Polarities in Unity: Revelation in Pittenger and Heschel

Polarities in Unity: Ideas of Revelation in Norman Pittenger and Abraham Heschel

BY

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Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
in partial fulfilment of the research requirements
for the degree Master of Arts in the
Department of Religious Studies
McGill University
September 1977

Abstract

This thesis deals with the ideas of revelation of Norman Pittenger and Abraham Heschel. It focuses on their common method of employing polarities in unity to describe the nature of reality and attempts to compare their major religious ideas as they feed into their respective concepts of revelation.

Pittenger's use of process philosophy to redefine traditional attributes of the Biblical God is compared to Heschel's use of the concept of divine pathos to describe a Judaic view of God; this comparison serves as the background for an analysis of the similarities and differences between their ideas of revelation.

Criticism of Pittenger and Heschel ultimately rests upon their respective abilities to remain true to the Biblical vision of reality they share.

Objet de la Thèse

Cette thèse a pour objet de traiter des idées de Norman Pittenger et d'Abraham Heschel sur la révélation. Elle porte notamment sur leur méthode commune d'employer les polarités dans l'unité pour décrire la nature de la realité et essayer de comparer leurs idées religieuses les plus importantes quant à leurs concepts respectifs de la révélation.

L'utilisation par Pittenger de la philosophie du processus pour redefiner les attributs traditionels du Dieu Biblique est comparée a l'emploi par Heschel du concept du divin pathos pour décrire une vue Judaique de Dieu; cette comparaison sert de toile de fond pour une analyse des similitudes et des differences de leurs idées sur la révélation.

La critique de Pittenger et Heschel dépend ultimement de leurs habilités respectives pour demeurer fidèle à la vision Biblique qu'ils partagent de la réalité.

CONTENTS

Preface

The purpose of this thesis is to analyze and compare the ideas of revelation of Norman Pittenger and Abraham Heschel. The choice of these two men's ideas as the content of the research presented in the following pages was made for two major reasons: first, as modern philosophers of religion, Heschel and Pittenger present one possibility for understanding the continuum of the Judeo-Christian vision of reality. Both base their major ideas on the Biblical vision of reality; thus a major point of correlation exists between them. Second, the use of polarities in unity in discussing revelation by Pittenger and Heschel speaks of a major area of common methodology.

Although Pittenger's particular, Christian perspective, which fuses the Christian framework of ontology and revelation with a process philosophy of organism, varies at basic and distinct points from Heschel's Jewish world-view, which employs the category of the divine concern as the explanation of God's involvement in creation, the overriding identification of their respective beliefs in the dynamic, living quality of being, and hence of the living and vital concern of God present in it, makes a comparison of their ideas possible.

In fact, Pittenger's reiterated stance that process ideas revitalize the Christian vision of reality, returning it to its roots in the dynamism of the Old Testament world-view (away from the abstract, static vision of Greek cosmology and philosophy) pointed out the possibility of a valid comparison of his philosophy and a modern Jewish one.

Previous reading in the area of Jewish theology and philosophy (i.e., besides Heschel, Martin Buber, Max Dimont, Herman Wouk, and others), coupled with course work in modern philosophy of religion and a prior research paper on Pittenger's process ontology, led me to believe that there was ample and interesting content for a comparison of Pittenger and Heschel.

Revelation was chosen as the theme of this thesis for several reasons: 1) it is a primary focus in theology on the relation between God and the world and between human knowledge and reality; 2) it particularly reveals the polarities in unity which Pittenger and Heschel employ in their philosophies; 3) it makes clear the distinguishing categories of belief between Jewish and Christian religion while upholding the historical connection between them and the content shared in common.

This thesis attempts to indicate how close to the Biblical vision of reality, especially in regard to revelation, Pittenger and Heschel remain. In this vein, its intention is to analyze the prophetic character of Biblical revelation as it is maintained in these two thinkers' modern perspectives.

Chapter One deals with Pittenger's fusion of process ontology and Christian reality as it is particularized in revelation; it attempts through the aid of other notable process thinkers to distinguish the chief points of Pittenger's own version of the relation of God to the world, especially in revelation as an event.

Chapter Two is the presentation of the major ideas of Heschel on the nature of reality, again using revelation as the focal point

of understanding his religious philosophy.

Chapter Three attempts to analyze and compare the major ideas of Pittenger and Heschel as they have been presented in the first two chapters. It is my hope that a fair appraisal of both these thinkers, based on their ability to remain true to the Biblical vision of reality, has been made. Such notions as the importance of time and history, the personal as the locus of meaning in reality, the nature of creation as purposive, the living relation of God and man, the ethical and existential dimensions of being, all of which are Biblical in origin, are raised and discussed in relation to the validity and scope of Pittenger's and Heschel's respective ideas.

The ultimate value of researching and writing this thesis has been a clarification of my own religious ideas through the analysis and comparison of the ideas of two significant thinkers in the field of modern religious philosophy.

CHAPTER ONE

Revelation in Norman Pittenger: The Focal Disclosure of the Nature of Process Reality

Norman Pittenger's process view of revelation truly defines itself only within the larger framework of his ontology. And, indeed, in any process theology dependent on the philosophy of organism, the overriding structure of the process itself dictates the understanding of special foci in theology such as revelation. A necessary analysis then of Pittenger's process ontology and the major influences of other process thinkers on this ontology must precede a study of Pittenger's ideas on revelation.

Process Theology: Simultaneously Existing Polarities in Unity

Perhaps the most apparent characteristic of process theology is the inclusiveness of its ontological elements. In other words, a process concept such as panentheism, which posits a God who includes in his sphere of being all that is in the universe without being equated to it as in pantheism,[1] points to the artificial abstraction involved in distinguishing for singular emphasis elements of process reality. Classical theology's distinctions between God and creation (based on Greek ideas of reality), for example, no longer have meaning in a process world-view where God is inclusive of, yet more than, the created order.

As Charles Hartshorne points out in his article, "Philosophical and Religious Uses of 'God'," God is intuited by man as cosmic wholeness--immutable, inclusive reality worthy of human love only if he is love inclusive.[2] Hartshorne's understanding of God emphasizes the basic

social nature of reality implicit in process ontology, "that the 'social' in its most general sense is definable as the synthesis of all the universal categories. It is the union of absolute and relative, independent and dependent, freedom and order, individual and universal, quality and structure and so on."[3]

Thus process ontology is an attempt to posit the internal relations of elements of reality, overcoming the misunderstanding which sees existence as external relations of mutually exclusive entities isolated from one another in space-time.[4] Hartshorne, for instance, points out that human nature (and life in general) reveals the social nature of reality.[5] Since life is seen as the most inclusive realm of being, it must be paradigmatic of the nature of all reality, including the Godhead.

What distinguishes God from the rest of reality, according to Hartshorne, is not his status as creator, per se, but his metaphysically unique position as the most "eminent" social being, the fact that he exemplifies to a maximum degree all universal categories of being, absolute and relative.[6]

Process as Event : The Dynamism of Reality

With Hartshorne's and Whitehead's thinking predominating in the formation of his process theology, Pittenger furthers a Christian understanding of reality as social and organismic. Pittenger's chief emphasis is on the dynamic nature of the world as process. The universe is a societal movement, an "inter-connected, inter-related, inter-penetrative series of events."[7] For Pittenger then the dissection of objective and

subjective reality within human experience is neither definitive nor ultimate in reality.

He rejects, thus, such dualisms as have disjoined human experience from the world--mind and matter, the natural and supernatural--claiming the inclusiveness of process categories; he centers on reality (including human life) as a whole, a converging process with unique foci, explicable only if there is a divine ordering principle at work within it.[8]

Both Hartshorne and Pittenger emphasize that the social nature of the process overcomes the static polarities of classical, western ontologies such as the unchanging, eternal God versus the changing, temporal world. Thomas Ogletree further points out that Morris Cohen's Law of Polarity must hold in a panentheistic conception of ontology; that is, ultimate contraries or poles in ontology such as being-becoming, actuality-potentiality, necessity-contengency are mutually interdependent, and nothing in reality can be described with exclusive reference to one pole.[9] Thus, though reality <u>in toto</u> is described as a process, within that process elements of reality can be understood by reference to these polar concepts in unity.

In particular, the distinction in reality between the individual actuality or event and the process as a whole can be made for philosophical and theological purposes, if it can be understood thereby that opposed categories such as subject-object, abstractness-concreteness, transcendence-immanence are not mutually exclusive but interdependent descriptions of the same reality.

And, indeed, it is in the understanding of process reality as

an historical, creative dynamic, that the importance of event becomes evident. Since the unique status of each event within the process is distinguished only as it contributes to the movement of the entire process, creativity becomes the essential, underlying ground of being. Thus, according to Pittenger, process becomes an ontology of intertwining, interdependent events and creation a dynamic, forward, evolutionary movement which is not God in his entirety but through which his ongoing, creative purpose is at work to raise reality to higher levels of actuality.[10] Creativity, as the ground of reality, though epitomized in God's supremely creative nature, is no less the nature of all lesser elements of the process.[11]

History: The Locus of Meaning in Process Reality

Importantly, for Pittenger then process ontology necessarily deepens an understanding of history as it relates to creativity. Rejecting the neo-orthodox, theological view which says that history, not nature, is the realm of divine activity, Pittenger admonishes that process thought cannot dissect in complete opposition to each other history and nature in the same creative, social reality. Since God is seen as the circumambient Reality of the process, his operation within nature is inevitable:

> But in that divine operation, there are different grades or levels of significance; and of these levels, the historical--with all its special qualities and characteristics--is one, and for us the supremely important one.[12]

Pittenger believes that the natural must be interpreted in terms of the historical when the study of creation is seen as the account

of "increasingly complicated organic structures."[13] Hence, argues Pittenger, no ontological dualism exists between nature and history as two levels of the same reality.[14]

History, seen as the effect of ongoing events, becomes that dimension of reality which defines the foci of the process. Though events in a process sense cannot be seen merely as singular, static entities but as dynamic, creative happenings related to other events in an organic unity, their uniqueness as individual happenings becomes defined through their universal effect on the rest of the process.[15] As Pittenger so aptly describes the nature of events:

> Perhaps above all, they are endlessly fertile...in their ability to provide the dynamic for growth and in their capacity to be everlastingly apprehended in their richness yet without being "comprehended" and thus made mere matters of "chronicle".[16]

The historical dimension of the process then is, as Pittenger sees it, the location of its meaning for man. More importantly, it is through the historical flux of events that the social dynamic of process incorporates and synthesizes universal categories and elements otherwise opposed.[17]

God: The Vital Impetus of Process Reality

Implicit, of course, in Pittenger's world-view is that the synthesis of ontological categories is possible only because of the immanent telos within the process; unlike Bergson's vitalism, however, the telos in Pittenger's reality which integrates the process and gives it an evolutionary character is inextricably tied up to God's eminently social nature and his cosmic vision. Thus, although creativity is the

principle which is the explanatory ground of being, God is the vital impetus of the process, on whom the world depends in his provision of the telos for its actualization.

For Pittenger then God and the world are the inevitable polar elements in unity in process ontology, each of which becomes understandable conceptually only through the existence of the other. In this instance, Pittenger's heavy reliance on Whitehead's philosophy becomes apparent.[18] Whitehead's concept of the overagainstness of the world and God in the explanation of process creativity reflects his belief that

> ...the universe is to be conceived as attaining the active self-expression of its own variety of opposites--of its own freedom and its own necessity, of its own multiplicity and its own unity, of its own imperfection and its own perfection. All the "opposites" are elements in the nature of things and are incorrigibly there. The concept of "God" is the way in which we understand this incredible fact--that what cannot be, yet is.[19]

It is this emphasis on the simultaneous yet unidirectional existence of opposites (which Whitehead advocates in his philosophy of organism and Pittenger reformulates in his Christian, process ontology) which is the unique stance of process thought. That God and the world are mutually dependent elements in the same creative dynamic necessitates a reassessment of the relationship of all polar, ontological categories, in particular the mental and the physical.[20]

Process theology, particularly that of Pittenger, seeks to maintain that such a reassessment necessarily moves theology away from the Hellenistic abstractions of reality, back to the dynamic, living reality of the Bible. Though recognizing that philosophical speculation about reality is absent in the Old Testament, Pittenger points out that Hebrew thought does, in fact, emphasize the dynamic

nature of creation, the element of novelty forever present in it, and, most importantly, the living relationship of God and his world. It is in relation to these emphases in understanding the nature of reality that Pittenger believes the Biblical world-view and process theology to be correlative.[21] The dynamics of the organic relationship in creativity between God and the world in Pittenger's theology become more understandable through a process characterization of God's nature.

God as Di-polar Deity

Whitehead is the originator of the conception of God as a di-polar deity, possessing an abstract, primordial nature which is unchanging and static, and an incomplete, temporally-determined, consequent nature.[22] In his primordial nature, God is the ground of reality, possessing an eternal, abstract vision of all possibilities for the creative movement of the process. Through his conceptual feeling, God provides the telos to the process and hence becomes the explication of all that is.[23] God's appetitive vision of harmony and strength of beauty (for the process) necessitates that the initial aim he provides for each new occasion's actualization be the most appropriate and ideal aim for its own becoming and for the most intense, harmonious furthering of the entire process. It is at this level of providing the initial aim for each occasion's becoming that Christian process philosophy acknowledges God's unique status as creator.[24] Thus God's primordial nature provides the lure in creation for emerging novelty. Though process theology acknowledges that other past occasions and the subjective aim of a particular occasion are

also responsible constituents in the occasion's actualization, God's significance as the provider of its telos is metaphysically unique.

However, the nature of God's lure in creation is not coercive but persuasive.[25] John Cobb points out that the nature of process is such that God's provision of initial aims cannot impair in any way the freedom of each new occasion of becoming. God must be seen to work in and along creation, persuading it to increasing intensification of value.[26] Otherwise creativity could not take novel turns within the process, and the universe would be a closed, determined system. God's persuasion of the process to intensification of value does not then prevent evil. In fact, though he is the source of all value through his vision of possibilities and his provision of initial aims, evil is a necessary and unfortunate actuality, as each occasion prehends in freedom the data which will serve in its actualization.[27]

In summary then, God's primordial nature serves as the ground of reality, the source of value, the agent of novelty in the process (creation). As Pittenger so aptly points out, God is not to be sought in the gaps of human knowledge or in sudden intrusions into an ordered world but in the purposive movement of the process where "each being in its degree is revelatory of some aspect of the underlying activity and transcendent source."[28]

God's consequent nature, on the other hand, is the polar opposite of his primordial nature. Through this aspect of his being, God experiences each and every occasion as it is actualized; Whitehead calls this experience of the temporal process God's conformal feelings.[29] As a result of the consequent nature's reception of temporal occasions,

it must be seen as the concrete, everlasting and unfinished side to God's being.

Like the process itself, God in his consequent nature actualizes himself as the supreme affect and recipient of all occasions and values being processed in the world. Thus every creaturely occasion is received into God's nature, including evil. According to Pittenger, God's necessary encounter with and taking into his consequent nature of evil occasions makes him a fellow-sufferer with man in the process.[30]

However, through the power of his conceptual feelings, God attempts to harmonize as far as possible, without removing the freedom of the process, those negative, evil or dehancing aspects of the process which his consequent nature has received.

Thus Pittenger argues, "What God is and does affects the creation; what the creation, with its capacity for decision is and does, affects God."[31] Although God is unsurpassable by anything which is not himself, in his consequent nature he is open to new experiences and the enhancement they can bring.[32]

The Christian Process God: Living and Loving Personality

Besides the acceptance of Whitehead's scheme for the process God as di-polar deity, Christian process theology posits God as more than supreme actuality, living and personal. Schubert Ogden, for instance, points out that the primal phenomenon of existence is experiencing subjects. Though the self in a processive sense must be understood as an ever-changing sequence of occasions of experience, the conscious integration of remembered past and anticipated future so evident in

human occasions must be taken as an analogy for God's reality.[33]

Hartshorne, also using analogy as his chief tool for a philosophical understanding of God, relates that if God is intuited as the ground of reality, he must necessarily share the highest attributes of ontology: life, personhood, (eminent self-hood), creative energy and love.[34]

Furthering Hartshorne's conceptualization of God, Pittenger, in the spirit and the form of D.D. Williams, emphasizes love as God's nature, the ultimate metaphysical reality, and the nature of the process itself.[35] Pittenger believes that God must be analogous to man in nature, must be aware, self-aware, and purposive, must have the capacity to love and be loved which is the most distinguishing quality of personality, if the rest of reality is to have any meaning at all.[36] God's constancy and faithfulness in the provision of a telos and harmony to the process must be the result of his unsurpassable love. Pittenger, of course, relies on the Christian message and revelation of God as love to further his process theism conceptually.

Pittenger argues that the chief quality of process is dynamism. Love, seen in action, is dynamic, thus sharing the nature of process, seeking and affecting all occasions of becoming in the world. God, understood as the cosmic telos, becomes the "eternal, spiritual, super-personal, inexhaustibly rich, self-existent, ultimate Reality, whose true character is the positive and overflowing goodness that we call love."[37] Thus according to Pittenger the basic truth about God is that he is the creative energy in all things, who, by the nature of

the process itself, must enter into relationships with men.[38] Such an understanding of God correlates with the Scriptural insight into his nature.

While reinforcing the Biblical idea of God and his relationship to creation, Pittenger reinterprets traditional attributes of God: His transcendence is "His inexhaustibility, not His remoteness;"[39] he is abstract as the source of all possibilities, and yet concrete as he influences and is influenced by the world. Pittenger points out that process thinking allows polarities to exist in God's nature which classical theism cannot: he is eternal as he is at the same time temporally everlasting, himself yet endlessly related, the chief principle of explanation, yet a participant in the entire process.[40] Above all, and supremely, he is love.[41]

Lewis Ford, in this vein, sees divine love and justice, the chief Biblical attributes of God, as symbols for process theology's two assumptions about God's relation to the world: first, God is concerned for and appreciates the intensity of value achieved in each occasion's actualization; second, God attempts to harmonize and integrate all the individual achievements which otherwise might clash in the process.[42]

Believing that the Trinitarian conception of God still has meaning in a process world-view, Pittenger points out that the Trinity provides an understanding of the social side of God. God the Father is the ultimate source of being, the telos; God the Son is God as he expresses himself in creation; God the Spirit is God responsive through creation.[43]

Particularly in relation to his revelatory activity, God must have distinctions within his being, Pittenger believes, his triune nature allowing him to be transcendent, immanent, and concomitant with creation all at the same time.[44] Revelation then becomes understandable even within the process framework. God's triune nature reveals the richness of his social nature.

God's Operation and Activity in the World

By focusing on a process conception of God, the obviously deep and necessary relationship between God and the world has been established. Pittenger upholds that the world is organic to the divine reality, as essential to an understanding of God as he is to an understanding of the world.[45]

Because God is the ultimate meaning of the process as cosmic telos and integrator, Pittenger maintains that by studying the world, man can, to some extent, understand the nature of divine activity. As the dominant element in each successive occasion (through his provision of its initial aim), God's organic relationship to the world reveals itself. For Pittenger, the process perspective of ontology points to the world as the field of divine operation, and, more importantly, indicates that "each occasion may be seen as the 'incarnation' of deity under the conditions of finite creativity."[46] Pittenger's belief in the incarnational character of reality reveals how process ontology, particularly Christian process ontology, synthesizes polar elements in order to explain the inclusive, social nature of reality.

And, indeed, a common panentheistic analogy is that the world

exists in relation to God as the body does to the mind. As Ogden points out, because he is eminently incarnate, i.e, God includes as his physical sphere of interaction the whole universe of nondivine beings, he is eminently relative as the absolute ground of all relativity.[47] Thus, although the world is completely dependent on God for its existence, the hopeful element in process theology is that each finite, becoming occasion makes a difference to God's own creative becoming.[49]

Since the world is organic to the divine reality, nature and history become essential to God's operation and fulfilment. God, the world and man (as the unique focus of finite being) create themselves in relation to nature and history. God necessarily deals with man as part of the process, with the whole of the natural order and human history as they are integral to his teleological purposes in the process and to his own becoming.[49]

Pittenger emphasizes again and again that the process perspective allows the historical dimension of reality to assume paramount importance in the discussion of God's relation to the world, by concentrating on the natural order as the locus of divine activity rather than on the miraculous intrusion of the divine into the secular order. He believes this perspective rings true to the Biblical vision of history as the realm of divine activity.

> The Biblical view of the history of the world, and of the place of man in it, rests back upon the conviction that God is immanent in the historical and natural processes and also transcendent over them because he is unexhausted by them. He is in them to work out a purpose; he is more than them to secure that his purpose is ultimately realized. Time, succession, and a dynamic conception of nature and of history are affirmed by the Biblical writers.[50]

But again, Pittenger warns that though the natural is interpreted through the historical, the sharp distinctions which traditional theology has made between them in relation to divine activity do not hold. He believes the Bible itself instructs us "to read nature in terms of the historical situation of man,"[51] and to acknowledge that nature itself is a historical process.

Pittenger also upholds the stance that Christian faith allows man to believe that history and nature are moving in a positive direction because of God's loving activity. Thus nature is evolutionary, revealing God incognito, as it were, by displaying astounding novelty and creativity within a framework of impressive regularity.[52]

Ultimately, Pittenger's understanding of God's operation in the world can be best summarized by his central belief that the world is incarnational: "The Incarnation is not confined only to the historical presence of Jesus Christ, but is also the manner and mode of all God's work in the world...God is ever incarnating himself in the creation, which means that he is ever entering into it."[53]

God's choice to be involved in the world, says Pittenger, is freely made out of love. His taking the initiative in the creative process through his provision of initial aims does not imply that the world had a specific beginning in time; it does imply, however, that creative activity is a two-way freedom in the process: God freely provides creative impetus to occasions of becoming, and these, in turn, freely choose to create themselves in response to that impetus. In regard to this freedom, Walter Stokes furthers Pittenger's view in his statement that through "time, history, and freedom...God reveals

himself as waiting for man's free return of self."[54]

Pittenger argues that the Logos concept or God-expressive-in-the-world, works as the best explanation of God's activity in the world, and more specifically of his influence on all human occasions of becoming and creativity. Since the world is an open field for the divine operation, Pittenger maintains that it is within the historical framework that the foci of the operation of the Logos are found.[55]

God, active on every level of existence in the process, expresses himself more and more fully in the created order--in living matter, in the movement of history towards righteousness and justice, in the personalities of men in concrete, historical situations--all of these levels incarnating to a greater depth God's activity in creation, until in Jesus Christ the focal manifestation of the Logos is made.[56] Pittenger maintains, therefore, that

> Evolution is...a name for a richly varied movement which in spiritual regard is divine revelation from start to finish. Through the Word God informs every grade and level of being; but he is not identified with the universe, which is created and derivative. And he is never exhausted therein but present and active in widely different degrees of intensity and significance.[57]

Through his di-polar nature which functions in three modes in the world, God's persuasion of novelty within the process becomes a matter of creation, and his reception of affect a matter of redemption. While the primordial nature provides the creative nisus for sustained creativity, the consequent nature provides the receptacle for this creativity as it is actualized. Through his ability to harmonize obstructive actualities in the temporal realm in an everlasting immediacy, God redeems the world by returning to it the perfected actualities he

has received into his consequent nature and harmonized.[58]

Again, the Logos is a fellow-sufferer with man, "so super-abundant in love he is utterly indefatigable and inexhaustible in his activity to promote good and positive process."[59] Pittenger believes that the Cross is the supreme example of the operation of the Logos in the world.

God's transcendence, in his neverending capacity to allow freedom to function in the creative actualizing of the process and epitomized in the loving activity of Jesus Christ, reveals that being is based on love.[60] Loving, says Pittenger, implies in its very nature the complete participation, sharing, and suffering of God and the universe. Enhanced by creation, God is not self-contained but vitally active and adaptive in the world.

Man: The Being Who Incarnates God to the Highest Degree in the World

Particularly in human activity God has priority;[61] every time man reveals his loving nature, according to Pittenger, he reveals also God's nature. Because he is a conscious, thinking animal striving toward fulfilment, futurity is part of his very being.[63] His valuing nature places him at the apex of the evolutionary process. Thus man incarnates the divine Logos to the highest degree in the universe.

Man's social nature is of utter importance in his revelation of the divine nature. The integration of his identity through participation in community speaks of man's paradigmatic position to the rest of reality. Man, Pittenger argues, is the microcosm of the universe, an anticipation of God himself.[63] God is thus the ground of the quest to become more human.

Pittenger argues that in the person and life of Jesus Christ both human and divine natures are brought to focus to the highest degree possible in reality. Taking his cue from Whitehead and Hartshorne, he points to Jesus' humanity and the suffering he undergoes in the redemption of evil as a manifestation of the suffering side of God's nature. In the dynamic, energizing love which he reveals as the core of his personality, Jesus, Pittenger believes, is the highest explanation and example of the divine Logos at work in the world.[64] Hence, Jesus Christ indicates that it is in the historical realm of genuine human life that the phenomenon of divine activity as integrative love is most manifest.[65]

That Jesus Christ discloses the nature of things in an unparalleled degree harkens in Pittenger's estimation to the inclusiveness of transcendent and immanent being in a process world-view. Yet this fact remains utterly true to the basic thrust of Christianity "as revelation in the most direct sense in which we know revelation, it is God making himself known by that which he does, and what is revealed is God in the living impact of personality."[66]

Revelation then in Pittenger's process theology is seen as the historical focus of the immanent activity of God's transcendent being as love. It points to the internal relations of being and the pervasive panentheistic character of reality. An analysis of Pittenger's ideas of revelation makes the connection between his Christian affirmation of reality and process ontology clear.

The Nature of Revelation in Pittenger's Process Theology

The nature of revelation, according to Pittenger, is complex,

mediated always through a faith experience and hence involving the subjective and objective poles of human experience. Although in a process perspective these poles are not exclusive categories of being but interdependent categories of reality, Pittenger points out that only within the context of Christian faith and community can the decisiveness of Christian revelation be acknowledged.[67] The Church and its interpretation of Jesus as the Christ necessarily contribute to his impact as the decisive revelation of the Logos. As Eric Rust concurs, the character of revelation is such that God remains hidden within disclosure situations unless the prophetic consciousness is present to reveal him.[68] Thus revelation is dependent on human consciousness to develop its full meaning as a special focus of the divine activity.

Since Pittenger's thought affirms reality as an organismic, societal whole, revelation in his eyes must be understood as a <u>focal</u> manifestation of the underlying nature of things.[69] Because the world is incarnational, revealing in its increasingly complex structures more and more of the nature of the divine being, revelation is defined by Pittenger as a complex of events which <u>decisively</u> points to the nature of God's work within creation.

More specifically, Pittenger relates that

> Essentially revelation is an action-reaction complex. Events which occur in the public domain are apprehended in their deepest meaning by those in whose presence they take place. The events are seen in a dimension deeper than that of surface happening; and the response which is made is more than a mere acquisition in their occurrence. For the events come to be understood in the light of what is already conceived to be a divine purpose working itself out in the historical realm, while the response

> is such that the beholder is caught up into, brought to participate in, or...feels "grasped" by the events as they make their impact upon him. And the two--occurrence and response--are...coincident; the event and the apprehension are not to be separated, even though they must be distinguished one from the other.[70]

Pittenger emphasizes that without a community of believers who identify and live out the initial apostolic response to the revelatory event in Jesus Christ, the revelation itself would not be adequate. "Revelation is seen as [an] activity requiring spiritual discernment if it is to be accepted."[71]

Arguing, however, that the dogmatic truths which stem as a description of a revelatory event are secondary to the historical event which is its locus, Pittenger proposes and believes that there are three major qualifications for an identification of revelation:

> 1) There is an absolute necessity for a prior view of nature and history which is essentially prophetic in character; i.e., man requires an interpretation of the world which sees it as the sphere in which the divine purpose is being worked out. This is both an Old Testament perspective and a process world-view;
>
> 2) There must be a recognition that revelation as an event-response complex is dated, having taken place at one particular time and place, and yet is somehow felt to be a present reality;
>
> 3) There must be a corresponding recognition that the Christian Church is the means by which the response of the past to Jesus as revelation is communicated in the present.[72]

Pittenger believes that within the process framework can be found the necessary perspective for viewing the revelatory character of events, specifically that of Jesus Christ. Essentially a world-view where God is the creator everpresent in the universe, accomplishing

his purpose through it (where creation is, in effect, the realm of divine activity) allows the prophetic consciousness to take hold: that is, events can be seen as occasions for greater or lesser disclosures of God's purpose, revealing his divine nature without identifying God completely with the world.[73] The Old Testament view of revelation then must also be assumed in the Christian view, especially in a Christian, process view.

Where then do the parameters of revelation begin and end in Pittenger's view? Firstly, revelation "is in event and in historical event, in a processive and societal world where some moments are of crucial importance, disclosing with singular intensity what God is up to in his world."[74] Secondly, Pittenger believes that we can make statements about what has been disclosed in these moments, but never in a fully satisfactory way. Thus, though God is known in and through creaturely occasions and activity, revelation is never entirely comprehended.

David Griffin, adding to Pittenger's understanding of revelation, believes that what makes any event a revelatory event is partially a function of God, his intention and initial aim for the event's actualization. As important, however, as the initial aim provided is the degree of realization of that aim.[75]

Griffin believes that an event which is highly expressive of the divine aim assumes a specialness which makes it ultimately determinative as a revelation of God.[76] Thus, Jesus, understood as actualizing God's aim to an optimal degree, can be accepted as a special revelatory act. Griffin also points out that it is helpful to distinguish between God's

actuality and his essence in order to understand the distinction between the content and the source of revelation. Since God himself is the object of faith, then a necessary distinction should be made between the subject of revelation, God himself, and its content; that part of his essence which is revealed.[77] Pittenger would agree with Griffin's distinction, insisting that God's nature remains largely hidden, though all disclosure situations reveal something of his activity and mode of being.

Most important, however, in an analysis of Pittenger's process view of revelation is the understanding of its historical character, the fact that it occurs in the temporal realm yet points to the eternal and divine; the 'happenedness' of Christianity, as Pittenger calls it, speaks of the eventful nature of revelation.

Pittenger believes that the Biblical concept of revelation as historical and prophetic is acknowledged in his process theology, since it emphasizes the historical dimension as the focus of its meaning. Indeed, in Jesus' life the importance of the historical and human orders of reality in the revelation of divine activity assumes paramount importance.

Because Pittenger defines ontology largely within the natural and the historical realms, he places emphasis on the ontological character of revelation, its ability to disclose the nature of reality. Griffin also points out that revelation must necessarily have cognitive content, indicating the truth of the nature of reality if it is to have universal meaning.

Griffin believes that Whitehead's ontology provides a necessary

framework for revelation as cognitive by allowing for the self-determination of the process and acknowledging at the same time God's influence on the natural order and history.[78]

The Distinction Between General and Special Revelation

Relying heavily on William Temple's thinking,[79] Pittenger argues that God is necessarily self-manifested in the process on all levels. Natural revelation then is the basic thrust of his ideas of revelation. The Logos is, according to Pittenger, the responsible agent within the revelatory event, and the Holy Spirit is associated with the apprehension of the event.[80] Although Pittenger maintains that the split between general and special revelation is artificial, since God is disclosed to some extent in all events, he believes the distinction must be made on the basis of the nature and degree of impact events have on man's understanding of God's activity in the world.

Therefore, while general or diffuse revelation occurs within the natural course of events and in the experience of men, special revelation is extraordinary, unusual, important in its character and in the effect it has on man and the process. While it is true, Pittenger argues, that in all revelatory activity God acts first (this being a central conviction of the Judeo-Christian world-view), God's decision to particularize his activity in a singular event (or complex of events) gives the event its significance as special revelation. The work of the Logos and the Holy Spirit then are understood to be intensified in such an event.

Before turning to a detailed account of Pittenger's ideas of special revelation, a review of the nature and mode of general revelation

should be made. According to Pittenger, the nature of process itself as events in an organic relationship involves a necessary and intimate relationship between God and the world: "the world veils God, but it may also be said (and we are sure it is more important to say) that God is unveiled through the world."[81]

Pittenger believes that God's presence and activity is in and through the process as a whole, but that he is especially revealed in the aesthetic, the majestic, the spiritual, the ethical and the conscious.[82] Since God is revealed through the wholeness of the process, he is understood as lying at the root of meaning and the integration of life as it is experienced. The 'penetration' and 'permeation', as Pittenger calls them, of God's presence in the world must occur in a great variety of ways and degrees:

> In the inanimate world, something of his consistency and purposiveness is disclosed; in the animate world, his vital quality and his living plan are shown; in man and above all in man at his highest, God's ethical nature, his love of beauty, his holiness may be manifested. But none of these areas is his exclusive place of revelation, and none of them is identical with God himself. They are the loci of his revelation, because they are the loci of his more complete activity.[83]

In the process perspective which Pittenger upholds, activity or creative energizing is the essential, shared mode of existence between God and the world. Thus it is impossible to dissect the living and organic relationship between them, either in time or in space. Pittenger argues that the concept of a pre-creational state of God, therefore, has no meaning.[84]

Since God and creation are "in process", Pittenger believes that all being is involved in a societal penetration of creative activity.

Since God uses nature and history to further the process, revelation is its ontological necessity. The divine reality has to manifest itself throughout the created order, though it is never identified completely with it.

Using also Whitehead's idea of the process deity as an integrative, harmonizing, and suffering God, and subsuming this idea under the Biblical idea of God as love, Pittenger argues that God reveals himself in all worldly activities which involve the operation of love and in all harmonizing, integrative operations within the process whether man is aware of his presence or not. So creation is understood as the "field of that activity in love."[85] Reality then necessarily involves suffering, love and triumph as God reveals himself as unidirectional activity integrating novelty within the process in a positive, evolutionary manner.

General revelation is thus nothing more than the diffuse operation of the Logos in the world. Pittenger believes that the process concept of God's immanence in the created order can conveniently be placed within the framework of the Christian idea of Trinity as the mode of the divine being and especially of his operation in the world.

Special Revelation

Special revelation is different from general revelation not in nature but in degree. It, too, is incarnational in character, an historical event or complex of event, but it is in the notion of importance that it can be distinguished from natural revelation. As Thomas Ogletree poses this understanding of 'importance', a certain happening or complex of happenings undergoes a transfiguration which gives it a paradigmatic

role in man's perception of reality. By disclosing the fundamental nature of reality, the event becomes set apart from all other events, gives rise to a notion of God, and helps determine man's fulfilment.[86] Special revelation is a disclosure of God which indicates a greater intensity of God's activity in the particular event which God has chosen as the locus of his operation.

However, Pittenger points out that the boundaries of special revelation cannot be so clearly defined that man may know "with absolute precision what we may call the 'limits' of the historical occurrence"[87] which is itself the heart of the revelation. Since God is never totally revealed in any revelatory event, but rather in the mode of his activity within the process, "the special or focal revelatory action does not confine God rather it defines him."[88]

Special revelation is a focusing of the process, an intensification of the meaning of the nature of reality as revealed in diffuse revelation, a finer apprehension of God's way with and in the world. It is only through a faith experience that this finer apprehension is possible.

The Special Revelation in Jesus Christ

Pittenger affirms that in the case of the special revelation in Jesus Christ a special faith experience is required to discern its significance. For the Christian the Christ event is "the focal historical reality...in his understanding of God and God's will for his world."[89]

Pittenger acknowledges that the primary locus of the revelation in Jesus is his personhood. However, he believes that the revelatory action in Jesus only assumes full meaning in the human response made to it:

"It is in this complex of events--the thing which occurs, which is known to us through imaginative retelling, and the response to it in faith--that the special revelation of God in Christ consists."[90] Again, the Christ event assumes real importance only as it is felt to illumine the "basic dynamic in the cosmos...the energizing of creative love, ceaselessly working to provide opportunity for and actualization of more widely shared good."[91]

The Congruity of the Special Revelation in Christ with General Revelation

The revelation of God in the Christ event is special revelation, according to Pittenger, for other important reasons: first, it reveals a congruity with general revelation and the revelatory history of the Old Testament; second, Pittenger argues that there is a connection between Jesus Christ as revelation and the entire historical realm; the congruity in the wholeness of the pattern of God's disclosure within the world-order necessitates that the revelatory history of the Old Testament is the prevenient preparation for the revelation in Jesus. And, indeed, in defining the boundaries of the Incarnation, Pittenger reveals that past Jewish history feeds into it.[92]

Third, as a complex event the Incarnation is historical in character: Jesus must be understood as a "genuine, historically-conditioned and entirely human being"[93] who is the center of the revelation in Christ. Thus, though God is 'met' in the Incarnation, the historical, human locus of divine activity in Jesus Christ is affirmed.

Ogletree, in a stance similar to Pittenger's, argues that Biblical faith values historical time, and that in the Incarnation the importance of time and flesh as essential constituents in the nature of reality

receives its most dramatic affirmation.[94]

Griffin furthers Ogletree's emphasis on the importance of revelation-in-the-flesh by insisting that, "In the Biblical vision of things, the person is the locus of the real and the valuable; the supreme reality is a supreme person."[95] The fact that the Christian vision of reality centers its chief meaning on the person of Jesus Christ points to the Incarnation as the most supreme of revelatory acts.

And Griffin indicates that the correlation of the Judeo-Christian world-view and process philosophy on the personal as the realm of the important "emphasizes as primary the notions of history, becoming, novelty, purposiveness, freedom, response, and mutual involvement"[96] in an understanding of reality.

If the Incarnation is, in reality, congruous with the rest of Biblical revelation, Jesus' decisiveness, says Pittenger, only makes sense because the revelation of God in him shares the same dimensions of reality that all disclosures of divine activity do: "Yet the fact remains that there are at times fuller emergences into history of the Divine Spirit and that Jesus is a decisive revelation of the character and will of God."[97]

Fourth, because Jesus shares the same categories of ontology as general revelation, he expresses the polarity of universality and uniqueness. By expressing God's activity in the world of men and human history, he has a universal character as revelation. But, "In the whole rich fullness of God's working in the world, in the wonderfully various and many-graded revelation which he makes of himself to his human children, Jesus Christ in the totality of his person and work is crucial, definitive, unique."[98]

Thus, Jesus

> is both universal and unique: universal in that he embodies that which God is everywhere purposing and in some fashion achieving in the affairs of men; unique, in that it is he, Jesus Christ, who decisively embodies this purpose and action and in the concrete results of his appearing has made a real, unmistakable and "unlosable" difference in the lives of men and in their understanding of God and of the world.[99]

The Uniqueness of the Christ Event: The Uniqueness of Inclusiveness

Pittenger proposes that Christ's uniqueness can be centrally understood as the emergent novelty of the actualization of the Logos in the world.[100] He is, therefore, an unprecedented channeling of God's activity in creation and in man. His decisiveness as revelation comes through his fulfilment of all revelation in "Jewish faith, in non-Christian and non-Jewish religions, in the secular world, in the natural order, and wherever and however else God has permitted men to learn something about Him."[101]

It is in the fulfilment of the order of God's self-disclosure in the process that Jesus Christ indicates the nature of reality. Pittenger, like Cobb and Griffin, argues that the meaning of the revelation in Christ must assume supreme, cognitive value, that as revelation-in-act, Jesus must become the most significant disclosure of the creative process of reality.

As Cobb points out, "he reveals what it means to live in terms of the way reality actually is. Although Jesus' life, like his beliefs, were conditioned by his time and place in history, at a deeper level we see in him what it is like for a man to exist in a manner appropriate to what God is and what man is. This is fundamental."[102]

Griffin reinforces Cobb's stance by insisting that Jesus can

only be understood as the savior if he is the decisive clue to the nature of reality.[103] Pittenger acknowledges Griffin's argument by positing that Jesus' decisiveness as revelation arises from the unparalleled degree to which he manifests the divine nisus present in all of creation without in any way overstepping his genuinely human nature: "in the dynamic existence which was his, [he] fulfilled the potentialities which were also his in a manner that impressed those who companied with him as being extraordinary without being a violation of the ordinary conditions of manhood."[104]

Jesus' uniqueness in his revelation of the Logos is one of inclusion: he reveals in an eminent manner the way God acts in the world, the most inclusive human attributes, and the most persuasive relationship between God and man.

Jesus' decisiveness, however, is always understood within the context of the Old Testament view of God's way with the world. Pittenger argues that the qualified difference in the revelation through Christ is the quantified difference in his understanding of the nature of reality:

> He was a true radical who penetrated to the heart of the Jewish awareness of God and God's will as it had been worked out in history, who provided a fresh but not totally discontinuous beginning in the history of man vis-a-vis that God, and who in doing this... established a new intensity in the relationship between God and man.[105]

Thus, though the decisiveness in Jesus Christ as revelation is one of degree (since there cannot be a difference in kind between different operations of the Logos in a process world-view expressing the singular quality of process creativity), Pittenger argues that the revelation in

Christ is, in its definitiveness, the final disclosure of God.

Jesus Christ becomes in Pittenger's eyes the criterion of all revelation by providing the clue to the nature of revelation in his creative dynamism, his influence on the direction of history and mankind, and in his provision of the proper goals for creative energizing to continue in a positive direction. As the paradigm of the nature of reality, more importantly of the nature of fully actualized manhood, Jesus becomes the crown of all revelatory activity.

Jesus Christ: the Metaphysical Union of the Divine and Human

Turning more specifically then to Pittenger's Christology, an understanding of how Jesus is the unique paradigm in his process theology of God's way with the world (and hence of the nature of reality) becomes apparent. The nature of the Incarnation is, of course, complex, having neither sharply defined limits nor conceptual boundaries. While the man Jesus must be taken as fully human, psychologically and physically, so that "the sacred humanity of our Lord is the very instrument for the "many-colored disclosure of God in language we may understand,"[106] the Incarnation must still express the metaphysical unity of the human and the divine.

Pittenger posits that through the Incarnation "the understanding that God has of man and his relation with man are now through the terms of his having known what it is to be a man; and man's approach to God and his relationship with God are through the terms which follow from the fact that his humanity has been integrally united with God."[107]

Acknowledging that Jesus Christ must be considered a genuine,

integrated unity, Pittenger points out that the unity of the divine and human in him is therefore organic, neither dimension contradicting the other, God acting through Jesus' human reality.

Thus Jesus' historicity is of paramount importance; although the knowledge of the Jesus of history is mediated through a faith experience of Jesus as the Christ, Pittenger believes nonetheless that there must be a recognition of his Jewish identity, his struggle as a human being to accept his vocation to do God's will in an unparalleled manner, and his human conditioning in a particular historical milieu which influenced his thinking. In Jesus' very real humanity the most positive release of the divine activity of love occurs:

> If Jesus released the divine love into human life in an unprecedented manner and degree, he did this because in all respects he shared the manhood which is ours; and if we, in our turn, can appropriate that love released in his accomplishment, it is because it was disclosed and made effective in these very human terms which are also ours. This is why there is a profoundly religious importance, a most serious significance for faith, in granting to Jesus the fullest measure of humanity.[108]

Pittenger states that in Jesus' human choice and decision to fulfil the initial aim granted him by God, the impact of his life as the revelation of the Old Testament God is made. Beside his influence on human life in this regard, Jesus brought to fulfilment the Judaic religious-moral culture in which he himself was immersed.

In Pittenger's eyes the essential presupposition for a theology of Incarnation is that man and God are in intimate relation and that the Logos is the basic ground of being. Using Augustine's concept of "man-made-towards-God", Pittenger sees Jesus as being elected as the organon of the Logos, but that necessarily he had to respond to this

election in complete surrender to God's will. Thus the metaphysical union of the divine and human is most complete in the Christ event:

> The most complete, the fullest, the most organic and integrated union of Godhood and manhood which is conceivable is precisely one in which by gracious indwelling of God in man and by manhood's free response in surrender and love, there is established a relationship which is neither accidental nor incidental, on the one hand, nor mechanical and physical, on the other; but a full, free, gracious unity of the two in Jesus Christ, who is both the farthest reach of God the Word into the life of man and also (and by consequence) the richest response of man to God.[109]

Pittenger warns, however, that the Christ event must not be seen to contain or manifest all of the divine reality, but to reveal the nature of God's activity in the world. Also, Jesus Christ is most importantly a revelation of the perfect union ontologically of the moral and spiritual response of man to God's being as love.

As is the case with God's way in the entire created order, divine causation has priority in the revelation in Jesus Christ. Indeed, Pittenger emphasizes that it is God's choice to reveal himself with unique intensity through the Incarnation, and that Christ's emergence as the expression of the divine reality, though the crown of congruous revelation, is not merely an evolution from natural forces but an appearance within the process involving supreme, divine causal activity.[110] Particularly in the Passion and death of Christ Pittenger believes that the divine causal and affective principle was at work, revealing God's suffering participation in his world and the triumph of cosmic love.

Pittenger insists that emphasizing God's activity in Jesus, rather than the divine substance present in him upholds the process perspective of the ceaseless energizing of God within reality and simultaneously the

Biblical understanding of unique revelatory events within the history of the world. Jesus then is the organon of the divine purpose and will; his manifestation of human divinity comes through his human effort to conform his will to the will of God, or in process terms to identify his subjective aim completely with the initial aim provided by God for his actualization. Though Pittenger acknowledges that this full union of the divine and human can probably be understood only through a faith experience, nevertheless he argues for its ontological reality.

Indeed, Pittenger believes that in the Christ event there is present the simultaneous experience of divine and human activity; the union of God and man is totally personal in Jesus Christ:

> The human life of Jesus was so one in will (that is to say in the deepest intentionality of being) with God that in him the life of God was lived in man, by a man, and for men... He is our clue to the Divine Reality; he is our clue to the truth about humanity; he is our clue to the right relationship between them. In him the Image of God is emergent and manifest in full humanity.[111]

Pittenger upholds that this union of God and man has a gracious quality which, once established, is permanent. However, he also believes that though the encounter through faith of God in Jesus is real, there is a distinction between God and man even as the most intimate relationship between them exists in the Christ event. Pittenger calls this self-disclosure of God-in-act in Jesus Christ a theocentric revelation (rather than a Christo-or Jesu-centric one), since it becomes the norm for what is said about God and the truth about man.[112]

The unique position of Jesus Christ as the 'final' revelation of God's activity (particularly in the created order) has a two-fold basis: first, though the Logos does, to some degree, work within all men, Jesus

must be understood to have been chosen by God as his special organon for the revelation of the divine purpose; second, Jesus' response to this choice by God is the fullest and most complete response a man can make to the divine will; thus he is the entirely adequate human instrument for the divine self-expression.

Jesus Christ: The Revelation of Human Nature

Through an understanding of Jesus as the En-manned Logos, Pittenger's Christology centers on his ontological significance as revelation. Since the Word is that mode of God's being concerned with creation, his self-expression and revelation, i.e., God outward, then it can be seen to undergird all human life in its historical situations.[113] The Logos is the agent of order and rationality in the working out of the process, the reason for the way things are, the definition of the meaning of the process as it continues forward in its creative actualization.

By positing Jesus Christ as the human locus of the Logos, the meaning of the Christ event becomes clear: it is the supreme paradigm of the nature of reality and the agent for the most intense and ultimate revelation of divine creativity in the world.[114]

Since God's chief activity is seen to be energizing love, in Jesus Christ can be found the human expression of cosmic love which allows all men the vision of love and the possibility of becoming integrated lovers. The unique intensity with which the Word energizes in the Christ event is so decisive that it utterly embraces the wholeness of life that only God himself can provide for man.

In effect then, the revelation of human nature in Jesus is as

essential as the revelation of divine nature. Again, it is because the process world-view incorporates and focuses on value at the level of the interpenetration of all of reality, particularly that of God and man, that the significance of Jesus' disclosure of true human nature is acknowledged. Pittenger would insist that such a view correlates with the Biblical understanding of the intimate relationship of God and the world, finding supreme expression in the Imago Dei in man.

What then does Jesus Christ reveal about human nature? As H.W. Montefiore points out, to understand the revelation in Jesus Christ one must see the analogy between God's being and man's. In this way the Incarnation makes sense. This is not to say, and Pittenger would agree wholly here, that God should be equated with a human person, but that the transcendent deity is immanently disclosed in the Christ-event.[115]

Because of Pittenger's emphasis on the dynamic nature of reality, he points to the existential aspect of Christ as revelation: "He is <u>what man is</u>, the existential embodiment of the essential Manhood which rightly belongs to each of us. For the Christian theist this is to say that in him the divine image is embodied in concrete and actual humanity, in historical existence."[116] The dynamic, temporal agent of God's working within creation, Jesus embodies to the ultimate degree the same existential aspects of becoming that all men do. Thus his very real emotion, love, suffering, doubt, and affirmation are given priority in Pittenger's view of revelation.

Jesus also reveals what a fully integrated, actualized Man of Love is, according to Pittenger. In fact, the basic reality of the Christ event is the love he shows as a man, not different in kind from other

human love, but in degree; because it "is indeed most intense, most generous, as it is most exacting and austere."[117] Jesus' expression of cosmic love is so positive and creative in Pittenger's eyes that it reveals the true participation which is life's nature and meaning. Thus, though all human love is the manifestation of divine love operating in the world, Jesus especially reveals God's harmonizing and creative love.

Griffin further points out that Jesus' transparency to the divine reality indicates his very self to be constituted by his prehension of God.[118] Thus his own vision of his purpose and role attains supreme authority. Jesus' utter obedience to the divine will further reveals his understanding of his response as a human being to God. His authentic humanity results from his full integration of God's initial aim for him within the temporal order and "his complete openness to every situation as mediating to him the demand and succor of God, his use of every situation as a new means of communicating himself to others in obedience to and in dependence upon God whose concern is for the universal fulfilment of mankind."[119]

Unlike Cobb who believes that the unique "I" of Jesus springs from his unique initial aim from God and his response to that aim, Pittenger believes all men are given the same kind of initial aim in God's directive to become fully actualized lovers and thus fully integrated human beings. Hence, though Pittenger tends to minimize the distinction between the nature of the initial aim given to Jesus and that given to other men, he does point out that Jesus' full obedience to his understanding of the divine purpose working within him is indeed unparalleled. Yet because he shares full humanity with the rest of mankind, his response

to God's will is the supreme paradigm for all men to follow in their own actualization.

Returning briefly to Cobb's argument that Jesus' claim of authority is different in kind from other teachers of the time because it unites both the content and source of his prehension, i.e., God,[120] Pittenger would agree that Jesus' vision of reality includes his claim to be God's agent for the working out of His purpose. In his understanding and reinterpretation of the kingdom of God, Jesus reveals his unique sense of authority.

Pittenger then posits Jesus' humanity as unparalleled by any other man in the history of the world. He, in fact, displays sacred humanity because he attains perfect, actualized manhood in his utter faith in God, his utter obedience to the divine will (epitomized in the Cross), and his love-in-action whereby he embraces both God and the world in love.[121] Thus, Jesus reveals what the Proper Man is under the conditions of space and time, "bringing to special fulfilment or actualization... genuine human possibilities."[122] Jesus' vision and work in the world have as their centre his knowledge of God's pervasive presence and activity in the world.

Jesus Christ: The Revelation of Divine Nature

In turning specifically to the revelation of divine nature in the Christ event, Pittenger shows that the same emphasis on Jesus' decisiveness in the revelation of human nature also holds in his disclosure of God. Pittenger argues that since only God can have the value of God, Jesus' life indicates that that which is ultimate in experience

and in being has an effect on man.[123] Because Jesus Christ is the metaphysical union of God and man, he acts simultaneously as both.

Griffin argues, for instance, that this understanding of Jesus' divine nature does not relegate the Christ event to the realm of the miraculous, but is an affirmation of Christian process ontology where God is seen as active in all events, and thus his objective presence in Jesus becomes possible. In the unity of the respective wills of God and Jesus in the Incarnation, the selfhood of Jesus becomes constituted by his awareness of God.[124] Hence is manifested the deity in Jesus, unparalleled elsewhere in the process.

In fact, in the concept of Jesus' transparency to the divine nature the most definitive idea of the revelation of God in the Christ event takes form. Because Jesus Christ is completely open to the working of the divine nature within him, a new level of creation is reached. Jesus' perfect obedience to the divine will, within the medium of human personality, makes the presence of God within him unique: "In him the love of God addresses man with a unique directness, not as through the prophets. In his acts and words Christians encounter the word and deed of God."[125]

Pittenger believes that Christ reveals God as Love-In-Action: "in Christ [God] disclosed his heart and effectively acted to make new and authentic existence possible for his children."[126] God, according to Pittenger, through the Christ event, is seen as a suffering lover who participates fully in the world as it is processed, experiencing both goodness and evil as they arise through the freedom of creativity.

Through Jesus, God reveals that love and tenderness are the means

by which integration and harmony are brought into the creation and by which the communal participation in the created good becomes possible. Jesus as revelation is definitive because he releases the power of love to others in an unparalleled way. The new life in Christ, the mutuality of divine and human love and love-in-community,[127] is the essence of the divine energizing within the process and the central affirmation of the Biblical God.

Through Jesus' revelation of the divine nature as love-in-act the saving side of God's nature is revealed. Pittenger argues that though the Christ event in no way limits God's gracious activity in relation to sin, evil, and suffering (and hence to atonement, redemption, and salvation), nevertheless it does reveal this aspect of God's operation in the most complete way. The Cross and the Resurrection are, in Pittenger's eyes, disclosures of "the universal fact of God in relation to sin and suffering."[128]

In particular, Pittenger believes that the Cross is absolutely essential to Christian faith, for Jesus' death "was the result of human sin and moral evil. But the fact of dying, with all its painful accompaniments, was nonetheless a genuine participation in the pain of the world."[129] Jesus revealed in his death that God is everpresent in the face of evil, never abandoning creation to ultimate destructiveness and destruction.

Jesus Christ: The Revelation of the Relationship between God and Man

Since the Christ event is both the revelation of divine and human nature, its final significance lies in its disclosure of the

relationship between God and man:

> There can be no doubt that the fact of Christ constitutes a "moment" in the history of the race, and if that be true it is a "moment" also in the history of the world with which men are in an inescapable and organic relation. But the "moment", says Christian faith, is decisive and absolute in its significance for God-man relations.[130]

In Christ, Pittenger believes, is found "the chief means of relationship between the ultimate Reality of God and the derived reality of men."[131] Griffin continues this line of thinking by stating that through the revelation in Christ there is an increased possibility for man's fulfilment of God's presentation of initial aims, particularly of aims which more directly express God's purpose in the world.[132]

Through the totality of his life, understood to be in perfect obedience to the divine will, Jesus indicates the right relationship between God and man. His actualization of human possibilities, specifically the human response to God's love and action, becomes a fact which all men can participate in through faith.

The Christ event changes for all time God-in relation-to-man, reconciling the world and man to God, heightening the redemptive activity of God within the created order: "on the Cross the love of God in Christ meets man even at the point where man deserts it, rejects it and slays it.[133]

The redemptive activity of God which occurs through Jesus' Passion, death, and Resurrection is the locus of the restoration of the God-man relation. Since man's true nature is indeed love-in-action, according to Pittenger, the complex event involving the Cross and the Resurrection must be seen as a continuing faith experience which indicates that the love released in the person of Jesus Christ is still working for the

benefit of man and the world.

Though the Christ event can be seen to be the crown of Judeo-Christian salvation history, Pittenger believes it is as revelation most importantly the paradigm of God's way with the world and his operation within it, of the self-actualized man, of the proper relationship between God and man, and finally of the nature of reality itself.

In conclusion, the foundation of Pittenger's ideas of revelation is broad, emphasizing the process belief that all of reality partakes of and hence reveals God's nature. Uniting this belief with the particular world-view of Christianity and its revelation, Pittenger sees Jesus Christ as a unique focus of the general mode of revelation in the world and as the final revelation which enhances and ultimately redefines the boundaries of God's activity in the world.

Footnotes - Chapter One

[1]Charles Hartshorne, The Divine Relativity (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1967), p. 89.

[2]Hartshorne, "Philosophical and Religious Uses of 'God'," in Process Theology, ed. Ewert H. Cousins (New York: Newmann Press, 1971), pp. 102, 105, 108.

[3]The Divine Relativity, p. 28.

[4]Eric C. Rust, Evolutionary Philosophies and Contemporary Theology (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1969), pp. 99-102. Whitehead, whose philosophy of organism is the basis of process theology, in fact argues that the universe must be seen as a process of feeling, that actual entities are mutually sensitive to one another and cannot, in reality, be dealt with in isolation without abstracting from reality. Whitehead believes there are no real distinctions between mind and matter or qualities and substance in process reality.

[5]The Divine Relativity, p. 27.

[6]Ibid., pp. 28-32.

[7]W. Norman Pittenger, Process Thought and Christian Faith (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1968), p. 13.

[8]Ibid., pp. 15-16.

[9]Thomas Ogletree, "A Christological Assessment of Di-Polar Theism," in Process Philosophy and Christian Thought, ed. Delwin Brown, Ralph E. James, Jr., and Gene Reeves (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1971), p. 335.

[10]Pittenger, Goodness Distorted (London: A.R. Mowbray and Company, Ltd., 1970), p. 31.

[11]Hartshorne in Cousins, p. 116. "A theistic philosophy must take 'create' or 'creator' as a universal category rather than as applicable to God alone. It must distinguish supreme creativity from lesser forms and attribute some degree of creativity to all actuality. It must make of creativity a 'transcendental', the very essence of reality as self-surpassing process."

[12]Pittenger, The Word Incarnate (Welwyn, Herts., England: James Nisbet and Company, Ltd., 1959), p. 154.

[13]Pittenger, "Bernard E. Meland, Process Thought, and the Significance of Christ," in Cousins, p. 205 .

[14]The Word Incarnate, p. 154. "It is in the historical order that we are enabled most clearly to see both continuity and novelty; the development of 'organism' reaches in this field a new height and intensity; and we may look back from it to the sequence of events in the previous levels and grasp more clearly their significance, both in themselves and as contributing to the ongoing course of events."

[15]Ibid., pp. 160-161.

[16]Ibid., p. 161.

[17]Ibid., p. 263. For example, Pittenger refers to the synthesis of the eternal and the temporal within history: "Historical events and human life, which constitute the highest level of which we have cognizance, are the area where so far as we can see the eternal and the temporal are in peculiarly intense interpenetration, varying in degree as the latter is made more effective as the instrument for the self-expression of God. Here is a Christian philosophy of history."

[18]Alfred North Whitehead, "God and the World," in Cousins, p. 94. "Opposed elements stand to each other in mutual requirement. In their unity, they inhibit or contrast. God and the world stand to each other in their opposed requirement. God is the infinite ground of all mentality, the unity of vision seeking physical multiplicity. The world is the multiplicity of finites, actualities seeking a perfected unity. Neither God, nor the world, reaches static completion. Both are in the grip of the ultimate metaphysical ground, the creative advance into novelty. Either of them, God and the World, is the instrument of novelty for the other."

[19]Ibid., p. 96.

[20]John Cobb, "The World and God," in Cousins, pp. 157-162. Cobb, for instance, attempts to overcome the distortions of reality which arise from distinguishing the mental and physical poles of existence, by positing the nature of process reality to be interrelated energy events; in this scheme the mental and physical have a necessary connection as energy events, the former being, of course, a more complex form of energy-event than the latter. In this sense, God can be seen to be a subjective energy event whose eminent immediacy in all other energy events grants him his unique metaphysical status.

[21]Process Thought and Christian Faith, pp. 21-22.

[22]Whitehead in Cousins, p. 90. "One side of God's nature is constituted by his conceptual experience. This experience is the primordial fact in the world, limited by no actuality which it presupposes. It is therefore infinite, devoid of all negative prehensions. This side of his nature is free, complete, primordial, actually deficient and unconscious. The other side originates with physical experience derived from the temporal world, and then acquires integration with the primordial side. It is determined, incomplete, consequent, 'everlasting', fully actual, and conscious. His necessary goodness expresses the determination of his consequent nature."

[23]Goodness Distorted, p. 36.

[24]John Cobb, "A Whiteheadian Doctrine of God," in Cousins, pp. 236-237. According to Cobb, by saying that the initial aim for each becoming occasion is provided by God is attributing a major creator role to God, since the initial aim determines the initial data and spatio-temporal locus of the occasion.

[25]Cobb, God and the World (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1969), p. 90.

[26]Ibid., pp. 91-92.

[27]Ibid., p. 96.

[28]Pittenger, Reconceptions in Christian Thinking (New York: The Seabury Press, 1968), p. 48.

[29]Lewis Ford, "Divine Persuasion and the Triumph of Good," in Process Philosophy and Christian Thought, p. 299.

[30]Goodness Distorted, p. 38.

[31]Ibid., p. 58.

[32]Ibid.

[33]Schubert Ogden, "The Reality of God," in Cousins, pp. 121-122.

[34]The Divine Relativity, pp. 25-32.

[35]Process Thought and Christian Faith, pp. 22,23.

[36]Pittenger, God's Way with Men (London: Hodder and Stoughton, Ltd., 1969), pp. 34-35.

[37]Pittenger, Christ and Christian Faith (Cornwall, New York: Cornwall Press, 1941), p. 123.

[38]Pittenger, God in Process (London: SCM Press, 1967), p. 14.

[39]Process Thought and Christian Faith, p. 24.

[40]Ibid., pp. 30-31.

[41]Ibid., p. 33. "Love is both self-giving and unitive. Thus, we may say that God is love because he enters into and participates in his creation; he is love, supremely, because he absorbs error, maladjustment, evil, everything that is ugly and unharmonious, and is able to bring about genuine and novel occasions of goodness by the use of material which seems so uncompromising and hopeless."

[42]Lewis Ford in Process Philosophy and Christian Thought, p. 296.

[43]The Word Incarnate, pp. 216-218.

[44]Ibid.

[45]Process Thought and Christian Faith, p. 41. "But for the process thinker if God is in fact creator, with creative activity in love as his very heart, then he cannot be the God he is, and hence not really God, unless there is a world in which his creativity is expressed and which itself is an expression of that creativity."

[46]Ibid., p. 53.

[47]Ogden in Cousins, p. 124.

[48]Op. Cit., pp. 22-23.

[49]Ibid., p. 23.

[50]God in Process, p. 90.

[51]Ibid., p. 91.

[52]God's Way with Men, pp. 45-46.

[53]God in Process, pp. 19-20.

[54]Walter Stokes, "A Whiteheadian Reflection on God's Relation to the World," in Cousins, p. 149.

[55]The Word Incarnate, p. 163. "...in the realm of history, there is a peculiar and novel operation of God, informing, moulding, modifying, relating life with life and event with event, bringing more significance out of this than that segment of the historical process, and throughout the movement never contradicting the uniqueness and speciality of each particular instance but using that very peculiarity for the fulfilment of the purpose which governs the whole enterprise."

[56]God in Process, pp. 19-20.

[57]The Word Incarnate, p. 166.

[58]Ford in Cousins, pp. 301, 303.

[59]Goodness Distorted, p. 41.

[60]Pittenger, Christology Reconsidered (London: SCM Press, Ltd., 1970), p. 143.

[61]Christ and Christian Faith, p. 86.

[62]Process Thought and Christian Faith, p. 57.

[63]Ibid., p. 64.

[64]Ibid., p. 73.

[65]Ibid.

[66]Christ and Christian Faith, p. 125.

[67]Ibid., pp. 108-110.

[68]Rust, p. 225.

[69]Reconceptions in Christian Thinking, p. 41.

[70]Ibid., p. 57.

[71]Ibid., pp. 51-54.

[72]Ibid., pp. 59-60.

[73]Ibid., pp. 60-62.

[74]Goodness Distorted, p. 90.

[75]David Griffin, "Schubert Ogden's Christology and the Possibilities of Process Philosophy," in Process Philosophy and Christian Thought, p. 357.

[76]Ibid., pp. 357-358.

[77]Griffin, A Process Christology (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1973), p. 141.

[78]Ibid., p. 103.

[79]Rust, pp. 138-147. According to Rust, Temple maintains that if there is a personal God who is the ground of existence, there is nothing which is not revelation. Temple believes revelation is the coincidence of mind and event; God can use any normal or natural events as revelation as well as any unusual one. Thus, the primary medium for God's self-disclosure is the process itself; but within the process events arise which are particular media of revelation. Temple argues that the eternal is self-expressed in history, i.e., that it fulfills itself in historical self-expression. History, however, does not make God different essentially but matters vitally to God because it is united vitally to his essence. God's being embraces values that are manifested in history; therefore, history makes God's life richer by actualizing the values inherent in his loving purpose. Importantly then, Temple believes the whole universe is sacramental, nature and history being expression of and participants in God's glory.

[80]The Word Incarnate, p. 21.

[81]Christ and Christian Faith, pp. 46-47.

[82]Ibid., p. 46.

[83]Ibid., p. 60.

[84]Goodness Distorted, p. 56. "We do not know anything about some supposed pre-creational state when God 'existed' alone -- in fact, to talk in this way is to suppose that a creator once upon a time did not create, which would seem absurd. His creativity is an everlasting activity, presupposing something creatively done and the results of that creative doing in a world which is not identical with God but which yet is 'his' world."

[85]Christology Reconsidered, p. 150.

[86]Ogletree in Process Philosophy and Christian Thought, pp. 338-339.

[87]The Word Incarnate, p. 27.

[88]Ibid., p. 29.

[89]Ibid., p. 33.

[90]Ibid., p. 40.

[91]Pittenger in Cousins, pp. 211-212.

[92]Christology Reconsidered, p. 86. "The locus of that specific activity of God which we designate when we say Jesus Christ is the total complex of event, compounded of long Jewish preparation, the appearance and life of Jesus himself, the response made to him as he was received in the days of Palestine, in the experience of him as risen from the dead, and in the primitive and continuing Christian community which also responded to him--and, by a legitimate extension, the totality of his impact upon human history down to the present moment...it is Jesus-in-the-midst-of-his-own-past-present-future--who constitutes the proper location of God's activity which Christians have come to denote by the word Incarnation."

[93]Ibid., p. 7.

[94]Ogletree in Process Philosophy and Christian Thought, pp. 341-342.

[95]A Process Christology, p. 160.

[96]Ibid., p. 161.

[97]The Word Incarnate, p. 202.

[98]Ibid., p. 15.

[99]Ibid., p. 165.

[100]Ibid., p. 169.

[101]God's Way with Men, p. 17.

[102]Cobb, "A Whiteheadian Christology," in Process Philosophy and Christian Thought, p. 396.

[103]A Process Christology, p. 20.

[104]Christology Reconsidered, p. 119.

[105]Ibid., p. 128.

[106]Christ and Christian Faith, p. 30.

[107]Ibid., p. 32.

[108]Christology Reconsidered, p. 40.

[109]The Word Incarnate, p. 188.

[110]Christ and Christian Faith, p. 97.

[111]God in Process, p. 29.

[112]God's Way with Men, p. 17.

[113]The Word Incarnate, pp. 5-6.

[114]Pittenger in Cousins, p. 213. "For Christian faith, the significance of Jesus is that he is the point where the Word is most signally, most intensively, most vitally and dynamically operative; in him, The Fourth Gospel says, The Word was 'enfleshed'--or, as we might more readily phrase it--discovers for itself through prevenient preparation and concomitant solicitation an adequate, but genuinely human organon or personal agent, decisive and crucial because it provides the important point for the Word's never-ending activity in the human creation."

[115]H.W. Montefiore, "Jesus, the Revelation of God," in Christ

for Us Today, ed. W.N. Pittenger (London: SCM Press, 1968), p. 103.

[116]The Word Incarnate, p. 159.

[117]Christology Reconsidered, p. 131.

[118]A Process Christology, p. 228.

[119]F.W. Dillistone, "Jesus, The Revelation of Man," in Christ for Us Today, p. 96.

[120]Cobb, "A Whiteheadian Christology", in Process Philosophy and Christian Thought, p. 393. In fact, Cobb believes that Jesus' prehension of God was not experienced as information about God but as the presence of God to and in him: "...this prehension of God constituted in Jesus the center from which everything else in his psychic life was integrated." Thus God's presence in Jesus constituted his self-hood and sense of authority.

[121]God's Way With Men, pp. 69-70.

[122]Pittenger in Cousins, p. 210.

[123]Christ and Christian Faith, p. 38.

[124]A Process Christology, p. 144.

[125]G.W.H. Lampe, "The Saving Work of Christ," in Christ for Us Today, pp. 147-148.

[126]Goodness Distorted, p. 61.

[127]Pittenger in Cousins, p. 215.

[128]Christ and Christian Faith, p. 128.

[129]Goodness Distorted, p. 46.

[130]Op. Cit., p. 108.

[131]Ibid., p. 133.

[132] *A Process Christology*, p. 242.

[133] Lampe in *Christ for Us Today*, p. 148.

CHAPTER TWO

Revelation in Abraham Heschel: The Disclosure of Divine Pathos

Like Norman Pittenger, Abraham Heschel is a philosopher who relies heavily on polarities and dialectics in his conceptualization of religious ideas. Heschel himself attributes his use of polar concepts to the Jewish tradition from which he emerges: "To Jewish tradition... paradox is an essential way of understanding the world, history and nature. Tension, contrast, contradiction characterize all of reality."[1]

Polarity and Paradox: Man's View of Reality

Heschel believes that from the human standpoint, polarities exist in every part of reality because of the nature of the human condition. Man is the being in the universe who senses the tension of everything, the magnetic opposition of drives, deeds, events, and thoughts, and yet paradoxically he intuits a God who ends all tension and "is beyond all dichotomies...Thus the pinnacle of Jewish truth is a mystery of divine unity."[2]

In delving into Heschel's own Jewish thinking, polarities in his ontology which set the stage for an understanding of his ideas of revelation become clear. Perhaps the most obvious example is his analysis of the relation of God to the world. By positing God as the wholly and transcendent other who, despite his incomprehensibility, is involved intimately with the world, Heschel believes he remains true to Biblical ontology.[3]

Fritz Rothschild points out (in his introduction to Heschel's thought in Between God and Man) that in the experience of grandeur and the ineffable which Heschel argues is one of the starting points for God-awareness in man's consciousness, polarities already exist. Man

combines the subjective and objective realms of reality in this experience; through his wonder, awe, and faith, all three subjective responses to the grandeur of the world, he experiences the sublime, the mystery and the glory of reality which are objective dimensions of his world.[4] Though there is clearly no logic which can "prove" the existence of these dimensions, Heschel insists they are an implicit part of man's relation to reality.

Similarly, man exists in time in a paradoxical manner. He is constantly aware of the temporality of his own existence and yet simultaneously conscious of the "uninterruptedness" and "abidingness" of time. That temporality and eternity always meet in man's understanding of himself in time points, according to Heschel, to one of the basic polarities in man's existence.[5]

Likewise, despite the history of his iniquities, man's faith implies that God's concern with the world is redemptive, that beyond the discord and diversity of human activity, the source and meaning of life is unifying compassion.[6] Heschel believes that man's position in the universe is unique as the converging point (though not the dissolution) of the world's polarities. Thus even in his own actions, pattern and spontaneity circumscribe his deeds. As a body-spirit unity, the living that man does involves both law and freedom.[7] Man can neither escape these polarities nor understand them completely. Yet Heschel believes that in the concreteness of human existence, their mutual exclusivity is surpassed and their mutual necessity affirmed. Only in God do all tensions end.

Obviously then, man's understanding and description of reality

are dialectical. Heschel maintains that epistemology cannot escape the mystery of paradox and polarity. Revelation then, as a unique focus of religious knowledge, will involve opposed elements from man's vantage point. And indeed it is with Heschel's understanding of knowledge that a full account of his ideas on revelation must begin.

Wonder as the Root of Knowledge: The Response to the Preciousness of Being

Heschel poses insight and reason as basic modes of human knowledge. But the root of all knowledge is wonder.[8] "The tangible phenomena we scrutinize with our own reason, the sacred and the indemonstrable we overhear with the sense of the ineffable."[9] Man's sense of wonder is a response of amazement to being, an answer to being's question to man, a sense of realization that whatever man is, he owes.[10] According to Heschel, man's wonder "is the state of our being asked,"[11] prior to our conceptualizations, involving the dimension of our existence which is truly religious, which responds in concern during moments of awe to the meaning of being. Not a perception, but an awareness of the mystery and glory of the world, wonder is a sense of the ineffable as an objective category of reality.

Wonder leads to our use of reason in discovering that which is tangible, but as a response to the mystery of being which hovers above the tangible, it leads to a cognitive insight that life has meaning and that God as concerned-being-beyond-all-being is real.[12] Unfortunately, such an insight is neither common nor lasting. Heschel points out that the knowledge gained of the ultimate significance of being is necessarily a faith experience:

> He who has never been caught in such a radical situation will fail to understand the certainty it engenders. He who absconds, who is always absent when God is present, should explain the reasons for his alibi, and abstain from bearing witness. He who has ever gone through a moment of radical insight cannot be a witness to God's non-existence without laying perjury upon his soul.[13]

Indeed, the transcendent preciousness of existence which Heschel points out is only sensed in moments of wonder and ensuing insight is

> a certainty without knowledge: it is real without being expressible. It cannot be communicated to others; every man has to find it by himself. In moments of sensing the ineffable we are as certain of the value of the world as we are of its existence.[14]

Heschel argues that meaning occurs outside the mind in objective reality, that in man's awareness being and value are inseparable. In fact, the expectedness of meaning, says Heschel, is the root of all man's thinking, feeling, and volition.[15] Because our concepts abstract this meaning, Heschel maintains we cannot conform the value of the world to our minds. Inexpressible in its very nature, only the immediate insight through wonder affirms its existence.[16] A. Lichtigfeld, in his book on philosophy and revelation in Jewish thought, confirms Heschel's point:

> In the religious consciousness being and meaning form a unity. The religious man grasps the transcendental reality immediately in the religious act; there is innate in him an intuition of his relatedness with 'Another' who is not wholly other, a Beyond that is within, and hence an immediate consciousness of a Reality which assures us that we are able to cooperate with an immanent purpose in the world.[17]

Though Heschel might dispute Lichtigfeld's contention that God is not wholly other, he, nevertheless, would agree that transcendent reality is sensed only in an immediate, religious act. Thus, though the ineffable is objective and transsubjective, Heschel believes it is not capturable in thought, imagination, or feeling.[18] "The living

encounter with reality takes place on a level that precedes conceptualization, on a level that is responsive, immediate, preconceptual, and presymbolic."[19] Hence, though science may explain the hows of existence, it never explains the whys of the world; in fact, it serves to extend the scope of the ineffable. Heschel believes the concept of the ineffable accounts

> for the diversity of man's attempts to express or depict reality, for the diversity of philosophies, poetic visions or artistic representations, for the consciousness that we are still at the beginning of our effort to say what we see about us.[20]

The Sublime: An Indication of the Divine Presence in the World

The sublimity of the world, therefore, produces the responses of radical amazement and awe in man. These are indeed ways of knowing the world and God's presence. The sublime points to the divine. Itself not ultimacy in being, it stands in relation to something beyond it: "The sublime is not simply there. It is not a thing, a quality, but rather a happening, an act of God, a marvel...There are no sublime facts; there are only divine acts."[21] The Biblical mind, Heschel believes, reacted to the sublime as the indication of the divine. For the prophets, in particular, wonder and awe were forms of thinking.[22] Not only in space but in time, not only in nature but in history, the sublime produced the experience of radical amazement in Biblical man.[23] Heschel believes the modern Jew must likewise retain his sense of wonder in order to sense the ineffable dimension of reality, and hence, God. In fact, the beginning of wisdom is awe.[24] Without awe, there is no transcendent meaning, no spiritual dimension or value to the world and

living. With awe, mystery becomes an ontological fact: "We stand in its presence, yet [are] unable to grasp its essence."[25] Mystery then is experienced in all being, an ontological category, "the nature of being as God's creation out of nothing, and, therefore, something which stands beyond the scope of human comprehension."[26]

Never gained through abstractions, but apprehended through concrete, immediate relatedness, mystery reveals that being implies standing for, that the ineffable is not an exception but the spiritual setting for reality, "as if to be meant to be thought of by God."[27] Thus Heschel maintains that in human knowledge the world and man are object and subject; within human wonder they are one in being, in eternity.[28]

Because of the value-laden ontology implicit in Biblical thought which Heschel preserves in his philosophy of religion, he believes that being is more significant in the moral sense than in the cosmological sense. While the Greek contribution to man's understanding of reality is the ordered totality of the cosmos, the Jewish contribution is the moral significance of being. As Heschel himself argues, "We are more anxious to know whether there is a God of justice than to learn whether there is a God of order.[29]

Value itself, says Heschel, lies in the very relations which exist in reality. Good and evil are not mere psychological facts, but are given within reality as ontological facts. Good, he believes, is the convergence or unity in reality, evil the discord and the divergence.[30] Moral and spiritual relations are given within reality; man himself is conscious that he must respond in commitment to the good without limitation.[31]

Importantly then, sanctification is not unearthly but the reason why all being is sublime:

> There is no dualism of the earthly and the sublime. All things are sublime. They were all created by God and their continuous being, their blind adherence to the laws of necessity are...a way of obedience to the Creator. The existence of things throughout the universe is a supreme ritual.[32]

God: The Divine Subject Sensed through the Experience of Sublimity

How then can God be understood as the source of sublimity? Heschel insists God is never the object of man's knowing, but can only be apprehended as the transcendent divine subject. God is never merely reflected upon in relation to the reason for being, but in relation to the reason for the preciousness of being.[33] We cannot argue God's existence from an idea of God or as a necessary, first cause, Heschel maintains, but from an ontological presupposition (awareness) that God does, in fact, exist.[34]

God is affirmed through a faith experience of the ineffable dimension of being as a reality which is higher and other than the soul and the universe.[35] Man possesses an intuition of God's presence in his sense that the universe is an object of divine thought, but in his response to this sense, he realizes he owes his existence to God, who is not just a being "but being in and beyond all things."[36]

Heschel argues that God's essence is never known by man, but that there are moments when his glory (Shekhinah) is revealed.

> The glory is the presence, not the essence of God; an act rather than a quality; a process not a substance. Mainly the glory manifests itself as a power overwhelming the world. Demanding homage, it is a power that descends to guide, to remind. The glory reflects abundance of good and truth, the power that acts in nature and history.[37]

The outwardness of the world then communicates part of the indwelling greatness of God. This greatness is not an aesthetic or physical category but a living presence. It is an aura lying about all being. There is no adequate way to know the glory, only an awareness of being known by it.[38]

According to Heschel, it is in fact God who asks questions of man before we ask questions of him: "God is not an explanation of the world's enigmas or a guarantee for our salvation. He is an eternal challenge, an urgent demand. He is not a problem to be solved but a question addressed to us as individuals, as nations, as mankind."[39] Heschel believes such an understanding of God springs from the basic Biblical affirmation that faith is dependent upon God's pursuit of man.[40]

Man then knows God only because God knows man. God reaches man with his questions only at rare times of spiritual insight on man's part. Yet man's knowledge is ever an awareness only of God's presence, never of his essence. Heschel reiterates time and again that God is a hidden God for the most part: "The extreme hiddenness of God is a fact of constant awareness. Yet his concern, His guidance, His will, His commandments are revealed to man and capable of being experienced by him."[41]

Heschel works from the Biblical concern with knowledge of God's will, rather than knowledge of the order of nature. Again, his emphasis is Judaic rather than Greek: to know God's will is to know he is the power behind nature.[42] Believing that we cannot treat God as part of the problem of epistemology but rather as the root of epistemology itself, in fact thinking itself, Heschel acknowledges that God is a problem which surpasses scientific and natural concepts.[43]

As a living subject then, God precludes our knowledge (as thinking subjects) of him. We must realize ourselves as objects of God rather than as subjects: "Our knowing Him and His reality are not apart. To think of Him is to open our minds to His all-pervading presence, to our being replete with His presence."[44] God, therefore, is a reality which is not an object of discovery. Man's thinking of God is within Him: "In thinking of Him, we realize that it is through Him that we think of Him. Thus, we must think of Him as the subject of all, as the life of our life, as the mind of our mind."[45] How then does God make himself known to man? As the subject of revelation, Heschel says, God manifests his presence and will. When man knows God's presence as subject, however, the danger lies in personifying him too closely, univocally with the human person. Heschel argues that to personify the spiritually real is often to belittle it, and such a presumption must never find weight in man's speech about God.[46]

Thus while God's knowledge of man is always prior to man's knowledge of God, it becomes clear that human knowledge of the divine "comprehends only what God asks of man."[47] Heschel asserts that this is the content of prophetic revelation, the Bible being God's vision of man, God's revelation of what he asks of man. Though we cannot know God from his revelation (as we might know another person) we can come to understand him in an intuitive way through the ineffable. Heschel argues that the prophets are indeed the primary human example of letting the ineffable become a voice which reveals God's concern with the world.[48]

Human wisdom then at its height is the identification of the human will with God's will, of the human point of view with God's point

of view, of human sympathy with the divine sympathy.[49] Though the human side is always limited because it is framed within the divine, faith itself does not depend on miracle or proof but rather on man's ability to reside spiritually within the mystery of the divine presence.[50] God's existence then can never be tested by human thought. It can only be acknowledged in awe in the presence of the ineffable.

Pointing out that God-awareness involves three approaches, all of which are found in the Bible, Heschel makes it clear that the Biblical understanding of man's communion with God is neither limited nor inadequate and hence ultimately appropriate for modern man. He outlines these three approaches as follows: 1) The awareness of the realm of the ineffable and God's glory ubiquitously sensed in and behind all things which leads to panentheism; 2) The awareness that the discrete, conscious self cannot be distinguished at its root which leads to mysticism; and 3) the awareness of God's voice addressing man and demanding the individual's free response which leads to the view of God as transcendent.[51]

Heschel's point is that the Biblical understanding of God is complex and paradoxical, and yet because it is the affirmation of the ineffable setting of all of reality, it necessarily has to be. Always, according to Heschel, God-awareness is by nature sudden and insightful, mysterious though concrete, paradoxical yet certain. For this reason, God's revelation of himself never fits clear-cut, rational categories of understanding, yet it is undeniably real for the man who has received it. The reality of God is grasped not as consequence but as a premise of human thought.[52]

Based on the Biblical approach to God-awareness, Heschel relates the three starting points for contemplation about God: 1) the sensing of his presence in the world; 2) the sensing of his presence in the Bible; 3) the sensing of his presence in sacred deeds. Heschel believes these correspond to three responses in human activity— worship, learning, and action — all three ways necessarily employed to keep man within the ineffable realm of reality.[53]

God's Unity: The A Priori Affirmation of His Inclusive Being

Once residing in the realm of the ineffable, man comes to an implicit affirmation of God's unity. God's oneness (i.e., his unity), Heschel maintains, is an a priori conception.[54] Rothschild, in developing Heschel's chief philosophical premises, claims that the Biblical-Judaic conception of God's oneness implies God's uniqueness, His sameness, His singularity and His power of unity with all things, and yet these predicates can be reduced to two pairs of polar concepts: uniqueness-togetherness; exclusiveness-inclusiveness. These polarities are necessary essentials for man's understanding of God's unity.[55] Rothschild further explains them in terms of the inclusiveness of unity (oneness) as a concept applied to God: God's uniqueness implies that He is neither an aspect of nature or an additional reality alongside the universe; God's togetherness means that He is not isolated from reality (i.e., the natural and supernatural are not two different spheres); His exclusivity is at the bottom of man's experience of the ineffable; man thus seeks an explanation of reality beyond the realm of causality; God's inclusivity is at the bottom of man's awareness that no one is ever alone.[56] Rothschild points out that each pole of the two pairs implies the other, that the

two together work as scissors which cut across God's relation to the world.[57] Man necessarily employs these polarities in order to plummet the depths of what God's oneness means, especially in regard to the world.

Although man's insight into the unity of the universe is metaphysical and God's oneness affirmed through it, at the same time, man sees that there is lacking moral unity in the world. In other words, Heschel believes that the discord and divergence in values indicate that history presents a different realm of reality from nature and that "there is a discrepancy between being and spirit, between facts and norms, between that which is and that which ought to be."[58]

Yet the religious man believes that God in his unified nature provides unity to the discord in the spiritual realm. Heschel argues that through the convenant the polarities of history are unified. Thus, though in man's existential choices the law of unity is transcended, in the divine oneness even the unity of existential polarities is possible:

> Divine is a message that discloses unity where we see diversity, that discloses peace when we are involved in discord. God is he who holds our fitful lives together... God means: no one is ever alone; the essence of the temporal is the eternal; the moment is an image of eternity in an infinite mosaic. God means: Togetherness of all beings in holy otherness.[59]

Mordecai Kaplan, stressing the functional as the primary concept for understanding the meaning of God, though basically developing a process God in his thinking which is at variance with Heschel's ideas, nevertheless reiterates the Jewish idea of God's unity subsuming the polarities of the world which Heschel so ardently pursues: "Divinity is the creative, coordinating, integrative process of the universe, insofar

as it makes for the salvation of man, both individual and social."[60] Kaplan's emphasis on the realm of the ethical as the realm of God's most important functioning and meaning echoes Heschel's thinking, though there are substantial and basic differences between their ideas.

The important point which arises from Heschel's emphasis on God's unifying role in history is that the world has God present in it, the natural and supernatural are thus not separate realms, even though the world is never viewed as one with God.[61] Revelation then is the converging of the natural and supernatural in a unique moment of man's spiritual awareness. Implicit in Heschel's thinking is the paradoxical assumption that though God is a unity which unifies the polarities of the world, he transcends both nature and history as exclusively real being.[62] The Shema, which is more than a negation of polytheism, Heschel maintains, infers God's uniqueness as incomparable being. Thus, Heschel says man senses God as both near and far, as a unity beyond reality who is ineffable yet immediate to him.[63] God's oneness then speaks of the moral realm of reality, from which there is no escape. In affirming God's being, man affirms his own moral being and God's redemptive concern with the world.

And indeed the theme of divine concern in Heschel's thinking finds its backdrop in his discussion of God's oneness. God's unity expresses his necessary concern for the world. "He is one in Himself and striving to be one with the world."[64] Heschel believes the Biblical account of creation affirms this striving of God in its reference to Day One of creation (אחד יום) as the day God desired to be one with man.[65] Being is thus never seen as being alone but as creation, as a divine act of

pathos. God does not cohere in being as a physical component but as a spirit of concern.[67]

Heschel argues that the promise of faith is that spiritual events are real, hence ultimately all creative events are caused by spiritual acts.[68] The creator God is the same God who reveals His will to man. Always it is the divine concern which is the root of God's communication to man.

Before delving more deeply into Heschel's discussion of the divine pathos as the modus operandi of divine revelation, two more brief points must be acknowledged in his understanding of God's being within a Judaic framework. Heschel believes that the assumption of God's being alive is the "minimum of meaning which the word God holds for us."[69] Any assumption of God's inanimateness would only invalidate the problem of the meaning of God for man. Though Heschel admits that God's living being is beyond demonstration, he feels that the supreme fact of Biblical religion, namely that God is concerned being, is as valid as assuming God's eternal mystery.[70] Heschel argues that in moments when man is open to the grandeur of living, God's living concern and assistance is certain knowledge.

Secondly, since it is a present moment which is the moment of radical amazement and the cognitive insight into the ineffable for the religious man, God is pure presence. "Things have a past and a future, but only God is pure presence."[71] God is the presence which calls man to what is in time, to the ineffable mystery of reality.

The Divine Concern: The Explanation of God's Relation to the World

The category of divine pathos, of transcendent, transitive concern, is what makes possible an understanding of God's call to man. Prophetic religion, according to Heschel, concerns itself chiefly with God's concern for concrete situations.[72] In fact, Heschel maintains that the Old Testament is nothing more than the account of God's concern with man:

> The Bible tells us nothing about God in Himself; all its sayings refer to His relations to man. His own life and essence are neither told nor disclosed. We hear of no reflective concern, of no passions, except a passion for justice. The only events in the life of God the Bible knows are acts done for the sake of man: acts of creation, acts of redemption, or acts of revelation.[73]

Heschel believes, in fact, that the three modes of divine concern are creation, redemption, and revelation; an adequate Biblical ontology must be based on divine pathos, since it has its starting point in the polarity of God as the wholly and transcendent other who is yet the spirit of concern and directed action.[74] The isolation of God from man in theology runs counter to the fact that the Bible is essentially God's anthropology.[75]

The divine nature is never known by man but rather God's demand to man is the subject matter of his revelation, Heschel admonishes. In awe, man responds to this demand, intuiting "the divine care and concern that are invested in (the world)" so that "something sacred is at stake in every event."[76] We do not ask what God's essence is but rather what his relation to man is in the awe in which we become aware of God. In other words, Heschel believes, "if our awareness of God is an answer to his search for man, or a return, then indeed His realness and His

concern dawn upon us together."[77]

In the paradox of transcendent otherness involved in creation, God's concern is only directed outward. The divine pathos for the moral and spiritual state of man which is the focus of Biblical ontology and religion is a mystery.[78] God's presence in all being cannot, Heschel reiterates, be thought of in a physical mode; it must be understood as the divine concern which gives all being its sacredness, which unifies the polarity of nature and supernature. Heschel describes God's immanence in being as analogous to a person's immanence in a cry he utters, i.e., all being is replete with the divine word.[79]

The paradox of the immanence of divine concern is that because of God's concealed presence in reality, there is an essence to being; and yet if he were not concealed there would be no appearance.[80] Thus, God's concern is immanent, though his essence is eternally transcendent.

Most importantly, the divine concern brings together God and man. The spiritual life of man is "the borderline of the divine,"[81] and it is on the moral level that the conflict between God and man is either removed or built. When man responds openly and honestly to the divine pathos, there is no hostility between the sacred and the secular.

Heschel believes that to remain true to the Biblical framework, the divine pathos must be as basic as ontology. Unlike the Greek concept of deity which is timeless and passive, the Biblical God is dynamic, living. Never to be mistaken for mere blind feeling, however, the divine pathos is intentional and directed activity of the divine subject. Heschel argues that the prophetic consciousness of God repeats this belief time and again.[82] The divine subject's free creative act, in fact, is the

ground of all reality in Biblical ontology.[83] Always, the freedom involved in the divine concern, in God's decision to initiate being and to be involved with it in an intimate way is the premise of Biblical religion.

Just as divine pathos precedes a discussion of ontology in Heschel, Ethos is inherent in an understanding of this pathos as it relates God to the world. Since revelation implicitly involves God's making known his will to man, the divine concern necessarily involves the ethical dimension of being. Heschel writes that the divine concern reflects God's goodness and moral nature and his willingness to be involved in man's history.[84] The God of the prophets is a lawgiver in a historic, dynamic reality which must involve man's response.

Through God's ever-present concern the unity of the polarities in ontology is accomplished: it "is the unity of the eternal and the temporal, of the rational and the irrational, of the metaphysical and the historical. It is the real basis of the relation between God and man, of the correlation of Creator and creation, of the dialogue between the Holy One of Israel and His people."[85]

The divine pathos itself has a polarity in its basic structure from man's point of view: it is experienced as love or anger, justice or mercy, each pole in the two pairs reflecting the divine reaction to human history.[86] Furthermore, man's experience of the divine concern is mediated through the word or events of history which are interpreted as expressions of the divine attitude. Heschel believes that the understanding of God is not a permanent possession based on these expressions in singular moments of time in human history, for God's attitude changes

as a reaction to human behavior.[87] Man's quest for God then presupposes God's quest for man.

Creation and revelation are both events which indicate the divine initiative in affairs of the world, more particularly in the events of human history. The analogy between revelation and human interaction moreover seems to be the only one which most suffices to describe the revelatory event.[88] God's intentional expression of concern (in the revelatory event) emerges through human conditions; thus it is not an essential attribute of God.[89]

In the prophetic consciousness, for instance, there are two kinds of pathos from man's point of view: redemption (or God's sympathy) and affliction (God's rejection). Pathos is not an objective characteristic of God but a functional reality, a form of relation which changes with human conditions.[90] This relational quality of the divine concern (and hence of revelation) is what keeps the prophets prophesying.[91]

God's glory or goodness, though usually concealed, is thus the act of God in the world, rather than a quality. Connected to the ineffability of being, it is, however, revealed in sacred moments, particularly to the prophetic consciousness which understands it as a manifestation of the divine concern.

The divine pathos makes God and man partners, co-respondents in "man's struggle for justice, peace, and holiness, and it is because of His being in need of man that He entered a covenent with him for all time, a mutual bond embracing God and man, a relationship to which God, not only man, is committed."[92]

In the prophetic sense of God's nature, then, Heschel regards

God's life as the unity of his conscious acts of pathos -- creating, demanding, expressing and responding in particular moments his concern with the world and man.[93] Man's own behaviour makes him present or absent in creation: his arrogance or selfish acts banish God's presence; his loving obedience understands and shares in His glory. God thus is in exile when man wants him to be, silenced rather than silent: "The prophets do not speak of the hidden God but of the hiding God. His hiding is a function not His essence, an act not a permanent state."[94]

Man can never be self-content with his behaviour because God's behaviour responds to it. Divine anger is as much an expression of divine pathos as love. Not an irrational or compulsive action, but a reaction to human conduct, Heschel believes it "is one of the profound ideas in the Biblical understanding of divine sovereignty, righteousness, and freedom."[95]

Heschel argues that the righteous indignation of God described in the Bible is an indication that "God's relation to man is not an indiscriminate outpouring of goodness, oblivious to the condition and merit of the recipient, but an intimate accessibility, manifesting itself in His sensitive and manifold reactions."[96]

Although divine compassion lies beyond anger, God's pathos indicates justice is his nature, love being subsumed within it. For Heschel, love is not the root attribute of God's nature for it would tend to disregard the evil deeds of man. Justice, however, is the true indication of God's way with the world: "Because of his concern for man, His justice is tempered with mercy. Divine anger is not the antithesis of love but its counterpart, a help to justice demanded by true love."[97]

The decisive prophetic thought, the central problem in Jewish thinking, Heschel argues, is that the "supreme categories in...ontology are not being and becoming but law and love (justice and compassion, order and pathos.) Being, as well as all beings, stand in a polarity of divine justice and divine compassion."[98]

Man: The Being in Creation Who Shares Transitive Concern with God

Man's share in the divine pathos is the vertical dimension of his being. In his reflective concern he indicates that life is concern for self-preservation; in his transitive concern, the vertical dimension of his being, the holy, is affirmed.[99] Thus, man's concern for others is not merely an extension of his organic being, but an ascension, for it may even mean self-denial.[100]

Man's transitive concern is a reflection of the divine pathos. Faith, in fact, has its source in the memory of divine companionship, of the communion between God and man in mutual concern.[101]

Because man's nature is concern, he is a quester for meaning, conscious always of the value-ladenness of being and his required commitment to the good.[102] The good is not a mere abstract quality or ethos but that which God cares for.[103] Since the divine pathos is always ethically bound, likewise man's pathos is.

Man lives in the holy dimension of being: all his thoughts, deeds and actions stand in this dimension; in other words, man lives in the realm of God whether he consents to it or not. Faith is the acceptance of the connection to God, the vertical dimension of being,[104] an assumption of ultimate commitment and reciprocity, the covenant between

God and man.[105]

Heschel argues that to be human is not a fact given within human being but a goal and achievement in the spiritual order of events.[106] It is the acceptance of the sacred dimension of being, an existential paradox, for it often involves a negation of self-interests.[107]

By recognizing himself as a need of God, man's concern for meaning and commitment become the reasons for his living. Without an assurance of his being needed, man plunges into existential depair; living is the reality which defines man's being. According to Heschel, this fact is the basis for the Biblical awareness that the transcendent being to which man refers himself for meaning must also be living concern.

As soon as man realizes that his nature does not conflict with God's, that life means a sharing of commitment and concern, a doing of the will of God, his meaning becomes clear. Then the totality of his actions are bathed in piety, an inner attitude of commitment. Heschel says that piety is a persistent, unchanging, inner attitude of the whole man which runs through all his deeds and thoughts and is the tenor of his life.[108]

The divine concern causes a response in man which is free and cannot be extracted. Freedom occurs in an act of self-transcendence, an indication of the novel, transcendent dimension of man's being. It presupposes a responsiveness to the divine pathos which leads to the self-engagement of the spirit in transitive concern.[109]

Human life then is a dialectic: what is and what is expected; despite the fact that man lives in an ordered pattern, he opens his soul to the call of transcendence.[110] Man's life itself is a moral problem,

raising always the question of "What ought I to do?" Man senses he is commanded, and that this command is his raison d'être.[111]

The vertical dimension of human life indicates that man is theomorphic, that he shares in the mystery of being and points to the realness of God. He realizes that what he is is not his own and this realization is answered by an insight that there is a God.[112]

In deeds (mitsvot) man responds to the divine pathos. Man's likeness to God is established not only in an analogy of being, but in an analogy of acts.[113] By imitating the divine concern in his acts, his deeds become sacred. In fact Heschel maintains we meet God's presence in our deed.[114] "A mitsvah is an act in which man is present, an act of participation,"[115] in God's presence. Man himself reveals the divine in acts of redemption which are responses to the divine pathos.[116]

Heschel believes human life is the point at which mind and mystery meet.

> Man is driven to commune with that which is beyond the mystery...beyond the mind is mystery, but beyond the mystery is mercy. Out of the darkness comes a voice disclosing that the ultimate mystery is not an enigma, but the God of mercy...the ultimate question became a specific commandment...a mitsvah is where mind and mystery mate to create an image of an attribute to God.[117]

In the good deed, God and man meet.

Faith then is always concern and deed. It is the memory of God's partaking in events with man. Revelation is a moment of illumination by God, a making known of His presence in acts of human history. Man witnesses these moments (in Jewish thinking) and returns to them in deeds.

The prophet represents a unique case of man's transitive concern.

Prophetic consciousness finds its root in the divine pathos. Prophetic sympathy is the subjective response to divine pathos. The prophet is not organically related to God but his will and feeling are unified with the divine concern. Believing that the divine will has been unconditionally revealed to him, the prophet responds passionately to God's demands, often denying the comfortableness of his own existence.

Prophetic existence is being attuned to the vertical dimension of being, to God, knowing "no bounds within the horizontally human."[118] In an act of will, of real human intensity, the prophet identifies his human person with the divine pathos as it is revealed to him.[119] Prophetic sympathy is never, however, union with the divine, but an experience of unity of will, consciousness, and message.[120]

What is the nature of revelation then within prophetic and, hence, Jewish religion? Heschel analyzes this problem in relation to two important components of ontology: transitive concern (divine and human) and the nature of event, i.e. the nature and importance of time. Before delving directly into Heschel's ideas on revelation, an excursion into his reflections on Time and Event is necessary.

Time: The Location of the Polarity of Temporality and Eternity

Heschel believes that a special consciousness is required to realize that we live time and are close to identical with it.[121] Temporality is thus the relation of space to time:

> Time, that which is beyond and independent of space, is everlasting; it is the world of space which is perishing. Things perish within time; time itself does not change. We should not speak of the flow or passage of time but of the flow or passage of space through time. It is not time that dies; it is the human body which dies in time.

> Temporality is an attribute of the world of space, of things of space. Time which is beyond space, is beyond the division of past, present and future.[122]

The temporal moment, Heschel remarks, is always alone and exclusive, but the essence of time is attachment and communion. Therefore, within time, communion, worship, and loving take place, time being the border of eternity.[123] Importantly then, though a singular moment is unique within temporality, "within eternity every moment can become a contemporary of God."[124]

Heschel emphasizes that temporality and time (abidingness) are two poles of exclusivity and inclusivity which must be understood in relation to each other.[125] Like the other polarities of ontology, they present a paradoxical unity to man. Time is a dimension which, though intrinsic, is transcendent, though hovering above all other ontological categories, is near and far at the same time, and beyond man's reach and power.[126] Heschel maintains that time belongs exclusively to God though man shares it with God.

The problem with man's existence is that he is often more concerned with space than with time, often confining his God to space when, in reality, God is a God of time. Thus "the higher goal of spiritual living is not to amass a wealth of information, but to face sacred moments."[127] Heschel argues that in religious experience moments of insight of a spiritual presence rather than of a thing impose themselves on man. It is these sacred moments which allow man to experience the eternal in time.[128]

In particular, Biblical religion is a religion of time. The world is seen more in terms of time and events than in terms of geography and things.[129] Heschel exemplifies this emphasis in Biblical religion.

with the concept (דבר) which in Hebrew has many more time-oriented synonyms than thing-oriented ones: i.e., word, speech, event, deed, saying, reason, etc.[130] Unique events in Israel's history are spiritually more significant than processes in nature.[131]

Heschel sees that "the God of Israel was the God of events: the redeemer from slavery, the revealer of the Torah, manifesting Himself in events of history rather than in things or places."[132] Thus Judaism is a religion which sanctifies time, the events in Jewish history as the Sabbath or Day of Atonement being its sanctuaries.[133]

That which is holy (קדש) always applies to time and sacred events. The sanctity of events precedes the sanctity of man and space.[134] Martin Buber affirms Heschel's analysis of the significance of time in Jewish religion in his exposition on the revelation to Moses in which he acknowledges that "The experience of event as wonder is itself great history and must be understood out of the element of history."[135] Buber believes that the saga of Moses is both sacred legend and sacred history because in it Israel stands always in relation to its God.[136]

Thus God is approached always through events rather than through spatial images. Man reaches his likeness to God in time, in sacred deeds, rather than in spatial things.[137] Through time, a spiritual harmony in the world is possible, a sympathy and participation in spirit which unites all being.[138]

The word of God and his presence being everlasting, man seeks (and finds) God in the realm of time. It is in an event of history that the creator of the universe identified himself to a people.[139] Revelation in Heschel's thinking is always closely allied with time.

Remembering that Heschel outlines the three modes of divine pathos as creation, revelation, and redemption, he justly points out that though creation is a continuous process through time (as God's concern is everlasting), it is initiated by a free, willful act of divine pathos which can be seen as the first sacred event of the world's history. Every instant is an act of creation because God is present in it through the continuity of time. Through time, renewal and new beginnings are eternally possible and man is enabled to meet God.[140] Time is sacred then because its source is eternity.[141]

Despite the continuity of creation possible in time, however, Heschel emphasizes that the world is not an ontological necessity. The Biblical concept of imposed law in nature essentially affirms a transcendent God who chooses to be immanent in the world.[142] There is no Hebrew word for cosmos, rather a word which refers to both the world and time simultaneously: עולם.[143] Through such an understanding, the Biblical emphasis on all things and events as being parts of an occasion in which the divine will operates becomes paramount.[144] Heschel points out that creation is then seen as an allusion to divinity rather than as an organic part of God.[145]

Since God is being-beyond-all-being, and hence beyond the category of space, God's presence occurs in time rather than in space.[146] Heschel points out that by calling God המקום (the place) in the Bible, his presence is understood to be wherever הקדש (the holy) are.[147] God "is not in the world once and for all...He is in events, in acts, in time, in history, rather than in things. (And when in things, he may be profaned and driven out, or kept by the power of our deeds.)"[148]

Yet Heschel maintains that in the light of Jewish tradition, there is a hierarchy of time, that not all moments or ages are alike. Those moments in which God speaks to man are spiritually significant, while those in which he remains silent are not.[149] Hence, the Biblical idea of God as dynamic, living concern finds its fulfilment in the concept of the hierarchy of time:

> ...if God is not thought of in terms of inanimate being, in terms of a Being that is not endowed with either will or freedom, then we must assume that he is not at all times at our disposal. There are times when He goes out to meet us, and there are moments when He hides his face from us.[150]

Events like Sinai then do not happen continuously, and there are ages, Heschel believes, when no one is "called" to prophesy.[151] Yet, "there are good moments in history that no subsequent evil may obliterate."[152] Thus, the point is that moments of singular importance are the sacred heritage of man, for in them, God's communication to man occurs.

The Distinction between Process and Event: Pattern versus Precedence

The fact that events are the location of spiritual significance redefines for Heschel the meaning of process. Heschel believes that both process and event are part of the world. A process, however, is a regular happening, following a relatively fixed pattern. An event is always unique, extraordinary, irregular, sudden, occasional, and unpredictable. Processes are typical, says Heschel, while events create precedents. An event cannot be reduced to part of a process.[153]

Heschel believes that nature is largely made up of processes (such as birth, growth, maturity) while history is composed of events.[154] The important distinction made here is that it is in the historical realm that the ultimately meaningful occurs in the world. Since an

event, according to Heschel, cannot be fully predicated or explained, "what the consciousness of events implies, the belief in revelation claims explicitly, namely that a voice of God enters the world which pleads with man to do his will."[155]

Events: The Locus of Revelation

Heschel makes clear, however, that revelation in this light is "not an act of interfering with the normal cause of natural processes, but the act of instilling a new creative moment into the course of history."[156]

Those events which are the location of God's revelation, unlike others of less significance, are always remembered in the present, so that man views his sacred history as surpassing the borderline of past and present, those events in it being everlastingly present.[157]

Though man lives in an order of processes as well as in an order of events, ultimate reality always comes to expression in events.[158] God's living acts of concern have a "presentational immediacy" in the mode of experience which acknowledges the uniqueness of events.[159]

Even creation itself, though a process, can be viewed as a unique event, a primeval act of revelation, in which God voluntarily expressed his will and concern.[160] God then is a God of events; he established a unique covenant with man through time; the covenant indicates that in a moment which is a pinnacle of sacred history for man, God voluntarily revealed his need for man in order to attain his ends in the world.[161]

Importantly, Heschel maintains that the unique is preserved only

by incorporating it into an enduring pattern. Thus, even those moments which reveal God's concern in distinct singularity are taken up by man into a lasting pattern in order to be remembered and understood. Again, Heschel purports that it is the nature of human life to shift between polarities in order to encompass in its understanding the complexities of being.[162]

Perhaps the most important dimension of human being which has an event character is freedom.[163] Heschel argues that:

> To believe in freedom is to believe in events, namely to maintain that man is able to escape the bonds of the processes in which he is involved and to act in a way not necessitated by antecedent factors. Freedom is the state of going out of the self, an act of spiritual ecstasy.[164]

Heschel maintains that freedom is that power to live in the realm of the spiritual, the realm of creative possibilities, to accept the reality that human life is involved in a dimension of reality which surpasses the natural order.[165] Man's "freedom is a situation of God's waiting for [him] to choose."[166]

The Nature of Revelation: An Event in the Ineffable Realm of Being

Revelation then is necessarily a complex of events, involving a manifestation of God's will and concern and man's response-in-freedom to them. As Heschel emphasizes, Judaism cannot separate its norms and ideas from the events in its history in which God and man have met.[167]

Heschel believes that for most men, the idea of revelation is unacceptable because "it is unprecedented."[168] Because it is a unique event happening at a unique time, following no fixed pattern or order, our natural inclination is to reject it. Heschel argues that in order

to sensitize ourselves to the meaning of revelation, we must learn to appreciate the uniqueness of individual events.[169] The Bible, for instance, points to the significance of a chosen time as well as a chosen people: God not only elected a people, he elected a day.[170]

The gift of prophetic thinking in particular, according to Heschel, is the awareness of the spiritual dimension of the concrete and particular.[171] And it is the uniqueness of the individual which Heschel maintains explains the significance of time and the uniqueness of the historical realm:

> We must remember that God is involved in our doings, that meaning is given not only in the timeless but primarily in the timely...for time is but a little lower than eternity, and history is a drama in which both man and God have a stake.[172]

Preserving the Biblical view of revelation, Heschel argues that "certain insights come to us not by the slow process of evolution but by [God's] direct, sudden grant."[173] To accept the prophetic consciousness is to believe revelation is an act of communication in man's historical existence which teaches him what to pursue and expect.[174]

Revelation in Heschel's understanding is a unique, meaningful event for being. Despite God's nature as transcendent otherness, he reveals himself in and through life and nature while yet infinitely surpassing all of reality. Because all events are unique in their singularity, the revelatory event is seen to be supremely unique for it holds the key to new creative and spiritual insights which unite past and future in a present moment.

H.Wheeler Robinson's article, "The Philosophy of Revelation," claims that it is the unusual insight of Hebrew thought to base knowledge

of God on concrete living so that ideas of God are continually adjusted to the events of life. The philosophy of revelation evident in Old Testament thought then is a philosophy of history.[175] Heschel, in attempting to remain true to this Biblical framework, maintains that revelation must be understood in the dynamism of event which involves the act of God expressed in the consciousness of the prophet.

Robinson further points out that the Old Testament characterization of God rules out any alliance to pantheism for Yahweh is transcendent while at the same time intimately concerned with the world.[176] Heschel acknowledges this point in his own philosophy of religion by insisting that God's act of communication in revelation is one of pathos not of the divine essence which forever remains a mystery.

Avery Dulles has argued that revelation must be understood as "the initial action by which God emerges from his hiddenness, calls to man, and invites him to a covenant existence."[177] It is this very concept of revelation which rings through Heschel's understanding of ontology, epistemology, and ethics. In a definition of revelation which seems to echo Heschel's own thought, Dulles continues:

> Revelation is never mere fact, in the sense of a verifiable historical occurrence; it is a fact pregnant with an abiding divine significance. Revelation is never mere doctrine, in the sense of abstract propositional truth; it is always doctrine which illuminates a unique event. The event occurs not merely in the world outside man, but also within him; it has an objective and subjective pole, neither of which can be surpressed. The most properly revelatory element would seem to be precisely the inbreaking of the divine in a manner that overcomes the subject-object dichotomy characteristic of our ordinary thought and speech.[178]

And, indeed, in Heschel's admonition that man must be attuned to the ineffable in order to experience God, and that it is the prophets who

so intensely adapted their senses and thinking to the realm of mystery, a similar point to that of Dulles is made. In fact, Heschel argues that revelation is an event in the effable, that literalmindedness, therefore, is a cardinal error in understanding it.[179] An indicative rather than a descriptive term, revelation

> is something which words cannot spell, which human language will never be able to portray. Our categories are not applicable to that which is both within and beyond the realm of matter and mind. In speaking about revelation, the more descriptive the terms, the less adequate is the description.[180]

Since God's communication is a mystery, Heschel warns that revelation cannot and must not be conceived as a physical or psychic process; neither is it a psycho-physical act; in fact nothing in human language is an adequate description; rather language can be used only as a pointer to the ineffable dimension of revelation.[181]

Martin Buber heightens Heschel's understanding of the mystery of revelation by defining wonder as a historical concept. Buber believes that the "miraculous" element of an event is the vital meaning it holds for a person or people which transfigures the event and "destroys the security of the whole nexus of knowledge" and "explodes the fields of nature and history."[182]

Heschel himself would agree that revelation as such a transfigured event conveys a mystery which calls upon wonder and amazement in man as responses.[183] Hence, Heschel argues that it is not <u>essential</u> that God's will is transmitted as sound; the sound (word) is a metaphor for what is made known to man in God's act of communication.[184]

Heschel believes that we can say only what revelation is not, just as the prophets argued that what they said was not their own.[185]

"Revelation is a mystery for which we have no concepts. To ignore its mysterious nature is an oversight of fatal consequence."[186] What then is our approach to understanding it? Heschel maintains that our goal is to intuit the will of God through the words which have come to frame it, not to grasp the describable in the words, but to sense the ineffable, to appreciate what lies beyond the reasonable.[187]

Since it is an event which does not last, revelation cannot be understood as some continuous process. Rather it is a primary event in a people's history in which man and God recognize each other as partners in a definite moment of time which is remembered and honored in the mutual pledge to honor the moment of partnership through righteousness and justice.[188] Again, Buber relates this same idea in his book Moses when he asserts that the importance of the revelation to Moses is that God makes his demand known to a people as the leader and legislator of that self-same people so that they become a people for him, and he, in turn, can reveal his care for them.[189]

The historical nature of revelation, though it does not lend itself to clearly rational categories, nevertheless points out that God's concern for what occurs and what is done by man in history is always present, though his power to reveal that concern is not.[190] Though nature and history are both under God's dominion, He chooses only particular moments (events) to reveal this fact to man. These events then become extraordinary indications of the divine attitude toward the happenings in the world, particularly those which involve human affairs. It is the prophetic consciousness which receives and interprets the revealed attitudes of God.[191]

Dulles nicely concurs with Heschel's comments in his summary of the Old Testament view of revelation:

> ...one may say that Yahweh progressively manifests himself through word and work, as Lord of history. He freely raises up spokesmen of his own choosing...He entrusts them with messages which they are to deliver to others... revelation for the Old Testament writers is primarily to be found in the 'word of God'. The word, however, is not mere speculative speech. It refers to the concrete history of Israel, which it recalls and interprets...is powerful and dynamic; it produces a transforming encounter with the Lord who utters it, and imposes stringent demands on the recipient. It opens up to him a new way of life, pregnant with new possibilities of punishment and deliverance. Revelation is ultimately aimed to bring blessings upon the whole nation.[192]

Heschel augments Dulles' commentary in his argument that revelation must be seen as the unity of God's justice and history. Since God reveals himself as the one God judging all events in history, history is looked at prophetically from the point of view of justice.[193] Heschel believes that God is "intent to fashion history in accord with Himself," [194] and thus there is ultimately one will only, the will of God, which shapes history. Though God's ways are just and wise they are not transparent nor immune to misunderstanding. At the same time that there is a disclosure of the divine will, there is also a concealment.[195]

Hermann Cohen, though a Jewish rationalist, would agree with Heschel's basic emphasis on justice as the theme of revelation. He argues that the purpose of revelation is to clarify the ethical tasks of man by revealing God's actions as the model for man's.[196] Yet, the problem remains, as Heschel acknowledges, that revelation is not clearly perceived from the human vantage point:

Because of the obtuseness of revelation, Heschel argues that

there is no one theory or dogma which can aptly "define God's intinerary through history."[197] In some senses, human history, though unfolding the relationship between God and man, is more a waiting for God than a window to his presence.[198]

What man does confirm about God's presence in those rare moments when he chooses to reveal himself is that pathos is the root RATIONALE of his revelation. Best summarized in the prophetic understanding of revelation, pathos is seen as love, mercy, or anger all springing from the divine need for human righteousness.[199] Pathos is, indeed, God's way with the world; thus, God always reveals his pathetic reaction to man's conduct rather than his essence.

Revelation: The Divine Act of Will Made Known to Man

Revelation in Heschel's understanding is an act of transcendent will: "God does not reveal himself; he only reveals His way; Judaism does not speak of God's self-revelation, but of the revelation of His teaching for man. The Bible reflects God's revelation of His relation to history, rather than of a revelation of His very Self."[200] Through the prophets' words, the divine event and idea are expressed. Heschel believes the spiritual comprehension of the prophet is needed to complete the event of revelation. The Torah is the product of divine revelation and prophetic inspiration, but it is not the literal word of God, rather his clothed revelation.[201]

Though Heschel believes God revealed himself to Moses as full of love and compassion, sensitive to the suffering of men, he emphasizes repeatedly that the extreme hiddenness of God must be a fact of constant

awareness in an understanding of revelation. Yet again, Heschel argues that "His concern, His guidance, His will, His commandment are revealed to man and capable of being experienced by him."[202]

Like H.W. Robinson, J.H. Hertz agrees that in the Jewish understanding of the divine being, revelation necessarily is the disclosure of the divine purpose and will which are most characteristic of his relation to nature and history. Hertz argues that in any theistic position, the revelation of God, or communication between God and man, is a logical necessity.[203]

In some ways, Heschel affirms Hertz's ideas in his conceptualization of "God's turning towards man" as the basic stance of Jewish religion, especially as characterized in prophecy. God's search for man, his desire to communicate his will to him in order to carry out his need for justice, indicates that he is not an unmoved mover, but a freely active and concerned agent in history. In prophetic events, God reveals his quest for righteous men. Thus, the prophet understands that, "revelation is not an act of his seeking, but of his being sought after, an act in God's search for man...This is at the core of all Biblical thoughts: God is not a being detached from man to be sought after, but a power that seeks, pursues and calls upon man."[204]

Revelation: An Event Involving the Polarity of Divine and Human Activity

Heschel argues that it is perceptively narrow to characterize revelation as prophetic insight; it is rather a divine event in which "God comes out of His imperceptibility to become audible to man. The full intensity of the event is not in the fact that 'man hears' but in

the 'fact' that 'God speaks' to man...revelation is an ecstasy of God."[205]

Based on the pathos and initiative of God, "revelation is a moment in which God succeeds in reaching man; an event to God and an event to man."[206] Heschel points out that the prophetic description of the dual nature of the event is necessarily a restriction in human experience of a transcendent occurrence. And yet "its indigenous quality is to be found in the creative fact of how the divine was carried into the concrete experience of man."[207]

Prophecy is a witness to God's polar relation to man. Through justice and mercy God rules the world, justice being his standard, mercy his attitude. But it is out of divine compassion and interest that both attributes are revealed.[208] The prophet confirms in his interpretation of the revelatory event the paradox that the eternal God is concerned with what is happening in time and has the capacity to experience emotion.[209]

Secondly, God is revealed as a doer, an agent of pathos, a moving and moved being, transcendent and wholly other in essence, faithfully involved with his creation in his deeds. Heschel believes that the wisdom of Biblical ontology is in not separating being from doing. In emphasizing the connection between activity and being, the dynamic quality of revelation is affirmed. Revelation then instills a new creative moment into history without interference in the course of natural processes. The dynamism of history as event (and hence of revelation as event) surpasses the fixed patterns of nature itself.

Prophetic Revelation: The Affirmation of the Divine-Human Encounter

Heschel's outline of revelation as an event involving the divine

and human poles of being necessarily includes his extended commentary on its prophetic character. To review briefly, the prophet, according to Heschel, is that breed of man who focuses on the world as the object of divine concern. The prophet believes that God never reveals himself in an abstract way but specifically and uniquely:

> God does not simply command and expect obedience: He is also moved and affected by what happens in the world and He reacts accordingly...He is not conceived as judging facts, so to speak, 'objectively', in detached impassibility. He reacts in an intimate and subjective manner, and thus determines the value of events...This notion that God can be intimately affected, that he possesses not merely intelligence and will, but also feeling and pathos, basically defines the prophetic consciousness of God.[210]

The prophet never claims to know God-in-Himself through revelation, only his reaction to the world and history, particularly as these are affected by the actions of man. Significantly then, God is not the object of revelation, but the subject. The prophet acknowledges revelation as a received act of communication which forces him to respond to its demands.

Dulles continues Heschel's line of thinking in his affirmation that the prophet is called by a free action of God; hence revelation does not achieve itself until formulated in human words.[211] Schillebeeckx in Revelation and Theology adds a dimension to the prophetic nature of revelation by asserting that the anonymous character of revelation as God's saving grace became through the prophets a particular, concrete, public revelation of salvation in Israel.[212] While Heschel would probably agree that prophetic revelation concretized God's way with men, he clearly emphasizes that the divine concern is its most prominent feature, and that revelation

as purely saving activity is a limited understanding of its depth and content.

In a stance similar to Dulles, Heschel believes that the prophet is the mediator of revelation, standing as the necessary link between the divine communication of concern and the men to whom it is addressed. Heschel stresses the encounter nature of prophetic revelation, that God and man are in a form of dialogue, so that revelation is not a frozen or onesided event, but is composed of God's initial act and man's reception of it and his response.

The prophetic experience, says Heschel, is an encounter with a word spoken and expressed in time from a presence.[213] Prophecy is a personal event at the same time that it is a transcendent act, in that God steps forth from his incomprehensibility and reveals his will to man. Thus, prophetic revelation is an act of a transcendent subject directed towards an experiencing one (a man),[214] an act of disclosure, of God addressing man through a revelation of his purpose.[215] Revelation is a dialogue in this sense because it never happens when God is alone. The prophet is an active partner in the event, giving as well as receiving.[216] Heschel emphatically points out that the prophet cannot be seen as a mere passive recipient of an objective revelation, but as an agent of reception and comprehension. In the chief revelatory event of Israel's history, this point is verified. "At Sinai God revealed His word, and Israel revealed the power to respond. Without the power to respond, without the fact that there was a people willing to accept, to hear, the divine command, Sinai would have been impossible."[217]

Heschel, to some extent, is affirming Buber's I-Thou encounter

as the central feature of prophetic revelation. Lou Silberman in an article on the meaning of revelation for the modern Jew insists in this vein that revelation must be understood as an event between God and man rather than one within man's consciousness:

> When we speak of revelation, we are referring to this betweenness, the relation of I-Thou. Revelation in the Bible is the encounter, in the seeming ordinariness of history, not of mere divine power, indifferentiated deity, but of just that to which we can, must, and do say, 'Thou.' Revelation is the saying within the event, 'Here I am', and man's response is 'Here I am.'[218]

Silberman insists that revelation must always be understood in its confrontational sense, that God discloses man's meaning in the revelatory event and man responds to it.[219] The Bible, then, becomes the word of God when God is met in it.[220]

Buber extends the scope of the revelatory character of the I-Thou encounter by insisting that revelation is always present in the experience of the divine as a presence and power.[221] Though man receives no cognitional content through his encounter with the divine Thou, he is changed.[222] Revelation is fulfilled in action, in the harmonious, dynamic activity which embraces the whole being of God and man.[223]

Heschel's position, in the light of Buber's and Silberman's statements, is perhaps existentially (hence, intellectually) more cautious. Heschel's affirmation of the encounter nature of revelation is tempered by his belief that only in extraordinary moments is the encounter possible; God himself chooses to remain silent most of the time.

Schillebeeckx adds substance to Heschel's position by insisting that it is through God's gracious initiative, not man's desire, that revelation occurs. God allows himself to be encountered, and there is no

dependency on man's prior actions.[224] Heschel is closer to Schillebeeckx than Buber in this vein, for he remarks:

> Man is not the immediate but merely the incidental cause of pathos in God...There is no nexus of causality, but only one of contingence between human and divine attitudes, between human character and divine pathos. The decisive fact is that of divine freedom.[225]

The living, pathetic communication between God and man is based upon man's ability to face God's question. The Old Testament asserts the duality-in-unity of the coincident divine and human willing which occurs in revelation, according to Robinson.[226] And, indeed, Heschel upholds this assertion in his belief that modern man fails to understand revelation because he is unable to know and face the realness of God's pursuit of man; the prophet, on the other hand, lives his life in the light of this pursuit.[227] The prophet fulfills God's demand by responding in sympathy to God's address:

> It is no mere listening to, and conveying a divine message which distinguishes his personal life. The prophet not only hears and apprehends the divine pathos; he is convulsed by it to the depths of his soul. His service of the divine word is not carried out through mental appropriation but through the harmony of his being with its fundamental intention and emotional content.[228]

The prophet, in fact, identifies his human concern with the divine concern. Robinson amplifies this point of Heschel by insisting that in a philosophy of revelation which accepts God's disclosure to man, the highest form of mediation is the moral consciousness of man.[229]

The prophetic experience brings the world into divine focus, enacting divine justice by revealing God's word: "The purpose of prophecy is to maintain the covenant, to establish the right relationship between God and man."[230] In fact, God's revelation through the prophet is, in

itself, an enactment of divine justice. The prophet indicates that the moral order is not autonomous but arises out of the divine concern: "Indeed, the personalization of the moral idea is the indispensable assumption of prophetic theology."[231] According to Heschel, the prophets never speak for the idea of justice, but for the God of justice.[232]

L. Baeck confirms Heschel's outline of the prophetic experience in his comment on Jewish belief:

> To the Jew the unity of God finds its determining expression in the unity of the ethical. He who realizes and fulfills the moral law, which is one, acknowledges God as the One; here is found the demanding and final significance of monotheism, here is found the full human sincerity of its acceptance.[233]

Heschel believes, however, that revelation is not a substitute for understanding, rather an extension to it. The prophet attempts through the revelation he has received "to extend the horizon of [man's] conscience and to impart...a sense of the divine partnership in...dealings with good and evil and in...wrestling with life's enigmas...Thus Judaism is based on a minimum of revelation and a maximum of interpretation."[234]

Prophetic inspiration, then, according to Heschel, is a phenomenon which can be understood only in its mystery as the incomprehensible fact of God's utterance going out from the divine essence and reaching the human ear metaphorically as sound. Heschel believes that all our categories of understanding are surpassed by the grandeur of revelation, for "the speech of God is not less but more than literally real."[235] Man must respond to the unheard of meaning in the statement, "God spoke," before he can be at home with it.[236] Thus, revelation is essentially a phenomenon which must be understood and verified through a faith experience.

Beyond the mystery of God's address to man and man's ability to withstand it, there is a confirmation of meaning.[237] "Revelation means that the thick silence which fills the endless distance between God and man was pierced, and man was told that God is concerned with the affairs of man."[238]

Yet Heschel refers to the paradoxical nature of prophecy: a paradox which "indicated a new order in God's relation to man, namely, that to reveal He must conceal, that to impart His wisdom, He must hide His power. It made revelation possible."[239]

The justification for belief in revelation is intrinsic; as Heschel admonishes there is always a profound disparity between experience and expression; any assertions about God's mystery and his approach to man in revelation are understatements, indications not descriptions. Heschel admits:

> The truth is that revelation is a problem that eludes scientific inquiry; no scholar has ever devised a lens to pierce its mystery...Revelation should not be rejected because of its being incomprehensible...The authenticity of revelation is shown in its being different from all other events and experiences. Its truth is in its uniqueness.[240]

Ultimately, Heschel argues, the truth of the prophet and revelation is authenticated through the positive response in faith and the belief that man is reached by God in the mystery of his concern as creator and redeemer. Reason and proof are unable to penetrate prophetic insight. Lichtigfeld supports this point in his comment on Hertz's philosophy of revelation:

> Revelation is thus the obvious inference and corollary of the character of the Deity held by all who believe in a personal God and Father in Heaven, in prayer to whom, in worship of whom, and in communion with whom, the highest moments of our lives are passed and lived. This close relationship between God and Man, this interplay of

> spiritual forces and energies, whereby the human soul responds to the self-manifesting life of all worlds, attains in Israel's prophets, that overmastering certainty which enables them to declare: 'Thus saith the Lord.'[241]

Heschel himself concurs with Lichtigfeld's comments about the prophetic certainty (that God has spoken through them), believing that God reaches man in moments of history freely chosen by him.

Mitsvah and Torah: Deed and Word as Revelation

Two concluding issues must be discussed in relation to Heschel's understanding of revelation. These are deed as revelation and Torah as revelation, two essential facets to Heschel's philosophy of revelation. Heschel argues that the presence or immanence of God in the world is particularized in mitsvot (or deeds). Though God's glory is hidden, in a mitsvah which is man's presence to God, this glory is revealed.[242] "Such acts of man's revelation of the divine are acts of redemption. The meaning of redemption is to reveal the holy that is concealed, to disclose the divine that is suppressed."[243]

In responding to God's will in a sacred deed, man perceives and reveals God's presence.[244] Heschel believes that mitsvot represent deity because they fulfill the word of God as spiritual ends which are initiated in God's expectation of man.[245] Hence, "we live by the conviction that acts of goodness reflect the hidden light of his holiness. His light is above our minds but not beyond our will. It is within our power to mirror his unending love in deeds of kindness, like brooks that hold the sky."[246]

Heschel articulates his position that the revelatory event is not a static point of fixation, but is fulfilled in man's deeds. This

articulation reiterates his understanding of revelation as both a divine and human event.

The Torah as revelation has some interesting implications in Heschel's philosophy. Remembering that Heschel emphasizes the auditory mode of prophetic revelation and an ensuing communication in human language, revelation as word must be carefully analyzed. Heschel understands the Bible to be God's "holiness in words,[247] ...charged with His spirit,...hyphens between earth and heaven."[248]

Believing the Bible to hold the presence of God, Heschel acknowledges that, "Revelation (in the Bible) is an issue that must be decided on the level of the ineffable."[249] The timeless quality of the Biblical words, the fact that they appeal to us "in moments of spiritual perspicuity"[250] alludes, according to Heschel, to the Bible's spiritual grandeur and authenticity.

In order to know the Bible, Heschel upholds that we must accept it first, "accept its unique authority in order to sense its unique quality"[251]; as always, this prior acceptance is the circularity of human faith. Nevertheless, Heschel argues that once faith acknowledges the uniqueness of Torah, its word, which is synonymous to its act, is recognized as "a vessel of divine power, the mystery of creation. The prophetic word creates, shapes, changes, builds and destroys."[252]

In the Biblical words, history becomes Scripture.[253] The Bible reveals God to Israel; Israel, in turn, through its life, makes Scripture history and reveals its holiness to God.[254] Heschel points out that accepting the premise that the Torah is God's anthropology rather than man's theology, "the way to understand the meaning of Torah min hashamayim

('the Bible is from heaven') is to understand the meaning of hashamayim min hatorah ('heaven is from the Bible'). Whatever taste of 'heaven' we have on earth is in the Bible."[255] Again, in and through the faith experience, Heschel perceives that the most adequate understanding of Torah as revelation is clarified.

In a final analysis of Heschel's understanding of the Torah as revelation, a setting forth of his "principles of revelation" seems appropriate. First, he believes it is a serious misunderstanding to reduce the problem of revelation to a matter of chronology; in other words, the sanctity of the Torah should not be based on when it was written down.[256] Heschel acknowledges that though the act of revelation is a mystery, its record is a literary fact. Since divine inspiration is a mystery, it can be alluded to only in amazement; the record of Mosaic authorship, on the other hand, can be analyzed and examined in the field of theology.[257]

Revelation, though momentary as an act, is recorded permanently in a text; Heschel believes we must use the Torah as a guide, without reducing the revelation it records to a matter of fact or spiritualizing the text altogether.[258] The Bible is both the word of God and man, "the drama of the covenant between God and man."[259]

God's wisdom and will are never completely revealed to man; the revealed Torah then is never completely possessed and understood by men in its entirety. Thus, there is meaning to the Torah yet to be revealed.[260] Heschel points out that man must fulfil the laws of Torah within his power, attempting continuous understanding of the event nature of revelation, knowing that the meaning of the Torah is never contained within the words

alone:

> The will of God is in time and eternity. God borrowed the language of man and created a work such as no men had ever made. It is the task of faith to hold fast to that work, to treasure its mixture of timeliness and eternity and to continually understand the polarity of its contents.[261]

For Abraham Heschel revelation is a complex and paradoxical event exposing the divine will and concern for justice in human affairs, expressed through the prophetic word, made living record in the Torah, and forever open as a challenge to the spiritual development of man.

Footnotes - Chapter Two

[1]Abraham Heschel, The Insecurity of Freedom (New York: Schocken Books, 1972), p. 136.

[2]Ibid., p. 137; Heschel, God in Search of Man (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1956), p. 341. "Jewish thinking and living can only be adequately understood in terms of a dialectical pattern, containing opposite or contrasted properties. As in a magnet, the ends of which have opposite magnetic qualities, these terms are opposite to one another and exemplify a polarity which lies at the very heart of Judaism, the polarity of ideas and events, of mitsvah and sin, of kavanah and deed, of regularity and spontaneity, of uniformity and individuality, of halacha and agada, of law and inwardness, of love and fear, of understanding and obedience, of joy and discipline, of the good and evil drive, of time and eternity, of this world and the world to come, of revelation and response...of man's quest for God and God in search of man."

[3]Heschel, Between God and Man, ed. Fritz Rothschild (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1959), p. 23.

[4]Rothschild in Ibid., p. 11.

[5]Heschel, Ibid., ed. Rothschild, p. 29.

[6]Heschel, God in Search of Man, p. 191.

[7]Ibid., p. 341.

[8]Heschel, Man is Not Alone (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1951), p. 11.

[9]Ibid., p. 9.

[10]Ibid., p. 70.

[11]Heschel, Between God and Man, p. 60.

[12]God in Search of Man, p. 131.

[13]Ibid., pp. 132-133.

[14]Man is Not Alone, pp. 21-22.

[15]Ibid., pp. 26-29.

[16]Ibid., p. 29.

[17]A. Lichtigfeld, Philosophy and Revelation in the Work of Contemporary Jewish Thinkers (London: M.L. Cailingold, 1937), p. 37.

[18]Man is Not Alone, p. 20.

[19]God in Search of Man, p. 115.

[20]Between God and Man, pp. 45-47.

[21]Ibid., p. 38.

[22]Ibid., p. 41.

[23]Ibid., p. 42.

[24]God in Search of Man, pp. 74-75. "Awe is an intuition for the creaturely dignity of all things and their preciousness to God; a realization that things not only are what they are but also stand, however remotely, for something absolute. Awe is a sense for the transcendence, for the reference everywhere to Him who is beyond all things. It is an insight better conveyed in attitudes than in words."

[25]The Insecurity of Freedom, p. 123.

[26]God in Search of Man, p. 57.

[27]Man is Not Alone, p. 64.

[28]Ibid., p. 39.

[29]Ibid., p. 55.

[30]Ibid., p. 120.

[31]Ibid., p. 223.

[32]Ibid., p. 267.

[33]Ibid., p. 61. "The question about God is not a question about all things but a question of all things; not an inquiry into the unknown but an inquiry into that which all things stand for; a question we ask for all things. It is phrased not in categories of reason but in acts in which we are astir beyond words. The mind does not know how to phrase it, yet the soul sighs it, sings it, pleads it."

[34]Between God and Man, p. 15.

[35]Man is Not Alone, p. 65.

[36]Ibid., p. 78.

[37]Between God and Man, p. 56.

[38]Ibid., pp. 56-57.

[39]Man is Not Alone, p. 92.

[40]Between God and Man, p. 68.

[41]Ibid., p. 49.

[42]God in Search of Man, p. 92.

[43]Ibid., p. 103.

[44]Man is Not Alone, p. 127.

[45]Between God and Man, p. 114.

[46]Heschel, The Prophets (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1962), p. 273.

[47]Man is Not Alone, p. 128.

[48]Ibid., pp. 128, 133.

[49]Between God and Man, p. 53.

[50]Man is Not Alone, p. 92.

[51]*Between God and Man*, p. 16.

[52]Ibid., p. 11.

[53]Ibid., pp. 35-36.

[54]Ibid., p. 98.

[55]Ibid., p. 17.

[56]Ibid.

[57]Ibid.

[58]*Man is Not Alone*, p. 106.

[59]*Between God and Man*, p. 101.

[60]Mordecai M. Kaplan, "The Meaning of God for the Contemporary Jew," in *Tradition and Contemporary Experience*, ed. Alfred Jospe (U.S.A.: Shocken Books, 1970), p. 71.

[61]*Between God and Man*, p. 107.

[62]*Man is Not Alone*, pp. 112,117.

[63]Ibid., p. 122.

[64]Ibid., p. 123.

[65]Ibid.

[66]Ibid., p. 144.

[67]Ibid., p. 145.

[68]*Between God and Man*, p. 120.

[69]*God in Search of Man*, p. 126.

[70]Ibid., pp. 126-128.

[71]Ibid., p. 142.

[72]Man is Not Alone, p. 143.

[73]Ibid., p. 144.

[74]Between God and Man, p. 23.

[75]Ibid., God in Search of Man, p. 136. "This is the mysterious paradox of Biblical faith: God is pursuing man. It is as if God were unwilling to be alone, and He had chosen man to serve Him. Our seeking Him is not only man's but also His concern, and must not be considered an exclusively human affair. His will is involved in our yearnings. All of human history as described in the Bible may be summarized in one phrase: God is in search of man."

[76]Between God and Man, p. 52.

[77]God in Search of Man, pp. 160-161.

[78]Between God and Man, p. 111.

[79]Ibid., p. 112.

[80]Ibid.

[81]Man is Not Alone, p. 265.

[82]Between God and Man, p. 23.

[83]Ibid., p. 26.

[84]Ibid., p. 118; p. 120. "The category of divine pathos leads to the basic affirmation that God is interested in human history, that every deed and event in the world concerns Him and arouses His reaction. What is characteristic of the prophets is not foreknowledge of the future but insight into the present pathos of God."

[85]Ibid., p. 120.

[86]Ibid., p. 121.

[87]Ibid., p. 25.

[88]Ibid., p. 26.

[89]Ibid., p. 118.

[90]Ibid.

[91]Ibid.

[92]Ibid., p. 140.

[93]The Prophets, p. 278.

[94]Man is Not Alone, p. 153.

[95]The Prophets, p. 282.

[96]Ibid., p. 283.

[97]Ibid., p. 297.

[98]God in Search of Man, p. 412.

[99]Man is Not Alone, p. 139.

[100]Between God and Man, p. 110.

[101]Man is Not Alone, p. 175.

[102]Ibid., p. 223.

[103]Ibid., p. 225.

[104]Ibid., p. 238.

[105]Ibid., p. 241.

[106]Heschel, Who is Man? (Stanford: Stanford University Press 1965), pp. 41-43.

[107]Ibid., p. 48.

[108]Man is Not Alone, p. 277.

[109]Between God and Man, p. 28.

[110]Ibid., pp. 31-32.

[111]Who is Man?, pp. 36, 111.

[112]Between God and Man, pp. 62-63.

[113]God in Search of Man, p. 289.

[114]Ibid., p. 312.

[115]Ibid.

[116]Ibid., p. 313.

[117]Ibid., p. 353.

[118]The Prophets, pp. 310-311.

[119]Ibid., p. 318.

[120]Ibid., p. 319.

[121]Heschel, The Earth is the Lord's and the Sabbath (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1966), p. 96.

[122]Ibid., p. 97.

[123]Man is Not Alone, p. 206.

[124]Ibid.

[125]Between God and Man, p. 30.

[126]The Earth ..., p. 99.

[127]Ibid., p. 6.

[128]Ibid.

[129]Ibid., pp. 6-7.

[130]Ibid., p. 7

[131]Ibid.

[132]Ibid., p. 8.

[133]Ibid.

[134]Ibid., pp. 9-10.

[135]Martin Buber, Moses: The Revelation and the Covenant (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1958), p. 16.

[136]Ibid., p. 19.

[137]The Earth ..., p. 16.

[138]Ibid., p. 19.

[139]Ibid., p. 95.

[140]Ibid., p. 100.

[141]Ibid., p. 101.

[142]Ibid., p. 111.

[143]Ibid., p. 112.

[144]Between God and Man, pp. 94-95.

[145]Ibid., p. 95.

[146]The Earth ..., p. 114.

[147]Ibid., p. 115.

[148]Ibid., p. 116.

[149]Ibid., p. 96.

[150]God in Search of Man, p. 129.

[151]Ibid.

[152]The Insecurity of Freedom, p. 143.

[153]God in Search of Man, pp. 209-210.

[154]Ibid., p. 210.

[155]Ibid.

[156]Ibid., p. 211.

[157]Ibid., pp. 211-212.

[158]Ibid., p. 21.

[159]Between God and Man, p. 20.

[160]Ibid., p. 19.

[161]Ibid., p. 30.

[162]Ibid., p. 31.

[163]God in Search of Man, p. 410.

[164]Ibid. "The reality of freedom, of the ability to think, will, or to make decisions beyond physiological and psychological causations is only conceivable if we assume that human life embraces both process and event. If man is treated as a process, if his future determinations are regarded as calculable, then freedom must be denied. Freedom means that man is capable of expressing himself in events beyond his being involved in the natural processes of living."

[165]Ibid., p. 411.

[166]Ibid., p. 412.

[167]Ibid., p. 201.

[168]Ibid.

[169]Ibid., p. 202.

[170]Ibid., p. 203.

[171]Ibid., p. 204.

[172]Ibid., pp. 206-207.

[173]Ibid., p. 207.

[174]Ibid., p. 208.

[175]H.W. Robinson, "The Philosophy of Revelation," in Record and Revelation, ed. H.W. Robinson (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1951), p. 303.

[176]Ibid., p. 308.

[177]Avery Dulles, Revelation Theology (New York: Herder and Herder, 1969), p. 9.

[178]Ibid., p. 180.

[179]Between God and Man, pp. 76-77.

[180]Ibid., p. 77.

[181]Ibid., p. 78.

[182]Buber, pp. 75-76.

[183]God in Search of Man, p. 186.

[184]Ibid.

[185]Ibid.

[186]Ibid., p. 189.

[187]Ibid.

[188]Ibid., p. 214.

[189]Buber, p. 10.

[190]The Prophets, p. 168.

[191]Between God and Man, p. 116.

[192]Dulles, p. 21.

[193]The Prophets, pp. 170-171.

[194]Ibid., p. 174.

[195]Ibid., p. 175.

[196]Hermann Cohen in A. Lichtigfeld, p. 22.

[197]The Prophets, p. 176.

[198]Ibid., pp. 190-191.

[199]Man is Not Alone, p. 245.

[200]God in Search of Man, p. 261.

[201]Ibid., p. 265.

[202]Between God and Man, p. 49.

[203]J.H. Hertz in A. Lichtigfeld, p. 124.

[204]God in Search of Man, p. 198.

[205]Ibid., pp. 198-199.

[206]Ibid., p. 199.

[207]Ibid.

[208]The Prophets, p. 220.

[209]Ibid., p. 259.

[210]Between God and Man, pp. 116-117.

[211]Dulles, p. 20.

[212]Edward Schillebeeckx, Revelation and Theology (London: Sheed and Ward, 1967), p. 7.

[213]The Prophets, pp. 431-432.

[214]Ibid., p. 433.

[215]Ibid,, p. 437.

[216]God in Search of Man, pp. 259-260.

[217]Ibid., p. 260.

[218]Lou H. Silberman, "Between God and Man: The Meaning of Revelation for the Contemporary Jew," in Tradition and Contemporary Experience, p. 103.

[219]Ibid., p. 105.

[220]Ibid., p. 106.

[221]Buber in Lichtigfeld, pp. 138-139.

[222]Ibid.

[223]Ibid.

[224]Schillebeeckx, pp. 185-186.

[225]The Prophets, p. 225.

[226]Robinson, p. 320.

[227]Between God and Man, p. 75.

[228]Ibid., p. 125.

[229]Robinson, p. 315.

[230]The Prophets, p. 202.

[231]Ibid., p. 217.

[232]Ibid., p. 219.

[233]L. Baeck in A. Lichtigfeld, p. 131.

[234]God in Search of Man, pp. 273-274.

[235]Ibid., p. 180.

[236]Ibid., p. 183.

[237]Ibid., p. 194.

[238]Ibid., p. 196.

[239]Ibid., p. 191.

[240]Ibid., pp. 220-221.

[241]Lichtigfeld, p. 125.

[242]Between God and Man, p. 80.

[243]Ibid.

[244]Ibid., p. 81.

[245]Ibid., p. 86.

[246]Ibid.

[247]*God in Search of Man*, p. 244.

[248]Ibid.

[249]Ibid., p. 250.

[250]Ibid.

[251]Ibid., p. 253.

[252]Ibid.

[253]Ibid., p. 255.

[254]Ibid.

[255]Ibid., p. 256.

[256]Ibid., p. 257.

[257]Ibid., p. 258.

[258]Ibid., p. 259.

[259]Ibid., pp. 260-261.

[260]Ibid., pp. 261-262.

[261]Ibid., p. 266.

CHAPTER THREE

A Comparative Analysis of the Ideas of Revelation of Norman Pittenger and Abraham Heschel

A comparison of the ideas of revelation of Norman Pittenger and Abraham Heschel serves both to focus their ideas and to analyze them in relation to the Biblical perspective which both thinkers acknowledge as the frame of their religious philosophies. Certainly the fact that Pittenger's thinking is Christian, and hence heavily in debt to the New Testament world-view as well, remains a distinguishing factor in the comparison. Nevertheless, Pittenger himself emphasizes that the Old Testament perspective of the dynamic nature of creation and its living relationship to God is the backdrop for his ontology and, in turn, the prophetic consciousness of reality for his views on revelation.

Heschel, as a philsopher of Judaism, points to the Hebrew Bible as God's anthropology, central therefore to his Judaic ideas of reality. Likewise, Heschel's belief that the Bible's central message is God's search for man is the thematic framework of his ideas of revelation. This comparison of the ideas of Pittenger and Heschel attempts, through points of commonality and distinction, to analyze how closely each man has remained true to the Biblical world-view from which his ideas have emerged.

Epistemology: The Human Link Between Eternal Being and Temporal Being

From a delineation of the main ideas of ontology and revelation in Pittenger and Heschel, one of the clearly distinguishing points of contrast is in their approaches to knowledge. For purposes of clarifying their ideas of revelation (revelation being in fact one of the main foci of the relation of epistemology and ontology in theology), a brief analysis of their approaches to knowledge seems in order.

Karl Jaspers in Philosophical Faith and Revelation points out that duality conditions all of man's thinking, and that the paradoxical unity of opposites is a common philosophical method in epistemology and ontology.[1] Indeed, this method of dealing in polarities is common to both Pittenger and Heschel.

Jaspers believes there are two main ways to knowledge: ontological (i.e., relating being to structure and hierarchy) and periechontological (i.e., an awareness, open in content, of the possibilities of reality as they are situationally experienced).[2] Pittenger's process perspective in this light appears to be ontological, although he acknowledges the infinite and novel possibilities of being inherent in reality. Heschel's perspective, on the other hand, with his emphasis on wonder as an awareness of the sublimity of being, appears to have a periechontological approach to knowledge.

Pointing out that the main difference in these epistemological perspectives is the use in periechontology of existential categories in understanding reality as opposed to cosmological, holistic categories in ontology, Jaspers acknowledges that awareness as the chief periechontological tool does not attempt to systematize reality but to tell what is, what man finds himself in.[3]

Although process thought, especially that of Pittenger, acknowledges that the distinctions between the subjective and objective dimensions of reality are abstractions from the unity in which they exist, it nevertheless posits the closed frame of organism as the chief understanding of being, including God. Heschel, in contrast, does not attempt to bind creation within a system, rather to bind it solely to its creator as one of the modes of his concern.

In this regard, Walter Stokes points out that knowledge of God is

directional, not conceptional, emphasizing the vertical dimension of God's relation to man.[4] Yet Pittenger seems to rely chiefly on conceptual epistemology to analyze the nature of the relation between God and the world, positing the horizontal dimension of shared being in an organic sense. Heschel, on the other hand, relies on directional knowledge, emphasizing the transcendence of the divine being in relation to the created order.

Because of these varying approaches in epistemology, Pittenger seems to employ reason as his chief tool, for he points out that God is not sought in the gaps of human knowledge but through the temporal order in which man finds himself. In a completely opposite understanding, Heschel uses insight as his main epistemological implement, emphasizing that knowledge begins with God, who makes man an object of his knowing; in fact, man can only sense, not even begin to know, the divine in the ineffable dimension of reality.

In regard to revelation then, Pittenger and Heschel are chiefly at variance in their analyses of the modes of revelation possible in reality. Pittenger's panentheistic approach has a broader base for defining revelation, though the contention is being made here that this enlargement is due chiefly to his combining of Greek (cosmological) and Biblical (historical) world-views in his process theology. Heschel remains truer to the Hebraic framework of reality in his idea of revelation, since his definitive basis for locating revelation is the historical realm. Beginning with their respective views of reality then, an understanding of their variant positions on revelation clarifies itself.

Panentheism versus Creation as a Mode of Divine Concern

Remembering that Pittenger sees the world as a dynamic series

of events in process, converging towards intensification of value and good, creativity becomes the historical ground of being. Nature and history are a unity in reality, Pittenger argues, and God and the world mutually interdependent, since the world incarnates deity in his philosophy of organism.

The distinction between the sacred and secular orders cannot hold, since divinity in a panentheistic sense is not an intrusion into the natural order. As Griffin, another process theologian, points out in agreement with Pittenger's stance, "the Christian, with his faith perspective that God is active in all events, will believe that ontologically speaking, God is 'objectively' present as a causal factor in the events...even though, epistemologically speaking, this is by no means an 'objective' fact."[5] Along this same line, John Cobb acknowledges that if God alone is seen as sacred with everything else lying in the realm of the profane, God absorbs all meaning and value from reality.[6] Pittenger believes that process theology negates this possibility.

Consequently, Pittenger's process God is an eminently social God, possessing an abstract primordial nature which is the lure in creation with its provision of creative possibilities through the granting of initial aims. God is persuasive, not coercive, allowing freedom of actualization in the process, so that good and evil are ontic realities.

In his consequent nature God becomes a fellow-sufferer with the world and man by receiving concrete occasions of actualization, good or bad, and integrating them into his reality. God's being is thus affected by the world.

Pittenger reinterprets God's traditional attributes which speak

of his remoteness from the world by positing the eminence (and hence ultimacy) of the divine being rather than his transcendence as wholly other.

Based on the analogy to human personhood, which process thought sees as the evolutionary apex of temporal being, Pittenger argues that God, too, must be living and personal, his being-in-love seen as the dynamic energy which synthesizes polarities in the world through the integration of the process in the divine, cosmic vision.

Pittenger upholds the Trinitarian concept of God's being, emphasizing its positive evaluation of God's relation to and activity in creation. Since creation incarnates deity, the Logos is progressively incarnated as the process evolves, man incarnating it to the highest degree.

Heschel's view of creation varies distinctly from Pittenger's. Unlike Pittenger who refuses to posit a real beginning in time to the created order, Heschel believes that there is absolute importance involved in acknowledging creation as an act of divine will in a unique and hence sacred moment. Although Heschel purports that creation is also seen as a continuous process since God's concern is continuous, the world is not an ontological necessity in his eyes. The order it reflects is a result of an imposed law of God, and the divine freedom implicit in the ontological dependency of creation on God is much more transcendent in orientation that Pittenger's concept of the divine freedom in providing cosmic vision and telos to the creative movement and integration of the process.

Secondly, Heschel relies on the mystery of the world, the realm

of the ineffable, as the objective, ontological category which points to the divine reality. The ineffable dimension of the world, however, is in no way organic to the divine being, but indicative of God's reality. Like Pittenger, Heschel believes in the relatedness of creator and creation, but only in the sense that the outwardness of the world indicates the divine indwelling, the glory of God not however a physical or temporal phenomenon, but a spiritual aura that is apprehended through the relatedness of God and the world.

Heschel acknowledges, as does Pittenger, that existence is precious, that meaning is an objective category of being. A certainty without knowledge, the sanctity of the natural order is the way reality really is. Perhaps this stance is most similar to Pittenger's belief that the immanence of the Logos in reality (i.e., in the process) speaks of the ontic necessity of the unity of being and value. The divine telos in process theology is a way of positing the fact that being has an implicit moral dimension, for the process moves towards greater intensity of value in its continuing creativity.

However, Heschel's repeated emphasis on God as transcendent otherness involved intimately in creation has no true parallel in Pittenger's process theology. True, God's eminently social nature in process reality speaks of the otherness "in degree of sociality" of God's being in relation to the rest of reality, but it does not deal firmly with transcendence as a qualitative distinction in essence.

In fact, Heschel's definition of God's incomparable being is that he is exclusively real; Pittenger's, on the other hand, is that he is inclusively real. Though the divine pathos can be understood as God's

reaction to (and hence affect of) the world, which somehow finds its parallel in Pittenger's framework in the divine consequent nature, Heschel adamantly argues that God's essence can never be known by man, only his will and way with the world.

The divine pathos, God's transitive concern, which according to Heschel is as basic as being, involves ethos as part of its very nature. The world is thus more significant morally than in a cosmological sense. The pathos is functional, not essential, a response to the world God has freely created.

Perhaps in Pittenger's idea of the primordial side of God's being providing the realm of abstract possibilities of becoming (and hence value) coupled with his belief that the consequent nature responds to the world as it creates itself, the closest similarity to the nature and role of divine pathos in Heschel's thought is made. Yet, although Pittenger does emphasize the functional nature of the process God, positing activity and energizing as the divine mode of being, the conceptual description of God's di-polar nature Heschel would deny altogether, insisting that the divine essence is beyond the realm of human understanding and knowledge.

Heschel also argues for the polarity in functioning of the divine pathos. God's reaction to the world involves justice (order-law) and mercy (love), for the divine concern reflects the world's (and, most importantly, man's) activity. Heschel believes justice is the divine attribute of eminence in God's relation to creation for under it love and law can be subsumed. Love, Heschel argues, does not necessarily give birth to justice, and God's chief concern for the world seems to be an

appraisal of and reaction to both discord and good as they are manifested.

In complete opposition to Pittenger, Heschel would argue the overwhelming limitation involved in calling God's chief functional attribute love. Thus, while Pittenger argues for an understanding of God as eminent and immanent loving activity (based on his Christian affirmation of Jesus Christ as the revelation of divine love), Heschel argues for a view of God as divine transcendence involved through justice in the world's functioning.

God's three modes of activity based on his pathos, Heschel believes, are creation, redemption and revelation. Pittenger's Logos ontology certainly indicates an important similarity, for the Logos is the chief principle of explanation of all God's activity including his creative, redemptive, and revelatory work. From man's vantage point, Heschel believes that God's being is the unity of his pathetic acts, as God's consequent nature in Pittenger can be seen as the taking in and integration of the process.

Echoing Pittenger's emphasis on man's importance, Heschel acknowledges that man is the most significant being in relation to the divine pathos and activity, God needing man as a partner in his activity. Man shares God's being analogously in his nature as concerned being; this sharing is not, however, organic, rather allusive. While Pittenger posits that man incarnates the Logos to the highest degree in the universe, a stance Heschel would argue against, nevertheless the common point which can be acknowledged between the two thinkers here is that man is the most significant being in the world in relation to God.

Although Heschel believes that ontology can be best understood

as incorporating polar categories based on God's activity in the world, i.e., that being must be understood in the paradoxical unity of justice and mercy or law and love, and this belief varies substantially from Pittenger's emphasis on love alone, both men see that God's unified nature provides the unity for the moral, historical realm of being, despite the reality of evil. Of course, Heschel would not conceptualize what God's unity means essentially (only in relation to the world) while Pittenger relies on the process perspective of A.N. Whitehead's di-polar deity.

Despite this very large difference in analyzing God's unity, both thinkers argue that the natural order reflects this unity, Pittenger particularizing his stance through his incarnation theme. Ultimately then, both Heschel and Pittenger agree that the distinction between the natural and supernatural does not hold.

Similarly, Heschel acknowledges God's living, personal, everlasting presence. Pittenger would agree that these are the bare requirements for a Biblical understanding of God. Though God's being has a "past" in the succession of events he has incorporated in a processive way, Pittenger would probably point out that the temporal concept of past, present, and future needed to explain God's potentiality and actuality is only a human device employed for understanding that God, too, incorporates new elements into his being. As Eric Rust concurs in his book on evolutionary philosophies, eternity must be seen as God's time in a process sense in order that God's knowledge is adequate to the present and future.[7]

In analyzing how Biblical the content of Pittenger's and Heschel's understanding of ontology is, a recognition of the differences between the

Judaic and Christian world-views is paramount. Nevertheless, certain Biblical modes of understanding reality are shared by the Old and New Testaments.

Firstly, the Biblical God is, indeed, a creator God with a unique status in being as the God of both nature and history. Secondly, his overwhelming desire for righteousness defines the moral realm of being, especially of human living. In other words, creation is seen to make a difference to the divine functioning. Thirdly, the inscrutability of the nature of God, though not of his ways, is also an emphasis in Biblical thought.

Pittenger's eminently social God who is so intimately and immanently involved in reality certainly preserves the unique status of the Biblical God, However, his summary of God's nature as cosmic love does not seem to account for the divine attributes of anger and indignation, and the harsh insistence which the Biblical God so clearly displays in relation to man's moral downfall and evil in the world.

The concept of divine pathos in Heschel's philosophy seems to better account for the polar nature of God's way with the world in the Bible. Heschel's view of the divine concern still affirms that God is compassionate and merciful but necessarily just in his demand for righteousness.

Finally, the inscrutability of the Biblical God, the power to seize man's being with awe, seems to have lost its meaning in Pittenger's divine ontology. His process scheme, (as others') so apparently neat in its ability to synthesize polar elements in divine ontology, also suffers from the lack of mystery and transcendence which the Biblical God holds

for man. Again, in this regard, Heschel seems much more able to stay true to the tenor and feeling of the Biblical picture of God. Heschel's reiterated emphasis on the divine incomprehensibility and yet the paradox of divine concern is appropriately Biblical.

Pittenger's Logos ontology, emphasizing the incarnational character of reality, is in some ways too forced a synthesis of Biblical and process ontology. Creativity seems, in fact, a more important principle of being than God as creator. Indeed, God and creation seem unable to retain their overagainstness as in the Biblical perspective. The point here essentially is that the Logos is a Greek, cosmological category (hence an immanentist principle of order) which opposes the Old Testament view of the functional, not organic, relationship of God and creation. (One could question in this regard whether even the Fourth Gospel writer interprets the Logos as an organic principle.)

As Jaspers so vividly points out, the cipher of immanence, though an important one in the history of ideas, is existentially weak, for it attempts to explain the whole of reality through a single principle, and existential experience speaks against such a view.[8]

Heschel's belief, on the other hand, of the indicative nature of creation, its allusion to the divine presence, and the importance of its coming into being in a unique, sacred moment preserves the basic Biblical emphasis of the divine initiative and freedom in creating the world and relating to it. He manages to acknowledge the intimate and deep relationship between God and the world without losing the transcendence of the Biblical God.

Most importantly, however, both Pittenger and Heschel maintain

the Biblical picture of God's living and personal being. Jaspers, along this line, emphasizes that the contribution of the Old Testament vision of God was the merger of the personal and transcendent in one being.[9] Thus, the God of concrete action was at the same time affirmed as overpowering intangibility.[10] Since the Incarnation brings the incomprehensibility of God within human boundaries, Pittenger is able to justify to some extent his movement away from the intangibility of the Old Testament God.

For both thinkers, however, the fact that God's unity is able to synthesize ontological polarities speaks of the grandeur and paradox of the divine being. This fact is an affirmation of the Biblical vision of the paradox of God's metaphysically unique being and yet his capacity for particularized concern.

Freedom becomes an issue in the relation of God and the world for both Pittenger and Heschel. Connected to the moral dimension of being, freedom, Pittenger would acknowledge, is the free actualization of potentiality in each occasion of becoming, though God is present in it as a lure. Especially in human occasions of becoming, Pittenger argues that in free choices man incarnates the Logos more or less, in response to the initial aim provided by God. The subjective aim man actualizes is in some sense his existential commitment or lack of commitment to God's lure to intensification of value.

Like Pittenger, Emil Brunner believes that the Holy Spirit is also necessary for a free response from man to God's seeking for him through the Word.[11] The Christian belief that God's modes of being in the world, i.e., the Word and the Spirit, are the means by which God's gracious work in creation is done is affirmed by Pittenger, especially in relation to human freedom.

Stokes, another process theologian, supports Pittenger's view of freedom and value as they apply to man by arguing that "man is a valuing process which is a drive for an unconditional source of values"[12] (i.e., God). Man's free choice, says Stokes, is not the highest value but the means by which he attains freedom.[13] Thus God reveals himself as waiting for man's free return of self, and the paradox of the autonomy of man's free response is nothing but God's gift of self to man.[14]

Stokes' position here is almost identical to Heschel's. For Heschel's definition of man's being as concern also points to the existential character of choice and freedom. Man's freedom, according to Heschel, is really God's waiting for a response to his pathos. Like Pittenger's divine lure, God's pathos for Heschel is the gift of deity needing man for completion of the divine purpose.

As Gabriel Moran in his theology of revelation points out in agreement with Pittenger and Heschel, life for man is supernatural in its moral dimension.[15] Or as Brunner so aptly describes the paradox of human freedom in the Biblical sense, man is free when he responds to his dependency on God.[16]

The Biblical affirmation of the covenantal relationship of God and man finds substance in Heschel's discussion of freedom. In contrast, Pittenger's stance is incarnational rather than covenantal, since subjectivity (the conscious awareness of God's call to man's freedom) seems lacking.

In this regard, Eric Rust points out that in process ontology God's immanence robs his creatures of an awareness of his overagainstness.[17] Rust argues that the overagainstness of God and man is better relayed in the analogue of the I-Thou relationship where two beings penetrate each

other in love while remaining mutually transcendent.[18] Furthermore, Rust argues that personal relationships require a moral order of personal differences in which complementarity doesn't exist at the full level of personality.[19] Rust believes that in an organic model of ontology (as Pittenger's) individuality is secondary to complementarity, but that personality and freedom demand more than limited individuality.[20]

The Historical: Process versus Event

Moving further along in this discussion of the possibility of overagainstness of God and creation in an organic, though Christian, model of reality, a focus on an understanding of the historical in Pittenger's and Heschel's ideas seems in order.

Though Pittenger essentially emphasizes the process as the chief concept for knowing the nature of reality, he is quick to point out that event is the main unit within the process itself. In other words, the process is a series of inter-connected events which are endlessly fertile in the meaning and substance they provide to the process, so much so, in fact, that their nature can be apprehended only rather than comprehended. Each event becomes unique as it illumines and moves the process forward.

History, Pittenger argues, is the level of reality which focuses on unique events as occasions of meaning for the process. Though nature and history are unified, the natural is interpreted in terms of the historical; through history a recognition of God's activity in the natural order is possible, since it is the locus of the synthesis of polar categories in being.

Heschel's definition of history begins with a discussion of

time, since he believes that time is the dimension of reality where the polarity of moment and eternity, or temporality and abidingness, is included. Not dissimilar to Pittenger's concept of time in which the temporality of an occasion of becoming is preserved in the everlastingness of God's being and the process, Heschel believes that the unique event is preserved in the history of a people who are conscious of its divine significance.

Heschel, like Pittenger, emphasizes the importance of event as the locus of meaning for the temporal order. It is through the unique event, Heschel argues, that God is approached, so that, in fact, the event is the realm of the sacred, for in it the eternal presence of God is intuited. Creation, for example, begun in a sacred moment of divine freedom, points to time and event as essential to God's mode of activity in the world.

Unlike Pittenger, Heschel believes that the reality of sacred moments is not tied up to God's organic presence, but to his spiritual presence. God's immanence in events speaks of the ineffable dimension of reality. There is a hierarchy of moments in history due to God's presence or absence, and the uniqueness of an event is based not on its similarity in nature to other events, but to its precedence in the realm of events.

Thus Heschel admonishes that an event can never be reduced to part of a process; process belongs to the natural order, events to the historical, for it is in the historical realm where the ultimately meaningful occurs. The divine pathos is expressed through singular events which attain a transforming power in the memory of a people who witness the divine meaning present in them.

The emphasis on the importance of events then is a theme in both Pittenger and Heschel. Pittenger refers to the fertility of events while Heschel argues for their transforming power. These views are not opposed to each other, in fact quite alike in tenor, though the major distinction between them lies in Heschel's point that events are essentially different from process.

In any case, history for both thinkers is the focus of God's activity in the natural order and hence the locus of meaning for reality. The main thrust of Biblical thought in regard to history as the realm of the divine operation is thus preserved in their respective philosophies. However, Pittenger, in a movement which is largely a Christian combination of Greek and Hebrew ideas, combines cosmology and history in his world-view. Ralph James, in an article on process thought, questions, in fact, whether an elevation of the historical over the natural is justified in a philosophy of organism.[21] Since organism is a cosmological category and Pittenger's incarnational principle an immanent telos, Pittenger's emphasis on the historical as a higher or deeper grade of significance than nature in reality is artificial.

In this same vein Jaspers argues that a grasping of history as a whole is impossible;[22] but, in fact, Pittenger's philosophy reveals such an attempt in his belief that the process is moving to a higher concretion of values. Jaspers insists that history seen in a holistic sense precludes human freedom.[23] Yet, Pittenger's process view is indeed a holistic scheme of nature and history.

Perhaps Jaspers' most important contribution to the distinct difference between Pittenger's and Heschel's concepts of history is his

contention that all that happens and changes in time is not history:

> We speak of "natural history", but we should not; for natural history is a process that can be known from without and inferred from facts, a process that repeats itself over long periods of time and whose inwardness, if it exists, remains inaccessible. History, on the other hand, is what occurs, what can be understood and not repeated within man--in the medium of his endeavors, plans, and purposes, of the creations of his mind and his political structures and struggles. Natural events are historically immaterial unless related to such comprehensive topics. History is human history.[24]

Pittenger, in fact, through his Logos ontology, broadens the definition of history to include natural history. Heschel, in complete agreement with Jaspers, omits natural processes from the realm of history.

Jaspers believes that existential events which reveal something eternal overlap vanishing moments in time.[25] Although both Pittenger and Heschel would agree that events which are meaningful or existentially determinative in reality are preserved through history, Pittenger argues from a broader concept of history; since each and every event incarnates deity to some extent it is incorporated into the historical process and preserved in and through God's consequent nature. Heschel, on the other hand, would argue that only certain, unique events of singular depth become history. Where Heschel sees history as the locus of <u>particular</u> events which speak of God's presence and operation in the world, all others being blurred in the flow of time, Pittenger acknowledges the important contribution of all events to the process, though some are more significant than others ontologically.

Again, Pittenger's synthesis of the natural and the historical in the overriding structure of the process, denying the dichotomy in reality between the two, causes the question to be posed as to whether

man is solely responsible for history as the focus of meaning in reality. In other words, is history the human recognition of significant events, so that all events which are not recognized are not history? Is it possible to posit the entire process as historical because it is comprised of events? Does this then not diminish the possibility of certain events having special significance, a question James verbalizes in his criticism of process thought?[26]

The point is whether Pittenger's process view of history is truly Biblical in outlook. For the Biblical view of reality emphasizes that in special events God's presence is sensed and expressed to man. Though Pittenger attempts to maintain this stance, his problem in retaining and justifying the uniqueness of special events in the process becomes clear.

Heschel, on the other hand, is careful to acknowledge that not all events are significant, some come and go without contributing to the meaning of history. However, those in which God chooses to be present become the focus of meaning for the relationship of God and creation. History is sacred history as it preserves in the memory of a people God's moments of presence to man.

In relation to revelation Jaspers sets forth five definitions of historicity. In reviewing them the elements in the understanding of history which Pittenger and Heschel do and do not share become clearer. First, Jaspers says that historicity can mean "the infinite and individual concretion of all things at all times"[27]; this meaning applies well to Pittenger's process view although Heschel does not appear to deal with it as a focus of his ideas. Second, historicity applies to the "diversity

and infinite variety of events"[28]; both Heschel and Pittenger affirm the event nature of history, though Heschel would probably be more conservative about the scope of human recognition of the infinite variety of events. Third, Jaspers believes that historicity can be applied to the concerns of one who remembers some of these events which are vital to him or his group;[29] again, this meaning finds a real home in the world-views of both Pittenger and Heschel since it is Judeo-Christian in orientation. Fourth, the existential historicity of an individual's identity with himself in the sequence of time yet cutting across it[30] is an important consideration for both Pittenger and Heschel. However, Pittenger's process view has not developed to any depth a discussion of human consciousness and identity in a process sense. And last, Jaspers refers to the total historicity of all existence in comparison to immutable eternity.[31] In this light Heschel would be more likely to agree for he poses the eternal as the dimension of divine living and the temporal as the dimension of man and nature, though he would probably question whether immutability need apply to eternity as a meaningful concept, since the Biblical God is an eternal God pathetically involved in the temporal realm. Pittenger cannot affirm historicity as a category applying only to derived reality, for God is organically involved in historical existence, though his primordial nature is eternal, abstract, and immutable.

The fact is that both Pittenger and Heschel preserve important Biblical ideas of history, but that Pittenger's process cosmology comes dangerously close to swallowing history up in the "organism" of being. Again, Heschel's outlook is intellectually more conservative in his preservation of Biblical categories. With these points in mind, the necessary

connection between revelation and history must now be established.

Revelation: God's Presence in History

In his book, The Meaning of Revelation, H. Richard Niebuhr argues that revelation is necessarily involved in historical relativism, in other words, that a confessional standpoint is always implied as the premise of understanding a revelatory event.[32] Both Pittenger and Heschel acknowledge this point in their respective beliefs that a faith stance is necessary to recognize an event as revelation.

Neibuhr continues this line of thinking in his position that revelation is based on internal rather than external history where internal history is defined as that which is "lived and apprehended from within."[33] More particularly, Niebuhr states the distinction: "in external history all apprehension and interpretation of events must employ the category of individuality but in internal history it is the category of personality that must be used in perceiving and understanding what happens."[34] Internal history, says Niebuhr, is concerned with events and their values verifiable in a community of selves, where time is a duration and the past "abides in us as memory."[35]

Pittenger and Heschel affirm this viewpoint in their own philosophies, for each refers to revelation as a permanent event in a believing community's history which has present reality because of its enduring meaning in that community's faith experience. Pittenger's emphasis on the incarnation of deity in man points to the realm of the personal as does Heschel's centering of revelation on the prophetic word. But Pittenger also emphasizes diffuse revelation, and this in some senses moves beyond

the category of internal history in positing the character of revelation.

Niebuhr believes that having a God means having history,[36] and that a leap of faith is necessary to recognize the duality-in-unity of internal (subjective) and external (objective) history.[37] Yet often man cannot sense the significance of an event as it relates to others in its inclusion of objective and subjective reality:

> The event, as it really is, is the event as it is for God who knows it at the same time and in one act from within as well as from without, in its isolation as well as in its community with all other events. Such knowledge of the nature of events is beyond the possibility of the finite point of view.[38]

Revelation becomes the event or events in man's internal history which illumine and make intelligible the rest.[32]

Since Heschel refers to God as the God of unprecedented events, his obvious agreement with Niebuhr's stance can be seen. Likewise, Pittenger's belief that God is most clearly understood in his creative energizing in special events points to the correlation between his and Niebuhr's views on revelation.

Pittenger and Heschel also have much in common with Niebuhr's point about the internal and external dimensions of an event which often escape human insight and yet relate its significance. For Pittenger argues that events are only apprehended, not comprehended, in their fullness, and Heschel remarks that an event lies in the realm of the ineffable as it reflects God's presence in the world and thus can only be understood through a unique insight involving faith. In summary then, Pittenger and Heschel share Niebuhr's belief that revelation deals with both the objective and subjective realms in a unity understood in its

entirety only by God, and that history is the necessary locus of the manifestation of deity.

Emil Brunner introduces a relevant problem to the relation of history and revelation in his discussion of the correlation of history and evolution. According to Brunner, there is too much contradiction involved in incorporating evolutionary concepts into an understanding of history, for history implies decision, while evolution implies continuity or that "latent immanent truth enters consciousness. There is here no answer to a word or to a challenge; there is only a process of natural birth."[40]

In this particular, Brunner is negating Pittenger's approach to history (and hence to revelation). While Pittenger would probably defend his position by arguing that the incarnation of the Logos in creation in no way impairs the freedom of decision and the run of novelty in the process, nevertheless, at least in his concept of diffuse revelation, his emphasis lies more on the immanent reality of God than on the existential moment of conscious decision to answer the word of God.

In some sense, Heschel's concept of the prophetic insight and affirmation of the divine call of concern confirms the existential dimension of history which Brunner sees as essential to an understanding of revelation. In fact, Brunner's belief that the timeless cannot take precedence over the timely is echoed in Heschel's argument that the Old Testament is more concerned with the moral realm than with the world of order.

Pittenger seems somehow caught between the two realms of order and historical, existential existence in his process view. In the Christ event he attempts to combine the two in a unique emphasis which, although

it points to the Incarnation as the fullest organic manifestation of the Logos in the process, also relays the complete, existential manhood of Jesus in identifying his human will with the divine will.

Along this same line, Pannenberg emphasizes that the Biblical conception of reality is more inclusive than the idea of cosmos, for an understanding of reality as event (i.e., history) can include cosmic reflection as an element within it and make the regularity expressed in the cosmic reflection more realistic in structure and movement by providing it with a broader base of presuppositions.

Perhap's Pittenger's world-view is just such an attempt to include cosmological order in the realm of history--though the reverse seems to be the case: his emphasis seems to be on placing historical categories within a cosmological framework. Heschel, on the other hand, deals primarily with the historical in his analysis of being and revelation, emphasizing repeatedly that order is not an issue of importance in Judaic ideas of creation and revelation.

Finally, Gabriel Moran adds to the discussion of history as it encompasses revelation by referring to history as the realm laden with meaning, not a process of events, but man's own life of self-understanding.[42] Moran would probably question whether Pittenger is dealing with revelation in terms of historical categories.

In real agreement with Heschel, Moran argues that God in the Old Testament is not limited spatially, and that the Word expresses the power and call of God directed to man in space-time, an invitation to personal interrelationship.[43] The primary fact of this call mediated through the human word is that man's freedom is called upon through "God's self-bestowal

in space, time, and community,"[44] which arises from his own gracious initiative. Heschel's reiterated emphasis on the freely willed and gracious encounter of God and man through the Word finds complete expression in Moran's comments.

At this point then an analysis and comparison of the ideas of revelation in Pittenger and Heschel must be brought to the fore to tie in the various points in their philosophies which have been discussed here as background. Again, the chief focus of the analysis is whether each man has preserved the Biblical framework from which he believes his ideas of revelation spring.

A Comparison of the Ideas of Revelation of W.N. Pittenger and Abraham Heschel

Before an honest comparison can be made between the ideas of revelation of Pittenger and Heschel, emphasis must again be placed on the fact that an extension of Heschel's ideas of revelation must necessarily be understood in Pittenger's Christian, though process, world-view. The obvious distinction between Jewish and Christian conceptions of revelation settles primarily on the New Testament vision of the unique and final revelation in Jesus Christ. For this reason, common points in Pittenger's and Heschel's visions of reality, focused in revelation, will echo the Old Testament perspective they share. Jesus Christ must be seen as a special case of revelation which will both relate to and distinguish itself from all other cases of Biblical revelation.

Recognizing that there is no one scheme for understanding revelation in either the Old or New Testament, the conclusion of this paper is that the prophetic is one of the most essential categories for understanding Biblical revelation and hence must be applied to the ideas of both Pittenger

and Heschel. There will be an attempt to show here that Heschel stays within the prophetic framework of revelation, and that Pittenger loses much of the Biblical perspective of revelation with his too heavy reliance on organic concepts of ontology which do not essentially mesh with historical, existential ones.

Turning to the nature of revelation in Pittenger then, the most obvious point he makes is that revelation is a complex event which necessarily must be illumined through a faith experience. Pittenger calls it an action-reaction event which is historical in character since it takes place in time within the natural order (though in reality there is no distinction between the natural and the supernatural in his process view of being).

Revelation unites polar categories and elements in the process: transcendent and immanent reality, the eternal and the temporal, universality and uniqueness. It is an ontological necessity, according to Pittenger, since it reveals the incarnational character of the world. It is soteriologically significant since its movement of the process forward in its intensification of good can be seen as redemptive.

Just as man is the pinnacle of the evolutionary movement, the personal is the highest medium of revelation in a process world-view. Yet despite these descriptions of the nature of revelation, Pittenger points out that it is never fully comprehended by man in its significance. More than a mysterious quality, revelation in Pittenger's eyes reflects untold depth of meaning for man.

Heschel's description of the nature of revelation runs parallel to Pittenger's in several places. He, too, refers to the complex event revelation is, describing the duality of its divine and human dimensions.

Like the nature of event generically, Heschel believes revelation is unprecedented, and yet as Pittenger does, he acknowledges its uniqueness in its concrete, historical character.

However, Heschel insists that revelation as event is singular and temporary, although it is preserved in the living pattern of a believing community's memory. As an event in the ineffable dimension of being, it is indicative not descriptive, defying human categories of explanation. Unlike Pittenger then, Heschel is more adamant about preserving the qualitatively different realm in reality revelation occupies. Heschel necessarily would argue against an organic understanding of God's presence in the revelatory event, saying this is too dangerous an identity of the divine with the created order.

In fact, Heschel refers to the encounter nature of revelation, that God and man meet each other in the living, personal presence of an identification of divine and human concerns and wills. Not an encounter with the divine essence, however, revelation is a recognition of the divine will as it is expressed in time and creation. In this sense, revelation is functional, not essential, since it emerges as a result of the divine reaction to human conditions. Here Heschel negates the ontological necessity of revelation which Pittenger posits.

Of course, in Pittenger's process view of revelation the mode of divine manifestation is the Logos or God-incarnate. Downing points out in his book, Does Christianity Have A Revelation?, that revelation gained impetus as a concept when Christianity merged with classical philosophy.[45] And, indeed, Pittenger's heavy reliance on the Logos principle indicates how marked a union of Biblical and Greek ideas determines his ideas of revelation.

Since he employs the Logos as an organic energizing located in all of the process, he can posit the category of diffuse or natural revelation in which God's generalized immanence is recognized throughout the process. He then argues that there is a heightened immanence of the Logos in the aesthetic, spiritual, and ethical realms of reality, or where man's activity (as love) predominates in the process. Special revelation is seen as the intensification of the divine expression in reality.

Heschel would argue that though the world points to the presence of God's glory, it can never incarnate divinity. Revelation is always special in his eyes as a sudden and unique communication from God to man. The Word is the metaphor for the mode of communication, since God's word can only be considered more than literally real.

Believing that revelation is centrally an auditory event (in human experience), Heschel says its power is unleashed in human insight and words. Thus the Torah becomes a mode of revelation since it records the word of God mediated through man. As Downing concurs, through the Torah God's will is revealed though he remains essentially a hidden God.[46] Heschel argues, however, that the Torah does not exhaust the limits of revelation, or as Moran aptly puts it, "If revelation is the communication of a divine reality within human experience, no human statements can exhaust the reality of that revelation."[47]

Harold E. Hatt presents an interesting thesis, that the Torah is viewed as revelation from two distinct vantage points: from the viewpoint of propositional theology it is the record of revelation; from the outlook of encounter theology it is the witness of revelation.[48] Heschel combines

both these ideas for he refers to the possibility through faith of encountering the divine presence in the Torah at the same time that he recognizes it as the witness of the revelatory history of Israel.

Finally, Heschel believes that mitsvot, deeds done in response to the demands of the Word, also reveal God's hidden light. Not unlike Pittenger's belief that loving acts are revelations of the divine activity, Heschel's emphasis on the holiness of good deeds connects to his stress on the importance of the human element in revelation.

The final dimension of revelation as an event which must be compared in Pittenger and Heschel is its content. For Pittenger, revelation is the decisive manifestation of God's way or purpose with the world. Revealing God's activity rather than his substance (for Pittenger also believes that God remains largely incognito), revelation focuses on love and loving activity as God's mode of being, i.e., on his harmonizing and integration of process reality. In agreement with Pittenger's point about revelation as love, Moran points out that God begins the revelatory process by knowing and loving man with a transforming power that causes man to know him. However, Moran believes it is the work of the Holy Spirit which is the foundation of the Christian's revelatory experience.[49]

On this same point, Hans Von Balthasar believes that revelation must be love a priori in order for man to give a freely loving answer to the Word.[50] The important point in citing the views of two other Christian thinkers on the content of revelation is to show that Pittenger does, in fact, emphasize a Christian concept of revelation in his belief that its content is chiefly love-incarnate.

Pittenger also argues for the cognitive content of revelation,

believing that it reveals the nature of reality, by focusing on the divine Logos as the chief principle of explication of the working of the process.

Finally, Pittenger sees revelation as a focus on God as a redemptive agent within the process, integrating and redeeming occasions of becoming (good and bad) through his cosmic vision and reception of affect. Chiefly through the process sense of God's integrating and harmonizing role in creation is revelation as soteriologically significant defined in Pittenger's view.

Heschel posits the main content of revelation as the disclosure of the divine pathos, a transcendent act of divine will, not essence, which commands a response from man. Heschel retains the Old Testament perspective in his ideas on the content of revelation, for Pannenberg points out in agreement with them, that the Old Testament does not speak of the self-revelation of God, rather of the Word of God which designates his commands.[51] Downing also concurs with this stance, arguing that the will of God, his demand for obedience, is the chief content of revelation in the Old Testament.[52]

Rather than the object of revelation, Heschel argues that God is its subject and agent. Brunner affirms this point by insisting that only as the subject of revelation does God become personality which asserts itself over against man, his divinity thus taken seriously by man.[53]

Most importantly, in God's revelation of his will is the ethical nature of his command to man set forth. Revelation, Heschel points out, must be understood as God's quest for justice and the righteous man. Again, the covenantal nature of revelation is implied here, i.e., God's call to man to commitment.

In this particular emphasis, the contrast between the ideas of Heschel and Pittenger becomes clear; Pittenger would propose that God's

call to man is to become a fully actualized lover, and it is in special revelation, especially that in the Christ event, that Pittenger's emphasis on love as the content of revelation becomes clear.

Revelation as Unique Event in the Faith History of a People

As has been mentioned before, there is certainly no one scheme for understanding the nature of Biblical revelation. Moran wisely points out:

> There is in fact no conceptually unified presentation of revelation in the Bible as a whole. Neither would it be possible to investigate the meaning of revelation solely by studying one or several technical words in the Bible, for the notion is so omnipresent that it cannot be encompassed in this way. These facts are neither shocking nor surprising.[54]

An investigation of Pittenger's and Heschel's schemes for understanding revelation as a unique event in the faith history of a people must keep in mind, then, the openendedness with which the Biblical ideas of revelation can and must be apprehended.

For Pittenger, the category of special revelation (centered mainly in the Christ event) is the chief means for upholding the uniqueness of revelation as Biblically understood. The difference between special revelation and general revelation is not one of kind but one of degree. As Hatt concurs, natural revelation does not give an adequate knowledge of God; thus we are dependent upon special revelation as a gift of God.[55]

According to Pittenger, special revelation does not confine God, rather it defines him more specifically. Cognitively deeper than general revelation, it illumines the nature of God and reality to a heightened degree. Its cognitive value affirms the faith experience of a people at

the same time that the faith experience affirms it as a special focus of God's activity. Special revelation is divinely-initiated; though Pittenger does not clarify how different God's initial aim or telos is in a special revelatory event (as compared to that in general revelation), he does emphasize that God's role in the event is heightened.

In the Christ event, the focus of all God's revelatory activity, God's gracious character is revealed. The revelation in Jesus Christ indicates a new dimension in revelation in its inclusiveness. Different in degree not in kind from other revelatory events, it becomes "final" in the unparalleled disclosure of divine activity, but Pittenger is quick to point out that it is not in man's power to know whether there will be future revelatory events which will release the divine energizing in the manner and mode of the Christ event.

The Christ event is unique, though universal, uniting polar elements in ontology: transcendence and immanence, the divine and the human, the temporal and the eternal. The Incarnation is the deepest, organic unity of divine and human being in its density of the presence of each. As Moran agrees with Pittenger, "The Incarnation is not merely a brute fact out of the past. It is the opening of a human history which established a unique way of revelation."[56]

Pittenger believes that Jesus must be understood as the organon of the divine will (rather than of the divine substance) in which the divine causal agency has priority. In this sense Downing concurs with Pittenger, for he says that through God's gracious initiative in Jesus Christ, he exercises his righteousness.[57] Thus the full revelation of God in Jesus Christ does not imply that God becomes clearly known in him

but that (as Juan Alfaro puts it):

> The whole religious life of Christ was dominated and directed by this personal relation to God, his Father: God revealed and communicated himself interiorly as his Father; Christ lived in an ineffable, personal communion, in a permanent "I-Thou" dialogue with God, his Father.[58]

In the complete agreement in intentionality between the divine and human wills in the Christ event, one of the prophetic elements of revelation in Pittenger's discussion of Jesus Christ can be recognized. Heschel himself argues that the human will matches the divine will in intention in prophetic revelation. Pittenger's process view coupled with Christian-Hellenistic ideas of revelation, however, causes him to take the Christ event one step further as the unity of the divine and human. He calls Jesus the "En-manned Logos", the most complete incarnation of deity in reality, hence the most cognitively paradigmatic case of revelation which has ever occurred. Jesus' finality as revelation in this regard is made clear by Pittenger. As Brunner reiterates this point:

> The word "revelation" as used in the Christian vocabulary has a totally different meaning from that which it has in all other religions, in metaphysics, or in ethics. Revelation here means the WORD of God as a human person--i.e., such knowledge of the divine will as cannot be found through submersion in myself or in the secret of the world, but comes through an act of communication, an act of personal self-impartation from outside of our own range, in which God gives us Himself.[59]

Pittenger argues that the divine causal agency in Jesus Christ is so different in degree from that in other men, that he is replete with the immanence of the Logos. In other words, Pittenger feels that the importance and the uniqueness of the Christ event are not based on an intrusion into being which is different in kind from the way God operates

in the world generally but on a quantifiedly different incarnation of divinity in Jesus.

Jesus then can still legitimately be viewed as the paradigm of human nature, the Proper Man, since he embodies all the existential qualities of being human. However, his freely made choice to respond completely to the divine will reveals the most intense love, especially as seen in the Passion and Crucifixion, for it completely rises above self-interest. The Christ event becomes, according to Pittenger, the final revelation of God as loving activity.

Jesus' obedience to the divine will, in fact, is the fullest example of the human understanding of God's purpose. In process terms, Pittenger argues that Jesus matched exactly the initial aim given him by God with his subjective aim. His unique sense of authority then sprang from his realization of the purpose God had for him.

As the paradigm of completely actualized man, Jesus also revealed the true God-man relationship. He became a salvific agent in this regard, for he epitomized and revealed how man must live in response to the divine initial aim. The Christ event continues to be redemptive in the faith experience of the believing Christian community. Similarly, it functions as the paradigm of the nature of reality as self-actualized love and the intensification of good.

Turning to Heschel's view of revelation as a unique event in the faith history of a people, points of similarity with Pittenger's ideas can be seen, though for the most part distinctions reign supreme.

First, in Heschel's understanding of prophetic revelation as the mode of Biblical and hence Jewish revelation, one of the main themes is human

obedience to the divine command, or as he sees it, the identification of the human will and concern of the prophet with the divine will and concern as they are revealed.

Heschel believes that this agreement of wills reflects the vertical, or transitive, dimension of man's being. In Christ's identification of his will with the divine will which Pittenger emphasizes, a point of agreement between the two thinkers can be made.

Heschel holds that the prophetic experience brings the world into divine focus by revealing through words God's polar relation to man, his justice and mercy. Here, of course, Pittenger would argue that love is God's centrally revealed attribute, yet the point can be made that Jesus also revealed justice as one of his main concerns.

Like Pittenger, Heschel believes that through the divine initiative there is human participation in and mediation of the revelatory event, that, in fact, revelation necessitates both the divine and human functioning. Heschel's emphasis on the ineffable dimension of revelation, however, would tend to emphasize more than Pittenger's ideas the unique singularity of the divine initiative involved at the outset of the revelatory event, i.e., that God's initiative is not present in all events. Whether Heschel would call revelation a paradigmatic experience in this regard is questionable. Paradigms speak of the possibility of repetition of experience, and Heschel emphasizes the precedence and unpredictability of the revelatory event.

Prophetic authority, according to Heschel, is not an epistemological certainty. Rather, in the uniqueness of the prophetic experience, truth is founded. In this same vein, Pittenger would probably agree that the Christ

event's authority is self-authenticating in its uniqueness.

The points of common understanding between Heschel's and Pittenger's ideas of revelation emphasize that both do attempt to work within the Biblical framework. More specifically then, the concluding remarks of this paper will be based on an analysis of the prophetic character of Biblical revelation as it is maintained or lost in the ideas of these two thinkers.

Prophetic Revelation: The Affirmation of the Divine and Human Relationship

Prophetic revelation in the Bible implies several important things. First, it is historical in character, not a violation of the natural order of things, an event which affirms that God and man are partners in history.

Second, by centering on God's stake in human affairs, revelation as a prophetic event confirms that both God and man are active participants and co-respondents in the event, though God's initiative has priority.

Third, prophetic revelation is ethical in content; it discloses God's involvement in and reaction to human behavior, either divine anger or mercy which reveal God's justice and love respectively.

Fourth, the encounter nature of revelation is emphasized in prophetic religion. God and man are seen as two personal poles of encounter (i.e., there is an I-Thou format), though God is not necessarily distinguished as an entirely revealed personality. The verticality of the God-man relation is stressed, ethical activity being the shared mode of being. God and man are seen as essentially different though they share the moral realm of being; God's transcendence as wholly other, then, is maintained despite his presence in the revelatory event.

Fifth, prophetic authority is based on the ability to illumine events which have occurred, are occurring and will occur. The prophet himself believes that God has truly reached him and sees the words of revelation as self-authenticating in their message and power. The prophetic response to God in revelation is obedience and compliance.

Last, prophetic revelation has a futuristic orientation, an eschatological significance. Revealing God's demand for justice, it argues that the moral state of man provokes a reaction from God, and that the future for man has divine implications. Prophecy is predictive in the sense that it forecasts God's punishment of continued moral iniquity and his reward of good.

Thus the prophetic dimension of revelation is multifaceted, its most important emphasis being the intimate connection between the divine and human realm of being.

Turning to Pittenger first in regard to his use of prophetic categories in revelation, his process revelation stresses prophetic consciousness as a required backdrop for understanding revelation. In other words, the world must be seen as the field of the operation of the divine will and purpose.

However, the problem with Pittenger's process perspective is that the transcendence of God loses meaning in the organic concept of revelation which speaks of the diffuse incarnation of God in every part of reality. This stance is largely un-Biblical, for in the Old Testament view of revelation, the world is not incarnational and in the New Testament view, Jesus Christ is the unique unity of the divine and human.

Pittenger's emphasis on the eminently inclusive rather than

exclusive nature of God is not a notion of transcendence in reality but a notion of immanence. Yet transcendence is an important and primary prophetic category for understanding God and the purpose of revelation.

Indeed, the eminent self-hood of God in the process view calls in question the necessity of special revelation, especially that in Jesus Christ. Since God is present organically throughout the created order, why is there a need for a focal manifestation of his activity?

The encounter nature of prophetic revelation is essentially incongruous to incarnational revelation as Pittenger extends it in a process sense. Encounter implies the opposed consciousness of two personal poles, and it is difficult to understand how, especially in relation to diffuse revelation , the encounter nature of revelation is preserved in Pittenger.

In the special case of the Incarnation itself, Pittenger posits that in his human, existential being, Jesus encountered the divine will and responded completely to it. However, Pittenger's belief in the complete, organic unity of the divine and human in Jesus seems to make this view untenable, since an organic unity does not imply a distinction of wills. Again, it is questionable whether Pittenger has even aptly preserved the New Testament vision of the revelation in Jesus in this regard. The struggle of the human will in response to the divine command, the vertical dimension of the God-man relation, seen, for instance, in the Biblical accounts of Job's struggle with the divine ways, Jeremiah's wish to escape prophesying, and Jesus' real anguish and doubts in the Garden of Gethsemane, points to the essential overagainstness of God and man

in the Biblical understanding of reality. Yet Pittenger's use of the term organon for Jesus' revelation of the divine will seems to downplay the reality of his existential mode of being which Pittenger tries to emphasize in his discussion of the Incarnation.

Pittenger has failed to emphasize Jesus' vision of himself in relation to the rest of reality. Did he distinguish (as the prophets did) his human reality from the divine reality? Was he consciously aware of himself as the En-manned Logos? Although these are questions which are difficult to answer in any Christian philosophy of revelation, Pittenger's particular process view makes them more difficult, for the inclusiveness of an organic concept of reality blurs distinctions and points of uniqueness in the nature of revelation through its synthesis of polar categories and elements in ontology.

In Pittenger's belief that Jesus's initial aim from God was not different in kind but in degree from other men, the problem arises as to how to preserve Jesus' unique metaphysical status as the Incarnation. The concept of the En-manned Logos is epistemologically weak in a process world-view since it implies that more of the Logos is present in Jesus initially than in other men. Is this then, an evolutionary perspective or an historical one, a cosmological understanding or a Biblical one?

Pittenger's chief emphasis in special revelation seems to be on its paradigmatic position to the rest of reality. Yet such a concept seems more an emphasis on the cosmological unity of Greek reality than on the moral dimension of prophetic (i.e., Biblical) reality. Particularly as prophetic revelation emphasizes the encounter nature of revelation, the word spoken and the word heard, the notion of the paradox of the divine

transcendence and God's need for man seems to lose ground in Pittenger's process view of revelation. Even the notion of di-polar deity does not alleviate the problem, for in reality it removes the need for revelation in process theology.

Because Heschel is essentially a Biblical philosopher, his ideas of revelation are necessarily prophetic in character. In his Jewish framework revelation is understood as a disclosure of divine will asking for a response from the human will; the encounter between God and man in Biblical revelation is upheld then in Heschel's philosophy. His reiterated stance that God is essentially a hidden God coming out of his incomprehensibility to communicate to man in sacred moments maintains the notion of precedence found in both the Old and New Testament visions of revelation.

Revelation does not indicate what the order of being is in Heschel's eyes, but what the nature of the God-man relationship is. In this sense, Heschel emphasizes the existential significance of prophetic revelation.

While certainly the integration of the God-man relationship is the theme of Biblical revelation, redemption being one of its major foci, Heschel's emphasis on the polarity of God's response in his revelation, the disclosure of his justice and mercy, again is a distinct prophetic perspective.

Obviously, Heschel's Jewish perspective, which negates the possibilitity of divinity ever residing in human form, disallows all possibility of incarnational revelation. Yet in many senses his understanding of prophecy and prophethood could apply well to Jesus' role in the revelatory history of the Bible.

In conclusion, the ideas of revelation of Norman Pittenger and Abraham Heschel are complex, involving polarities in unity which are

conceptually paradoxical. Though there are points of similarity in their ideas, Heschel's Jewish vision of reality and Pittenger's Christian world-view necessarily oppose each other at significant points. Again, Heschel remains truer to the Old Testament framework than Pittenger does to Biblical revelation in general. Perhaps Pittenger's weakness in this regard is due to his incorporation of Christian ideas into a process framework rather than an implementation of Christian reality with process ideas. Nevertheless, both thinkers have aptly wrestled with the meaning of God and revelation for a modern world.

Footnotes - Chapter Three

[1]Karl Jaspers, Philosophical Faith and Revelation (London: St. James Place, 1967), pp. 150-151.

[2]Ibid., pp. 199-203.

[3]Ibid., p. 202.

[4]Stokes, "A Whiteheadian Reflection on God's Relation to the World," in Cousins, p. 143.

[5]Griffin, A Process Christology, p. 102.

[6]Cobb, God and the World, p. 28.

[7]Rust, p. 219.

[8]Jaspers, p. 201.

[9]Ibid., p. 143.

[10]Ibid.

[11]Emil Brunner, The Word and the World (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1931), p. 71.

[12]Stokes, p. 143.

[13]Ibid., p. 146.

[14]Ibid., p. 149.

[15]Moran, Theology of Revelation, p. 167.

[16]Brunner, pp. 68-69.

[17]Rust, p. 218.

[18]Ibid., p. 220.

[19]Ibid., p. 217.

[20]Ibid., pp. 216-217.

[21]Ralph E. James, Jr., "Process Cosmology and Theological Particularity," in Process Philosophy and Christian Faith, p. 400.

[22]Jaspers, p. 2.

[23]Ibid.

[24]Ibid., p. 186.

[25]Ibid,, p. 194.

[26]James, p. 400.

[27]Jaspers, p. 105.

[28]Ibid.

[29]Ibid.

[30]Ibid.

[31]Ibid.

[32]H. Richard Neibuhr, The Meaning of Revelation (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1967), p. 16.

[33]Ibid., p. 44.

[34]Ibid., p. 48.

[35]Ibid., pp. 48-50.

[36]Ibid., p. 59.

[37]Ibid., p. 61.

[38]Ibid.

[39]Ibid., p. 68.

[40]Brunner, p. 57.

[41]Wolfhart Pannenberg, "Dogmatic Theses on the Doctrine of Revelation," in Revelation as History (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1968), pp. 141-142.

[42]Moran, p. 41.

[43]Ibid., pp. 42-44.

[44]Ibid., p. 44.

[45]F. Gerald Downing, Has Christianity a Revelation? (London: SCM Press, Ltd., 1964), p. 253.

[46]Ibid., pp. 44-45.

[47]Moran, p. 107.

[48]Harold E. Hatt, Encountering Truth (New York: Abingdon Press, 1966), p. 139.

[49]Moran, p. 150.

[50]Hans Urs Von Balthasar, Love Alone (New York: Herder and Herder, 1969), p. 68.

[51]Pannenberg, Introduction to Revelation as History, pp. 9-11.

[52]Downing, pp. 43-44.

[53]Brunner, pp. 26-27.

[54]Moran, p. 22.

[55]Hatt, p. 184.

[56]Moran, p. 59.

[57]Downing, pp. 79-80.

[58]Juan Álfaro quoted in Morán, p. 65.

[59]Brunner, p. 21.

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