there, almost in the same place as before, as if he had materialized out of the windy night, lay another drunk at the curb. Perhaps he had seen my benevolence, perhaps word had gone out on the wind that a fool, a good Samaritan, was afoot in the city, and it was a good time to get a blanket, maybe some spare change. "I'm cold," he said, his voice reaching me. I stopped in my tracks. I had the distinct idea that were I to get another blanket and return with it, there would by then be a third man on the street. Or that I would lose the self-protective myopia that I had developed as a city dweller, and I would see, now everywhere, the figures of the poor and hear them calling out to me. I realized that if I responded once more, I would never get to Carolyn's. I would never get home again that night. I would never finish graduate school and make my bright, promising way in the world. I heard a call that night as clear as if someone had called my name, but it seemed to me a call to something too difficult, too self-sacrificing. I ran the half block to Carolyn's and shut the door on the night. I was not ready for that kind of obedience.

Abram was.

The call delivered to Abram at that moment in Haran concludes by laying before him an immense future:

> *"I will make of you a great nation and I will bless you and will make your name great. I will bless those who bless you, and curse those who curse you. All the families of the earth will find blessing in you."(12:1–3)*

This future contains a promise: Abram will father a great nation, his name will be great, and he will become a blessing to those who cherish him and a curse to those who curse him. In the words "all the families of the earth will find blessing in you," we have a glimpse of a restored Eden, a new world, perversely anticipated in Babel, in which the human community is viewed as a great kinship system tracing its parentage, its spiritual roots, back to Abram and to this moment of his call and response. The patriarchal tradition is set in motion, its generational enterprise and purpose articulated. The goal of soul is not empire or a theocratic state worshiping the Great Father. Nor is the soul's goal a sublime reunion with a parental God in a restored Eden. The envisioned end is the commonweal. Vocation is not "personal growth"; soul is linked to the welfare of a human community. Here, in what is for me its purest articulation, vocation is ultimately a planetary service, work deeply linked to gift and giving.

Abram's call—both the one he hears and the one he leaves to us—contains a promise. It is God's promise to fill and empower us with energy and vision; but more, it is also His promise, and our promise to one another, that our soul journeys will be connected to the well-being of the whole earth. The promise in the call touches upon our desire to dedicate ourselves to the highest possible service to our fellow human beings. Something beyond biology calls this man to transform the world into the family of man.

> *So Abram departed, as the Lord had spoken to him; and Lot went with him. And Abram was seventy-five years old when he left Haran. And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and all the souls that they had gathered to them in Haran; and they went forth into the land of Canaan; into the land of Canaan they came. (12:4–6)*

The story of the soul on its journey of vocation has begun. From the moment he leaves "his native land and his father's house" and enters Canaan, Abram lives in two dimensions, and in both he lives as a stranger.

One dimension is a realm of naturalistic and interpersonal realities: he travels with his kin and clan, he encounters famine, contends with Pharaoh, deals with his nephew Lot, and achieves considerable status among the tribal chieftains of Canaan. But he cannot settle anywhere. Owning only what he has brought with him, his herds and his household possessions, he becomes a migrant and an immigrant, "a stranger in a strange land." He undergoes the ordeals, the voiceless and helpless ignominy of the refugee. He belongs nowhere. In this dimension, though he makes his way and even in time receives his honors, he remains the stranger. His native land lies behind him, and the land he seeks has not yet been given or found.

But Abram lives and moves as a stranger in a second dimension. His passage through the landscape of external realities and events is punctuated by internal events of secret and enormous consequence, by his encounters with the Great Father, whose will and way he seeks to know. God appears to him unasked and then does not appear when Abram pleads. God reiterates His promises and withholds the fulfillment. We can easily imagine an endless running soliloquy within the heart of Abram as he contends with this God into whose mysterious embrace he has entered. This deep and vexed intimacy with Spirit, this wrestle of the personal imagination with the transcendent Imagination, is prolonged throughout Abram's wanderings in the world. In the inner

realm of that dark intimacy he is no less a stranger than he is in the outer world of Canaan and Egypt. In fact his *journeying without destination* is an external image for his internal experience. Outwardly and inwardly Abram comes to feel what it is like to be a stranger in strange lands.

The Stranger is one of the central images for the soul in the Bible. Though every man and every woman may experience being a stranger, the Bible suggests that for men and women who can never know the purely instinctual continuities of nature, who have been cast out of an imagined Eden of pure communion, the sense of being a stranger in both the physical and in the spiritual world is existentially deep and true. Abram and Sarai are the paradigm of this stranger; they wander not only through a landscape where they cannot settle but through the inscape of imagination, through visionary trances, through confusing and contradictory senses of their vocation. They are constantly uprooted not only from place but from certainty. They live estranged from the familiar, their grasp on reality itself constantly shaken through repeated encounters with the Strange.

The Stranger leaves behind no legacy of deeds. It does not come easily into our councils, or if it does, it is the part of us that feels it does not belong fully, not even here. It eludes the nets of psychotherapy, which would find in strangeness some psychological explanation and reconcile it to the world. The Stranger within us will never reach home; it will never be fully atoned. The land the soul moves through is not its to possess; its name is not known to those it meets; it is the outsider, one to be feared if strong, preyed upon if weak, tolerated, at times befriended, but of another place, another clan. The Stranger is not one of us.

The call has lifted Abram from the familiar; the call has opened him to the inner worlds of Imagination, and his encounters with his God at Bethel, in Egypt, and in Canaan are moments of his successive initiation. What comes to him when he is called is nothing less than his own soul, his utmost imagination, with its hunger for the infinite, its capacity to dream, to wander, to search, to endure, to learn, and to grow. Soul is shaped by its passage through the two dimensions; in both it lives as the Stranger, and yet it lives unestranged. For while the unknown is the medium through which it moves, it rests ever more subtly on a sense of faith. God, by whatever name and whether present or remote, wraps the wanderer in a boundless mystery until the two dimensions blend and blur into a single reality.

I was teaching at Brooklyn College in the mid-1970s. Each afternoon when my classes were done, I crossed the campus toward the subway to make my way home. One section of that walk became a gauntlet for me. A group of orthodox Jews—young men with long side-curls and prayer-shawl fringes showing beneath their white shirts, wearing black coats and hats, no matter what the weather—stood along one side of that walkway in front of a table laid out with various pamphlets. As I walked past, the voices assailed me, "Are you a Jew? Are you a Jew?" The figures bobbed at me like tall birds, the words repeated like the cawing of crows.

At that time in my life I did not feel I was a Jew. So as I walked past the campus Chassids, their question fell like water on impervious rock. I had, after all, seen the fly on the windowpane and had been carried beyond it; I had sat in chapel and been exhilarated by Christian harmonies; I had sat for years with the Quakers in the Cambridge Meeting House when I was at Harvard. I had practiced Transcendental Meditation and had been drawn most recently to an intensive practice for three years with Sri Chinmoy, an Indian guru. I was everything and anything but a Jew.

Yet water falling on rock wears on it. As the weeks and months went by, this question evoked a greater and greater sense of rage in me. I felt the question as ever more intrusive and personal, and it succeeded finally in becoming my question to myself. Sitting on the subway heading home, the question took on a life of its own in my mind. Am I a Jew? Am I a Jew?

For the first time in my life I asked myself what "Jew" meant to me. In it I felt the traces of an alien ethnicity, a distant history not mine and yet in some way mine. I faintly apprehended a link to some sense of lineage, parentage, spirituality. "Jew." I realized I feared the word, for to tell the world you are a Jew meant risking your life. Six million people had died during my childhood for saying *yes* to the question I was being asked on the campus of Brooklyn College in 1976. I realized that underneath my anger at their pestering, I was afraid, and I felt some sense of guilt for not being a Jew; I felt some sense of betrayal, as if in not owning that I was a Jew, I was turning my back on the holocaust. I even felt some sense of deprivation, that I had no sense of connection to a body of learning, lore, and life into which, by happenstance, I had been born.

During these months when the question wore on me like a koan, like water upon a rock, I realized that I had always felt like an outsider. At boarding school, as one of five Jews in my class of a hundred boys, I never forgot that I was a Jew among Gentiles. But I felt like a Gentile among the Jews, ~~for I had~~

Moshe Weinfeld

The Promise of the Land

The Patriarchal Stories in the Light of Greek Foundation Stories

As is well known, most of the genres of biblical literature have their counterparts in the ancient Near East. Creation stories, genealogies, legal codes, cultic instructions, temple-building accounts, royal annals, prophecies, psalms, wisdom literature of various kinds—all are widely attested in the cognate literatures from Mesopotamia, the Hittites, and the Egyptians. The only genre lacking such counterparts is that of stories about the beginning of the nation and its settlement, which are so boldly represented in the Patriarchal narratives and the accounts of the Exodus and the conquest of the Land. The contrast is especially striking when we compare the first eleven chapters of Genesis with the rest of the book. In Gen. 1–11 we find stories of creation, the flood story, and lists of world ancestors before and after the flood—literary types all well established in Mesopotamian literature. From chapter 12 onward, however, no parallel with the ancient Near East can be shown—not in content, of course, which reflects the particular nature of Israel, but also not in form. This kind of storytelling might be expected in the great cultures of the ancient Near East, but we look for it in vain. The lack of this genre is quite understandable given that, unlike Israel, the large autochthonous cultures were not cognizant of a beginning of their national existence.

On the other hand, this genre *would* be expected in the Greek sphere which like Israel was based on colonization and founding of new sites. That the genre of foundation stories was widely popular in the Greek world may be learned from Plato's *Hippias Maior* (285D), where, in response to Socrates' question about what the people liked to hear most, the Sophist replies, "stories about heroes and foundation of cities." I have long suspected that this genre of Israelite literature had much in common with the Greek milieu, especially since this type of storytelling, including the David Court story, crystalized in the Davidic period, when there were contacts with elements originating in the Greek sphere, such as Krethi and Plethi.

My thoughts on this problem took further shape when, more than ten years ago, I participated in a seminar on the *Aeneid* conducted by the late H. Wirszubsky. What concerned me especially in the seminar discussion was the central idea of the work: the mission of Aeneas to found a city that would rule the world, an idea strikingly similar to that found in the book of Genesis, in which Abraham and his seed are to become, like Aeneas, a great nation (*gôy gadōl:* Gen. 12:1 ff.) that will rule peoples (Gen. 27:29).

I have been pondering this question ever since. I had the feeling that the composition of the patriarchal stories is based on a model similar to that of Aeneas. Because the *Aeneid* is modeled on foundation stories prevalent in Greek colonies, the so-called *Ktisissagen*, I saw in the patriarchal stories, with their promises for the inheritance of the land of Canaan, a reflection of the same genre.[1]

I was pleased to discover that one of my colleagues at the University of Tel Aviv, Jacob Licht, was elaborating a similar idea and applying it to the Exodus–Sinai cycle. He suggested that I publish his thesis in a journal I edited, *Shnaton* 4 (1980), which I was eager to do. Licht's point of departure was Deut. 27:9: "Today you have become the people of the Lord your God," which he took as a proclamation of establishment. He rightly connected it with the foundation stories so widespread in the Greek world and so boldly expressed in the Roman epic of Virgil. Both Licht and I drew the same analogy, though from different points of departure: I was asking about the patriarchal promises, while he was interested in the Exodus-Covenant traditions. The two approaches could be combined, as they are in the Pentateuch itself, but my main focus in this book is the Aeneas-Abraham analogy.

In chapter 2, I compare the pattern of Israelite settlement to the pattern of foundation of colonies in the Greek world.[2] Here, however, I concentrate on a typological comparison of the Patriarchal traditions with the rich traditions concerning the ancestors of ancient Rome, beginning with the roles of the ancestor in both cultures.

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1. One must consider, of course, that many different stories had circulated before the epic of Virgil took its present form (see below). However, because we are concerned with the typology of the epic rather than its historical development, we have chosen as a point of departure for this study the richest and most elaborate foundation story, that of Virgil.

The antiquity of the connection between Aeneas and Rome is evident in Hesiod: the tale about the birth of Aeneas is followed by the fate about the birth of Latinus (*Theogony* 1008 ff.).

The typological model investigated here is also reflected in the Greek traditions about the return of the *Heraklidai* (the Dorian migration), in which we find the same motifs: promised land, exile for several generations, and divine guidance. But here, too, we have only fragmentary evidence, not a crystalized epic comparable to the Patriarchal narratives.

C. H. Gordon ("Vergil and the Near East," *Ugaritica* 7 [1969], pp. 266–88) adduces a range of parallels, from Abraham to Jesus, to show affinities between the Aeneids, the Bible, and the ancient Near East. He provides a list of common motifs, such as the tree of life (cf. Aen. 6:138 f.); the master who ties his yoked team with reins of vine-leaves (Aen. 6:804 f.; compare Gen. 49:11; *CTA* 19; II:53–55 = *Aqht*); and the offering of seven sacrificial bullocks (Aen. 6:38 f.; compare Num. 23:4, 14, 29). However, in the absence of integration and critical analysis of the material he adduces, his thesis is unconvincing.

2. First published in my article, "The Pattern of the Israelite Settlement in Canaan," in *Congress Volume, Jerusalem 1986*, ed. by J. A. Emerton, pp. 270–83 (Supplements to Vetus Testamentum 40; Leiden, 1988).

1. A Man Leaving a Great Civilization and Charged with a Universal Mission. Aeneas leaves famous Troy and stays for a while in Carthage, which later becomes Rome's great enemy; finally, his son Ascanius reaches Lavinium, and later his son gets to Alba-Longa.[3] His descendants reach Rome, which is destined to rule the world.[4] Similarly, Abraham leaves the great civilization of Mesopotamia, Ur of the Chaldaeans,[5]

3. Virgil begins the poem with a reference to Lavinium (*Aen.* 1:2–3), but when Aeneas's destination is named, it is the Tiber (2:781–82; cf. 7:157 ff.). In *Aen.* 1:267 ff., Jupiter proclaims that Lavinium will be *sedes regni* for thirty years, but then the reign will shift to Alba-Longa. On the whole problem, cf. recently G. K. Galinsky, *Aeneas, Sicily and Rome* (Princeton, 1969), pp. 141 ff.

4. "You shall see Lavinium's city and its promised walls, and you shall raise on high to the starry heavens . . . your son . . . shall crush proud nations . . ." (*Aen.* 1:57 ff.); "from this noble line shall be born the Trojan Caesar who shall limit his empire with ocean, his glory with the stars . . . welcome to heaven, laden with Eastern spoils" (1:286 ff.); "there the house of Aeneas shall rule over all lands" (3:97); "he was to rule over Italy, a land teeming with empire . . . to head on a race from Teucer's noble blood and bring all the world beneath his laws" (4:229 ff.); "remember, you, O Roman, to rule the nations with your sway . . . to impose peace with law . . ." (6:775 ff.).

5. Gen. 11:28–31; 15:7; Neh. 9:7. This is an anachronism, because the Chaldaeans appear in the Mesopotamian documents for the first time in the ninth century B.C.E., and they became rulers of Babylon only in the seventh and sixth centuries. The city of Ur, however, was already known in the third millennium as the center of a great Sumerian empire that reached its peak during the third dynasty of Ur (twenty-first–twentieth centuries B.C.E.). It seems that in the original version of the Patriarchal narratives the Patriarchs came from Haran; Ur of the Chaldaeans, as the place of their origin, was incorporated in a later stage. In fact, according to the ancient (J) layer of the Patriarchal stories, Abraham received the call to leave his homeland (Gen. 12:1) in *Haran* (cf. Gen. 11:31b–32) and not in *'Ur Kasdim;* see my forthcoming commentary on Genesis. From the point of view of typology and pattern, which is the main point of our study, Ur and Haran serve the same purpose: to indicate that the father of the nation comes from a known civilization. Both Ur and Haran served as great centers of culture, and both were associated with the worship of the moongod Sin.

stays for a while in Aram, which later becomes Israel's enemy, and reaches Canaan, the Land of promise, out of which his descendants will rule other peoples.[6]

In both cases we have examples of an ethnic tradition later developed into an imperial ideology; in both, we are presented with a divine promise given to the father of a nation who later becomes a messenger for a world mission. The ancient traditions of Israel, originally bound to the settlement in Canaan, were applied during the Davidic period to the rule of an empire, stretching from the Euphrates to the River of Egypt (Gen. 15:18).[7] By the same token, the traditions about settlement in Latium were applied, during the time of Augustus, to the Roman Empire—Aeneas became not only the father of Rome itself but also a prefiguration of the ruler of the entire world. The prophecy of Poseidon in the *Iliad* 20:307 that Aeneas will rule over the Trojans, *νύν δὲ δὴ Αἰνείαο βίη Τρώεσσιν ἀνάξει* (cf. Homeric Hymns, *AD Venerem* 3:196–97), is indeed recorded (reinterpreted) in an oracle in *Aen.* 3:97–98 saying that the house of Aeneas shall rule "over all lands": *hic domus Aeneae cunctis dominabitur oris.*[8]

Before us, then, lies a typological parallel: a man escapes the

6. "I make you the father of a multitude of nations" (Gen. 17:5); "peoples shall serve you and nations bow down to you" (Gen. 27:29); "and the homage of peoples be his" (Gen. 49:10); cf. also Gen. 12:3 and parallels.

7. For *gôy gadôl* implying the Davidic empire, see my article, "The Old Testament: The Discipline and Its Goals," in *Congress Volume, Vienna 1980,* ed. by J. A. Emerton, pp. 423–34 (Supplements to Vetus Testamentum 32; Leiden, 1981). For the Davidic background of the Patriarchal stories, see B. Mazar, "The Historical Background of the Book of Genesis," in *JNES* 28 (1969), pp. 73–83.

8. Strabo, *Geography* 13 1:53 (608) quotes a reading in the *Iliad* 20:307; πάντεσσιν for Τρώεσσιν: Αἰνείαο γένος πάντεσσιν ἀνάξει; cf. L. Malten, "Aineias," *Archiv fur Religionswissenschaft* 29 (1931), p. 53, and see [illegible] *Harvard Studies in*