

prayer and praise, with continuity in both cases from the life beyond death.

(*Post 213*) *Adversus Praxean* (8) — The error of Praxeas caused Tertullian to distinguish between the persons of the Trinity and, consequentially, to distinguish between their roles in relation to prayer. The Son, he says, is He who in the Old Testament Theophanies trained men in Divine discourse; the Son when on earth was distinct Person (as when He prayed to the Father in heaven); and His prayer for the Comforter to be sent shows the third Person of the Trinity to be distinct too.

(217–22) *De Pudicitia* (12) — In this treatise the place of prayer in relation to the remission of sins of others is considered; the case of Jeremiah and the words of John are reviewed as showing that there is a limit to such intercession. And the abuses attending intercessory prayer in Tertullian's day are denounced. On the other hand, he considers that we rightly pray that venial sins be pardoned.

There is a vast amount more that Tertullian has for us in this great theme of prayer — the philosophy of prayer, its theology and its practice, but perhaps the foregoing paragraphs will have served as an introduction to a field that has rich ore for those who will mine there.

*The Altar in Joshua and Judges**

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THE OBJECT of this paper was to study the evidence in the text on Israelite methods of building altars, and to consider what were the differences from Canaanite custom. Little is said directly in the text. The Law (Ex. xx. 24ff.) prescribes earth or rough stone altars, with the intention that they should be temporary, just as the earth filling of the tabernacle altar would leave no permanent memorial; this is borne out by the facts stated or implied in Judg. xx–xxi, while the permanent 'altars' on Ebal (Josh. viii. 30ff.) and by Jordan (Josh. xxii. 10) were for different purposes.

* Summary of a paper read at the O.T. Study Group, July 1959

Some Canaanite altars may have been natural rock surfaces, but not all; the altar which Gideon had to pull down was substantial, and the words used for breaking it suggest an erected structure. No case can be made for an early Israelite custom of using natural altars; of the instances recorded (Judg. vi. 20, xiii. 19; 1 Sam. xiv. 33), the first was almost unintentional and the other two took place under conditions of general difficulty and apathy. Gideon and Saul both erected altars for regular sacrifice almost immediately.

The absence of '*asherim*' ('groves') from orthodox Israelite altars is certain; and although the term *massebah* ('pillar') occurs, the context always makes it clear that there is no idolatrous connotation. (Judg. ix. 6 with Josh. xxiv. 26; cf. Ex. xxiv. 4)¹.

The debate continues on 'centralization' (which has become something of a catchword; we need to consider more carefully what it might mean in practice). Since the theory that Josiah's reforms were due to the discovery of Deuteronomy has been refuted (see Donald Robinson's monograph), much has been said against the associated view that the book 'demanded centralization'. If the text of Deuteronomy is not conclusive (though xxii. 5 seems hard to read otherwise than as meaning one sanctuary), there is no doubt that the affair of the altar 'Ed caused a great scandal. The sanctuary of the ark was unique, and we read how Elkanah paid yearly visits (quite apart from festivals). On the other hand it can be argued that the importance of ritual cleansing would have made local altars a necessity. This all bears on the question of how the invasion of Canaan fell short of the original idea.

¹ Apart from these features, the type of altar used does not seem to have been a principal point of opposition between Israelite and Canaanite religion.