to the Biblical writers. This opposition to Biblical revelation and to the manner of establishing doctrine is not in agreement with the methodology and conclusions as found in the Lutheran Confessions.

Von Hofmann, the real founder of the Erlangen school of *Heilsgeschichte*, embodied in his Biblical-theological synthesis insights that were the product of philosophy and of a critical approach to the Scriptures. Schleiermacher, Schelling and Hegel who have

influenced von Hofmann's thinking were idealistic philosophers and essentially pantheists. The positions of idealism cannot be harmonized with Biblical theism.⁶⁵ Adoption of an Hegelian interpretation of history was also responsible for the universalism that has characterized many of the stances of the proponents of *Heilsgeschichte*. Universalism is a theological belief that is not in harmony with the clear teachings of Scripture (Acts 4:12; John 3:12; 3:36) nor of the Lutheran Confessions.

While it is true that God has revealed Himself through mighty acts, it is erroneous to limit the self-disclosures of God to a small number of historical events as E. G. Wright and Reginald Fuller have done.⁶⁶ The New Testament has characterized the entire Old Testament as "Godspirited" or "God-breathed out." The Old Testament Scriptures are described by Paul as "the oracles of God" (Roman 3:2). The distinction between God's acts and the human response results in the introduction of a false dichotomy into the Scriptures. For each act of God stated by Wright and Fuller in *The Book of the Acts of God* their opponents can show that they were predicted before their occurrence and that God also gave an interpretation of the events so that there could be no mistake as to their true significance, which would rule out the possibility that the human response would be in error in its interpretation of the event. This means that the formula of dealing with Scriptural data in terms of mighty acts plus human response is inadequate and leads to a serious limitation of the Bible as the source for religious authority.

The history of the Old and New Testaments cannot be equated with world history. It is not true that all history is revelation. The historical events that are recorded in the Old Testament occurred in lands of the Fertile Crescent and frequently Israel's history became involved in the histories of the Assyrians, Babylonians, Egyptians, Persians, Phoenecians, Aramaeans and other smaller Near Eastern nations. In the first century A.D. the gospel was brought to Asia Minor and Europe. In the post-Apostolic period Christianity spread into Africa, Asia and Europe. Even though Christianity entered the flow of world history, yet at no time can the Kingdom of God be identified with any nation or kingdom. In this world members of the kingdom of God will be in the minority and will be persecuted. Christians believe that the next important event in world history will be the visible Second Coming of Christ, the King of Kings, to judge the nations of the world.

One of the major criticisms conservative theologians must make against a number of *Heilsgeschichte* theologies is that they have postulated a dichotomy between types of histories and thereby have robbed the term "history" of its accepted definition. Von Rad employs the word "Geschichte" of *Heilsgeschichte* in a manner that differentiates it from "Historie." Much in the Old Testament prior to the writing of the so-called Court Chronicle of David's time

according to von Rad, is not history.⁶⁷ Ever since the days of rationalism it has been a presupposition of the historical-critical method to question the miraculous and supernatural and assign any miracle to the realm of myth and classify any supernatural event as impossible and therefore non-historical. Many modern *Heilsgeschichte* theologians agree with Martin Kähler's rejection of supernaturalistic historicism. Merrill has properly asked:

How can it be said, indeed, that there is more than one kind of history, that which describes the sum total of the past? Anything less than this is less than history and must be relegated to the realm of pure myth.⁶⁸

The eighty some miracles that are found in the thirty-nine books of the Old Testament are repudiated as historical and assigned to the realm of saga and myth. The writers of the New Testament believed in the occurrence of miracles and regarded the documents of the Old Testament as an inspired collection of reliable writings and would have categorically rejected the idea of the mythological character of stories and episodes in the Pentateuch, Joshua, Judges and I Samuel as unreliable. The New Testament writers considered the miracles of the Old Testament as historical happenings. Those who adopt the rationalistic approach over against the miracles of the Bible are doing this in opposition to the clear evidence of the New Testament. The position of the authors of the Lutheran Symbols on the subject of the miraculous was that of the New Testament understanding of the miraculous. The hermeneutics of the various schools of *Heilsgeschichte* as outlined in this essay are not in harmony with the hermeneutics employed by the Lutheran fathers as reflected in the Lutheran Confessions.

FOOTNOTES

1. Alan Richardson, *The Bible in the Age of Science* (London: SCM Press, 1961), p. 122.
2. Otto Piper, *New Testament Interpretation of History* (Princeton: Princeton Theological Book Agency, 1963), p. 231.
3. Isaac Rottenberg, *Redemption and Historical Reality* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1954), p. 26.
4. *Ibid.*
5. Bernard-Ramm, *Protestant Biblical Interpretation* (Boston: W. A. Wilde Company, 1956), pp. 79-83.
6. Eric C. Rust, *Salvation History. A Biblical Interpretation* (Richmond: John Knox Press, 1962). 325 pages; C. Luke Salm, *Studies in Salvation History* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1964), 236 pages; John Power, *History of Salvation* (Staten Island, N.Y.: Alba House, 1967), 199 pages.
7. For an excellent summary of the teaching of this school cf. G. Weth, *Die Heilsgeschichte: Ihr universeller und ihr individueller Sinn in der offenbarungsgeschichtlichen Theologie des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1921), p. 14.
8. Van A. Harvey, *A Handbook of Theological Terms* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1964), p. 113; Rottenberg, *op. cit.*, p. 27.
9. H. Ott, "Heilsgeschichte," in *Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, 3:188.

10. *Ordo Temporum*, Xi, 13 as quoted by Charles T. Fritsch, "Biblical Typology," *Bibliotheca Sacra*, 103:418-419, October-December, 1946.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 419.
12. *Ibid.*
13. *Ibid.*
14. Rottenberg, *op. cit.*, pp. 27-28.
15. John H. Gerstner, "Heilsgeschichte," *Baker's Dictionary of Theology* Everett F. Harrison, editor-in-chief (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1960), p. 265.
16. Fritsch, *op. cit.*, p. 426.
17. Van Harvey, *op. cit.*, p. 114.
18. Weth, *op. cit.*, p. 114.
19. Raymond F. Surburg, "The New Scofield Reference Bible," *The Springfielder*, 31:14, Winter, 1968.
20. Fritsch, *op. cit.*, p. 426.
21. Cf. J. Haas, "Hofmann, von Joh. Christian Konrad," H. E. Jacobs and John A. W. Haas, *The Lutheran Cyclopedia* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1899), pp. 224-225.
22. Christian Preus, "The Contemporary Relevance of von Hofmann's *Hermeneutical Principles*," *Interpretation*, 4:313, July, 1950.
23. Ramm, *op. cit.*, 79.
24. J. L. Neve-O. W. Heick, *History of Christian Thought* (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1946), II, p. 134.
25. Preus, *op. cit.*, pp. 311-321; Neve Heick, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 132ff.
26. Cf. the article on "Delitzsch, Dr. Franz," Jacobs and Haas, *The Lutheran Cyclopedia*, *op. cit.*, p. 153.
27. Rottenberg, *op. cit.*, p. 33.
28. Alan Richardson, *History Sacred and Profane* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1964), p. 121.
29. James Richmond, "Liberal Protestantism, Liberal Theology, Liberalism," Alan Richardson, editor, *A Dictionary of Christian Theology* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press), p. 192.
30. *Ibid.*, pp. 192-193.
31. Cf. Otto W. Heick, *A History of Christian Thought* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1966), II, pp. 252-255.
32. Rottenberg, *op. cit.*, p. 39.
33. Richmond, *op. cit.*, p. 193.
34. Robert C. Dentan, *Preface to Old Testament Theology* (Revised edition; New York: The Seabury Press, 1963), pp. 50-57.
35. Richardson, *A Dictionary of Christian Theology*, *op. cit.*, p. 153.
36. Walter Eichrodt, *Theology of the Old Testament*. Translated by J. A. Baker (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1961), I, p. 37.
37. *Ibid.*
38. As cited by Rottenberg, *op. cit.*, p. 46.
39. *Ibid.*, pp. 46-47.
40. G. Ernst Wright, *God Who Acts. Biblical Theology as Recital* (London: SCM Press, Ltd., 1952), p. 11.
41. *Ibid.*, p. 11.
42. G. Ernst Wright and Reginald Fuller, *The Book of the Acts of God* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1957), cf. pages 221; 221-222.
43. Cf. the evaluation of von Rad in James M. Robinson, "Old Testament Scholarship," in Martin E. Marty, *New Directions in Biblical Thought* (New York: Association Press, 1960), pp. 77-81.
44. Eugene H. Merrill, *An Historical Survey of the Old Testament* (Nutley, N.J.: The Craig Press, 1966), p. 22.
45. Alan Richardson, *History Sacred and Profane*, *op. cit.* p. 131.
46. Oscar Cullmann, *Christ and Time*. Translated by Floyd V. Filson, (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1950), 253 pages; Oscar Cullmann, *Salvation in History* (New York and Evanston, 1967), 352 pages.

47. Cullmann, *Christ and Time*, *op. cit.*, p. 16.
48. Carl E. Braaten, *New Directions in Theology Today, Volume II. History and Hermeneutics* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1956), pp. 165-166.
49. Ramm, *op. cit.*, pp. 80-81.
50. Otto Piper, *God in History* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1939), p. xix.
- 50a. Otto Piper, "The Authority of the Bible," *Theology Today*, 6:163, April, 1949.
51. Otto Piper, "How I Study My Bible," *Christian Century*, 63:299, March, 6, 1946.
52. Cf. Otto Piper, "Principles of New Testament Interpretation," *Theology Today*, 3:192-204, July, 1946. Ramm has summarized this article in *Protestant Biblical Interpretation*, *op. cit.*, pp. 82-83.
53. Ramm, *op. cit.*, p. 83.
54. Karl Steck, *Die Idee der Heilsgeschichte* (Zürich: Verlag A. G. Zollikon, 1959), p. 50.
55. Richardson, *History. Sacred and Profane*, *op. cit.*, pp. 139-140.
56. Jacob Jocz, *The Covenant. The Theology of Human Destiny* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1968), p. 288.
57. Rudolf Bultmann, "Neues Testament und Mythologie," *Kerygma und Mythos* (Hamburg-Bergstadt: Herbert Reich-Evangelischer Verlag, 1948), I, p. 51.
58. Cf. Reinhold Niebuhr, *Resurrection and Historical Reason: A Study of Theological Methodology* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1957), pp. 105-127.
59. Wolfhart Pannenberg, *Revelation as History*, in association with Rolf Rendtorff, Trutz Rendtorff & Ulrich Wilkens, Translated from German by David Granskou (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1968), pp. 125, 131, 135, 139, 145, 149. In this essay we have used Braaten's paraphrases as found in his *New Directions in Theology*, *op. cit.*, pp. 28-29. Cf. also James M. Robinson and John B. Cobb, *Theology as History*, Vol. III (New York: Harper & Row, 1967), 276 pp.
60. Pannenberg, *op. cit.*, pp. 125-149.
61. Braaten, *op. cit.*, p. 29.
62. Cf. Ralph A. Bohlmann, "Principles of Biblical Interpretation in Lutheran Confessions, in *Aspects of Biblical Hermeneutics* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1966), pp. 21-47; Ralph A. Bohlmann, *Principles of Biblical Interpretation in the Lutheran Confessions* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1968).
63. Theodore G. Tappert, *The Book of Concord* (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1959), p. 464-465.
64. *Ibid.*, p. 465.
65. Cf. the unfavorable evaluation of von Hofmann in Erwin L. Lueker, editor, *Lutheran Cyclopedia* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1954), p. 344.
66. Cf. the criticism of James Barr, "Revelation through History in the Old Testament and in Modern Theology," *Interpretation*, 17:193-205, April, 1953; James Barr, *Old and New Testament in Interpretation* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1966), pp. 65-102; Cf. also Langdon Gilkey, "Cosmology, Ontology, and the Travail of Biblical Language," *Concordia Theological Monthly*, 33:143-154, March, 1962.
67. This view is found in a number of places in Gerhard von Rad, *Old Testament Theology* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1962), I, pp. 105-128.
68. Merrill, *op. cit.*, pp. 22-23.