12 speaks of Shiloh as "My place," and related its destruction not to the designation if Yahweh heartily disowned all that was done there! Verse 11 practice of sacrifice but to the wickedness of Israel. Jerem1ah does not calls the Temple "this house which is called by My Name"—an unlikely show of worship was accompanied by a general iniquity of life. Verse 11 e.g. reason than that the Decalogue was promulgated in the setting of Sacrifice. Neither of these is satisfactory—the second, if for no other point of denying that it corresponds in any way to the will of God. Some Some Modern Religions, (Tyndale Press). (With J. 0. Sanders.) The Interpretation of the Bible, (I.V.F.). Some Modern Religions, (Tyndale Press). (With J. O. Sanders.)

JEREMIAH vii, 22

The interpretation of this verse which has been commonly given has made Jeremiah a downright opponent of ritual worship as such, even to the point of denying that it corresponds in any way to the will of God. Some have taken it to mean that they would leave it so, taking the verse as implying that ritual legislation came later than the prophet; others have suggested the expedient that Jeremiah was thinking only of the Decalogue, which contains no ritual prescriptions. Neither of these is satisfactory—the second, if for no other reason than that the Decalogue was promulgated in the setting of Sacrifice. The following note desires to offer a few suggestions which may aid the understanding of the verse.

(1) Negatively, the context makes clear what the words cannot mean, e.g. vv. 9-10 do not condemn the people for coming to stand before Yahweh in the Temple (for the possible ritual significance of the verse here, see, e.g. Lev. 1, 22) because Yahweh heartily disowned all that was done there! Verse 12 speaks of Shiloh as "My place," and related its destruction not to the practice of sacrifice but to the wickedness of Israel. Jeremiah does not seem to be opposed to sacrificial worship as such—the point could be proved at length in writings. If vii, 22, really evidences an opposition to such worship, then it is an isolated outburst, and we must hold that Jeremiah spoke in haste, and without due consideration.

(2) This expedient is not necessary, for, turning to the positive teaching of the verse, we find it to be capable of a perfectly simple explanation. The proposition translated "concerning" is "al dibhrei. Basically, this expresses the notion of "cause." See BDB dabhar 8: "reason, cause.") There are, therefore, two broad translations of the proposition: (1) "Because of"—looking back to that which gives rise to a certain state of affairs as a cause gives rise to an effect; and (2) "For the sake of"—looking forward to the end at which a certain action aimed, and out of desire for which it was performed. These are the basic translations of the words; they can only mean "concerning" in so far as the proper meanings can share in the pro

THE PENETRATION OF GRAECO-ROMAN SOCIETY BY CHRISTIANITY

With all our modern statistical equipment it is difficult enough to say how widely held the Christian faith is, or from what social groups its strength is mainly drawn. For the ancient world there are not even any statistics. A few census returns supply the numbers of certain sections of the population at odd times, but leave untouched women, children, foreigners, or others without civil rights. Many attempts have been made to fill the gaps by calculating from grain consumption, built-up areas, rate of burials, and so on. But the very diversity of method shows how uncertain the results are. Even if we could draw a cross-section of ancient society, we should still have trouble fitting the Church membership in. Christians may have been widely known in their own community, but usually they felt no need or thought it wise to leave any lasting public record of their faith. The first overtly Christian tombs that we know were set up in public aisles in the isolated uplands of central Anatolia. They came from the third century and could be a cry of defiance from a Church that held passionately to the duty of open confession in troubled times. "So and so died for the Church, in remembrance, one Christian to another." They give us an intimate glimpse into the relations between one group of Christians and its neighbours, but their brief light only heightens the dark

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(With J. O. Sanders)

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There are, of course, plenty of ancient writers who comment expressly on the subject, but they are often too anxious to persuade us to inform. To the apostles, for instance, the universal preaching of the Gospel was not a question of fact so much as an article of faith. It was the preoccupation of the end. The more imminent they conceived the end to be, the more readily did they anticipate the completion of their mission.